



THE TOWN OF
CORTE MADERA
MARIN COUNTY CALIFORNIA

240 Tamal Vista Blvd.
Suite 110
Corte Madera, CA 94925

www.townofcortemadera.org

Town Manager
Town Council
415-927-5050

Town Clerk
415-927-5085

Finance Department
415-927-5055

Central Marin Fire Department
415-927-5077

Planning Department
415-927-5064

Building Department
415-927-5062

Public works Department
628-258-0294

Parks and Recreation Department
415-927-5072

Sanitary District No. 2
628-258-0294

Central Marin Police Authority
415-927-5150

Notice of Preparation

To: Interested Parties

Date: March 15, 2022

Subject: Notice of Preparation of Draft Supplemental Environmental Impact Report

Town of Corte Madera 2023-2031 General Plan Housing, Land Use, and Safety Elements Amendments and Zoning Amendments

Lead Agency: Town of Corte Madera

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN THAT the Town of Corte Madera will be the Lead Agency under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and will prepare a Draft Supplemental Environmental Impact Report (DSEIR) for the proposed project. This NOP includes a project description and an overview of the potential impacts that will be addressed in the DSEIR.

Project Title: Town of Corte Madera 2023-2031 General Plan Housing, Land Use, and Safety Elements Amendments and Zoning Amendments

Project Applicant: Town of Corte Madera

Project Location: Town of Corte Madera

The project description, location map, and the potential environmental effects are contained in the attached document.

The purpose of this notice is: (1) to serve as the Notice of Preparation to potential Responsible Agencies, agencies involved in funding or approving the project, and Trustee Agencies responsible for natural resources affected by the project, pursuant to Section 15082 of the CEQA Guidelines; and (2) to advise and solicit comments and suggestions regarding the preparation of the DSEIR, environmental issues to be addressed in the DSEIR, and any related issues, from interested parties in addition to those noted above, including interested or affected members of the public. The Town of Corte Madera requests that any potential Responsible or Trustee Agency responding to this notice do so in a manner consistent with CEQA Guidelines Section 15082(b).

All parties that have submitted their names and mailing addresses will be notified as part of the project's CEQA review process. If you wish to be placed on the mailing list or have any questions or need additional information, please contact the person identified below. A copy of the NOP and attachment document is on the Town's website (<https://www.townofcortemadera.org/>), on the Town's Housing website (<https://www.cortemaderahousing.org/>) and is on file at the Town Hall offices, located at 240 Tamal Vista Blvd, Suite 110, Corte Madera, CA 94925.

Scoping Meeting:

Date: March 31, 2022

Time: 6:30 PM

Location: Via teleconference meeting via Zoom.

Link: <https://us06web.zoom.us/j/88395259464>

Meeting ID: 883 9525 9464

Information on how to participate in the meeting will also be posted on the Town's website (<https://www.townofcortemadera.org>) and on the Town's Housing website (<https://www.cortemaderahousing.org>) three days prior to the scheduled meeting.

30-Day NOP Review Period: In accordance with CEQA, should your agency have any comments, it is requested to provide a written response to this NOP within the 30-day NOP review period between March 16, 2022 and April 15, 2022. Written comments must be received via email or at the mailing address below no later than 5:00 p.m. on April 15, 2022.

Please indicate a contact person in your response and send your comments to the following contact:

Adam Wolff, Director of Planning and Building
Town of Corte Madera
PO Box 159
Corte Madera, CA 94976-0159
awolff@tcmmail.org



March 15, 2022

Date Adam Wolff, Director of Planning and Building

Town of Corte Madera 2023-2031 Housing, Land Use, and Safety Elements Amendments, and Zoning Amendments Notice of Preparation

2023-2031 Housing Element Update Overview

The Town of Corte Madera (Town) has begun the process of updating its Housing Element in order to update the Town's housing policies and programs through 2031 and to accommodate the Regional Housing Needs Allocation (RHNA) for the Town as determined by the California Department of Housing and Development and the Association of Bay Area Governments. The Housing Element update also requires amendments to the General Plan Land Use Element and Safety Element, as well as the Town's Municipal Code, including the Zoning Ordinance.

Setting/Project Location

The Town of Corte Madera is located in Marin County, approximately eight miles north of the Golden Gate Bridge. Incorporated in 1916, the Town of Corte Madera encompasses approximately 4.5 square miles in total. However, 1.25 square miles of this area is submerged under bay waters and .67 square mile is protected marshland, leaving a net land area of 2.55 square miles. Parks, open space, and flood control areas comprise 0.38 square mile of this net land area. The eastern border of the Town is on San Francisco Bay; the western edge is bordered by unincorporated Marin County lands, mostly in open space preserves. Mount Tamalpais lies immediately west of the Town. Adjacent to Corte Madera are the City of Larkspur to the north, the City of Mill Valley to the south, and the Town of Tiburon to the southeast. Corte Madera's regional location is shown in [Figure 1, Regional Map](#).

General Plan Elements to be Amended

Housing Element

State law requires the Town to have and maintain a general plan with specific contents in order to provide a vision for the Town's future, and inform local decisions about land use and development, including issues such as circulation, conservation, and safety. The Housing Element is one of the state-mandated elements of the General Plan. State law specifically requires the Town to update the Housing Element of its General Plan by January 15, 2023, while making any changes to other elements of the General Plan needed to maintain internal consistency and undertaking any related changes to the Town's Municipal Code (including the Town's Zoning Ordinance).

The Town’s Housing Element for the 2015-2023 planning period was adopted in May 2015. In accordance with State law, the eight-year planning period for the updated Housing Element will extend from 2023 to 2031; this is also referred to as the 6th Cycle Housing Element Update. The Town is updating its Housing Element to comply with the requirements of State law by analyzing existing and projected housing needs, and updating goals, policies, objectives, and implementation programs for the preservation, improvement, and development of housing for all income categories.

Regional Housing Needs Allocation (RHNA)

The Housing Element Update addresses any changes that have occurred since adoption of the current (2015-2023) Housing Element. These changes include, among others, updated demographic information, housing needs data, and analysis of the availability of housing sites. The Housing Element map of available housing sites would be updated to identify sites that could accommodate the Town’s Regional Housing Needs Allocation (RHNA) for the 2023-2031 planning period. The final RHNA allocation, broken down by income level, for the Town is shown below in [Table 1, Corte Madera 2023-2031 Final RHNA Allocation](#).

Table 1 Corte Madera 2023-2031 Final RHNA Allocation

Income Level	Units
Very Low Income (Less than 50 percent of Area Median Income)	213
Low Income (50 to 80 percent of Area Median Income)	123
Moderate Income (80 to 120 percent of Area Median Income)	108
Above Moderate Income (Above 120 percent of Area Median Income)	281
Total Allocation	725

SOURCE: ABAG 2021

Community Outreach

Over the last 6 months, the Town has held seven public workshops, including a six-part Housing Element Workshop series. One of the primary goals of the workshop series was to engage the community in a conversation that focused on identifying varying housing-related policy considerations and issues, and methodically developing Corte Madera’s vision and planning framework for addressing regional and local housing needs, and meeting the State-mandated RHNA. Workshops were held on the following dates:

- October 13, 2021 Introduction to the Housing Element Update
- November 10, 2021 Corte Madera Housing: Existing Conditions, Opportunities & Challenges
- December 8, 2021 Potential Housing Opportunity Sites
- January 12, 2022 Planning for 700+ Homes, Part 1

- February 9, 2022 Planning for 700+ Homes, Part 2
- February 15, 2022 Planning Commission and Town Council Joint Meeting
- March 9, 2022 Next Steps: CEQA, Programs & Policies, Safety Element

Housing Opportunity Sites

The Housing Element Update will identify specific sites appropriate for the development of multifamily housing (including affordable units), and the Town would rezone those sites as necessary to meet the requirements of State law. The preliminary list of existing and proposed sites that can accommodate development of multifamily housing includes sites that are located throughout Corte Madera, and is subject to refinement based on additional public input and review of the draft Housing Element by Town’s Planning Commission and Town Council, and HCD. A summary of the development potential for all nine opportunity sites is included below in [Table 2 Housing Opportunity Sites Potential Development Summary](#). Locations of the potential housing opportunity sites are shown on [Figure 2, Housing Opportunity Sites](#).

Table 2 Housing Opportunity Sites Potential Development Summary

Opportunity Sites	Existing		Housing Element Update	
	Acreage	Existing Commercial Buildings Square Footage	Maximum New Residential Units	Assumed Likely New Commercial Square Footage
9 Sites	21.95	271,024 SF	773	237,167 SF

Notes:

1. Assumes existing commercial buildings would be replaced by new mixed-use residential/commercial development.
2. Assumes net 773 new multi-family residential units.
3. Assumes net reduction of 33,857 square feet of commercial (271,024 sf existing minus 237,167 sf proposed).
4. Assumed likely new residential units and assumed likely commercial square footage are only estimates. Actual development at any opportunity site must be consistent with the general plan land use and zoning designations and could include more or less commercial square footage and residential units.
5. Maximum new residential units shown does not reflect potential for application of density bonus on opportunity sites.

Safety Element Update

The Safety Element is also a state-mandated component of a General Plan. The Safety Element focuses on the protection of the community from risks associated with climate change, earthquakes, floods, fires, toxic waste, and other hazards. The Safety Element is the means by which the Town defines what measures will be undertaken to reduce potential risk of personal injury, property damage, and economic and social dislocation resulting from natural and human-made hazards. The extent of a hazard depends on local conditions since most hazards are confined to a particular area or site. Various health and safety hazards should be considered in planning the location, design, intensity, density, and type of land uses in a given area. Long-term costs to the Town, such as maintenance, liability exposure, and emergency services, are potentially greater where high hazards exist.

The Town is required to update the General Plan Safety Element to address climate change resiliency. Senate Bill (SB) 379 requires all cities to review and update their General Plan Safety Elements with climate change adaptation measures. The required review and update of the Safety Element consists of the following three components:

- A vulnerability assessment that identifies the risks climate change poses to the local jurisdictions;
- Identification of adaptation and resiliency goals, policies, and objectives; and
- Feasible implementation measures.

The Safety Element update will also address other legislative mandates to reduce fire risk, plan for emergency evacuation, and reduce risks from flooding. The update will occur simultaneously and in conjunction with the Housing Element Update.

Land Use Element Update

The Town will update the existing Land Use Element to address revised land use designations, acreages, and housing unit numbers to reflect changes made to the Housing Element. The supplemental EIR will evaluate only the change in General Plan buildout resulting from the amendments to the Land Use and Housing Elements. The EIR will not evaluate total buildout of the amended General Plan.

Municipal Code Amendments

The proposed project includes amending Title 18 (Zoning) of the Town of Corte Madera Municipal Code to revise the Zoning Map to rezone all of the opportunity sites. Amendments to other sections of the municipal code may be necessary.

Supplemental EIR Approach

Consistent with CEQA Guidelines Section 15163, the EIR will be supplemental to the 2009 *Town of Corte Madera General Plan Revised Final EIR* (general plan EIR), updating existing analysis where appropriate, and presenting new analysis where necessary. This supplemental EIR will evaluate only the change in General Plan buildout resulting from the amendments to the general plan elements. The supplemental EIR will not evaluate total buildout of the amended General Plan.

CEQA Guidelines section 15146 states that, “The degree of specificity required in an EIR will correspond to the degree of specificity involved in the underlying activity which is described in the EIR.” The underlying activity is adoption of the 2023-2031 Housing Element and associated general plan and zoning amendments. Therefore, the supplemental EIR will evaluate the environmental impacts of the 2023-2031 Housing Element to the greatest degree feasible; however, additional environmental review in compliance with CEQA may be required when development proposals requiring discretionary action are proposed. This process is called “tiering.” “Tiering” or “tier”

means the coverage of general matters and environmental effects in an EIR prepared for a policy, plan, program or ordinance followed by narrower or site-specific EIRs or negative declaration that incorporate by reference the discussion in any prior EIR and which concentrate on the environmental effects that (a) are capable of being mitigated, or (b) were not analyzed as significant effects on the environment in the prior EIR.

Probable Environmental Effects

Based on a review of the general plan EIR, the following environmental issues have been determined to be adequately addressed in the general plan EIR and will not be addressed further in the supplemental EIR:

- Agricultural and Forestry Resources;
- Cultural Resources (with the exception of Tribal Cultural Resources);
- Geology and Soils (including Paleontological Resources);
- Human Health/Risk of Upset (with the exception of Wildfire);
- Hydrology and Water Quality; and
- Mineral Resources.

Environmental effects to be addressed in the supplemental EIR will be based on a review of the environmental analysis contained in the general plan EIR and an understanding of current conditions in the Town. Probable environmental effects associated with adoption of the 2023-2031 Housing Element and associated updates to the Town's Safety and Land Use Elements and Zoning Ordinance will be addressed in the supplemental EIR and are briefly discussed below.

Aesthetics and Visual Resources

The aesthetics discussion and analysis in the general plan EIR will be utilized in this section, and updated where necessary to address the proposed project. For example, the project may include increasing the allowed heights of buildings. This section will address both project-level and cumulative visual resource impacts.

Air Quality

The air quality section of the general plan EIR addressed greenhouse gas emissions and energy in addition to air quality. This section of the supplemental EIR will reflect current air quality analyses, as well as current federal, state, regional, and local regulations. The proposed project could result in an increase in operational criteria air emissions through new vehicle trips generated by additional housing. The proposed project may also increase community health risks and hazards by placing sensitive receptors near existing or planned sources of toxic air contaminants (TACs) or other hazardous emissions.

Biological Resources

The biological resources section of the supplemental EIR will utilize the California Natural Diversity Database (CNDDDB) to determine whether there have been any status changes to special status plant and wildlife species, and whether the general plan EIR adequately addresses sensitive biological resources to current standards.

Energy

The proposed project is presumed to create new development capacity that would result in increased energy demand. The three primary sources of energy demand would likely be fuel use in vehicles, and electricity and natural gas use in buildings. The net change in demand for these types of energy will be modeled in CalEEMod and EMFAC. Because the threshold of significance for energy impacts is qualitative, the impact discussion and analysis will also be qualitative.

Greenhouse Gas Emissions

The Town adopted an updated climate action plan (CAP) in 2020. The CAP includes GHG emissions projections for the years 2030 and 2050 based on projected residential and non-residential growth in Corte Madera. Measures to reduce GHG emissions are then defined based on the emissions reduction volume needed to meet the CAP GHG emission reduction target for 2030 of 40 percent below 1990 levels. With implementation of the reduction measures, GHG emissions in Corte Madera would be reduced approximately 49 percent, or nine percent more than needed to meet the 2030 target.

The proposed GHG impact analysis approach is to determine whether the proposed project could be considered consistent with the 2020 CAP, and if so, to streamline the GHG emissions analysis pursuant to CEQA Guidelines section 15183.5. If GHG emissions produced from implementing development consistent with the proposed project do not increase projected 2030 emissions by more than nine percent, the proposed project could be found to be consistent with the CAP. In this case, the proposed project could be considered consistent with the CAP. Pursuant to CEQA Guidelines section 15183.5, the proposed project GHG impact would be less than significant provided each new future individual project made possible by the proposed project is conditioned to implement applicable GHG reduction measures included in the CAP.

Noise

This section will address whether the proposed project would result in an increase in the noise levels identified in the general plan EIR with implementation of the proposed project.

Public Services

This section will address whether the proposed project would require new or expanded public services facilities, and whether those facilities would result in significant environmental impacts.

Public services to be addressed include fire protection and emergency medical services, law enforcement, public schools, water supply and service, wastewater service, solid waste service, and electrical, natural gas, and telephone services, and parks and recreation. Cumulative project impacts to public services will also be discussed.

Sea Level Rise

CEQA does not require the evaluation of the environment's impact on a project, but does require an analysis if a project contributes to an environmental effect that could have an effect on a project.

The Town's 2020 Climate Action Plan documents projected flooding impacts on Corte Madera from sea level rise. The general plan EIR also addresses sea level rise. Existing documentation will be used in this section of the supplemental EIR to present the anticipated flooding impacts of sea level rise, and a qualitative discussion as to how the project could exacerbate these flooding issues.

Transportation

The transportation section of the supplemental EIR will address the vehicle miles traveled (VMT) impacts of the project. VMT was not a required component of a CEQA transportation impact analysis when the general plan EIR was prepared. The transportation section will also include an analysis of local transportation operational effects of increased housing based on level of service (LOS). The study intersections will be primarily located at US 101 ramps, Tamalpais Boulevard, Corte Madera Avenue, Madera Boulevard/Tamal Vista Boulevard, and Paradise Drive, which are the major roads to and through Corte Madera.

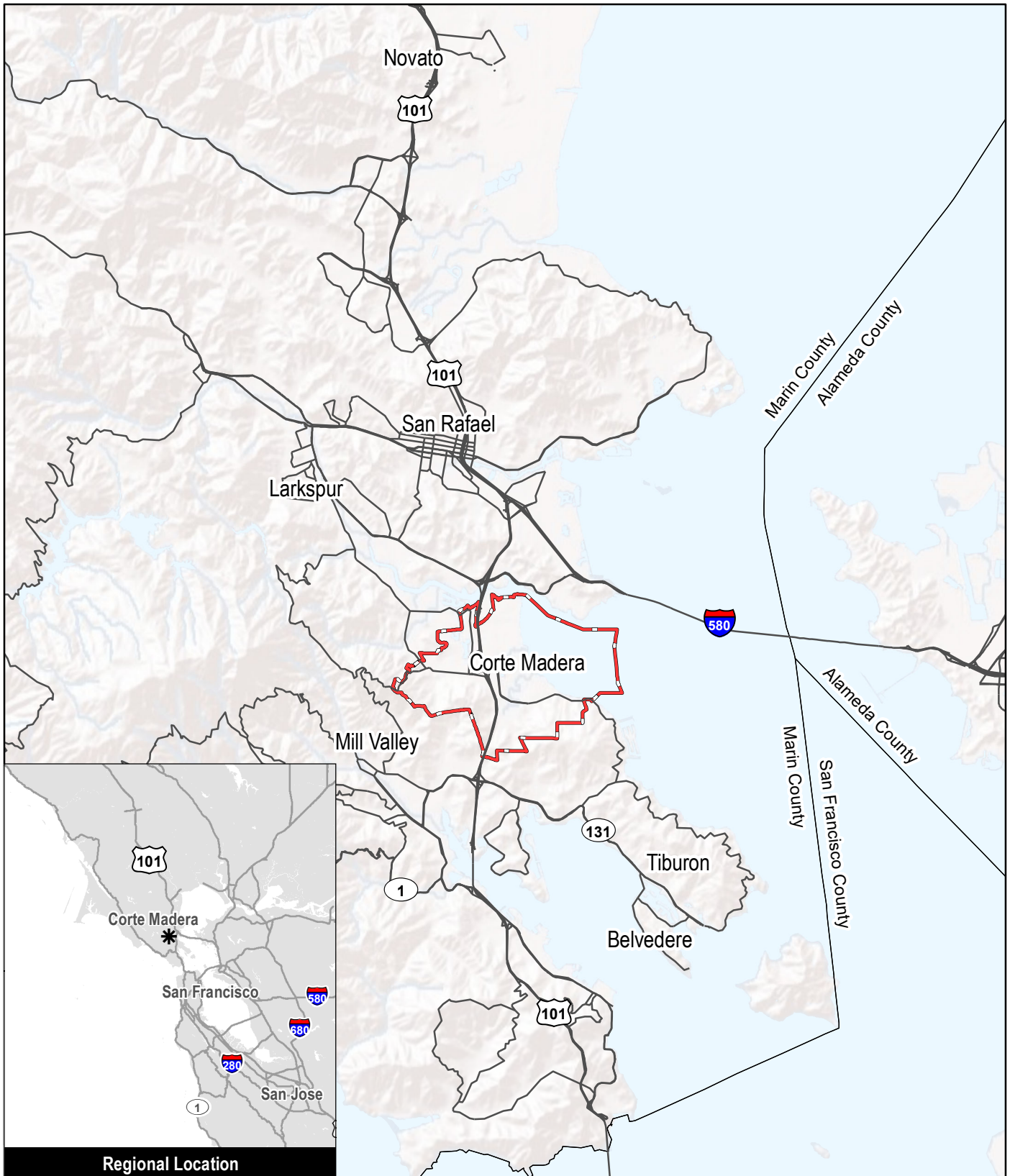
Tribal Cultural Resources

This section of the supplemental EIR will report on the Town's SB 18 and AB 52 Tribal Consultation process. If consultation does occur, this section will address whether the proposed project may have an adverse change on the significance of a tribal cultural resource.

Wildfire

This section of the supplemental EIR will address whether the project would substantially impair an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan; expose people to pollutant concentrations from a wildfire or the uncontrolled spread of a wildfire; require installation or maintenance of associated infrastructure that may exacerbate fire risk or that may result in temporary or ongoing impacts to the environment; or expose people or structures to significant risks, including downslope of downstream flooding or landslides as a result of runoff, postfire slope instability, or drainage changes. Cumulative project impacts associated with wildfire hazards will also be discussed.

This side intentionally left blank.



0 2 mile

 Town Limits

Source: ESRI 2014

Figure 1

Regional Map



Town of Corte Madera General Plan Housing, Land Use, and Safety Elements Amendments and Zoning Amendments NOP

This side intentionally left blank.



Source: Town of Corte Madera 2022

Figure 2
 Housing Opportunity Sites



This side intentionally left blank.