

**DATE:** November 10, 2015

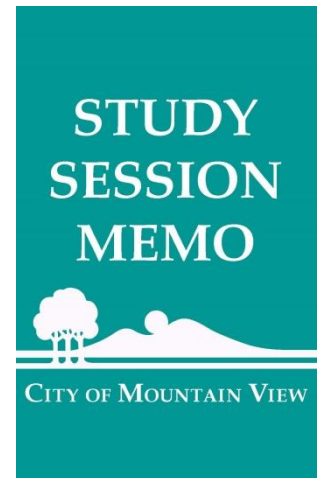
**TO:** Honorable Mayor and City Council

**FROM:** Martin Alkire, Principal Planner  
Randal Tsuda, Community Development  
Director

**VIA:** Daniel H. Rich, City Manager

**TITLE:** **North Bayshore Precise Plan Residential Land  
Use Scenarios**

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## **PURPOSE**

The purpose of this Study Session is for the City Council to discuss and provide direction on North Bayshore Precise Plan residential land use scenarios. If Council direction is clear, then staff will develop a preferred land use plan for the Precise Plan that will then be analyzed in the Precise Plan Environmental Impact Report (EIR). Updated Precise Plan policies will also be developed from this preferred land use plan.

## **BACKGROUND**

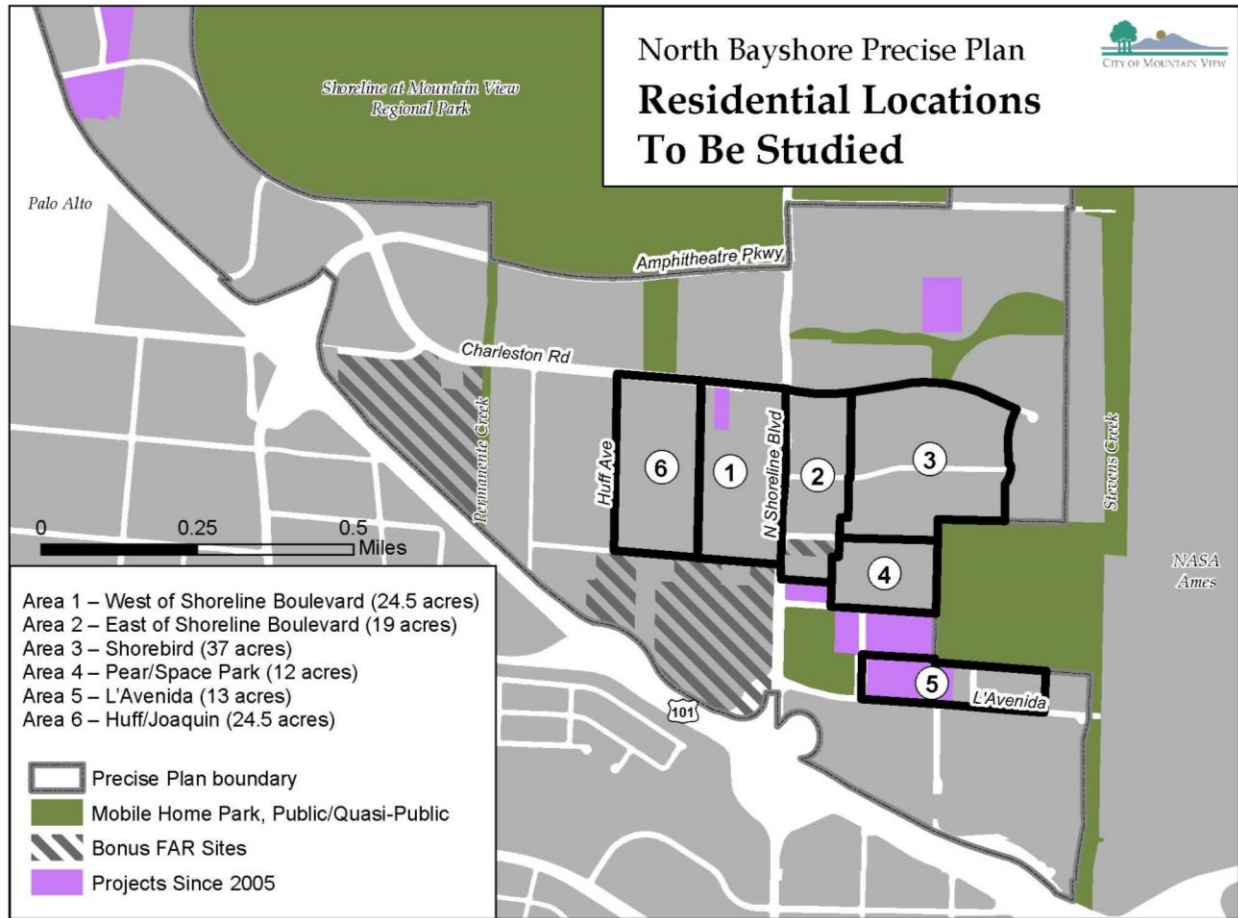
### **February 3, 2015 City Council Meeting**

At this meeting, the City Council directed that the General Plan be amended to include residential uses, and that the North Bayshore Precise Plan process study adding residential uses.

### **April 14, 2015 City Council Meeting**

At this meeting, the City Council reviewed potential North Bayshore new residential locations. The Council directed that the following areas be further evaluated for residential uses during the Precise Plan update process:

**Map 1: Residential Study Locations**



The Council also provided direction on the July workshop format and indicated a preference to further study more urban, high-density residential uses during the Precise Plan process.

### **May 5, 2015 City Council Meeting**

The City Council authorized five Bonus FAR proposals to submit for planning applications. Four of these authorized Bonus FAR sites are shown on Map 1 as hatched areas.

### **July 25, 2015 Community Workshop #1**

This workshop included a panel of leading urban planners to discuss ideas for the future of North Bayshore. The workshop also included small group exercises where participants described their desired outcomes for this Precise Plan process; described their preferences in terms of development types, building types, and other community

amenities; discussed ideas for alternatives for new mixed-use development, housing, services, civic uses, parks, and open space; and identified opportunities and challenges with transforming the area. The workshop was attended by approximately 90 participants.

Overall, workshop participants wanted to see a vibrant, mixed-use neighborhood with a variety of land uses, housing types, public spaces, and destinations within North Bayshore. A more complete summary of workshop comments is included in Attachment 1.

### **October 22, 2015 Community Workshop #2**

Based on the broad input received from Workshop #1, the North Bayshore team created four land use scenarios. These scenarios differed in terms of the size of the geographic area for new residential uses, the height and intensity of buildings, the mix of housing types, and the number of potential units.

These scenarios and other related topics were presented to the community at an October 22 workshop. Approximately 40 people attended this meeting.

The following are key summary points from this meeting:

- Most preferred a larger geographic area for new residential uses;
- Most preferred allowing a flexible mix of land uses – residential and office – in the residential study area;
- The new neighborhood should be designed so it is comfortable and safe for pedestrians and bicyclists, with buildings that support active streets;
- Taller building heights are acceptable in areas with a lot of activity;
- Most preferred a housing unit mix that favored smaller units;
- Retail should be focused along a “main street” environment;
- Most supported locating central public open space in the area west of Shoreline Boulevard and north of Plymouth Street;
- Central open space should include diverse, flexible activities; ideas include small play areas, farmer’s market, public art, water features, giant chessboard.

Participants were also given a questionnaire to complete following the presentation and group discussion. The questionnaire included similar questions to those in this Study Session memo. Workshop questionnaire results are included in Attachment 2.

### **Environmental Planning Commission – November 4, 2015**

The Environmental Planning Commission (EPC) considered this item at their November 4 meeting. Due to timing issues, the EPC's comments will be distributed later to the City Council in a separate supplement.

### **DISCUSSION**

The North Bayshore team developed four land use scenarios for the residential study area. The three key factors or inputs into the scenarios include housing unit mix (number of microunits, 1-bedroom units, 2-bedroom units, etc.), size or footprint of the residential area, and the block intensity and building massing.

Each of these factors can be modified to influence each scenario based on Council preferences. For example, Council could prefer a scenario with a small-sized geographic area, a higher percentage of microunits in the overall housing mix, and a block intensity and massing limited to mostly 5 stories with some 12-story towers. The resulting outputs would then form the basis for a Preferred Plan Alternative that would be studied in the Precise Plan EIR.

#### **1. Residential Footprint Scenarios**

The Precise Plan team developed the following residential footprint scenarios showing where new residential uses could be located in North Bayshore. The areas in orange represent the residential footprint area, while areas in gray are office areas. Scenario No. 1 has the largest residential footprint, Scenario No. 2 the next largest footprint, etc. All of the scenarios continue the key Precise Plan direction to break up the large blocks with new streets or bike/pedestrian pathways.

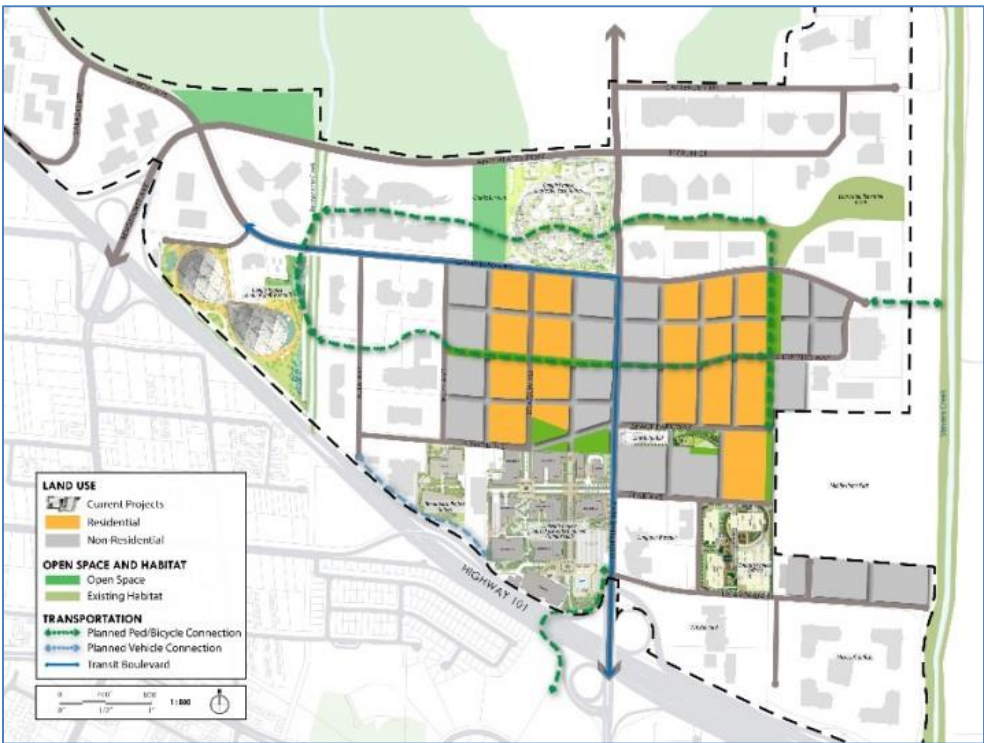
**No. 1: Highest Residential**



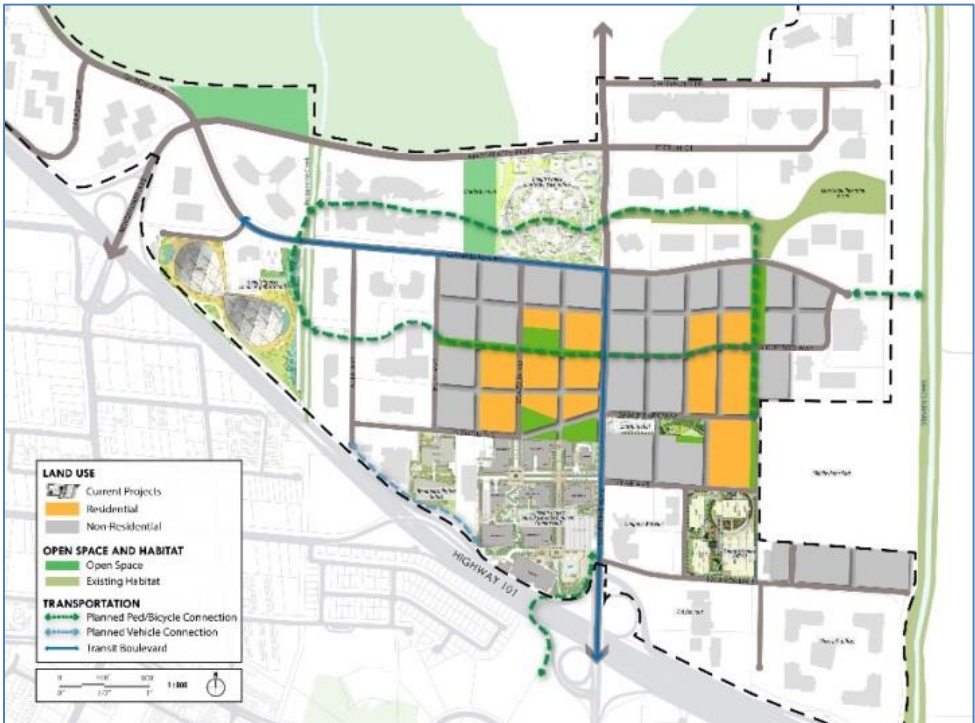
**No. 2: Neighborhood Streets**



### No. 3: Two Neighborhoods



### No. 4: Small Neighborhoods



All of the scenarios assume a mix of different housing types that could include: 4- to 5-story, 5- to 8-story (mid-rise), 8- to 12-story (high-rise), mixed, and office buildings. Each of these residential building types include a range of densities that, when added up over the number of residential blocks, results in a total residential unit range.

Table 1 is a high-level comparison of the four scenarios against several indicators and evaluation criteria.

**Table 1: Scenario Indicators and Assessment**

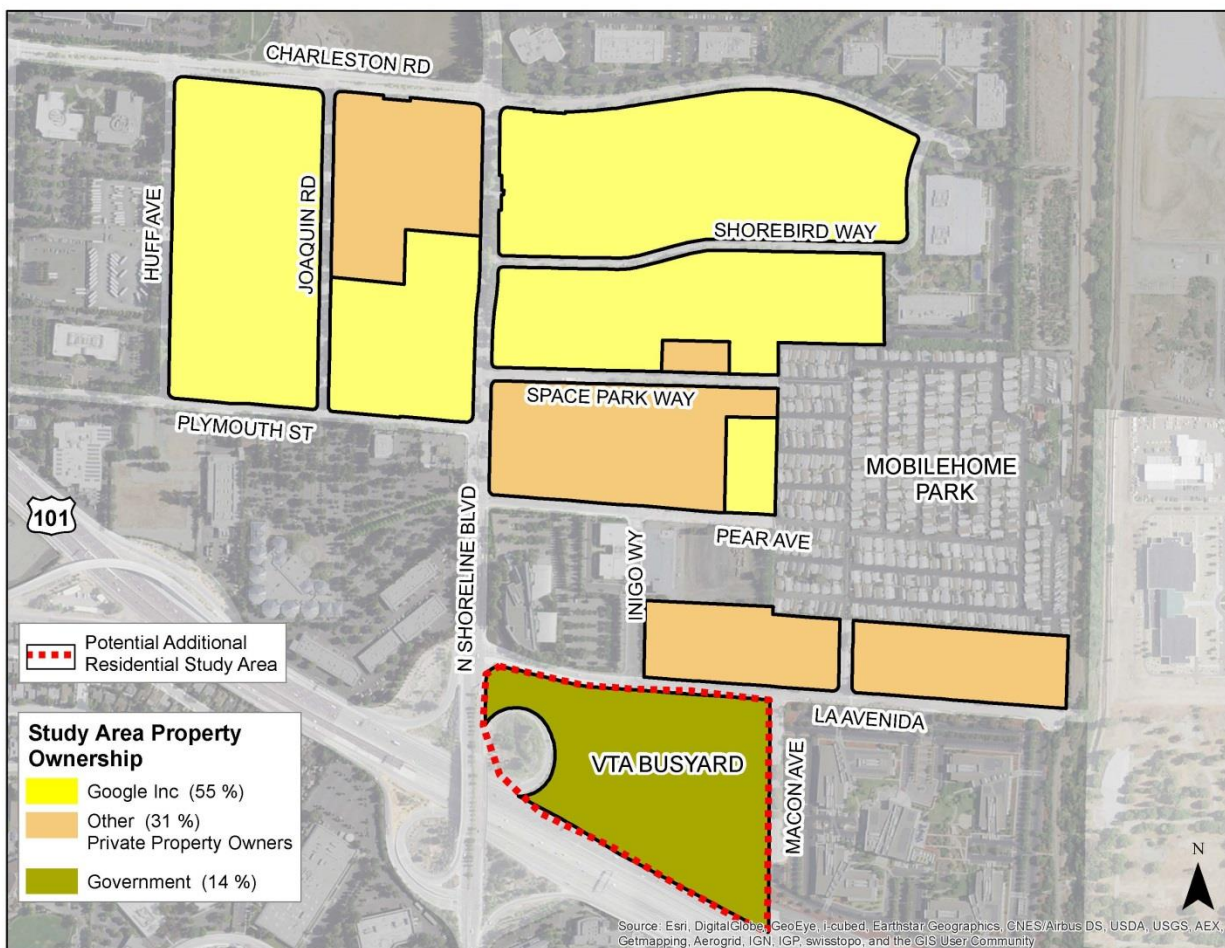
	<b>Baseline (existing conditions)</b>	<b>Scenario 1 Highest Residential</b>	<b>Scenario 2 Neighborhood Streets</b>	<b>Scenario 3 Two Neighborhoods</b>	<b>Scenario 4 Small Neighborhoods</b>
<b>Residents</b>	0	11,500 to 13,600	10,000 to 11,900	7,400 to 8,800	4,700 to 5,500
<b>Housing Units</b>	0	6,700 to 9,100	5,900 to 7,900	4,400 to 5,800	2,800 to 3,700
<b>Residential Acres</b>	0	60	47	42	36
<b>Jobs/Housing</b>	No Housing	← Best Better Good →			
<b>Residential Acres Near HOZ*</b>	0	2.7	2.7	2.7	0
<b>Pedestrian, Bike, and Transit Trips</b>	0	← Best Better Good →			

\* Within a 750' buffer from burrowing owl habitat, 600' buffer from egret rookery, or 400' buffer from Charleston Retention Basin.

*Property Ownership Profile*

The following map shows the property ownership profile for the North Bayshore residential study area boundaries, and is based on County Assessor data. The map also shows an optional Area 7 discussed later in this Study Session memo. Staff has been communicating with the major property owners in these areas throughout the North Bayshore Precise Plan process, and will continue to do so as we receive Council direction on the process.

**Map 2: Residential Study Area Property Ownership**



## 2. Land Use Regulations

At their February 3, 2015 North Bayshore Precise Plan Study Session, the Council directed staff to return with additional information on whether the Precise Plan should include “residential only” areas. At the October 22 workshop, most participants preferred a flexible approach which would allow both residential and office uses in the residential study area. Table 2 below lists several options and policy considerations regarding this issue.

Staff is seeking Council direction on this issue to finalize the location and number of residential units to be studied in the Precise Plan EIR. Additional information and policy language regarding this issue will be brought back to the EPC and Council for review during Precise Plan policy development in 2016.



**Table 2: Land Use Regulation Approaches**

Approach and Description	Policy Considerations
<b>1. Flexible Land Uses</b>	
New residential, mixed-use residential, or new commercial land uses allowed throughout the residential study area. Mixed-use residential could include ground-floor service uses.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provides maximum flexibility for property owners.</li> <li>• Less certainty that residential units would be built.</li> <li>• Less certainty that a cohesive residential neighborhood would be created.</li> </ul>
<b>2. Residential/Mixed-Use Residential Only</b>	
Only new residential or mixed-use residential uses allowed throughout the residential study area. Mixed-use residential could include ground-floor service uses.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Less flexibility to property owners; would limit new office buildings from being built in the residential study area.</li> <li>• Would create legal nonconforming status for existing office buildings.</li> <li>• More certainty that a large cohesive residential neighborhood would be built.</li> </ul>
<b>3. Minimum Residential Area</b>	
A minimum core area could be established for only new residential or mixed-use residential uses. This could be a certain percentage or blocks of the residential study area. Mixed-use residential could include ground-floor service uses.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Less flexibility for property owners in a core area.</li> <li>• Greater certainty that a minimum number of residential units would develop to help create a cohesive neighborhood with some services.</li> <li>• Allows areas outside the core to develop with either residential or commercial land uses.</li> </ul>

Some additional policy ideas Council may be interested in discussing include:

- **Residential Incentives.** Office square footage demolished for new residential units could be transferred to nonresidential areas in North Bayshore. For example, a 100,000 square foot office building in a residential only area could be demolished and replaced with a new residential building. The demolished commercial square footage could then be built in a nonresidential area in North Bayshore.

- **Bonus FAR.** A Bonus FAR category could be added to the Precise Plan that could be granted to any project removing office square footage and adding residential units.
- **Mixed-Use Building Design.** Ground-floor commercial service space could be required for new residential buildings to ensure neighborhood commercial space is available to serve new residential units in the area.
- **Office/Residential Linkage.** New office buildings could be allowed if the office square footage is linked to a certain minimum number of residential units built in the area. A similar approach was considered with the San Antonio Precise Plan, but was not adopted. This option would require Council authorization to study additional office square footage in the Precise Plan EIR.

Staff will take direction from Council on a preferred approach, and then finalize the number of residential units to be studied in the EIR.

***Council Question No. 1:*** Land Use Residential Scenarios and Land Use Regulations

- No. 1A:** Which of the four residential scenarios does Council support to be further analyzed as the Precise Plan's Preferred Alternative in the Precise Plan EIR, or does Council have specific input on scenario factors such as residential footprint area, housing unit mix, and building intensity and massing?
- No. 1B:** Does Council prefer a flexible, residential only, or minimum residential area policy approach or any additional policy ideas?

### 3. **Urban Design**

Urban design is a critical part of designing a new residential neighborhood in North Bayshore. Where buildings are placed next to the street, ground-floor uses, building heights, parking location, building massing, and streetscape design for bikes and pedestrians are some of the important elements in creating a vibrant, attractive, and comfortable new neighborhood.

The North Bayshore team created a series of visuals showing how this new neighborhood could look and feel. Below are several of the visuals showing how a

new residential neighborhood could be designed for North Bayshore. Additional images are shown in Attachment 3.

**Image 1: Residential Street**



**Image 2: Eye-Level Residential/Office Street**



Detailed urban design standards and guidelines will be discussed with the public, stakeholders, the EPC, and Council in 2016 to ensure the Precise Plan directs how future residential buildings and streets will be designed.

**Council Question No. 2:** Do the urban design images shown in Attachment 3 reflect the type of neighborhood Council would like to see in North Bayshore? If not, what changes would Council like to see?

#### 4. **Building Heights and Intensities**

Mid-rise and high-rise block types include buildings ranging from 5 to 12 stories. The mid-rise buildings include an 8-story building prototype. The high-rise prototype is 12 stories. If we assume a ground-floor height of 15' and 11' per floor multiplied by 12 floors, then buildings would be approximately 150' in height, plus any additional finished building pad elevation. The maximum allowed building height in the residential study area is 182' due to the restrictions from adjacent Moffett Field.

The two maps below show two building height options: varying building heights and uniform building heights. The uniform option shows 4- to 5-story buildings throughout, while the varying building height option would allow taller buildings up to 12 stories in limited locations, such as around centers of activity.

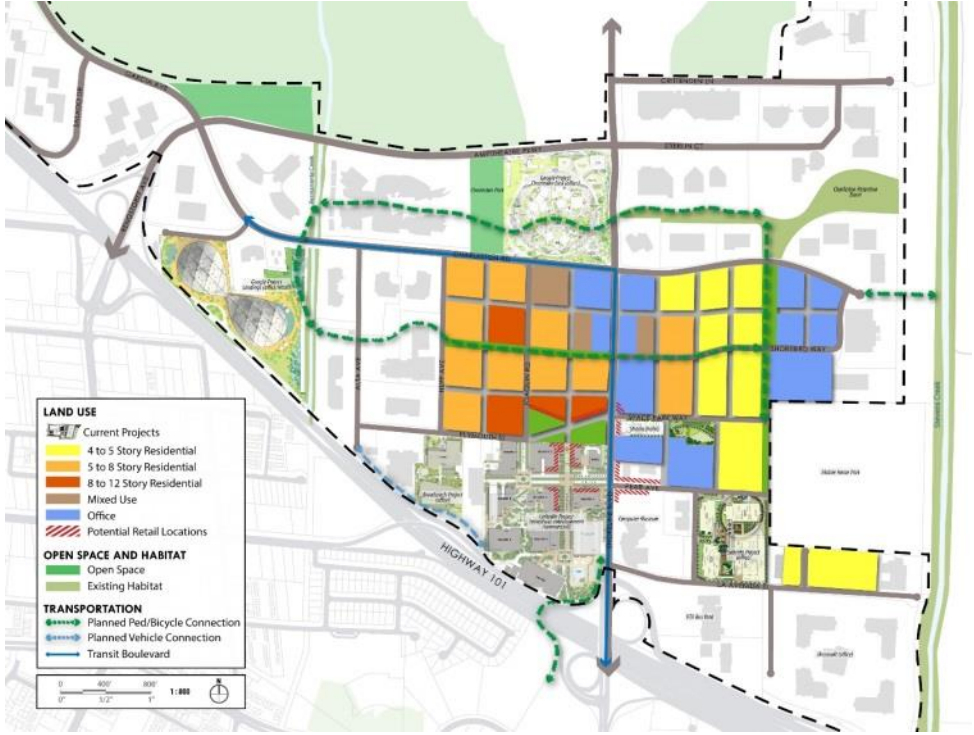
The uniform building height option provides a more predictable building height pattern, but limits the amount of additional residential units that could be accommodated in a taller building. Varying building heights provide more variety to the streetscape and focuses the tallest buildings around centers of activity such as a central public open space area or retail to help support these as vibrant areas.

When the Precise Plan is updated, additional urban design standards and guideline will be developed for Council's preferred option. These standards and guidelines will address issues such as the bulk and massing of taller buildings, bird-safe design, view corridors, ground-floor design elements, and other key urban design topics.

Map 3: Uniform Building Heights



Map 4: Varying Building Heights



**Council Question No. 3:** Should building heights and intensities be uniform throughout the residential study area, or should taller buildings be allowed in certain areas?

**5. Housing Unit Mix**

During the first North Bayshore Precise Plan workshop, participants stated preferences for a diversity of housing types and densities, including microunits. Participants stated that housing in the area should be for a variety of people, including empty nesters, seniors, teachers, and younger residents in their 20s and 30s. The general expectation is that new residential units in North Bayshore will be stacked flat rental apartments at five stories or higher in order to utilize land more efficiently than other housing types.

Table 3 below lists the average sizes of different unit types and compares the recent unit mix of Mountain View projects with a higher-intensity mix that favors smaller units. The higher-intensity mix allows for a greater number of smaller units that would be more affordable than larger units. These units would serve workers in North Bayshore, empty nesters, roommates, couples, and small families.

**Table 3: Housing Unit Mix**

	Average Unit Size (SF)	Citywide Mountain View Data (in %)*	Recent El Camino Real Mountain View Projects (in %)	Precise Plan Higher Intensity Mix (in %)
<b>Microunits and Studios</b>	350 to 450	11%	0%	30%
<b>1 Bedroom</b>	650 to 780	36%	60%	40%
<b>2 Bedroom</b>	900 to 1,150	38%	40%	30%
<b>3+ Bedroom</b>	Above 1,150	13%	0%	0%

\* 2014 American Community Survey data, rental units only.

**Council Question No. 4:** What mix of housing units would Council prefer in North Bayshore?

**6. Retail and Services**

Additional retail and services would be needed to support new residential in North Bayshore. This could include a neighborhood grocery store, dry cleaners,

restaurants, cafés, banks, pharmacies, hair salons, and other types of neighborhood-serving retail and services.

Retail and services are recommended to be located in a central area to create a concentration of businesses and a vibrant “placemaking” destination. The location would build off the existing retail and service businesses in this vicinity as well as the proposed new retail and services by the LinkedIn development. The location would also be accessible to nearby area residents who walk or bike.

The retail area location can be designed as a “main street” or a “central square” environment. The main street design would generally be focused along streets, while the central square option would include an area surrounding a central open space area. The diagrams below show general, conceptual locations. These would be areas where the Precise Plan would require ground-floor retail and services. Other Precise Plan areas could also include ground-floor retail and services as they redevelop depending on market need, but this area would be required to include space for future retail and services.

**Map 5: Main Street Design**



**Map 6: Central Square Option**



**Council Question No. 5:** Should a core area of retail and commercial services be focused along a main street environment or around a central open space area?

**7. Central Public Open Space**

Expanding and improving open space is an important North Bayshore Precise Plan principle. New public open space can be a key organizing element integral to residential neighborhood design, and can provide important community gathering space and open space opportunities for area residents.



The central public open space is proposed in the following general location:

### Map 7: Central Public Open Space



Staff believes the central public open space area is a preferred location because it can be designed as part of the Plymouth Street realignment, which the Precise Plan identifies as a high-priority improvement, is in a central location near proposed retail and services, is adjacent to a core residential area shown in all residential scenarios, and provides a visible connection to Shoreline Boulevard.

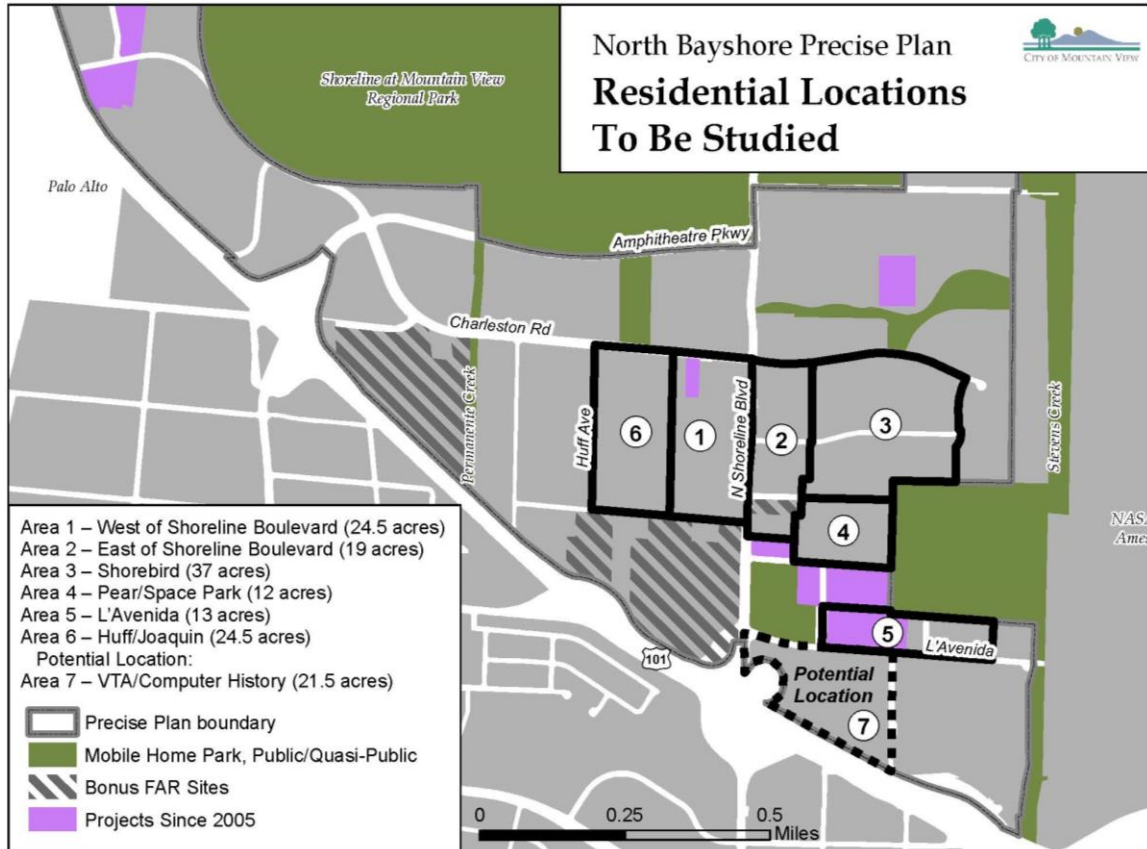
This area includes three parcels owned by Google and City right-of-way. Staff and stakeholders will need to work together on property acquisition, street design, and the timing and implementation of this improvement. The actual design of this public open space will be dependent on the street alignment and adjacent redevelopment.

**Council Question No. 6:** Does Council support the general location of the central public open space area? If not, where would Council prefer to see it located, or would Council prefer to see open space dispersed?

## 8. Additional Residential Study Area

Staff previously informed Council that an additional residential study area which includes the VTA bus yard site would be brought back to them for consideration. The map below shows the boundaries of this potential residential study area.

**Map 8: Potential Additional Residential Study Area**



The potential Area No. 7 includes the VTA bus yard site located adjacent to Highway 101 and L'Avenida. This site is used for maintenance of VTA buses.

Area No. 7 was not originally included in the areas the City is studying for new residential uses. However, both VTA and the City have been discussing future land uses at the bus yard site. VTA is interested in redevelopment of the site, and the City is interested in a future land use in this location that better aligns with the City's vision for North Bayshore. Additionally, the City has an interest in using part of the site for a Highway 101 off-ramp realignment identified as a Precise Plan priority to divert northbound Highway 101 traffic from the Shoreline Boulevard/off-ramp intersection.

Residential uses at the VTA bus yard site would be relatively far from the bulk of the other residential areas and the proposed central public open space and retail use areas. It also would be located adjacent to Highway 101 and a new off-ramp, which would require some site design and building mitigations to reduce air quality and noise impacts.

*Council Question No. 7:* Does Council support adding Area 7 to the residential study area?

## 9. L'Avenida – NASA Ames Connection

The 2030 General Plan includes the following policy regarding a connection between North Bayshore and NASA Ames:

**LUD 17.1: Connectivity.** Improve connectivity and integrate transportation services between North Bayshore, Downtown, NASA Ames and other parts of the city.

This issue was previously discussed several years ago by Council when a Charleston Bridge was proposed to connect NASA Ames with North Bayshore with a shuttle-only bridge. However, Council did not support this due to concerns over potential impacts to the sensitive creek habitat.

Staff is bringing this issue forward now because a new potential transit/shuttle connection located in a less sensitive habitat area such as near L'Avenida, could help improve congestion on Shoreline Boulevard by providing a different route for northbound Highway 101 shuttle buses. The Precise Plan EIR will be kicking off soon, so if a new connection is to be considered, this would be a good time to fold this work in with the overall transportation analysis. VTA is doing a study of connecting light rail from NASA to North Bayshore, and on October 27, Council discussed a "last mile" connection for this area, indicating openness to a crossing of the creek at some point for mass transit.

*Council Question No. 8:* Does Council support studying a potential bridge connection at or near L'Avenida in the Precise Plan EIR?

## RECOMMENDATION

This memo provides context and policy choices to help the City Council determine the parameters for detailed analysis of new residential uses in North Bayshore.

Staff recommends that the Council provide direction on the questions in this memo. Staff will then refine the Preferred Plan Alternative based on Council direction and begin the EIR analysis. The key questions in this memo include:

- No. 1A:** Which of the four residential scenarios does Council support to be further analyzed as the Precise Plan's Preferred Alternative in the Precise Plan EIR? Or does Council have specific input on scenario factors such as residential footprint area, housing unit mix, and building intensity and massing?
- No. 1B:** Does Council prefer a flexible, residential only, or minimum residential area policy approach? Or, does Council have another preferred policy approach or any additional policy ideas?
- No. 2:** Do the urban design images shown in Attachment 3 reflect the type of neighborhood Council would like to see in North Bayshore? If not, what changes would Council like to see?
- No. 3:** Should building heights and intensities be uniform throughout the residential study area or should taller buildings be allowed in certain areas?
- No. 4:** What mix of housing units would Council prefer in North Bayshore?
- No. 5:** Should a core area of retail and commercial services be focused along a main street environment or around a central open space area?
- No. 6:** Does Council support the general location of the central public open space area? If not, where would Council prefer to see it located, or would Council prefer to see open space dispersed?
- No. 7:** Does Council support adding Area 7 to the residential study area?
- No. 8:** Does Council support studying a potential bridge connection at or near L'Avenida in the Precise Plan EIR?

## **NEXT STEPS**

The key next steps in the Precise Plan process include drafting a Preferred Plan Alternative to be analyzed by the EIR. The Preferred Alternative, would, in part:

- identify where residential uses could be located;
- include a number and mix of residential units; and
- become an input into more detailed analysis and EIR work, such as traffic modeling.

The EIR process will take approximately 12 months to complete. The Precise Plan policies will be updated based on the Preferred Plan Alternative concurrent with the EIR analysis. Following completion of the EIR, public hearings will be scheduled to consider adoption of the Plan. Per the adopted schedule, the EIR will commence in early 2016, and the overall Precise Plan update and EIR will be completed in the first quarter of 2017.

However, if clear enough direction is given to launch the EIR, EPC and Council could potentially review the Precise Plan by the end of 2016. This would depend on the timing of other key inputs into the EIR, primarily the “gateway analysis” for North Bayshore.

## **PUBLIC NOTICING**

Posting of the agenda, and notice of the Study Session was also announced via social media. Courtesy notices were mailed to the City’s North Bayshore Precise Plan interested parties list.

MA/7/CAM  
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- Attachments:
1. July 25, 2015 Community Workshop #1 Summary
  2. October 22, 2015 Community Workshop #2 Questionnaire Results
  3. Urban Design Images