



**CITY OF NOVATO**  
CALIFORNIA

**NOTICE OF AVAILABILITY**  
**of a Draft Environmental Impact Report for the**  
**City of Novato General Plan 2035**  
**State Clearinghouse #2016122043**

**Date:** February 28, 2020

**To:** State Clearinghouse  
Responsible Agencies  
Trustee Agencies  
Federal Agencies  
Interested Parties

**Lead Agency** City of Novato

**Project Location:** City of Novato General Plan Area (see Figure 1)

**Lead Agency Contact Person:** Steve Marshall, AICP  
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Novato, California 94945

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The City of Novato (“City”) is the Lead Agency for a draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR) prepared to analyze the environmental impacts of the proposed Novato General Plan 2035 (“General Plan 2035”). Pursuant to Sections 15086 and 15087, Title 14, California Code of Regulations, this Notice is given to advise interested parties that the City has completed the DEIR for General Plan 2035 as described below and that the DEIR is available for public review. The project location, description, and potential environmental effects are described below.

### **Project Location**

Novato is located in the greater North Bay region of the San Francisco Bay Area and is the northernmost city in Marin County (Figure 1). The City is located northwest of San Pablo Bay approximately 29 miles north of San Francisco, 37 miles northwest of Oakland, and approximately 35 miles north of the San Francisco International Airport. The City is bordered by unincorporated areas of Marin County. General Plan 2035 applies to all lands within: Novato’s city limits, the City’s Urban Growth Boundary (UGB), and the City’s Sphere of Influence (SOI). This area is defined as the “General Plan Area” for the proposed project (refer to Figure 1). The City’s SOI, and thus General Plan Area, extends

in a few areas past the current City limits and UGB boundary into nearby unincorporated areas as determined by the Marin Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCO).

## **Project Description**

General Plan 2035 is a comprehensive update of the City's 1996 General Plan, and establishes the community's vision for future development of the City through 2035. As part of the general plan process, General Plan 2035 has been reorganized and reformatted, with updated goals, policies, and programs that reflect the community's vision of Novato. The City's General Plan Land Use Map has also been updated to reflect the community's vision to modify growth in four specific focus areas in the City, which are most likely to change in the next 15 years and would benefit from careful planning. The four focus areas are shown in Figure 2 below and include:

- **Downtown.** Downtown Novato is the commercial core of the community. The area is maintained as a pedestrian-oriented shopping and dining destination. The General Plan 2035 vision for the Downtown is to maintain the area as the civic and economic center of the community, blending historic buildings and new construction, and adding housing in mixed-use developments.
- **North Redwood Boulevard Corridor.** The North Redwood Boulevard Corridor provides an opportunity for the City to address an identified retail sales leakage pattern and address community shopping needs by creating a lively retail area with a unique sense of place. General Plan 2035 envisions the North Redwood Boulevard Corridor as a place that would also feature inviting gathering places, restaurants, and entertainment uses.
- **North, North Redwood Boulevard Corridor.** The North, North Redwood Boulevard Corridor area contains predominately non-residential development set back from the street with landscaped buffers. The corridor could be developed with high-quality office and research and development uses, as well as supporting uses such as local-serving retail and recreational uses.
- **Northwest Quadrant Neighborhood.** In the Northwest Quadrant Neighborhood parcels are usually small, and homes are in close proximity to one another. The General Plan 2035 promotes retaining some existing single family homes, along with reinvestment and revitalization of this district through development of carefully designed housing through adoption of a neighborhood-specific zoning code that would ensure compatibility with the scale and diversity of residences.

In addition to the four focus areas, expanded development could occur in the Novato Industrial Park area, specifically the Hamilton and Ignacio Industrial Parks, through the proposed Master Plan/Precise Development Plan Amendment (Industrial Parks MPA). The Industrial Parks MPA is proposed to allow an increased floor area ratio and building height limit for designated "life science campus" development for the biotechnology industry, subject to a cap of 500,000 square feet. Life sciences campuses would be permitted in the Hamilton and Ignacio Industrial portions of the Novato Industrial Park and are expected to consist of a mix of office, lab, and manufacturing space. Campuses could consist of one or more parcels with two or more buildings that have interrelated operations

and may have shared parking, employee amenities, and interconnected access to facilitate collaboration.

General Plan 2035 includes the following five chapters, collectively encompassing the seven required elements of the General Plan: Great Places, Environmental Stewardship, Living Well, Economic Vitality, and A City that Works. These five chapters describe the existing conditions and context for the related topic areas, followed by goals, policies, and programs to guide the City's management and development. The proposed draft General Plan 2035 can be viewed on the City's General Plan Update webpage at:

[www.novato.org/generalplan](http://www.novato.org/generalplan)

### **Potential Environmental Effects Evaluated in the DEIR**

The DEIR has been prepared because of the potential for unavoidable, significant adverse effects resulting from project implementation. The DEIR prepared for General Plan 2035 identifies and discusses potential impacts, mitigation measures, residual impacts, and monitoring requirements. All environmental impacts included in the *CEQA Guidelines* Appendix G checklist are included and analyzed in the EIR. The DEIR identifies potentially significant impacts in the CEQA impact categories of air quality, biological resources, cultural resources, geology, noise, transportation/traffic, and tribal cultural resources. For the majority of issue areas analyzed in the DEIR, impacts were determined to be either less than significant or reduced to a less than significant level with incorporation of mitigation measures. However, significant and unavoidable effects on the environment are anticipated in the CEQA impact category of Transportation/Traffic. A copy of the DEIR may be obtained at the City's General Plan Update webpage at:

[www.novato.org/generalplan](http://www.novato.org/generalplan)

Hardcopies of the DEIR and General Plan 2035 may be viewed at:

Novato Community Development Department, 922 Machin Avenue, Novato  
Novato Library, 1720 Novato Boulevard, Novato  
South Novato Library, 931 C Street, Novato

### **Cortese Sites**

Novato hosts properties listed on hazardous waste sites lists compiled pursuant to California Government Code Section 65962.5. Please refer to Table 4.7-1 of the DEIR for a description of these sites.

### **Review Period**

The DEIR will be available for agency and public comment for a minimum 45-day review period as specified by the *CEQA Guidelines* (Section 15105). The purpose of this comment period is to consider the content of the DEIR and the potential environmental impacts that may result from project implementation, not the positive or negative attributes of the project itself. Comments pertaining to the impact analysis, criteria and thresholds,

mitigation measures, and alternatives presented in the DEIR will be considered by the City during preparation of the Final EIR (FEIR). The FEIR will include copies of comments and the City's responses to comments pertaining to the environmental analysis provided in the DEIR.

**The public and agency comment period for the DEIR will begin on February 28, 2020, and end on April 13, 2020 (a 46-day public review period). Comments may be submitted in writing or by e-mail by 5:00 p.m. on April 13, 2020** addressed and mailed to the City of Novato (please include the name of the contact person and contact information for your agency) to:

Steve Marshall, AICP  
Planning & Environmental Services Manager  
922 Machin Avenue  
Novato, California 94945

Email: [smarshall@novato.org](mailto:smarshall@novato.org)

### **Public Hearing**

The Novato Planning Commission will conduct a public hearing to receive agency and public testimony and provide comments on the DEIR. The Commission will provide direction to staff regarding preparation of a final EIR for General Plan 2035.

**The hearing will be conducted on Monday, April 13, 2020, at 7:00 PM in Novato City Hall, 901 Sherman Avenue, Novato.**

### **Document Availability**

Copies of the DEIR and the draft City of Novato General Plan 2035 may be obtained at the City's General Plan Update webpage at:

[www.novato.org/generalplan](http://www.novato.org/generalplan)

Figure1 – General Plan Area

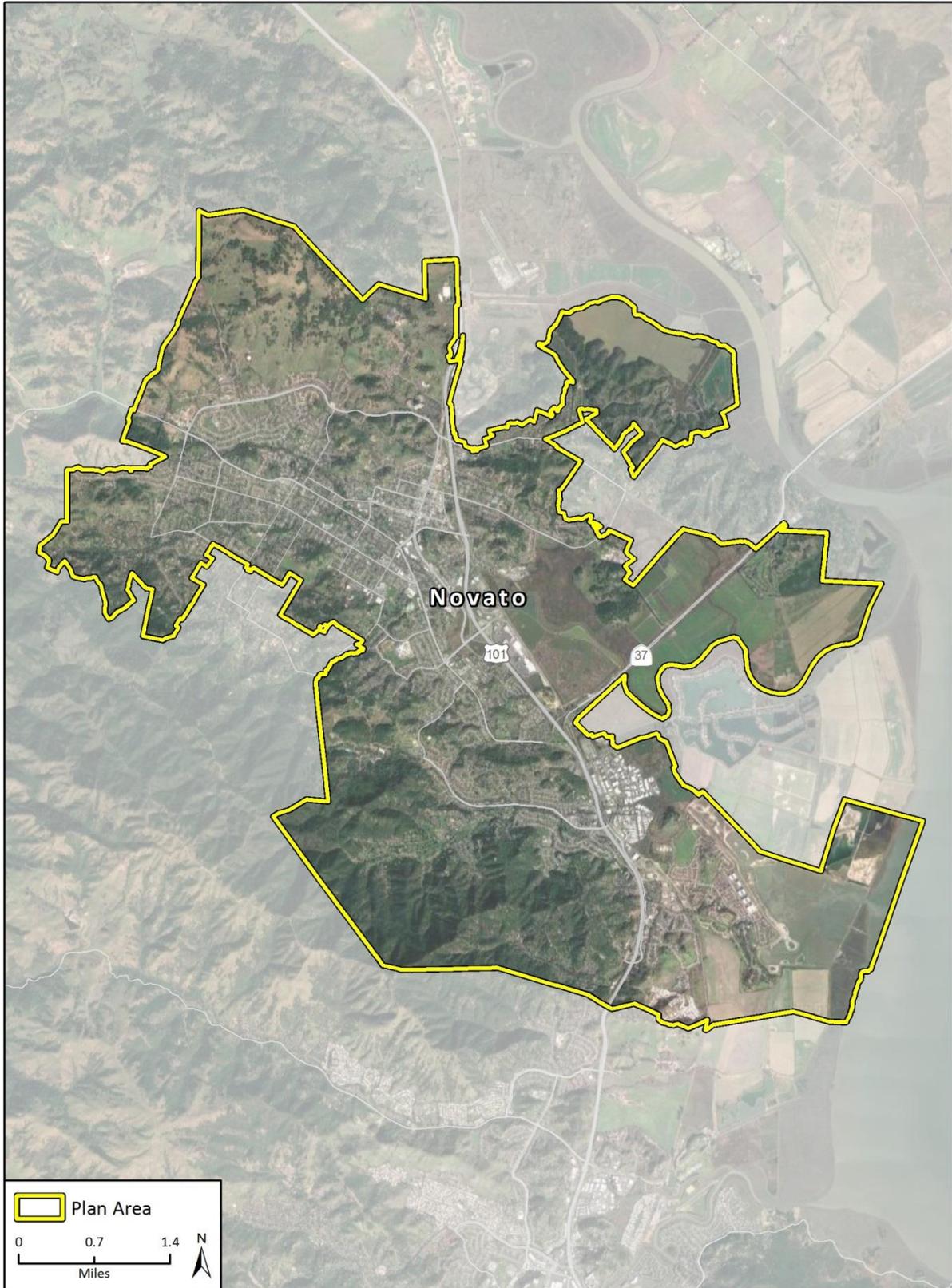
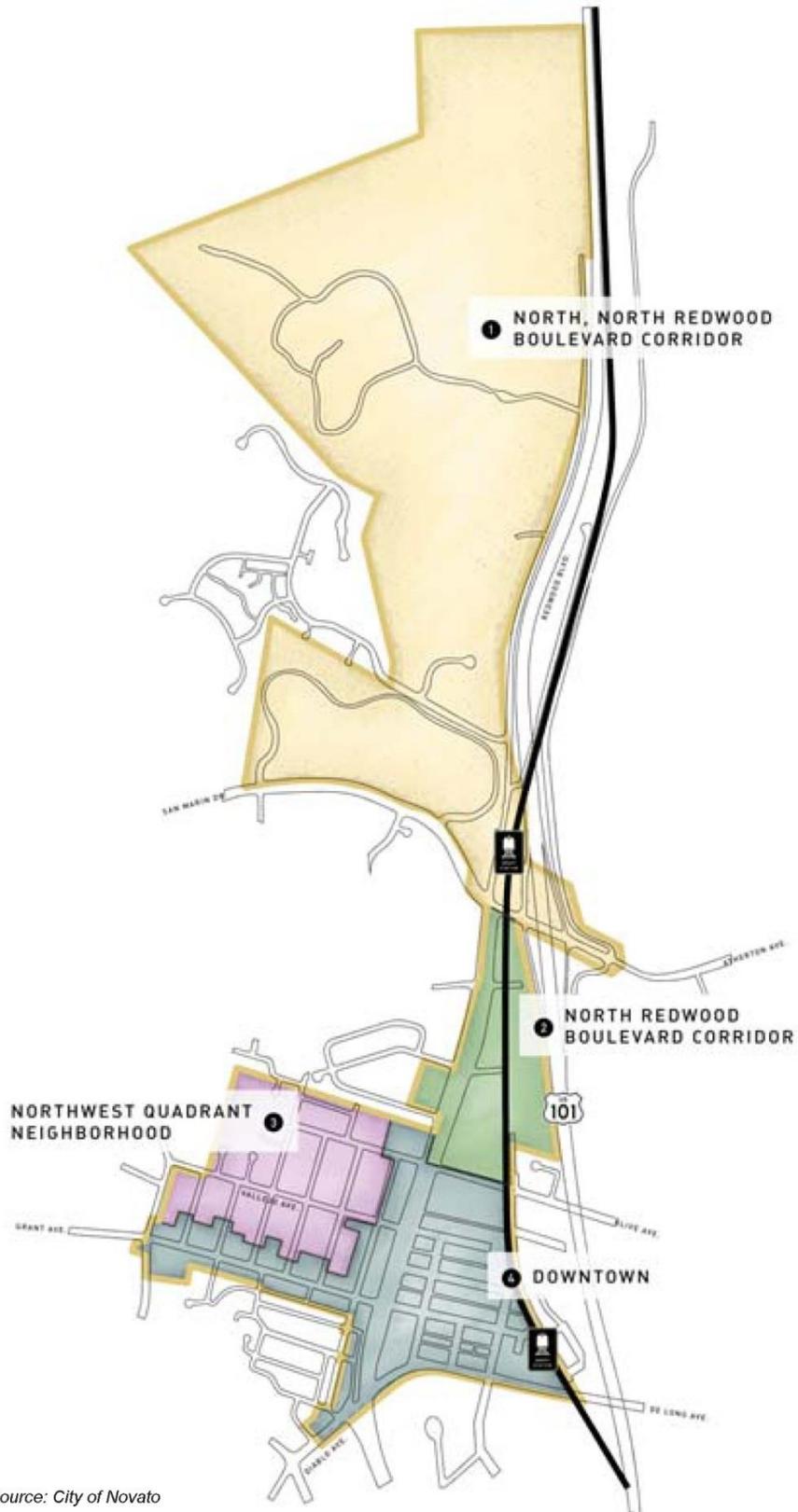


Figure 2 – General Plan 2035 Focus Areas



Source: City of Novato