

NOC Attachment 1: Project Description

PLANNING AREA LOCATION AND BOUNDARIES

Pleasanton is located in Alameda County, one of nine Bay Area counties bordering the San Francisco Bay (Figure 1). At the subregional level, Pleasanton is a part of the Tri-Valley area, along with unincorporated portions of Alameda and Contra Costa Counties, the Town of Danville, and the cities of Dublin, Livermore, and San Ramon. Pleasanton is generally surrounded by the City of Livermore to the east, unincorporated Alameda County to the south, the Pleasanton Ridge Regional Park and unincorporated Alameda County to the west, and the City of Dublin across Interstate 580 (I-580) to the north.

PLANNING AREA CHARACTER

The Downtown Specific Plan (DSP) planning area (planning area) is generally situated in the central portion of the city (Figure 2). The planning area covers approximately 319 acres, or about 2 percent of the area within city limits.¹ As shown in Figure 3, the planning area is approximately bounded by the Alameda County Fairgrounds to the west; the Arroyo del Valle and Union Pacific Railroad tracks to the north; a generally straight-line projection of Second and Third Streets to the east; and Bernal Avenue to the south.

Downtown Pleasanton is located at the “hub” of the city where many major streets originate (i.e., Hopyard Road, Santa Rita Road, Stanley Boulevard, Vineyard Avenue, and Sunol Boulevard). It is bisected in a north/south direction by Main Street. The Union Pacific Railroad right-of-way, which is currently the route of the Altamont Commuter Express (ACE) train service, runs in a north/south direction in the western part of the planning area, and curve north of the Arroyo to form the northernmost border of the planning area. The Transportation Corridor (a former railroad right-of-way) runs parallel to First Street in the eastern part of the planning area. The Arroyo del Valle and its protected riparian buffer is an approximately 200-foot-wide open space corridor that runs along the northern portion of the planning area. The Arroyo eventually drains into the Arroyo de la Laguna, west of the planning area. The terrain of the planning area is generally flat with a gradual upslope beginning east of Second Street. The Arroyo del Valle is the only natural, undeveloped part of the

¹ Calculation based on incorporated city limits, which according to the Pleasanton General Plan, is 14,300 acres.

planning area, although several parks and open space areas are scattered throughout downtown Pleasanton.

The planning area is generally flat, with elevation increasing slightly east of Second Street. The Arroyo del Valle runs in a natural channel slightly below the grade of adjacent land.² Most of the planning area is built out, leaving the Arroyo del Valle and its banks as the last undeveloped natural open space.

PROJECT BACKGROUND

Pleasanton's first DSP was adopted in 1989 and was comprehensively updated in 2002. The 1989 Pleasanton DSP and the 2002 update helped create an active commercial area along Main Street and aim to preserve historic residential neighborhoods. Based on feedback from the community and elected officials, the City initiated a comprehensive update to the DSP in 2016 in order to better respond to current market conditions, promote multi-modal mobility, and incorporate other planning efforts recently undertaken by the City. The updated DSP (Proposed Plan) is the result of that process. Though many of the policies in the 2002 DSP remain relevant and have been retained, the update will allow the City to address recent changes and opportunities within the planning area.

A key component of the Proposed Plan is consideration of alternative land uses for approximately 9-acres of City-owned properties in and around the existing civic center that are the current site of City offices, the Pleasanton Public Library, the Police Station, other municipal uses, and the City-owned 4-acre site adjacent to the ACE station. In late 2016, the City Council accepted the Pleasanton Civic Center/Library Master Plan, which envisions the civic center and library at a new location across Bernal Avenue to the southwest, on the City-owned Bernal Property at Bernal Community Park. Approval of the proposed relocation of the civic center and library is subject to a vote by the people of Pleasanton and is therefore not yet final. In the event that relocation of the civic center is approved, the Proposed Plan provides a vision and a conceptual land use plan for the redevelopment of the approximately 9-acre civic center property and an adjacent 4-acre vacant City-owned property, developed with input from the community.

The construction and operation of civic uses on the 318-acre, City-owned Bernal Property, including a cultural arts center, fire station, community center and environmental education center, was considered in the Bernal Property Phase II Specific Plan and Bernal Community Park Master Plan EIR (SCH# 2002052132), certified by the City in 2006. That EIR, including its environmental analysis and mitigation measures, is incorporated by reference, consistent with CEQA Guidelines Section 15150. In compliance with CEQA Guidelines Section 15150, the Bernal Property Phase II Specific Plan and Bernal Community Park Master Plan EIR (Bernal Property Phase II EIR) is available to the public at the City of Pleasanton Community Development Department and online.

² (United States Geological Survey, 2015)

This EIR evaluates at a programmatic level the potential environmental impacts that could result from the construction and operation of civic uses comparable to those analyzed in the Bernal Property Phase II EIR, including the relocated civic center and library described above. Where portions of the Bernal Property Phase II EIR are relevant to the analysis in this EIR, the incorporated parts of the referenced document are briefly summarized.

PURPOSE

Under California law, cities and counties may use the specific plan process to develop policies, programs, and regulations for implementing their general plans in site-specific areas. A specific plan frequently serves as the bridge between the general plan and site development plans in this regard. No rezoning, subdivision, use permit, development plan, or other entitlement for use, and no public improvement shall be authorized for construction within the specific plan area that is not in substantial conformance with the specific plan. The DSP is the City's guide for development in downtown Pleasanton, establishing policies and programs related to land use, circulation, infrastructure, historic preservation, urban design, economic development, and the environment.

OBJECTIVES

The overarching goal of the Proposed Plan remains to improve the viability of downtown while preserving its small-town character and scale. However, in order to address changes and opportunities downtown, the following objectives have been established for the DSP update:

- Provide a framework for new development and redevelopment in the downtown area, including underutilized commercial properties and significant opportunity sites, to provide for viable commercial and residential opportunities that serve residents and visitors and reinforce the beloved visual, historic, and civic character of downtown Pleasanton.
- Provide a vision for the redevelopment of the existing civic center site that will provide a dynamic mix of community gathering places, retail, entertainment, visitor, residential, and employment uses should the civic center and library relocation be approved by voters.
- Promote a balance of mixed-use development in the downtown area to meet the residential, employment, entertainment, and service needs of the community, and create a walkable, active downtown environment.
- Ensure a high-quality, well-designed public realm that prioritizes accessibility, attractive streetscaping, green spaces, plazas, and parks to improve pedestrian mobility and comfort and foster a sense of community and civic pride.
- Improve mobility for all modes, including cars, transit, bicycles, and pedestrians, by improving connections between downtown districts; improving connections from Main Street to side streets; improving connections to the ACE train station; improving transit, bicycle, and pedestrian infrastructure to enhance safety, increase usership of modes of transportation that are alternatives to driving, and reduce congestion; and providing complete streets.
- Foster a strong, stable, and diverse local economy built on the strong retail, restaurant, and office base of downtown Pleasanton.

- Preserve and enhance the natural and scenic resources of the Arroyo del Valle.

KEY COMPONENTS OF THE PROPOSED PLAN

The Proposed Plan provides a policy framework applicable to new development and redevelopment in the entire planning area; however, the most significant physical changes—including new development and streetscape changes—are expected to occur primarily in only a few geographic areas.

Under the Proposed Plan, Main Street, Division Street between Main Street and Railroad Avenue, First Street, and Peters Avenue, would undergo streetscape changes that could alter the visual character and transportation patterns of these streets.

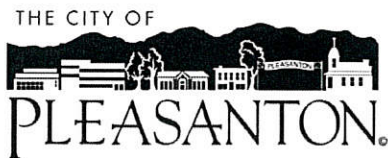
The proposed Town Square District, which comprises the 9-acre existing civic center and the City-owned 4-acre site adjacent to the ACE station, would undergo the most significant changes if the relocation of the civic center to the Bernal Property should occur. The redevelopment of the Town Square District would only occur in the event that the voters approve relocation of the existing civic center to the Bernal Property. The Proposed Plan assumes the 35,000 square foot building currently housing the Pleasanton Public Library would stay in its current location and be repurposed, and that all other developable parcels in the Town Square District area would redevelop. There is potential for additional development on this site if the library building were to be redeveloped. Because the Town Square District would have a new Mixed Use – Downtown land use designation, the site would develop with a combination of residential, retail, office, live/work, and hotel uses, as well as a new approximately 0.75- acre city park, known as the Town Square.

Other parts of the planning area, including the existing and largely built-out residential neighborhoods, and most of the area north of the Arroyo del Valle, are not anticipated to experience substantial change as a result of Proposed Plan implementation. Similarly, the Proposed Plan does not envision changes to existing downtown parks, planning for which has been completed under separate master plans, including the Downtown Parks and Trails System (2002) and the Master Plan for Lions Wayside and Delucchi Parks (2014), although the Plan anticipates adding one park in the new Town Square District. The Proposed Plan would also continue to support the long-term preservation and enhancement of the Arroyo del Valle, consistent with the General Plan Wildlands Overlay and Public Health and Safety land use designations, which preserve open space resources throughout the city.

DRAFT EIR

The Draft EIR for the Pleasanton Downtown Specific Plan identifies the potential for significant effects in the following impact areas: Aesthetics; Air Quality; Biological Resources; Cultural, Historic, and Tribal Resources; Energy, Climate Change, and Greenhouse Gas Emissions; Geology and Seismicity; Hazards and Hazardous Materials; Hydrology, Drainage, and Water Quality; Land Use, Population, and Housing; Noise; Public Facilities and Recreation; Traffic and Transportation; and Utilities and Service Systems.

Resource topics that are not addressed in the EIR include mineral resources and agricultural and forestry resources due to a lack of these resources in the planning area



The EIR also evaluates potential cumulative and growth-inducing effects of the Proposed Plan, and alternatives to the Plan. The CEQA-required No Project alternative will evaluate the impacts resulting from continued implementation of existing plans, policies, and regulations that govern the planning area. Alternatives that would avoid or lessen significant environmental effects related to the Proposed Plan are discussed.

Public Comment

This Draft EIR will be available for public comment from February 1, 2019 to March 17, 2019. Comments can be submitted in writing or via email to:

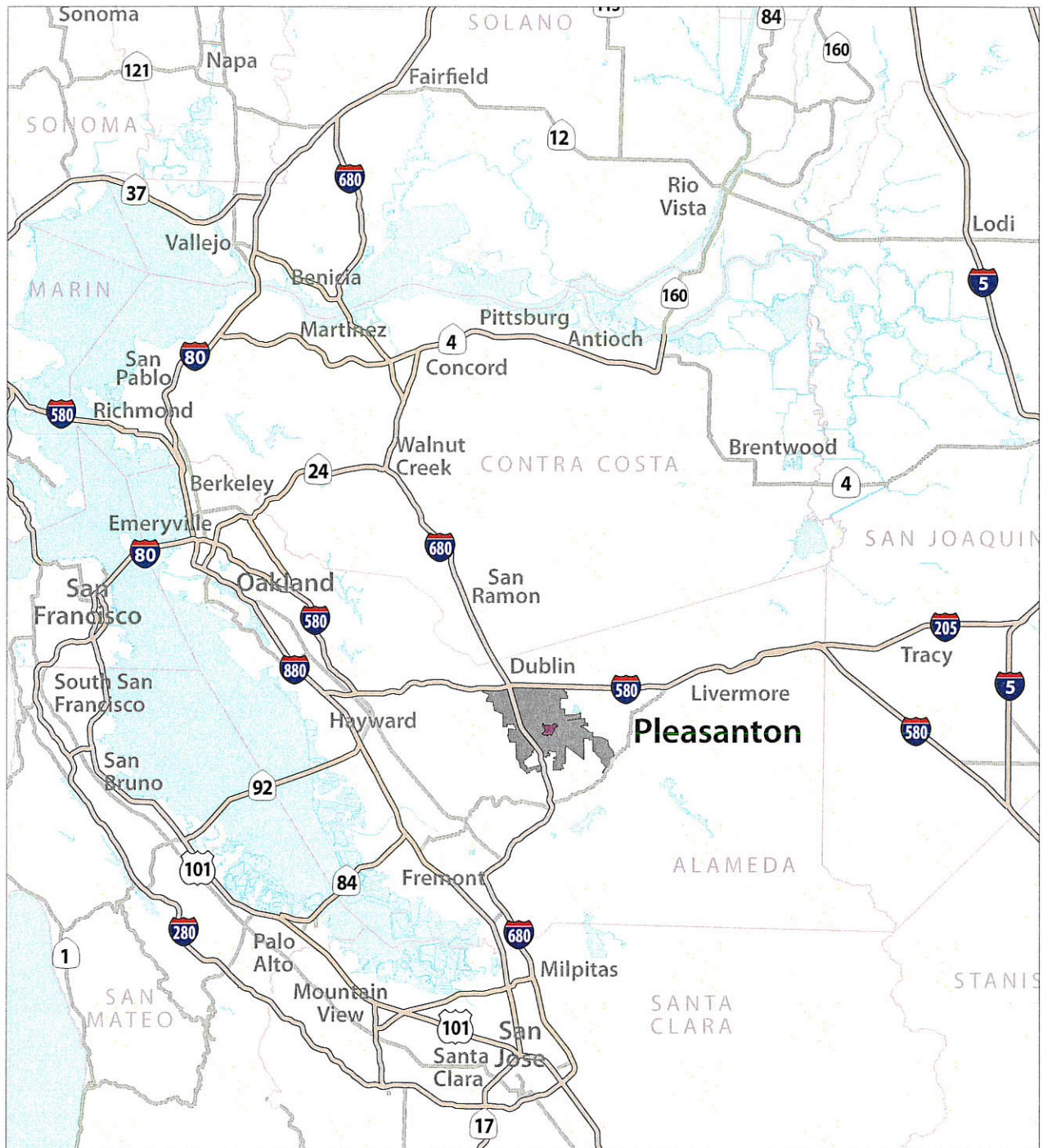
Richard Patenaude, Contract Planner
rpatenaude@cityofpleasantonca.gov

(925) 931-5611
City of Pleasanton, Community Development Department
P.O. Box 520
Pleasanton, CA 94566

All comments received or postmarked by March 17, 2019 will be accepted.

Document Availability

Copies of the Draft EIR are now available for public review online at the project website: <https://PtownDtown.org/ceqa>, or in printed form at the Planning Division located at 200 Old Bernal Avenue or the Pleasanton Public Library located at 400 Old Bernal Avenue.



- Pleasanton City Limits
- Downtown Specific Plan

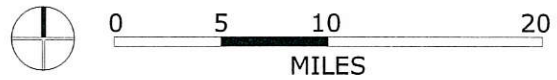


Figure 1
Regional Location

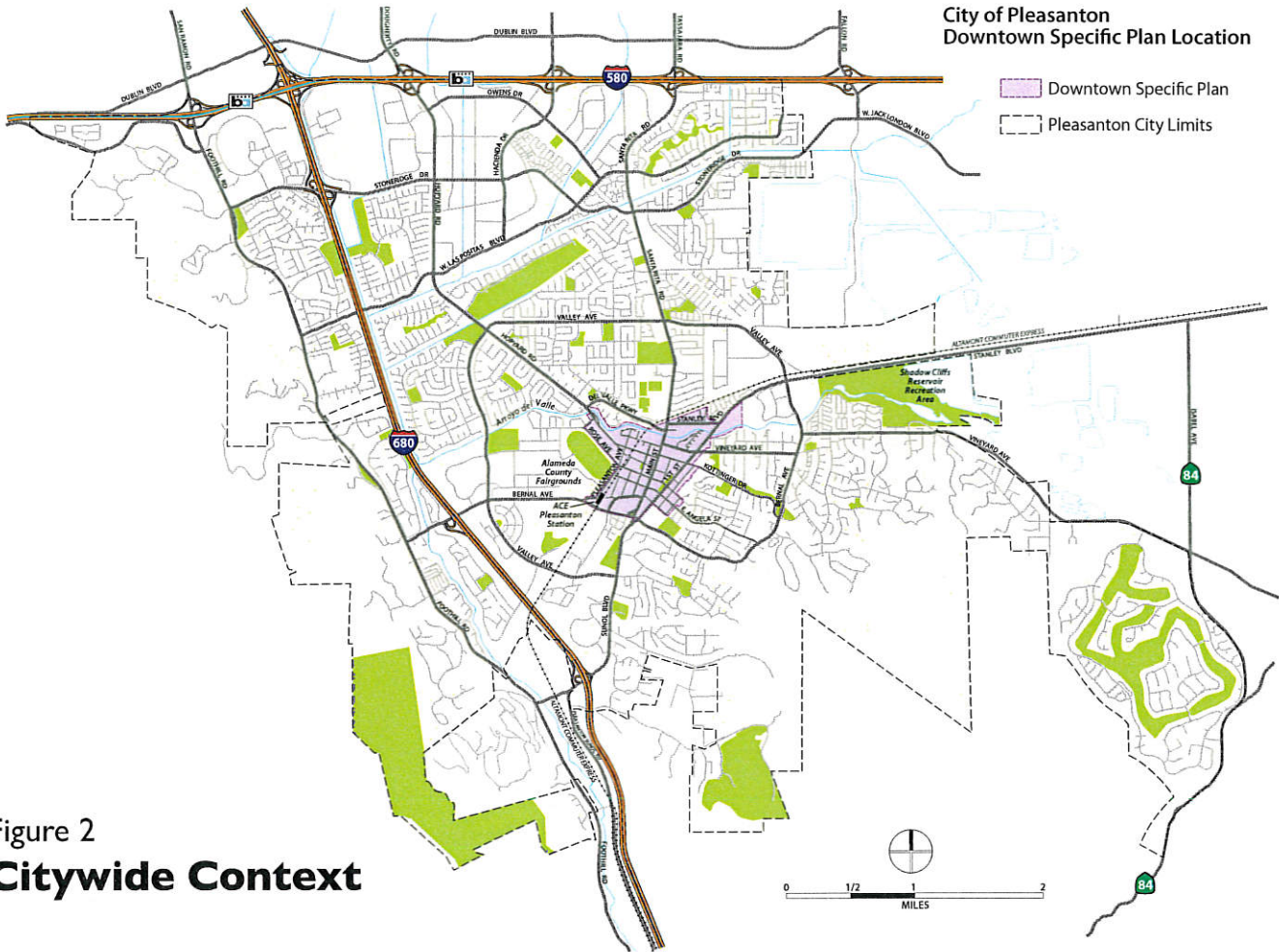


Figure 2
Citywide Context

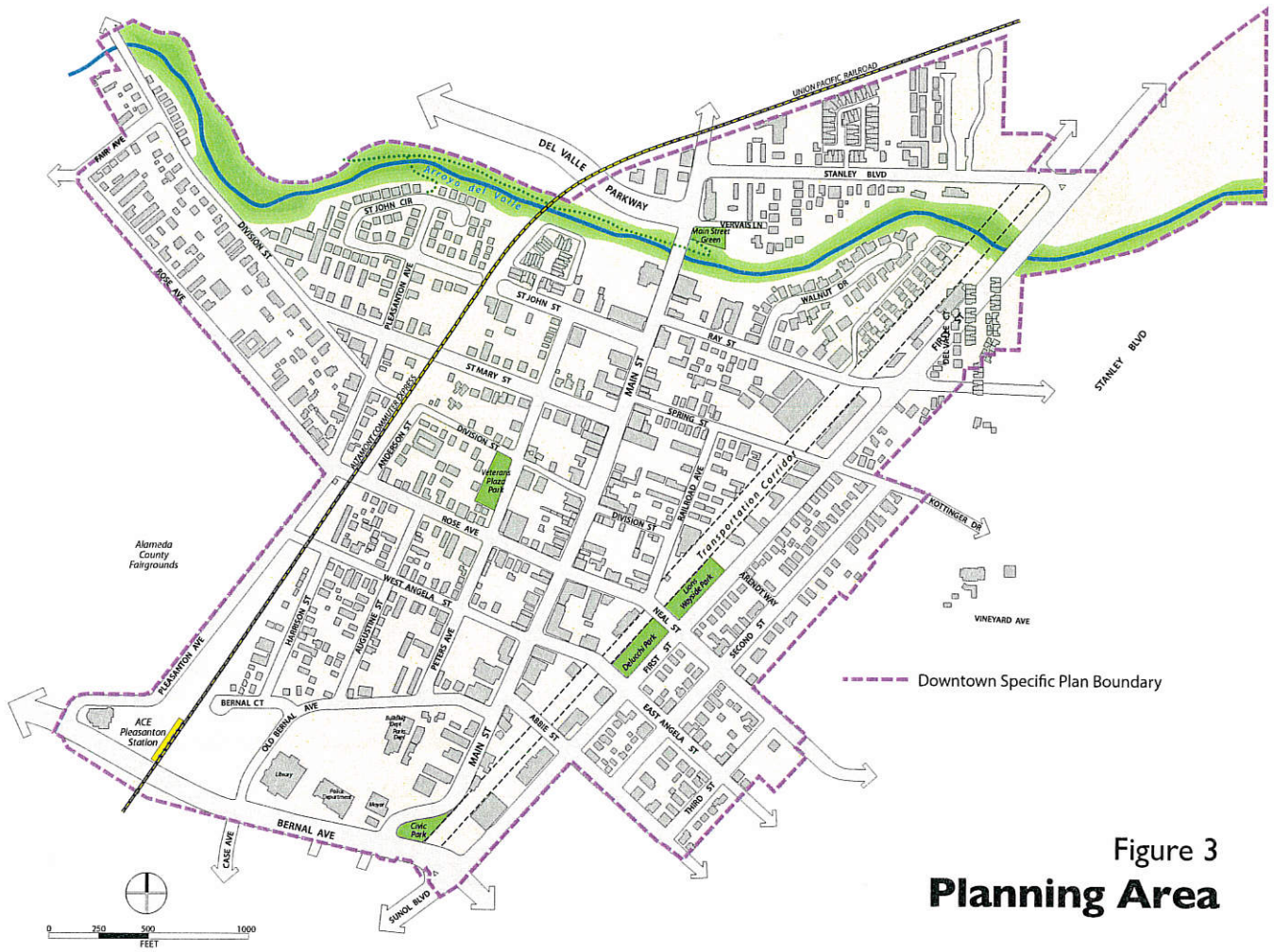


Figure 3
Planning Area