

East Whisman Precise Plan Summary of Prior Direction and Workshops

Residential Land Use – February 2015

At a February 3, 2015 Study Session, the City Council directed staff to study residential land uses in the EWPP area as part of a larger discussion on potential new residential land use strategies in the City.

Planning Grant – June 2015

The City Council accepted a VTA Priority Development Area (PDA) Planning Grant in June 2015 to fund the new Precise Plan. The grant program supports planning efforts that encourage housing and employment growth near public transportation in the County. As part of the grant, the City will expand the existing Whisman Station PDA boundary to include the EWPP area. The grant funds the Precise Plan consultant team: Community Design + Architecture (CD+A), Raimi + Associates, Strategic Economics, and Fehr + Peers.

Environmental Review – March 2016

On March 22, 2016, the City Council authorized City staff to enter into a contract with David J. Powers & Associates for preparation of an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) for the Precise Plan.

Workshop No. 1 – July 2016

This community workshop included three exercises: a visioning activity, a visual preference survey, and an individual mapping exercise. In addition, an online survey gathered additional community input on these topics. A summary of this workshop is attached to this document.

[Visioning – September 2016](#)

The EPC and City Council held Study Sessions on the vision for East Whisman in September 2016. City Council direction included the following:

- **Visioning Concepts:** Support of preliminary visioning concepts identified in the Study Session memo, including focusing development around the light rail station,

encouraging jobs/housing balance, and providing neighborhood-serving commercial uses in the area.

- **New residential:** Support for adding residential land uses to the Plan area, while maintaining existing office allocation; some Councilmembers supported additional office.
- **South Plan Area:** Residential land uses in the south Plan area were not supported due to limited connectivity to the rest of Mountain View and a desire to retain smaller office space for start-up/small businesses.
- **Higher-Intensity locations:** Support for higher-intensity housing along Middlefield Road and around the Middlefield VTA Station, and greater retail in the Plan area.

Workshop No. 2 – December 2016

This community workshop included two exercises: a review of development alternatives, and a discussion about two focus areas, the Village Center and the Middlefield Station Area. In addition, an online survey gathered additional community input on these topics. A summary of this workshop is attached to this document.

[Preferred Land Use Alternative – February 2017](#)

The EPC and City Council held Study Sessions on the preferred land use alternative in February 2017. City Council direction included the following:

- **Preferred Land Use Alternative:** Support for the Combined Land Use Alternative, maintaining maximum building heights of eight stories, studying residential land uses over 1.0 FAR on Whisman Road.

Preferred Alternative



- **Preferred Village Center Alternative:** Support for the Expanded Village Center Alternative, which includes studying a mix of uses on all four corners of the intersection at North Whisman and East Middlefield Roads at heights up to four stories.
- **Priorities:** Support for the following Precise Plan priorities: affordable housing, transportation improvements (including pedestrian and bicycle improvements), and public open space. Additional priorities identified include ownership housing, business retention, and support for school facilities.

EIR Scope Amendment – April 2017

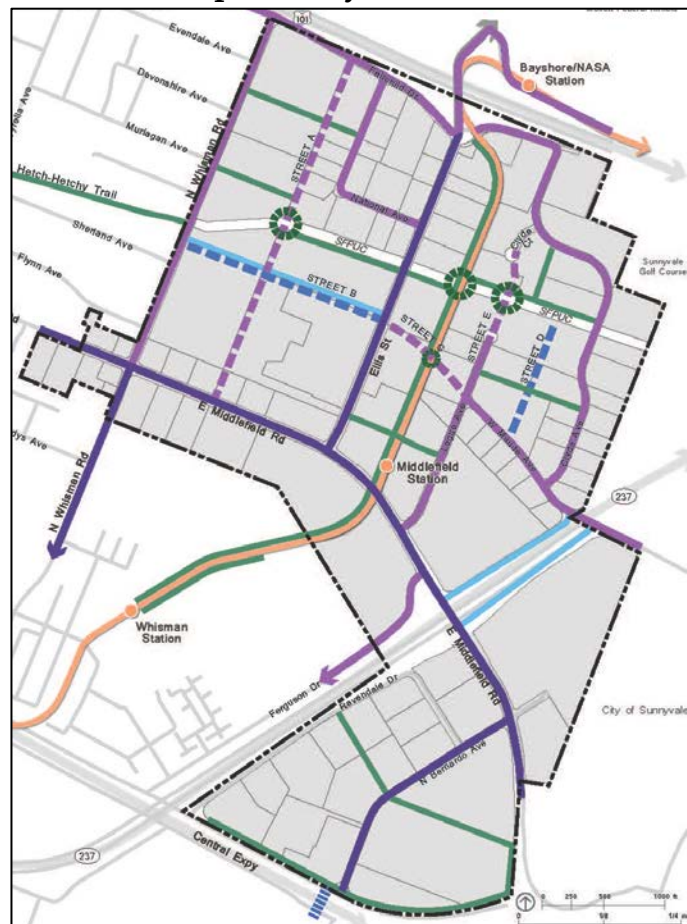
On April 4, 2017, City staff returned to Council with a budget and scope amendment for the environmental consultant, David J. Powers, to analyze a second land use alternative in the Precise Plan EIR. At this meeting, Council directed staff to study two land use alternatives; approved funding for additional environmental and transportation analysis for the Precise Plan; and endorsed the number of residential units, office square footage, and retail square footage to be studied in the Precise Plan EIR.

Neighborhoods and Circulation – June 2017

The EPC and City Council held Study Sessions on neighborhoods and circulation plans in June 2017. City Council direction included the following:

- **Complete Neighborhoods:** Support for a complete neighborhoods strategy with land use targets.
- **Affordable Housing:** Support for an affordable housing strategy like North Bayshore's.
- **Circulation:** Feedback was provided on conceptual circulation goals and networks for vehicles, bicycles, and pedestrians.

Conceptual Bicycle Circulation

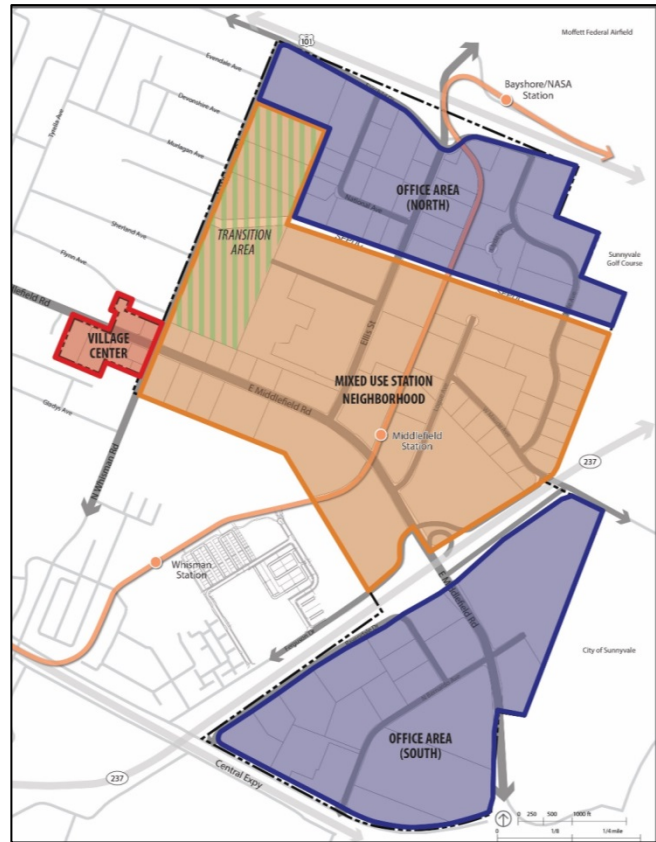


Land Use Policy Topics – February 2018

The EPC and City Council held Study Sessions on land use policy topics in February 2018. City Council direction included the following:

- **Guiding Principles:** Provide additional emphasis on some concepts, including jobs/housing balance, ownership housing, walkability/bikeability, and sustainability.
- **Character Areas:** Supported for the boundaries and descriptions of the Plan's proposed character areas (Mixed-Use Station Neighborhood, including a Transition Area near Whisman Road; Office Areas – North and South; and the Village Center).
- **Minor Height/FAR Map Changes:** Support for increasing the allowed intensity in the East Village Center and Fairchild/Ellis areas from 3-4 stories to 5-6 stories.
- **Office FAR:** Supported for 0.5 to 1.0 Maximum Office FARs across the Mixed-Use areas.
- **"Base" FAR:** Support for 0.4 "base" FAR for office and 1.0 "base" FAR for residential (0.8 in the Village Center).
- **Village Center Intensity:** Support for a General Plan Amendment to increase the allowed heights and FAR in the Village Center from 3 to 4 stories and from 1.05 to 1.35 FAR.

Character Areas



Minor Height/FAR Map Changes



- **Affordable Housing:** Support for further analysis of a flexible affordable housing approach, with an overall goal of 20 percent affordable units. This included consideration of some residential developments that may have fewer on-site affordable units, along with other tools to increase affordable housing opportunities through office and some residential developments.
- **Jobs/Housing Linkage:** Support for further analysis of a Jobs/Housing Linkage Strategy that ties office development requirements to the number of residential units developed. These could include additional Transportation Demand Management, affordable housing or public benefit requirements.

East Whisman Precise Plan Community Workshop #1 Summary

German International School of Silicon Valley
310 Easy Street, Mountain View, California
July 16, 2016, 9:00AM-12:00PM

On Saturday, July 16, 2016, the City of Mountain View hosted a workshop to engage with community members about the East Whisman Precise Plan. The workshop was held at the German International School and took place from 9am until 12pm. The event was attended by approximately 60 community members and interested parties.

The workshop commenced with an opening statement by Mountain View Mayor Pat Showalter. Mayor Showalter discussed the importance of the City's General Plan, key elements of the Precise Plan, and the importance of community participation and collaboration in the process. Following Mayor Showalter, Lindsay Hagan, Project Planner for the City of Mountain View, provided a more detailed overview of the



Precise Plan project, describing what a Precise Plan is and its relationship to the City's General Plan, discussing City Council direction on studying the addition of housing in the area, and outlining the planning process. After Ms. Hagan, Eric Yurkovich of Raimi + Associates, project consultant, provided a brief overview of existing conditions in the plan area and explained the interactive workshop exercises. Copies of the presentation of the workshop are available on the project website: <http://www.mountainview.gov/eastwhisman>. A video of the workshop is available on the KMTV Youtube Channel: <https://youtu.be/UYTdYJhwSIM>.

The workshop included three exercises:

1. **Visioning activity.** Workshop participants were divided into small groups of six to eight community members and asked a series of discussion questions regarding their vision of East Whisman. Each table included a facilitator who asked the following questions to the group:
 - a. What is your vision for the East Whisman Precise Plan area?
 - b. In the future, will East Whisman look the same or will it be different? What will be the same and what will be different?
 - c. What do you think is missing from East Whisman?
2. **Visual preference survey.** In the large group, all participants were shown a PowerPoint presentation of fourteen slides with varied images of land uses (e.g. offices, housing, mixed-use development, retail, or parks), buildings, and pedestrian/bicycle improvements. Using a key pad polling system, participants were asked to vote in "real-time" on which image they liked the most and aligned with their vision of East Whisman, in order to assess the group's overall preferences on scale, height, character, architecture style, and other aesthetic elements of potential development in East Whisman.

3. **Individual mapping exercise.** Returning to the same small groups, participants were each given a map of the plan area and stickers representing different land uses to place where they preferred office, housing, retail, parks/open space, and community facilities in East Whisman. Additionally, participants marked where they desired ground-floor retail and new bicycle/pedestrian connections in the plan area. Each table also identified and discussed transition areas between the East Whisman Precise Plan area and surrounding neighborhoods and between different land uses within the plan area.

In addition to the workshop, the City of Mountain View hosted an online survey from August 2, 2016 to August 12, 2016 to gather additional input. Similar questions from the workshop were asked in the online survey in twenty-four questions. A total of thirty-one participants completed the survey and a summary of the results are provided as an appendix to this report.

Exercise #1: Visioning Discussion Summary

In the first exercise, participants were separated into eight small groups to discuss visioning questions over the course of a half hour. Each table included a facilitator, whose role was to manage the small group discussion and to ensure that everyone had a chance to speak and share their ideas. Each group appointed a reporter to record ideas from group members, and to capture the three top ideas from the group. The following questions and results were summarized in the report-back worksheets filled out by each group reporter (see Appendix for copies of the report-back sheets):






What is your vision for the East Whisman Precise Plan area?














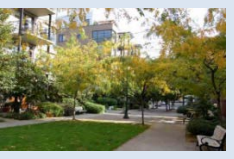







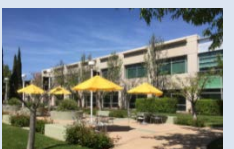
- **Housing.** Additional housing in East Whisman. Housing should vary in style and intensity. Housing should be affordable to a variety of income levels and people.
- **Retail/Services.** Greater neighborhood services, including grocery stores, restaurants, and shops, should be in East Whisman. Retail should be in residential and office mixed-use developments.
- **Transit-oriented development.** Intensified land use around the Middlefield VTA station for regional transportation connections.
- **Jobs/Housing Balance.** Housing that supports the amount of jobs to create a livable neighborhood.
- **Connectivity and walkability.** Better walkability and connectivity for cyclists and pedestrians to and within East Whisman, connecting to Sunnyvale and adjacent areas – including over/under Central Expressway. Safe and accessible paths and bicycle/pedestrian networks.
- **Traffic management.** Better transportation connections and policies to manage traffic in the area.
- **Open space.** More parks, open space, and public plazas with high-quality landscaping throughout the plan area.













Exercise #2: Visual Preference Survey

In the second exercise, all participants were shown a PowerPoint presentation with a succession of images to vote on their visual preference. Fourteen slides were shown to the audience and each slide had four photo options to select from. Participants used live key-pad polling clickers to vote for what they would like to see in East Whisman. Instant results of the voting were shown after each slide. The audience showed a moderate consensus towards activity-centered open space, green plazas, mid-rise developments, and a strong preference towards separated bike and pedestrian paths. Below are the results for each question and slide.



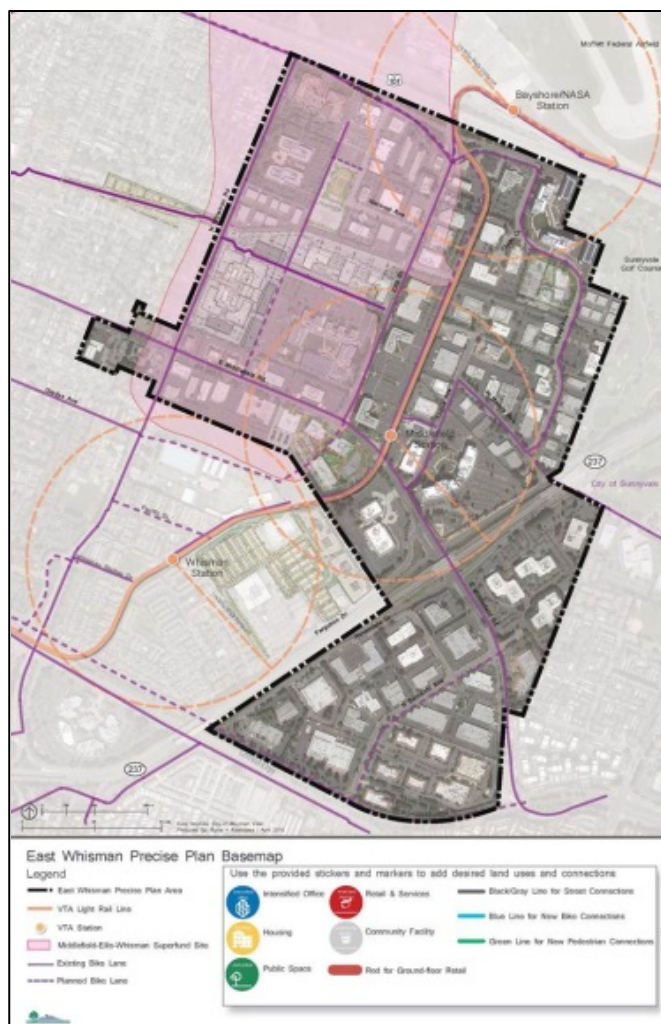
Question	Option A	Option B	Option C	Option D
1: What type of open space do you prefer for the area?				
Total: 42 (no vote: 5)	8 19%	12 29%	12 29%	10 23%
2: What type of plaza do you prefer for the area?				
Total: 47 (no vote: 0)	4 9%	16 34%	18 38%	9 19%
3: What scale of housing do you prefer for the area?				
Total: 44 (no vote: 3)	15 34%	16 36%	10 23%	3 7%
4: What residential building do you prefer for the area?				
Total: 44 (no vote: 3)	3 7%	6 13%	21 48%	14 32%
5: What residential building do you prefer for the area?				
Total: 37 (no vote: 10)	4 11%	3 8%	24 65%	6 16%

Question	Option A	Option B	Option C	Option D
6: What residential building do you prefer for the area?				
Total: 35 (no vote: 12)	1 3%	2 6%	24 68%	8 23%
7: Which residential sidewalk do you prefer for the area?				
Total: 45 (no vote: 2)	18 40%	3 7%	8 18%	16 35%
8: Which commercial sidewalk do you prefer for the area?				
Total: 43 (no vote: 4)	13 30%	16 37%	11 26%	3 7%
9: Which type of paths or greenways do you prefer for the area?				
Total: 43 (no vote: 4)	2 5%	1 2%	18 42%	22 51%
10: Which type of bike path do you prefer for the area?				
Total: 32 (no vote: 15)	2 6%	2 6%	19 59%	9 28%
11: Which type of office environment do you prefer for the area?				
Total: 35 (no vote: 12)	6 17%	1 3%	12 34%	16 46%

Question	Option A	Option B	Option C	Option D
12: Which mixed-use building do you prefer for the area?				
Total: 34	11	4	3	16
(no vote: 13)	32%	12%	9%	47%
13: Which retail building do you prefer for the area?				
Total: 34	2	0	22	10
(no vote: 13)	6%	0%	65%	29%
14: Which type of retail experience do you prefer in the area?				
Total: 41	12	15	11	3
(no vote: 6)	29%	37%	27%	7%

Exercise #3a: Individual Mapping

For the third exercise, each participant was given a map of the plan area and a set of land use stickers to place where they wanted certain land uses, depicting their individual concept plan for East Whisman. Participants were given one sheet of stickers with eight (8) intensified office dots, eight (8) housing dots, four (4) open space/park dots, two (2) retail dots, and two (2) community services dots. Markers were also provided to add notes to the maps, and for drawing ground-floor retail locations and new pedestrian, bicycle, and other transportation connections/networks. Facilitators were present during the exercise to answer questions and provide background on recent development projects, existing conditions, and other relevant information. When finished, participants discussed their maps within their small groups.



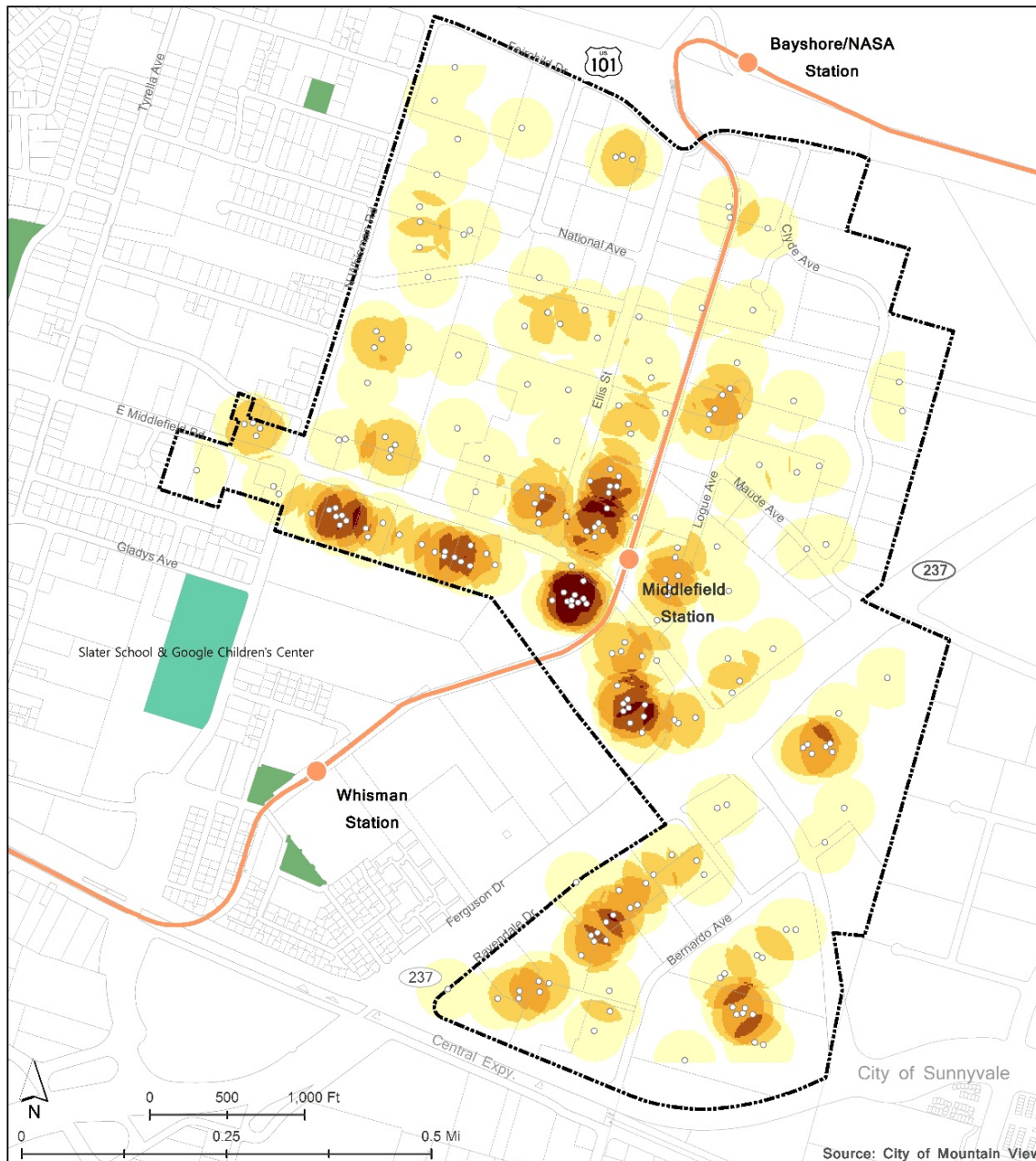
Overall the majority of participants (33 of 42, 73%) placed residential, retail, and intensified office within the plan area. Five participants chose not to place any new office in the area, and four participants did not place any residential in the plan area.

After the completion of the exercise, each map created by a participant was entered and coded into Geographic Information System (GIS) and tabulated to see the highest concentration of dot placement for each use. Maps on the following sheets show the relative concentrations for housing, intensified office, retail, and open space/park uses.



Housing Results

Housing sticker placement was mostly concentrated along East Middlefield Road (along the southern portion), around the Middlefield VTA Station, and southeast of State Route 237 along Bernardo Avenue. The darker colors illustrate the greatest overlap of housing stickers.



Community Workshop Results: Housing Locations



Office Results

In contrast to housing, the locations for intensified office development stickers were largely concentrated along the eastern side of Ellis Street, along south side of Clyde Avenue, along Highway US 101, and both sides of State Route 237. Some participants showed a preference for office around Middlefield VTA Station. The darker colors illustrate the greatest overlap of office stickers.

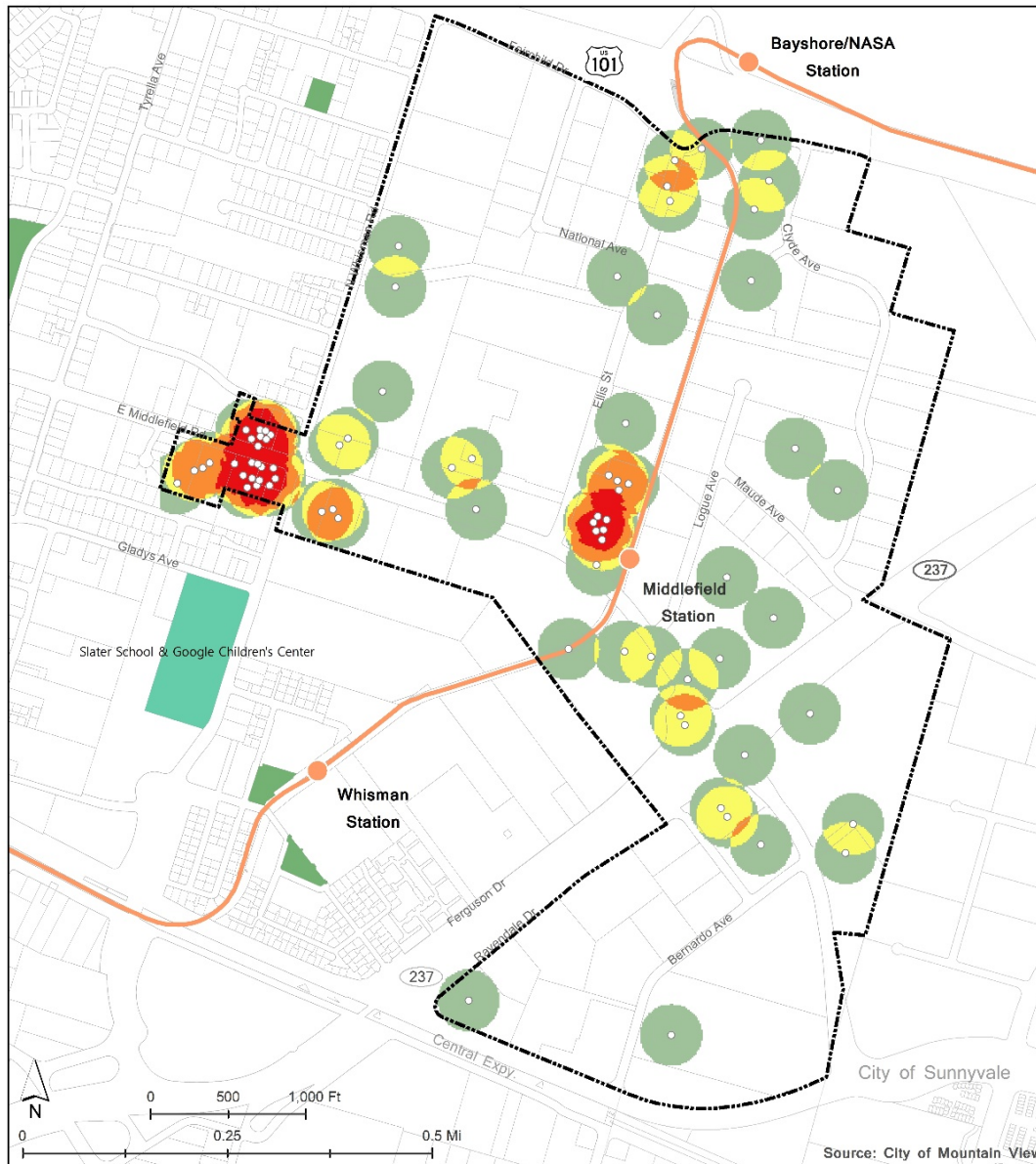


Community Workshop Results: Office Locations



Retail Results

Retail sticker placement showed two areas of strong concentration: (1) at the intersection of Whisman Road and East Middlefield Road in the existing shopping center, and (2) around the Middlefield VTA station. Some alternative location preferences were shown on either side of State Route 237 along Middlefield Road, and around the intersection of Ellis Street and Clyde Avenue (where the current Specialty's Café is located). The darker colors illustrate the greatest overlap of retail stickers.

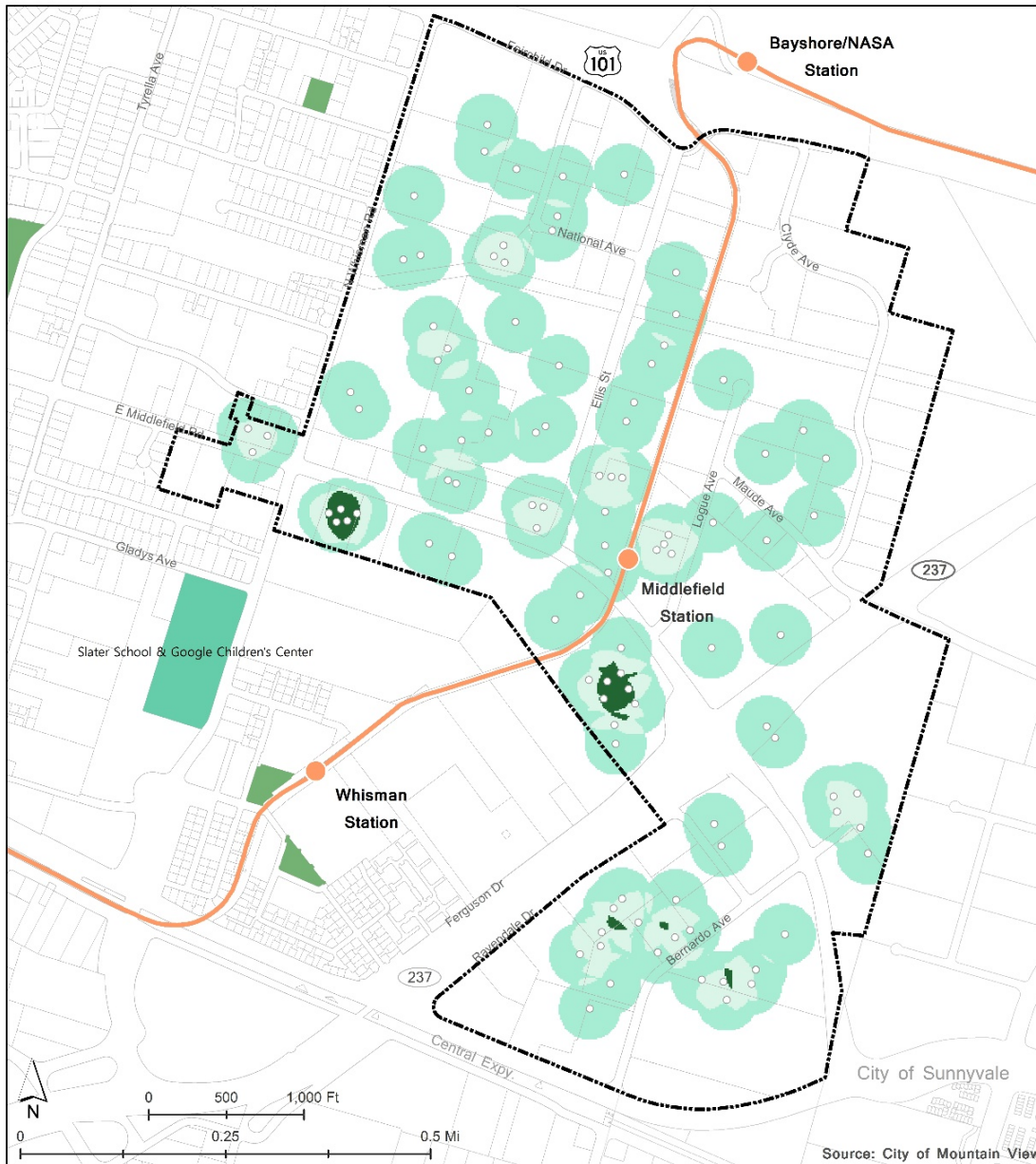


Community Workshop Results: Retail Locations

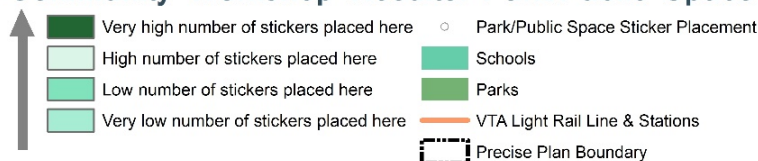


Open Space Results

Stickers for parks/open space were distributed evenly throughout the plan area, with some noticeable concentrations adjacent to existing residential development and near some participants housing sticker locations. Park/open space stickers were also placed along the west and south border of the Precise Plan area, indicating a desire for green transitions into existing neighborhoods. The darker colors illustrate the greatest overlap of park/open space stickers.



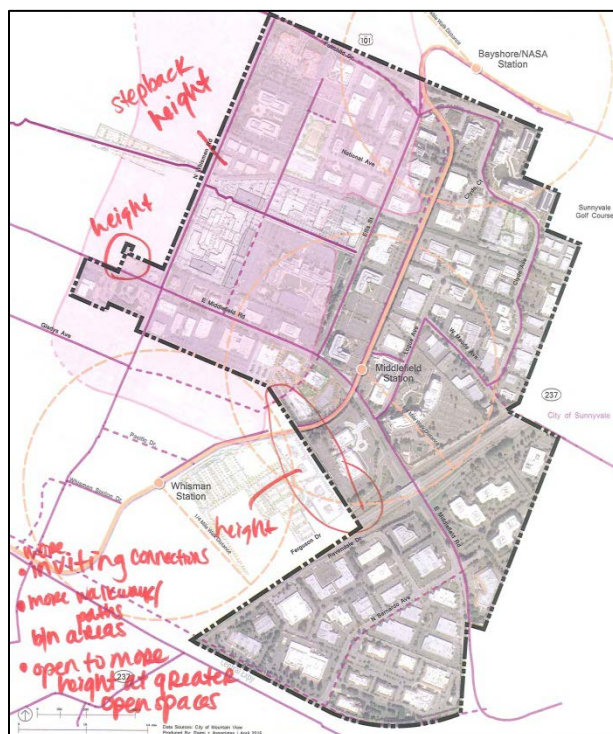
Community Workshop Results: Park/Public Space Locations



Exercise #3b: Transitions

As a second part of the third exercise, each table discussed how development should transition between the East Whisman area and surrounding neighborhoods and within the plan area between different land uses. The following are comments that emerged from the small groups. Please note, several of the comments about development intensity along Whisman Road conflict with one another.

- Place taller buildings along Whisman Road, East Middlefield Road, and freeways.
- Place office buildings away from plan area edges to reduce traffic next to surrounding neighborhoods.
- Reduce interference with adjacent Agricultural land (the orchard).
- Place mixed-use next to residential uses as a transition.
- Place lower-density housing or lower-intensity office near existing residential neighborhoods on Whisman Road.
- Place more intense housing on Middlefield Road to transition to existing residential housing south.
- Use green space around Precise Plan border as a transition. More green/tree line streets around transition areas.
- Use step-back massing to break up taller, bulkier buildings. Be considerate of building height adjacent to existing neighborhoods.



Workshop participants also made the following comments about the circulation network:

- Connect pedestrian path and bicycle bath across the Central Expressway through an underpass on Bernardo Ave.
- Develop bike and pedestrian connections to and from Middlefield Station.
- Separate pedestrian/bicycle paths from each other and the street.

Conclusions

Overall, there was broad agreement and support for improved bicycle and pedestrian access throughout and into East Whisman and VTA stations, as well as a desire for more open space, parks, and green paths. Connections to existing paths and to currently inaccessible areas are critical. While the larger group generally supported housing in East Whisman, office was still seen as a primary land use in the area. Greater intensity of office could be acceptable if

transportation issues are tackled in a comprehensive manner and if placed away from existing residential neighborhoods.

Some of the major takeaways of the workshop were:

- New housing (at low and medium intensities) was generally seen as acceptable or even beneficial to the Plan Area, to help the jobs/housing balance and affordability in the area.
- Intensified office was generally seen as acceptable in the plan area.
- New residential development should be clustered so as to generate a true “neighborhood,” and/or structured around a public open space(s); and, new housing could act as a transition from existing residential neighborhoods.
- Mixed-use development (with ground-floor retail) was acceptable in the right places (three key potential nodes were identified by many participants: Whisman Road/Middlefield Road, Middlefield VTA Station, and around Specialty’s); and, mixed-use development could transition between residential and office land uses.
- Higher-intensity office should be placed away from existing residential neighborhoods, along major roadway corridors, and freeways.
- Fostering character and introducing new open space and connections should be a goal of new developments.
- New development along the border of the plan area (particularly on N. Whisman Road) must respect the neighborhoods across the street, and not overwhelm with height and bulk.
- More retail and local-serving services are desired overall, especially if new residents arrive.
- There were differing ideas about what should occur along Bernardo Avenue in the southeast portion of the plan area. Some participants supported a housing-focused, while others expressed interest for this area to remain as office uses.

Appendices

1. Summary of Online Survey Results
2. Report-Back Sheets

East Whisman Precise Plan Community Workshop #2 Summary

German International School of Silicon Valley
310 Easy Street, Mountain View, California
December 3, 2016, 9:00AM-12:00PM

On Saturday, December 3, 2016, the City of Mountain View hosted the second community workshop related to the East Whisman Precise Plan, with the goal of garnering specific feedback on proposed land use alternatives, building heights, housing unit mix, and the character of key activity centers of the Plan Area (Middlefield Station and the Village Center). The workshop was held at the German International School from 9 am until 12 pm. The event was attended by approximately 30 community members and interested parties, and was facilitated by City staff and the consultant team. It should be noted that attendees of this workshop included more business representatives and property owners than Workshop #1.

The workshop opened with a short introduction from Lindsay Hagan, Project Planner for the City of Mountain View, describing the Precise Plan process, timeline, and project goals. Ms. Hagan's opening was followed by a short greeting from Mountain View Mayor Pat Showalter. Mayor Showalter discussed the importance of participation and collaboration in the process, and the value of staying engaged in the planning process. After the mayor's welcome, Tim Rood of Community Design + Architecture, project consultant, discussed the differences between the three proposed land use alternatives (including estimates of key metrics). Finally, Eric Yurkovich of Raimi + Associates, project consultant, presented a brief overview of the two workshop exercises. The introductory presentation and a video of the workshop are available on the project website: <http://www.mountainview.gov/eastwhisman>. (Alternative video link is: <https://youtu.be/CBLCYRc-j4Y>)



Workshop Goals and Exercises

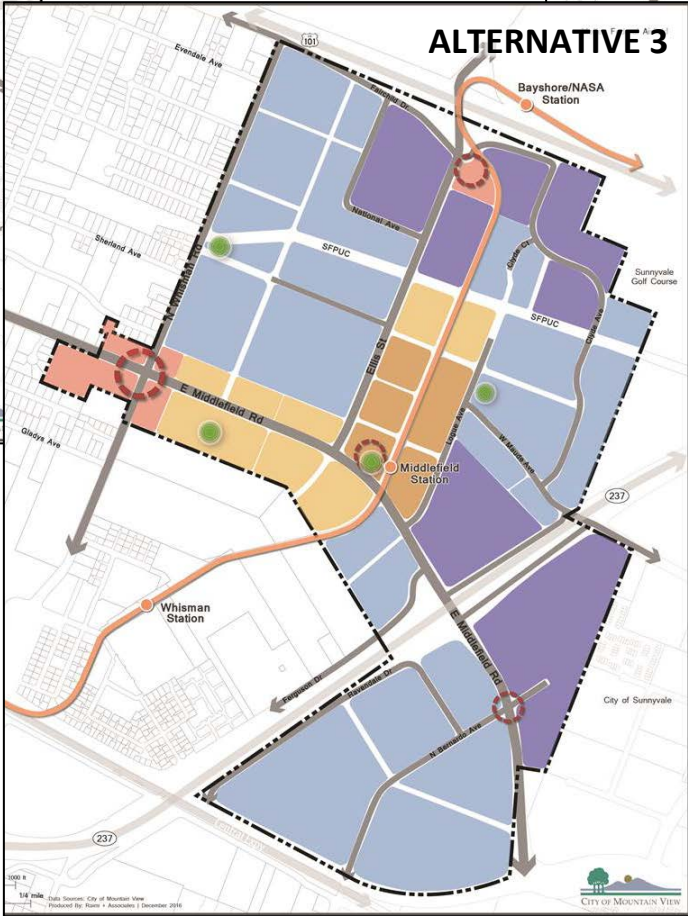
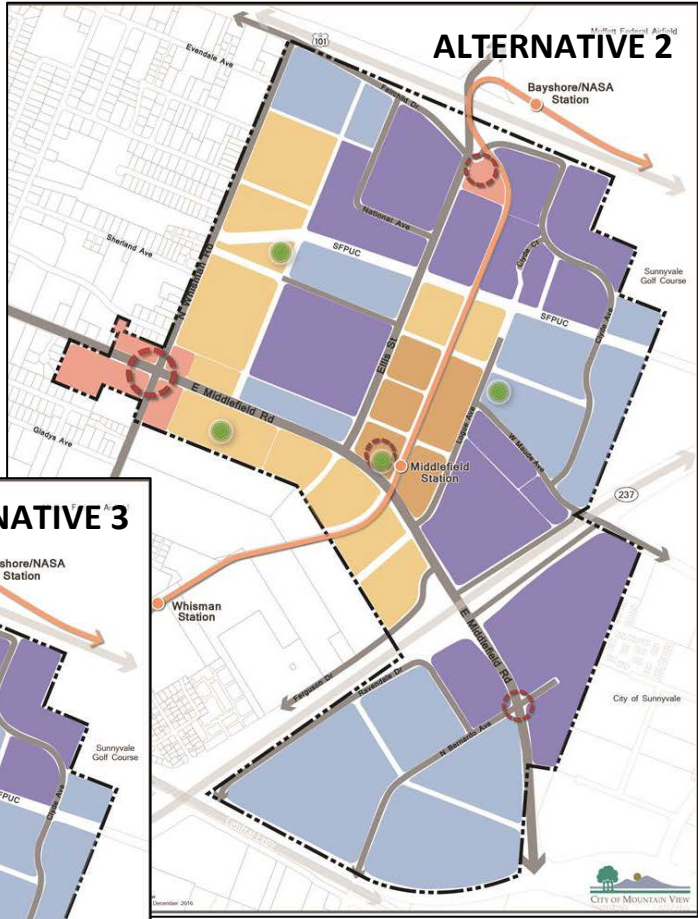
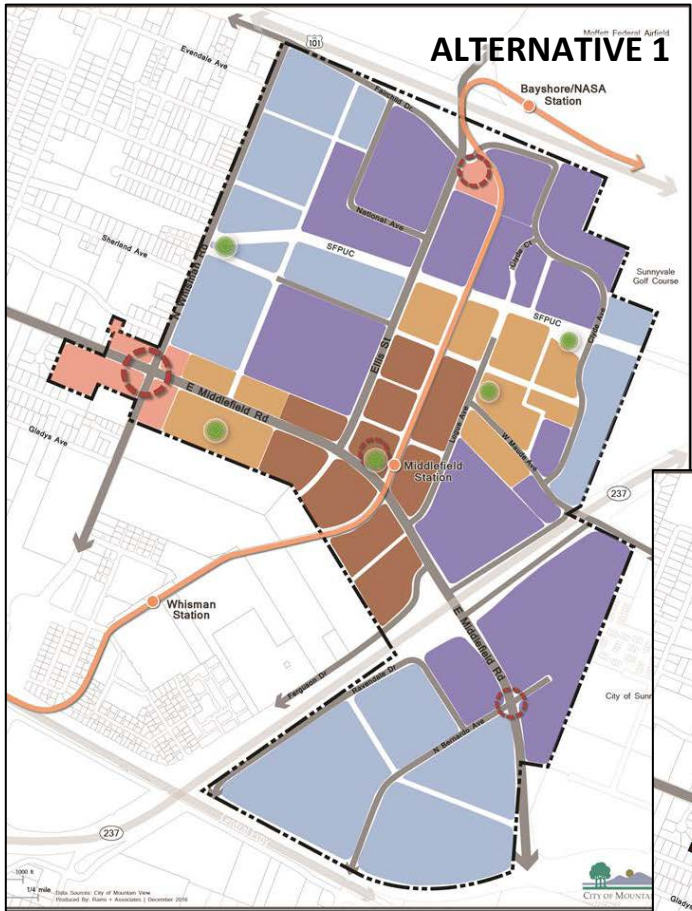
For this workshop, the City set out to achieve the following:

1. Consider land use alternatives and discuss a preferred alternative.
2. Provide preferences for other plan area improvements/components.
3. Discuss the character of two focus areas: the Village Center and Middlefield VTA Station.

To achieve these goals, the workshop was split into two exercises:

1. **Development Alternatives.** Workshop participants were divided into small groups of five to seven community members and asked a series of questions about three land use alternatives for East Whisman. Questions included:
 - a. *Do any of the alternatives represent your vision for East Whisman? Do you have other ideas that are not shown?*

EAST WHISMAN PRECISE PLAN LAND USE ALTERNATIVES



LEGEND

- Lower-Density Residential (up to 4 stories)
- Medium-Density Residential (5-6 stories)
- Higher-Density Residential (7-8 stories)
- Mixed-Use Village Center / Retail (1 to 3 stories)
- Lower-Intensity Office (up to 4 stories)
- Higher-Intensity Office (5-6 stories)
- VTA Station
- VTA Light Rail Line
- East Whisman Precise Plan Area
- Retail Location
- Conceptual Park Locations

- b. *Where should the tallest buildings be allowed in East Whisman? Should building heights greater than eight stories be allowed near the Middlefield Station?*
 - c. *Should residential development be required in specific areas of East Whisman?*
- After the small group discussions, participants completed an individual questionnaire.
2. **Focus Areas.** The second exercise allowed workshop participants to discuss two distinct locations within East Whisman – the Middlefield Station area, and the Village Center at the intersection of N. Whisman Rd. and E. Middlefield Rd. Participants discussed the following questions:
 - a. **Village Center.** *What alternative best represents your vision for the Village Center?*
 - b. **Middlefield Station Area.** *Do the preliminary statements provided represent your vision of the Middlefield VTA Station area (within a 10-min. walking distance)? What makes the best transit-oriented places?*

In addition to the feedback heard at the workshop, the City of Mountain View hosted an online survey from December 16, 2016 to January 2, 2017 to gather additional input from those community members or stakeholders unable to attend. The same questions from the workshop were asked in the online survey, accompanied by the same visual exhibits. A total of 149 participants completed the survey and a summary of the results are provided as Appendix 1 to this report.

Exercise #1: Development Alternatives Discussion

In the first exercise, participants were arranged in six small-table groups to discuss the three land use alternatives over the course of an hour. Each table included a facilitator, whose role was to manage the small group discussion to ensure that everyone had a chance to speak and share their ideas. Each group appointed a reporter to record and capture the top ideas from group members (and to complete a summary report-back worksheet). The following concepts were drawn from the report-back worksheets: (see Appendix 2 for copies of the report-back worksheets)

- **Land Use Alternatives.**
 - Account for and address the traffic impacts of higher density development/more residents. (3 groups)
 - Need high-quality transit service for new residents/employees to use light rail. (2 groups)
 - Desire for condominium/ownership opportunities. Make efforts to accommodate residents in all phases of their lives. (2 groups)
 - Create continuity of development character, especially along Ellis Street. Make sure the corridors are addressed in a comprehensive way such that a similar character or feel dominates the whole length. (2 groups)
 - Desire for more retail to support new residential. Make sure enough retail locates within the Plan area. (2 groups)
 - Allow moderate density housing near Middlefield Station. (2 groups)
 - Improve street connectivity to facilitate walking or cycling to work.
 - Make efforts to keep housing and office separate.
 - Create a 'there-there', a true neighborhood with a sense of community.
- **Building Heights.**
 - Allow the tallest residential heights near the VTA station (3 groups) or Logue Ave/Maude Ave (1 group).
 - Groups were split evenly on whether buildings near the station should be allowed to be greater than eight stories or less than eight stories.
 - Place tall buildings along the 101 or 237 freeways (5 groups), or Ellis Street (2 groups).
 - Allow four-stories along E. Middlefield Rd. (2 groups)
 - Locate taller buildings away from existing low-scale neighborhoods. Avoid an abrupt transition from existing to new structures.
 - Allow greater density to generate greater retail demand, and maybe attract a grocery store.
- **Regulatory Mechanisms.**
 - Strong support for housing (4 groups) and mixed-use development (3 groups) along E. Middlefield Road. (4 groups)

- Create clusters of residential and retail, making it possible to walk to shops/services. (2 groups)
- Desire to have flexible regulations in order to allow office uses to continue operating in areas that may become residentially zoned. (2 groups)
- Provide incentives to promote housing development.
- Don't assume current businesses will be around forever; make the Plan work regardless of whether existing businesses are there in the future.
- Preserve the low-scale, start-up office character of the Bernardo area.
- Allow mixed use for certain types of retail.



Questionnaire Results

After the small group discussion, each individual workshop participant filled out a questionnaire, which were collected by table facilitators (28 total questionnaires were completed). A numerical summary of responses to the questionnaires are as follows:

1. Select the land use alternative that most closely aligns with your vision.

Alternative #1	Alternative #2	Alternative #3
7 votes	7 votes	7 votes

2. Should buildings heights greater than 8 stories be allowed near Middlefield Station?

Yes	No	If no, what should the maximum be?
8 votes	16 votes	4 stories: 6 votes 6 stories: 6 votes 8 stories: 4 votes

3. Should residential development be required in specific locations in East Whisman or should it be allowed throughout the Plan Area?

Flexibility	Residential Only	Minimum Neighborhood	Other
14 votes	4 votes	5 votes	2 votes

4. What mix of housing units do you envision in East Whisman? Note: This topic was not discussed at length within the groups by facilitators.

Small Unit Mix	Market Unit Mix	Alternative Unit Mix	Other
1 vote	2 votes	7 votes	13 votes (variations on Alternative Mix)

5. Select and prioritize three plan area improvements or strategies for East Whisman. Note: This topic was not discussed at length within the groups by facilitators.

Improvement or Strategy	Votes
Public Open Space	18
Affordable Housing	9
Pedestrian or Bicycle Facilities	18
Commercial Retail Space	7
Small Business/Nonprofit Facility	2
School or Education Facility	4
Childcare Center	0
Other (Write-Ins: Transit, Multi-Family)	3

After the report-back from the first exercise was completed, certain participants (chosen randomly by the placement of a sticker on the back of their seat) were asked to switch tables in order to mix up participants.

Exercise #2: Focus Areas Discussion

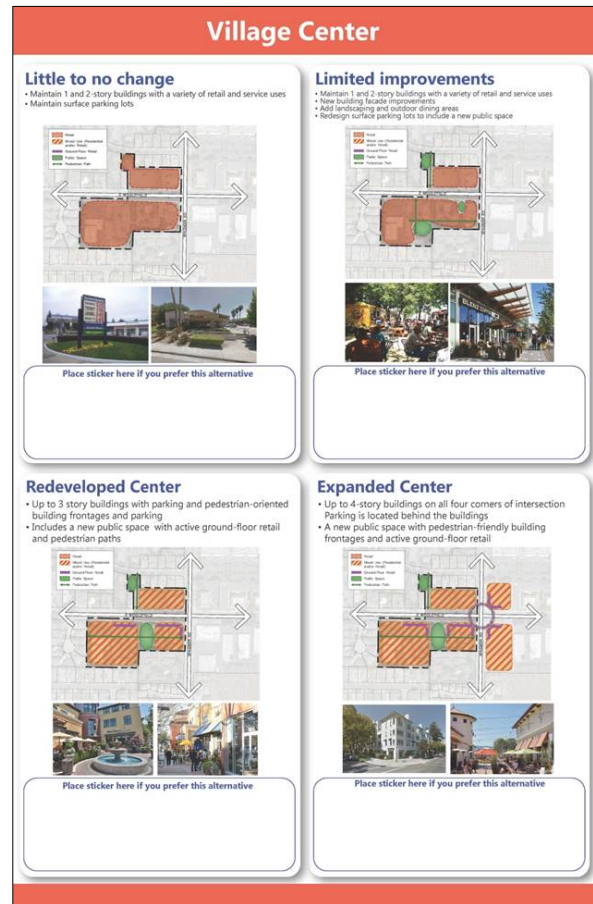
For the second exercise, each small group was given a large, printed map of the two geographic focus areas – the Village Center and Middlefield Station. The five group boards are attached as Appendix 3. The boards asked for specific feedback from participants on the focus areas. Markers and post-it notes were provided to add notes and ideas to the maps, and for drawing any additional concepts. Facilitators were present during the exercise to answer questions and provide background, existing conditions, and other relevant information. Finally, community members discussed their thoughts within their small groups.

Village Center Board

The first board presented community members with four options for the future character and land use of the neighborhood retail area located at the intersection of N. Whisman Rd. and E. Middlefield Rd.:

1. **Little or No Change** – maintaining existing retail uses, 1 and 2-story buildings, and parking layout.
2. **Limited Improvements** – maintaining 1 and 2-story buildings with site and façade improvements; redesign parking to add open space.
3. **Redeveloped Center** – redevelop center in line with the Village Center concept from the General Plan at 3-stories with mixed-uses, ground-floor retail, and gathering spaces; focus development west of Whisman Rd.
4. **Expanded Center** – redevelop center and expand to all corners of intersection with up to 4 story buildings; include mixed-use, ground-floor retail, and gathering spaces.

Workshop participants were asked to place a sticker on the choice that best represented their vision for the Village Center. Any additional ideas were to be written on the board or on post-it notes. After explaining the different options, facilitators led a free-form discussion, prompted by the following question: “**What alternative best represents your vision for the Village Center (e.g. land uses, building heights, open space)? Do you have other ideas?**”



Overall, 80% of votes were between Limited Improvements and Redeveloped Center. No participants selected “No change.”

No Change	Limited Improvements	Redeveloped Center	Expanded Center
0 votes	11.5 votes	6.5 votes	5 votes

Other comments on the Village Center area included:

- Provide incentives to current owners to redevelop their properties.
- Avoid building too much density or bulk adjacent to existing residents. Include setbacks in any potential development towards the rear of the properties (near existing residences).
- Provide a greater diversity of vendors and services, especially a grocery store.
- Introduce a better tree canopy to create an inviting place (both along streets and within the shopping centers).



- Include more green space(s), especially in the back part of the vacant lot.
- Preference for the area to remain exclusively retail-focused, and not add residential.
- Concern about the viability of expanding retail across N. Whisman Rd., given its size and the current traffic congestion issues.
- Support for mixed-use in general along the E. Middlefield Rd.
- Work towards making both sides of N. Whisman Rd. more walkable and pedestrian-friendly.

Middlefield Station Board

The second board presented community members with potential visioning statements for the Middlefield VTA Station – e.g. wide sidewalks, mix of uses, neighborhood retail, public open space, bicycle facilities, and pedestrian-oriented design. Facilitators framed the discussion with the following questions:

1. **Do the preliminary statements provided represent your vision of the Middlefield VTA Station area (within a 10-min. walking zone)? Are there other ideas we missed?**
2. **In your opinion, what makes the best transit-oriented places?**

Generally, the preliminary direction expressed on the board was well-received by participants, and their comments included the following thoughts and responses:

- Make the Middlefield Station a nice, inviting place - doesn't necessarily mean the tallest/largest residential building has to be built immediately next to the station; smaller, human-scale elements are more important (a rhythm of small shops, a fountain, a sculpture, benches, nice trees, a pedestrian paseo or plaza, etc).
- Require human-scale, good design and transparency, and minimum open space/plaza.
- Provide dedicated parking for light rail riders and/or clearer parking rules and regulations; it is not clear who is allowed to park there now.
- Provide residents and transit users with activities near the station.
- Improve connections to the station with trails and bicycle lanes (green striping).
- Major improvements are needed from light rail/VTA if they are truly transportation alternatives: more frequent trains, faster trains, more destinations, better timing with traffic lights.
- Mixed uses would promote more transit use (restaurants, supermarket, theater, etc).
- Shade, wide sidewalks, and trees are important to draw users.
- Incentivize live/work arrangements.
- Create multiple, interconnected green areas (a 'greenbelt').
- Welcome new retailers and don't be overly prescriptive about the minimum square footage or the explicit kind of use; Palo Alto has strip retail areas that are struggling partly b/c of onerous regulations.

Middlefield Station

Preliminary Direction

- A neighborhood with a mix of high-intensity residential, office, and mixed-use buildings within a short walk of transit and community spaces.
- Allow the tallest buildings adjacent to the Middlefield Station.
- Improve station access with pedestrian and bicycle connections.
- Provide a neighborhood-serving retail area.
- Create a signature public open space for gathering and community events.
- Include new community-serving facilities, such as childcare.
- Build pedestrian-oriented buildings close to the street with active ground floor uses.

Are there other ideas we missed? Write them below!

What makes the best transit-oriented places?








Other ideas:

Additionally, participants identified key traits and examples of transit-oriented or pedestrian-oriented places they liked:

- *Key Traits:*
 - Include a diversity of uses (mix of uses), activities, and amenities
 - Use trails to connect transit to other nearby destinations
 - Provide appropriate space for the transit station
 - Have defined and clearly marked bike lanes
 - Declares itself as the place to be.
- *Examples of Desirable Transit-Oriented Places:*
 - Castro Street, Mountain View
 - Laurel Street, San Carlos
 - Santana Row, San Jose
 - Downtown Palo Alto
 - Ottawa, Canada
 - El Monte Shopping Center, Mountain View

Conclusions

Some of the major takeaways of the workshop were:

- **Preferred alternative.** Differing opinions over the preferred alternative – voting split equally three ways.
- **Area intensification.** Recognition that greater density/intensity has benefits, such as the potential for more transit ridership, retail, and open space, but may also increase traffic.
- **Residential location.** New residential was generally seen as acceptable in the following locations: along E. Middlefield Rd. and around the Middlefield VTA Station. Keen interest that new residential be clustered in such a way as to create a ‘there-there’, or a real neighborhood(s).
- **Middlefield VTA Station.** Support for housing at or around the station area (with differing opinions over the appropriate heights and densities for any transit-adjacent development). Eight stories was generally seen as the maximum building height by a two-thirds majority of participants.
- **E. Middlefield Rd.** Support for mixed-use development along E. Middlefield Rd.
- **Ellis St.** Leverage Ellis Street as a real corridor; create a continuous character.
- **Office.** Intensified office was generally seen as acceptable in the plan area. Support for taller buildings along the freeways. Desire to keep some areas along Bernardo Avenue as low-scale, start-up spaces.
- **Retail.** Support for additional retail and greater diversity of services/vendors and a concern that any regulations or plan standards should be welcoming to retailers.
- **Adjacency.** Carefully design any development near existing residential neighborhoods with the right transitions/step-backs.
- **Land use approach.** Wide support for ‘flexibility’ in land use regulations; against requiring housing and allowing the area to evolve without being overly restrictive. Strong support for incentives to encourage transformation/redevelopment.
- **Housing unit types.** Create a place for a diverse demographic (singles, couples, families), including support for condominiums. Concern that small, rental units will lead to a more transient population.
- **Transit ridership.** Concern that VTA light rail might not be used by new residents/employees without improved service; not enough people would use it to lessen the impacts on the roadway congestion.
- **Plan area improvements.** Strongest support for open space, pedestrian/bicycle facilities, and affordable housing as priority plan area focuses.