

DATE: April 2, 2019

TO: Honorable Mayor and City Council

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Community Development Director

VIA: Daniel H. Rich, City Manager

TITLE: **Terra Bella Visioning and Guiding Principles
Plan – Land Use Alternatives**



PURPOSE

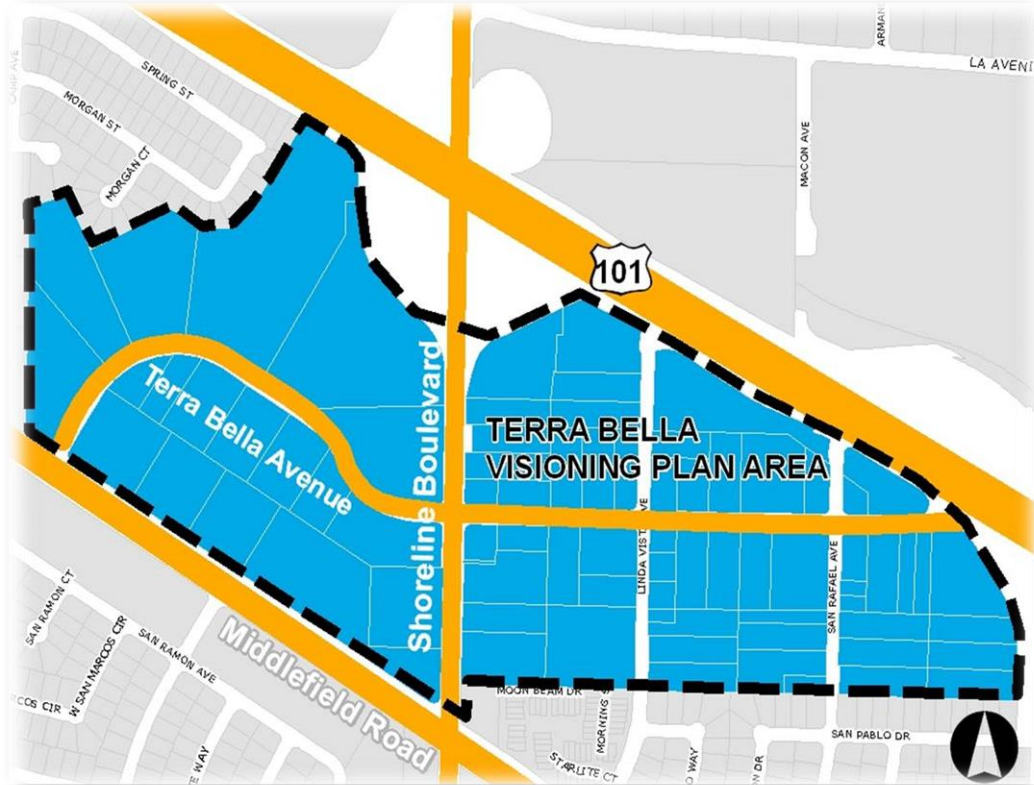
The purpose of this Study Session is to present revised land use alternatives for the Terra Bella Visioning and Guiding Principles Plan and summarize input from the February 20 Environmental Planning Commission meeting. Staff is seeking City Council input and policy direction on a preferred land use and next steps for the Terra Bella Visioning and Guiding Principles Plan.

BACKGROUND

The Terra Bella Visioning and Guiding Principles Plan process started in April 2018 and has included multiple community workshops, stakeholder meetings, and Environmental Planning Commission (EPC) and City Council Study Sessions. For an overview of prior workshops and meetings, see Attachment 1 (Summary of Prior Meetings).

This work was authorized by the City Council as a targeted community outreach effort to gather community input on the future vision for the area and develop strategies to guide future development in the area. The 2030 General Plan does not identify the Terra Bella Area as a “Change Area” for future development. Therefore, no specific vision was identified for the area during the 2030 General Plan update process.

Figure 1: Vision Plan Area



EPC and Council Meetings

The EPC and City Council held Study Sessions on potential land use alternatives and other policy direction on October 17, 2018 and November 13, 2018, respectively.

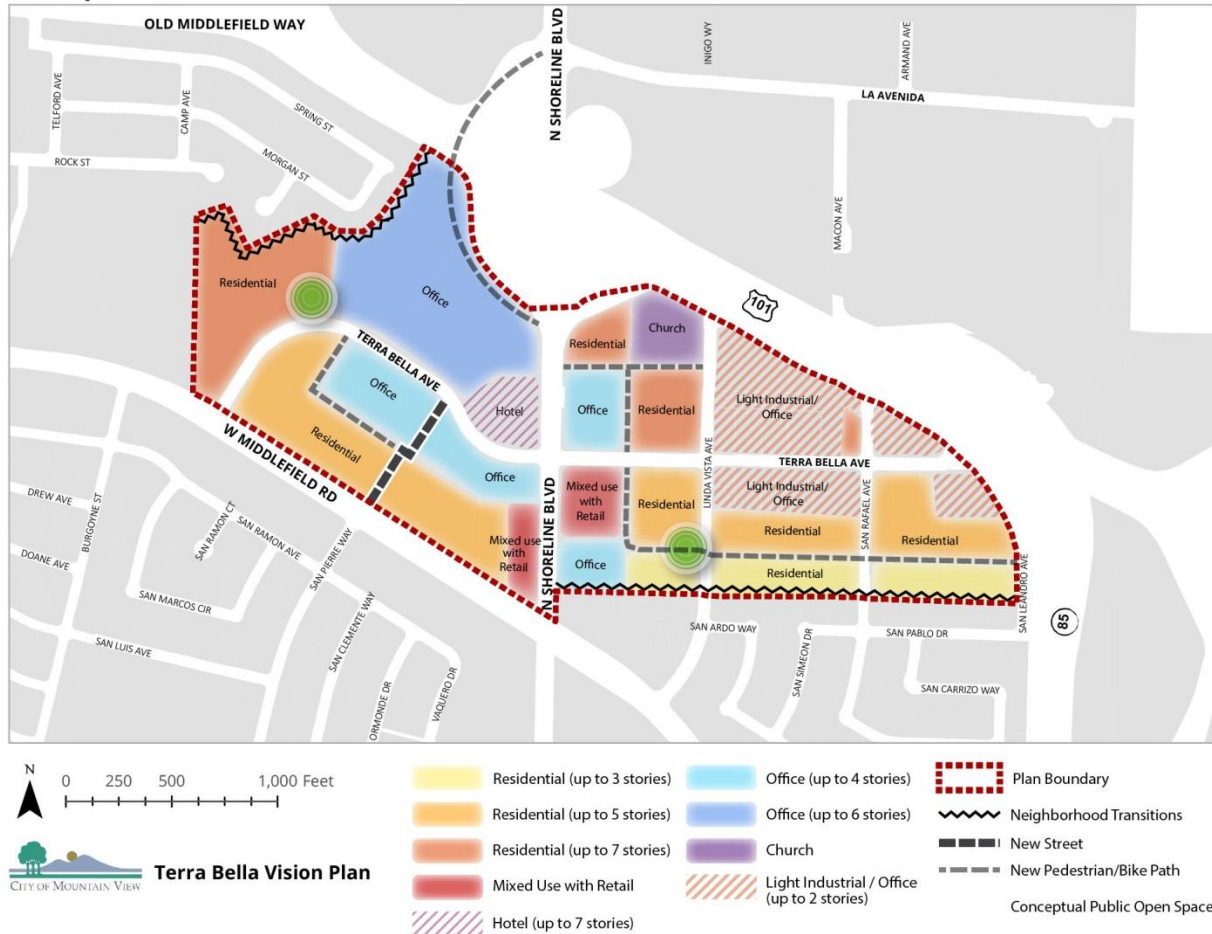
In summary, the City Council was supportive of the addition of residential land uses in the Plan area, and envisions a higher-intensity residential neighborhood with greater retail services, the addition of open space, and improved multi-modal improvements and connections throughout. Several members of the public spoke at both the EPC and City Council meetings, including residents, property owners, developers, and existing business owners. Public speakers suggested a variety of topics for EPC and Council consideration, including, but not limited to, the need for policies that create sensitive transitions adjacent to single-family neighborhoods in the area, the need for additional housing in the area, and preserving existing small businesses.

The City Council responses to all the questions from the November 2018 Study Session are summarized in the table below, including EPC comments where noted.

P	Vision and Guiding Principles	Council supported the proposed vision and guiding principles for the plan area.
2	Land Use Alternatives	Council supported the EPC Preferred Land Use Alternative with certain changes discussed in the Analysis section of this report.
3	Neighborhood Transition Strategies	Council supported proposed transition strategies and suggested additional transition strategies along the Northwestern Plan Area boundary adjacent to existing residential developments (i.e., near Morgan Street and Rock Street).
4	Community Benefit Strategy	Council supported the community benefit strategy.
5	TDM Requirements	Council supported strong TDM policy and requirements for future developments in the area.
6	Other Strategies	Most of the Councilmembers supported requiring other strategies such as jobs-housing balance and school strategies.

The City Council supported the EPC Preferred Land Use Alternative 4 (refer to Figure 2–EPC Preferred Land Use Alternative) and further directed staff to study several changes to Alternative 4. The Council also directed staff to study an additional alternative with reduced residential densities at key locations. These changes are discussed in the Analysis section of the report. Council further directed staff to hold an additional focused outreach meeting to gather input from residential neighborhoods adjacent to the Northwestern Plan boundary; a summary of this meeting is discussed below.

Figure 2: EPC Preferred Land Use Alternative



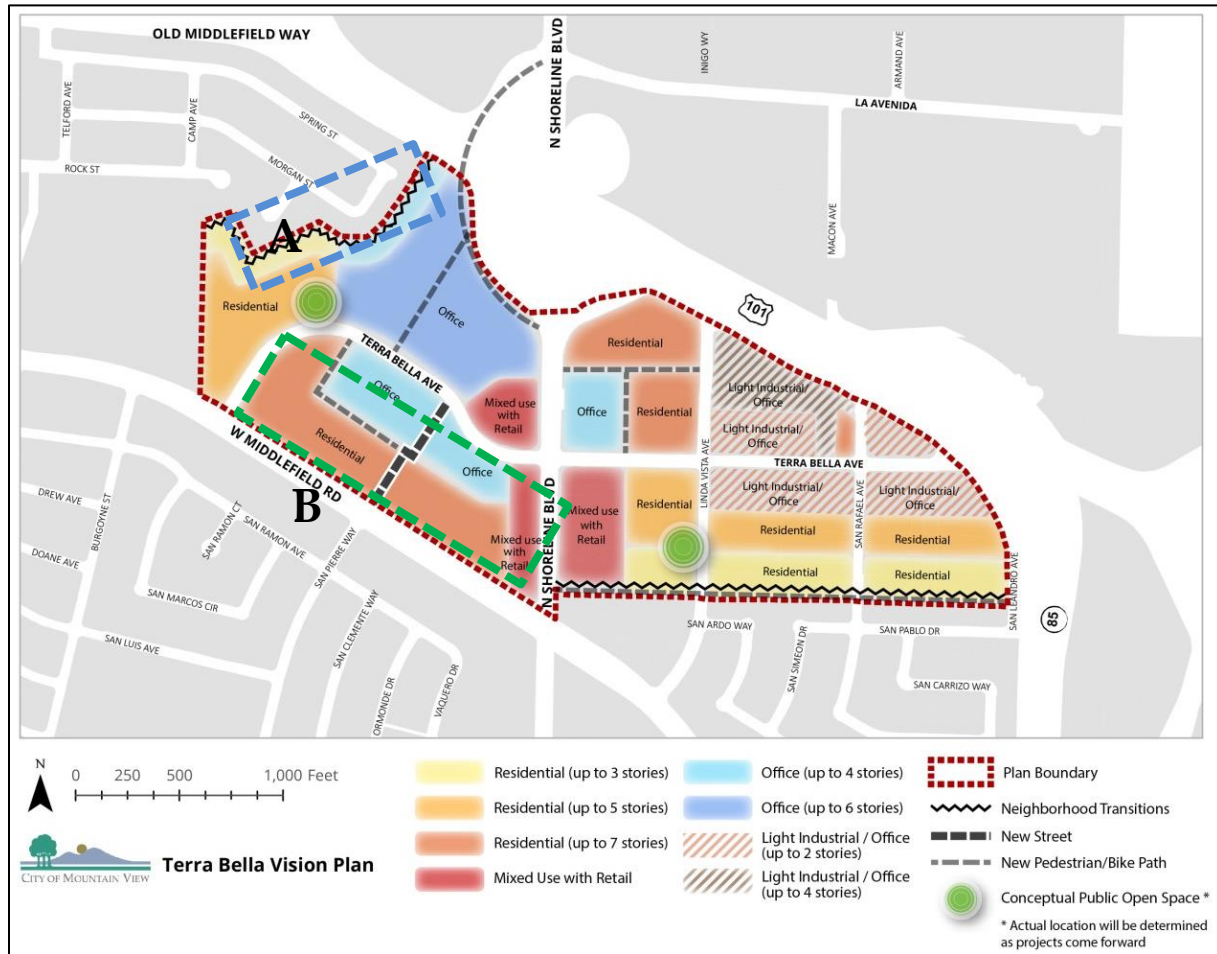
Third Community Outreach Meeting (January 2019)

As a follow-up to the November Council meeting, staff held an additional focused outreach meeting on January 28, 2019 to gather community input on the proposed Vision Plan Land Use Alternatives and specifically neighborhood transition strategies along the Northwestern Plan Area boundary adjacent to the Morgan Street and Rock Street single-family neighborhood. The meeting was attended by 10 people. The public input received at this meeting focused around Reduced-Intensity Residential Land Use alternatives adjacent to existing single-family residential areas. The preference was to include reduced development intensity and additional transition strategies in the area bordering the Morgan Street and Rock Street neighborhood, and the area is identified in the blue dashed box in Figure 3 below.

At this meeting, staff also noted that a lower-intensity land use alternative was being studied by the project team as directed by the City Council at the last Study Session meeting. This information is included in the Analysis section as the “Revised Lower-Density Land Use Alternative.”

Another public comment from this meeting was to increase the residential density along West Middlefield Road, currently identified as medium-intensity Residential Land Use (up to five stories), to higher-intensity Residential Land Use (up to seven stories). The area for the suggested modification is shown in the green thick dashed box in Figure 3 below.

**Figure 3: Community Outreach Meeting, January 28, 2019 –
 Input on Land Use Alternative**



Environmental Planning Commission Meeting – February 20, 2019

On February 20, 2019, the EPC held a Study Session to provide policy direction on the preferred land use alternative (see Attachment 2 – [EPC Study Session Report](#)). The meeting was focused on land use alternative selection for the plan area. Seven members of the public spoke at the EPC meeting, including residents, property owners, and business representatives. In addition, staff also received e-mails, letters, and other correspondence since November 2018 (these are included in Attachment 3 – Additional Public Comment). In summary, comments included:

- Maintain the General Plan 2030 vision.
- Strong concerns related to a proposed six- to seven-story building height and areas of greater intensity adjacent to existing one- to two-story residential neighborhoods.
- Strong need for sensitive neighborhood transition strategies to preserve the existing neighborhood character.
- Support lower building heights adjacent to current single-family zoned properties and landscaping as a buffer.
- Concern with the amount of change proposed in the area.
- Concerns with additional traffic issues from the proposed land uses adding to the current traffic issues along Shoreline Boulevard.
- Concerns with additional office land uses contributing to greater job-housing imbalance.

EPC input is summarized in the Analysis section.

ANALYSIS

Since the November 13, 2018 City Council Study Session, the project team has refined the land use alternatives based on Council direction, the February 2019 EPC Study Session, and public input. The major refinements include the following:

1. Created additional mixed-use areas along Shoreline Boulevard to create an area that allows a mix of retail, services, and active land uses.

2. Incorporated neighborhood transition strategies along the Northwestern Plan Area boundary west of Shoreline Boulevard to reduce potential impacts of new development on existing single-family home areas.
3. Extended the Industrial/Office Land Use along San Rafael Avenue up to Terra Bella Avenue to create a more continuous industrial zone.
4. Increased the intensity of Industrial/Office Land Use between Linda Vista Avenue and San Rafael Avenue and south of U.S. 101 to accommodate higher-intensity office use close to U.S. 101, which acts as a natural barrier.
5. Shifted the bike/pedestrian path closer to the Southern Plan Area boundary east of Shoreline Boulevard to create a better access along the single-family homes.

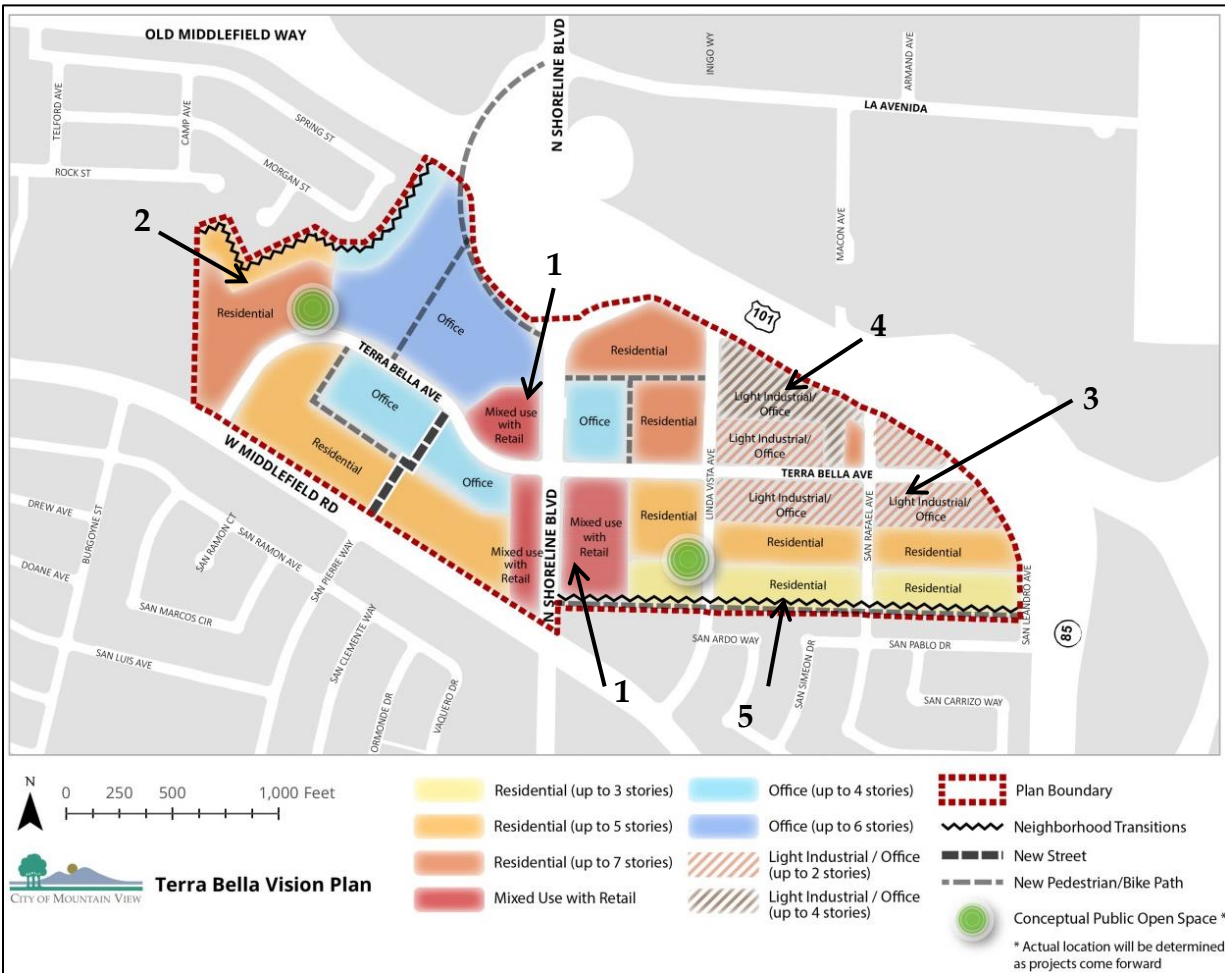
These topics are enumerated 1 through 5 on Figure 4 below to more easily reference the geographic location to which the Council directed changes (refer to Figure 4 – Revised Land Uses – Alternative 5).

The City Council asked staff to update the alternative based on the above input (Alternative 5 below) and a second with lower overall residential densities (Alternative 6 below).

Revised Land Uses – Alternative 5

Land Use Alternative 5, shown in Figure 4 below, incorporates all the City Council direction from the November 2018 Study Session meeting discussed above. These changes result in additional potential housing units and nonresidential square footage (due to the current church site being suitable for housing in the future).

Figure 4: Revised Land Uses – Alternative 5

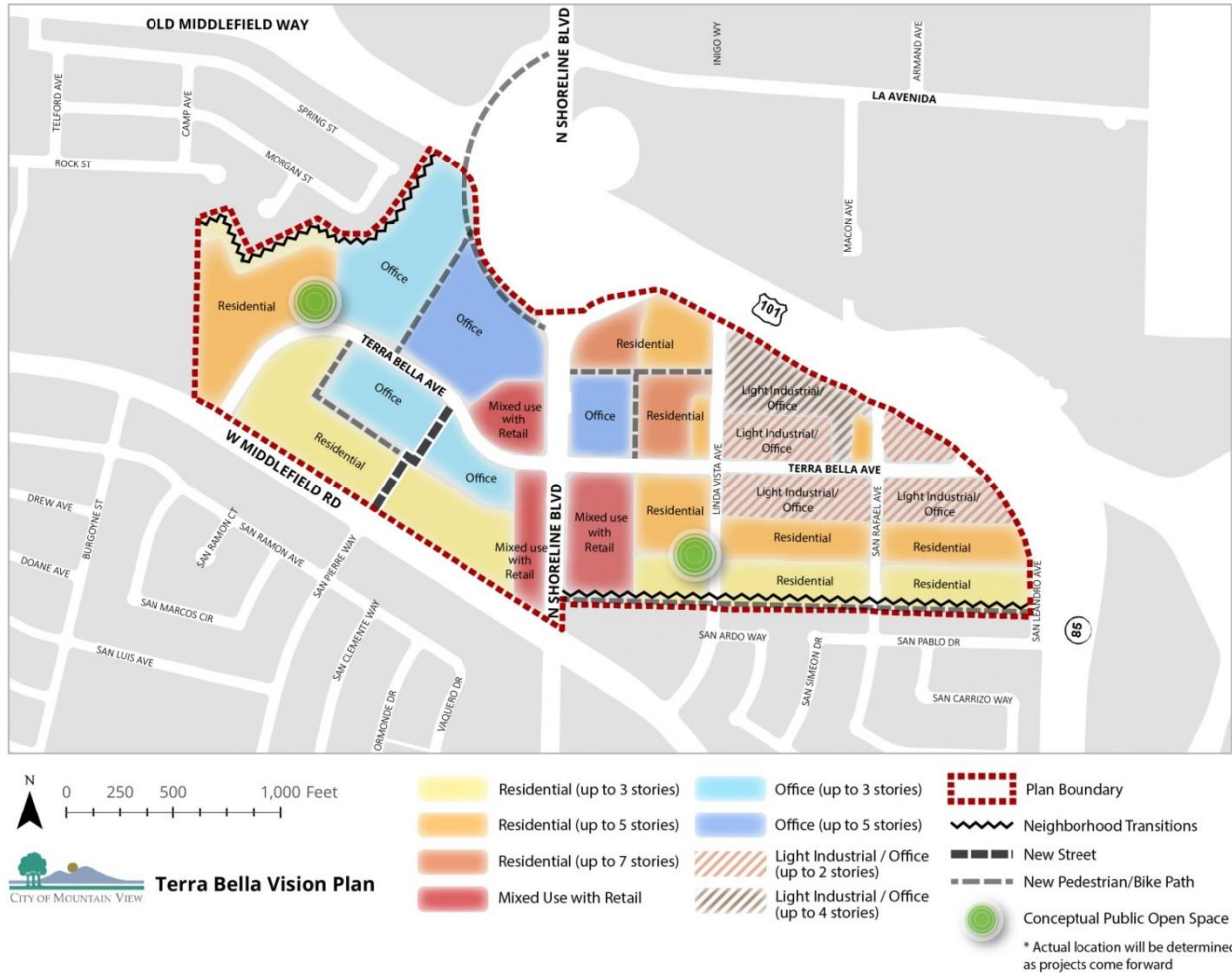


Revised Land Use – Alternative 6 (Lower Density)

At the November 18 Study Session, Council also asked for a lower-density alternative. Alternative 6, as shown in Figure 5 below, was developed based on City Council input by further refining the revised land use alternative discussed above and studying an alternative with lower residential densities. The highest residential density areas allowing up to seven stories are reduced to up to five stories throughout the plan area, and the medium-density residential land uses areas allowing up to five stories are reduced to up to three stories west of Shoreline Boulevard. A portion of the higher-intensity office use (up to five stories) north of Terra Bella Avenue and south of U.S. 101 was changed to lower-intensity office (up to three stories). Alternative 6 reduces the projected housing units significantly from 2,500 to 1,700, whereas the nonresidential

square footage has increased from 1.6 million square feet to 1.7 million square feet (due to some residential being changed to light industrial).

Figure 5: Revised Land Uses – Alternative 6 (Lower-Residential Density)



Comparison of Alternatives 5 and 6










Charts 1 and 2 below compare several key factors between existing conditions, the original EPC-recommended option, and the two land use alternatives (Alternatives 5 and 6) discussed in this report. Chart 1 provides an estimate of the number of acres by land use and Chart 2 provides an estimate of the number of residents and employees and the amount of housing units and nonresidential square footage.

Chart 1: Land Use Options and Mix of Land Uses

	Existing	EPC Option 4	City Council Option 5	City Council Option 6 (lower density)
Residential Housing Area	3 (3%)	35 (38%)	35 (38%)	35 (38%)
Office Area	62 (66%)	28 (29%)	25 (27%)	25 (27%)
Light Industrial / Office Area	19 (20%)	15 (16%)	18 (19%)	18 (19%)
Mixed Use / Retail Area	1 (1%)	5 (5%)	11 (12%)	11 (12%)
Hotel Area	0%	3 (3%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
Park / Open Space Area	0 (0%)	5.1 (5%)	4.6 (5%)	4.6 (5%)
Institutional / Church	7 (8%)	2.5 (3%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)

*Figures in Chart 1 represent number of acres and composition of land use based on acreage.

Chart 2: Land Use Options Comparison

	Existing	EPC Option 4	City Council Option 5	City Council Option 6 (lower density)
 Residents*	~20	4,000 to 5,200	4,200 to 5,500	3,200 to 3,600
 Housing Units	9	1,900 to 2,500	2,000 to 2,600	1,500 to 1,700
 Non-Residential SF	1.4 msf (~3 ksf retail)	1.6 msf (~56 ksf retail)	1.8 msf (~73 ksf retail)	1.7 msf (~73 ksf retail)
 Employees**	~4,200	~4,700	~5,400	~5,200
 Jobs – Housing Mix				

*Assumes 2.1 residents per unit

**Assumes 3 employees per 1,000 square feet



EPC Input

At its February 2019 Study Session, the EPC did not reach a consensus on a preferred land alternative. The following summarizes the key topics where the EPC reached a 6 to 0 vote, as well as topics where they were evenly split.

Topics with clear consensus:

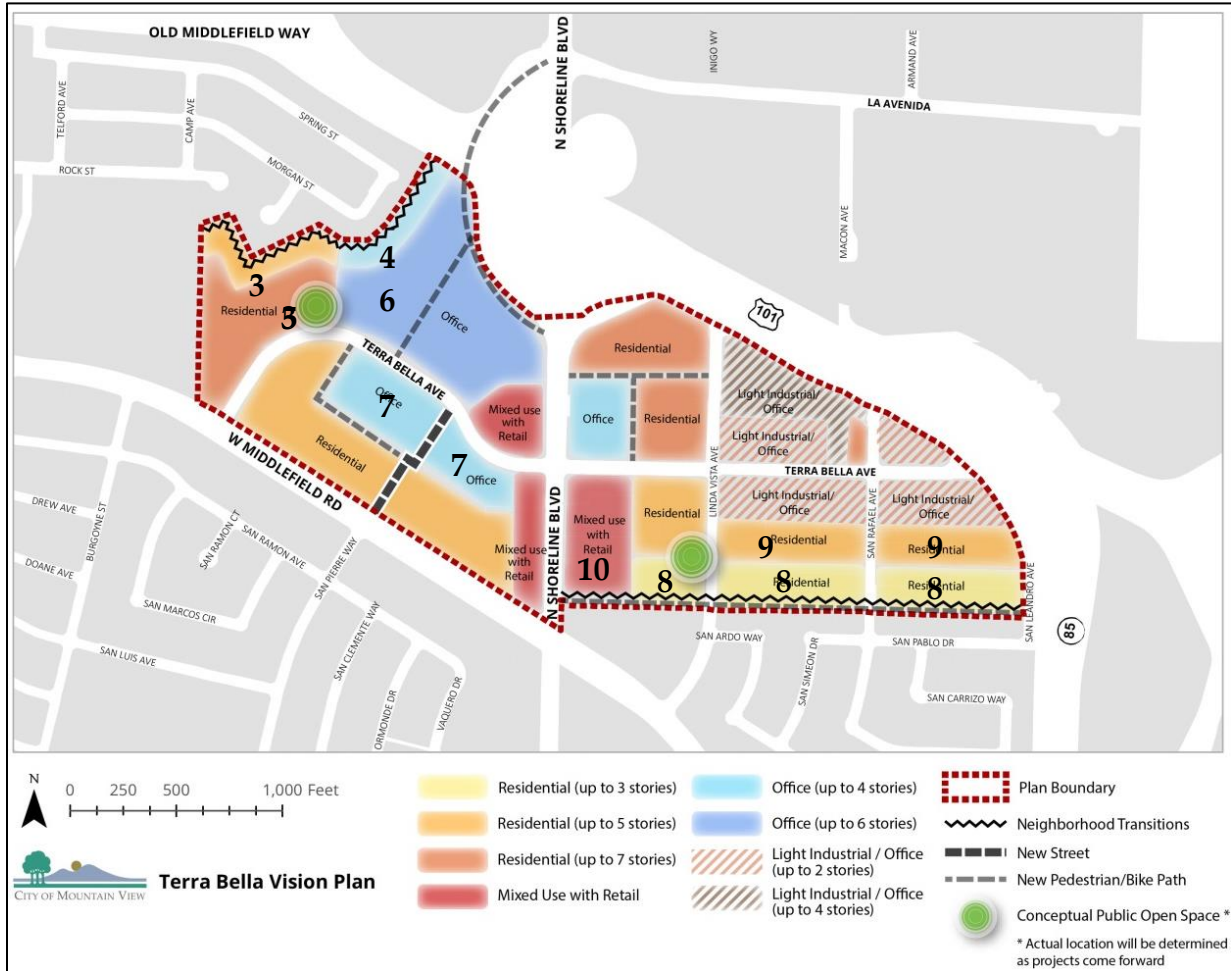
1. **Mixed Use Areas:** Future projects in the mixed-use area along Shoreline Boulevard should have a residential emphasis.
2. **Transition Areas:** EPC reaffirmed the importance of providing a sensitive transition between the Terra Bella area and existing single-family residential neighborhoods. Future projects in the plan area should be required to include those neighborhood transition strategies. Require future mixed-use proposal along Shoreline Boulevard to have a residential emphasis.

Other topics with no clear EPC consensus are listed below. These topics indicate proposed changes to land use Alternative 5 as discussed by EPC, and are enumerated 3 through 10 on Figure 6 below to more easily reference the geographic location that the mixed-consensus topics refer to (refer to Figure 6 – Areas of EPC discussion).

3. **West of Shoreline Boulevard, North of Terra Bella Avenue:** Require a single-story height limit adjacent to existing R1-zoned properties along the northwestern plan area boundary (3 to 3 vote); some discussions also suggested 1-up zoning along the northwestern plan area boundary.
4. **West of Shoreline Boulevard, North of Terra Bella Avenue:** Limit office to a two-story height limit adjacent to existing R1-zoned properties along the northwestern plan area boundary (3-3 vote).
5. **West of Shoreline Boulevard, North of Terra Bella Avenue:** Change higher-intensity residential (up to 7 stories) to lower-intensity residential (up to 3 stories) (3 to 3 vote).
6. **West of Shoreline Boulevard, North of Terra Bella Avenue:** Change the proposed office building height west of the bike/pedestrian pathway from up to 6 stories to up to 3 stories (3 to 3 vote).

7. **West of Shoreline Boulevard, South of Terra Bella Avenue:** Change the proposed office land use to lower-intensity residential (3 to 3 vote).
8. **East of Shoreline Boulevard, South of Terra Bella Avenue:** Limit the proposed residential land use building height up to 2 stories immediately adjacent to existing R1-zoned property along the southeastern plan area boundary (3 to 3 vote).
9. **East of Shoreline Boulevard, South of Terra Bella Avenue:** Change the proposed medium-intensity residential (up to 5 stories) to lower-intensity residential (up to 3 stories) south of Terra Bella Avenue between Linda Vista Avenue and San Leandro Avenue (4 to 2 vote).
10. **East Side of Shoreline Boulevard, South of Terra Bella Avenue:** Change the building height for mixed-use proposed east of Shoreline Boulevard and south of Terra Bella Avenue from up to 7 stories to up to 5 stories (4 to 2 vote). Change the proposed office land use between Terra Bella Avenue and Middlefield Road, west of Shoreline Boulevard, to lower-intensity residential (3 to 3 vote).

Figure 6: Areas of EPC Discussion Based on Alternative 5



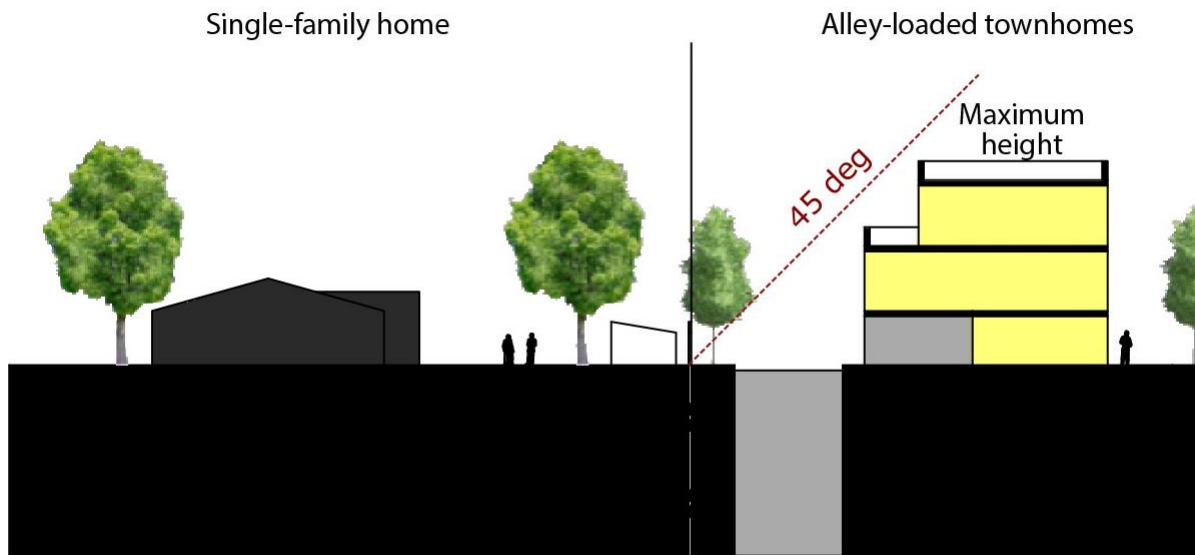
Transition Strategies

At the EPC Study Session on February 20, 2019, there was considerable discussion on providing context-sensitive transitions between new development in the Terra Bella neighborhood and bordering single-family neighborhoods, including the Rock Street area and Stierlin Estates. In November 2018, staff presented a series of potential strategies to provide appropriate transition buffers for future development in the Plan area, including: increased building setbacks, upper-story step-backs, 45-degree daylight plane for building volumes, orientating primary windows away from existing homes, providing landscape buffers, and limiting balconies. Below are some illustrative examples of what these transition strategies could look like along the edges of the Terra Bella Plan Area near single-family homes. The following illustrations show a

combination of several transition strategies that could be considered in a variety of circumstances and are not necessarily specific to just Terra Bella.

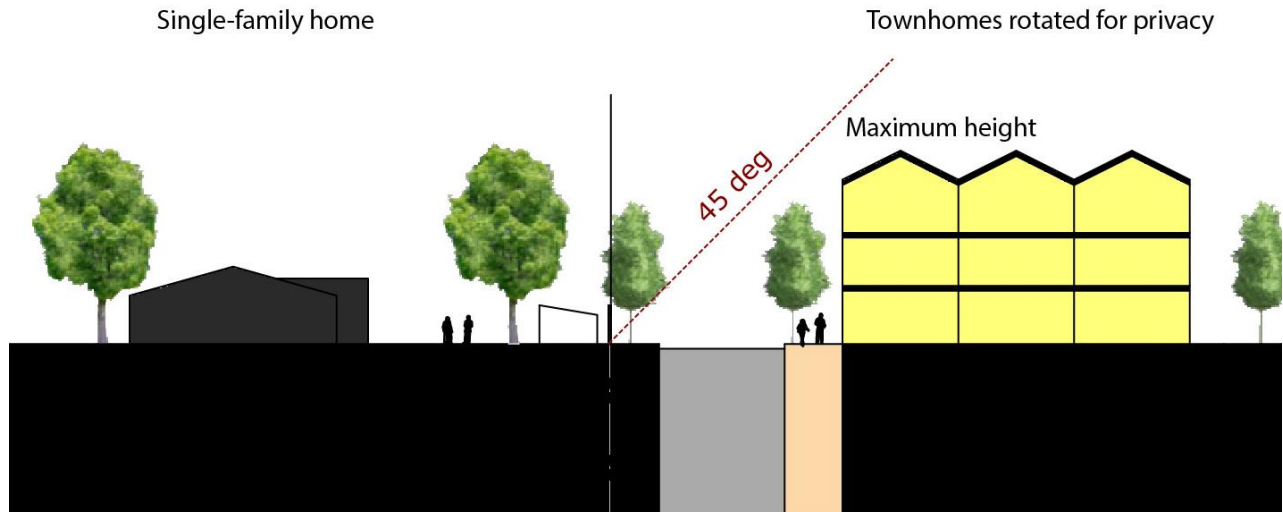
Example No. 1: Landscaping along the edges creates a buffer and screens views into neighboring homes. An alley or street is accommodated in the minimum setback area between new development and existing single-family homes. Townhomes are two stories at street/alley level, stepping up to three stories. Maximum height is established (as shown on the Vision Plan diagram), and follows a 45-degree daylight plane.

Figure 7: Landscape Buffer Strategy 1



Example No. 2: Landscaping along the edges creates a buffer and screens views into neighboring homes. A new street, and an expanded setback area, provides a setback between new development and existing single-family homes. Three (3) story townhomes are turned sideways so that primary windows are not facing the backyard of single-family homes. Maximum height is established (as shown on the Vision Plan diagram), and follows a 45-degree daylight plane.

Figure 8: Landscape Buffer Strategy 2



In addition, the Vision Plan could stipulate that any new development proposals include additional analyses to reduce the impacts on neighboring single-family homes, which could include view and shadow studies.

Other Impacts

EPC was concerned about how the land use alternatives impact the jobs-housing balance, schools, and traffic in the area. The Vision Plan intends to gather community input on key topics such as land use and circulation, and evaluate ways to implement big-picture General Plan direction and Council goals. It does not include detailed feasibility and technical analysis of potential impacts of development. Such detailed development standards and regulatory framework would require additional studies through a Precise Plan process.

In reviewing this information, the Council should consider which alternative best represents its vision for Terra Bella Avenue and any particular policy areas that should be addressed. Staff also notes that elements within each alternative can be mixed and matched.

Council Question No. 1: Which Land Use Vision Alternative does the Council prefer for Terra Bella Avenue?

Council Question No. 2: Are there particular policy areas or direction that Council would like the Plan to emphasize or address?

Future Precise Plan

During the last round of public meetings, some Environmental Planning Commissioners and City Councilmembers as well as community members discussed interest in developing a Terra Bella Precise Plan once the Visioning Plan was adopted. The following is a comparison of the pros and cons of the City embarking on a new Terra Bella Precise Plan or just using an adopted Terra Bella Visioning Plan.

Option 1: Terra Bella Precise Plan

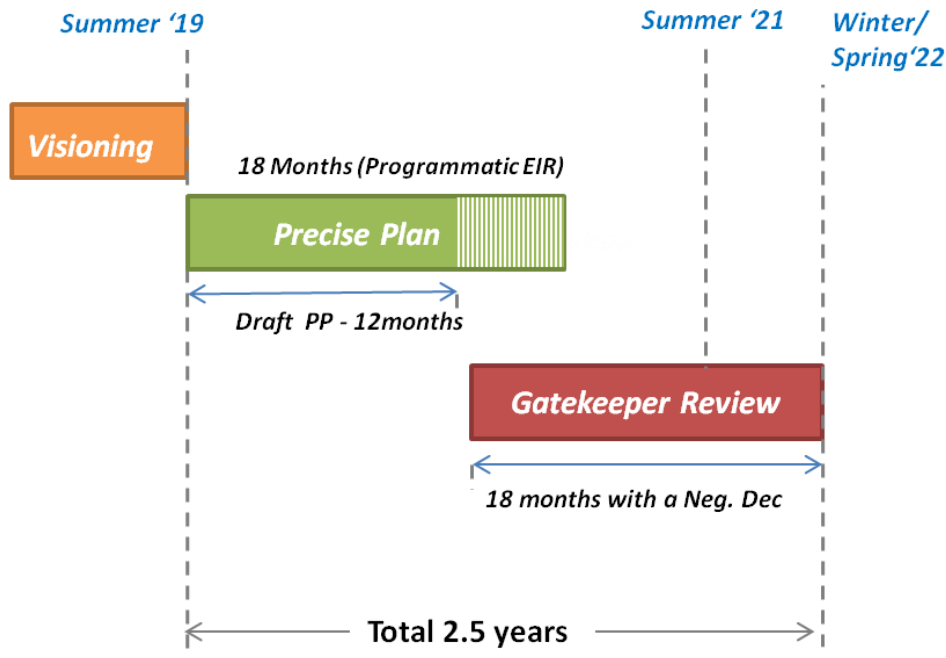
Pros:

- A comprehensive and detailed standards and guidelines, such as floor area ratio, building setbacks, and TDM requirements, etc., would provide greater clarity and expectations for developers, the community, and decision makers.
- More detailed analysis, including environmental review and technical studies on topics such as development feasibility; transportation, utility, and air quality impacts; and school and public infrastructure needs would provide more information to help evaluate new development proposals.
- More efficient and consistent environmental review of development projects based on one Precise Plan EIR.

Cons:

- Would require significant additional staff time and funding.
- The Precise Plan could take approximately 18 to 24 months, which could result in delays of pending projects or missed opportunities if market conditions change.

Although preparation of a Precise Plan can take up to 24 months, the City Council could consider allowing Gatekeeper projects once the Public draft of the precise plan is available (time frame – 12 months) to reduce the delay in project review time, as shown in the following graphic.



Option 2: Terra Bella Vision Plan

Pros:

- **Review Time:** Allows Gatekeeper project to move forward sooner instead of waiting for a Precise Plan process, which could result in some desired land uses, such as new housing, to be built.

Cons:

- **Each project would be reviewed on a case-by-case basis** without detailed and established development standards or guidelines. This would involve negotiations on a project-by-project basis over key topics, such as building setbacks, which could result in an inefficient process and inconsistent City requirements.
- **Project CEQA Review:** Each Gatekeeper project would need individual CEQA review which would create greater inefficiencies and require more staff review.
- **Resources:** Individual Gatekeeper projects would require more staffing resources.

Council Question No. 3: Does the City Council wish to add creating a new Terra Bella Precise Plan as a possible priority project for Fiscal Year 2019-20 as the next step following the Vision Plan Adoption?

When staff brings back the final Vision Plan for adoption, after Council has determined its priority projects, the question of when or whether to accept Gatekeepers can be addressed.

RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends the City Council provide feedback on the preferred land use alternative for the Terra Bella Visioning and Guiding Principles Area and direction on the following questions posed in the Study Session memo:

1. Which land use vision alternative does the City Council prefer for Terra Bella?
2. Are there particular policy areas or direction that Council would like the Plan to emphasize or address?
3. Does the City Council wish to add *creating a new Terra Bella Precise Plan* as a possible priority project for Fiscal Year 2019-20 as the next step following the Vision Plan Adoption?

NEXT STEPS

Following this Council Study Session, the project team will continue preparing the Draft Vision Plan. The public draft of the Vision Plan is anticipated in spring 2019. Final adoption of the Plan is anticipated before the summer 2019 Council break.

PUBLIC NOTICING

The City Council agenda is advertised on Channel 26, and the agenda and this report appear on the City's website. All property owners and tenants within the Plan area and within a 750' radius of the Plan area were notified of this meeting by mailed notice. Other interested stakeholders were notified of this meeting via the project's e-mail notification system, including adjacent neighborhood associations: Rex Manor Neighborhood Association and North Whisman Neighborhood Association. Social media was used to notify the public and the school districts were notified. Project and meeting information is posted on the project website:

https://www.mountainview.gov/depts/comdev/planning/activeprojects/terra_bella.asp.

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- Attachments:
1. Summary of Prior Meetings
 2. [EPC Study Session Report – February 20, 2019](#)
 3. Additional Public Comment