

3

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

3.1 INTRODUCTION

Consistent with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines, Section 15124, the Project Description chapter of this EIR contains details regarding the precise location and boundaries of the proposed project; a list of project objectives; a general description of the project’s technical characteristics; a list of the agencies expected to use this EIR in their decision-making; and a list of permits and other approvals required for the proposed project.

3.2 PROJECT LOCATION AND SETTING

The 7.4-acre project site is located at the southeast corner of Chiles Road and La Vida Way in the City of Davis, California (see Figure 3-1 and Figure 3-2), within the South Davis Specific Plan Area. Regional access to the site is provided by Interstate 80 (I-80) and the I-80/Mace Boulevard interchange, located northeast of the project site. The site is identified by Assessor’s Parcel Number (APN) 069-070-022.

Currently, the infill project site is developed with a two-story 53,248-square foot (sf) office building (built in 1966) and associated site improvements, including two surface parking lots located to the north and east of the building, respectively. Approximately 118 trees are located at the site entry way, along the building perimeter, and throughout the parking lots. The remainder of the project site is primarily dominated by weedy, ruderal vegetation. An approximately 12-foot-high soil berm surrounds the existing building and extends along the northern side of the parking lot located to the east of the building.

The project site is bordered by La Vida Way to the west, a preschool (Merryhill Preschool) and multi-family residential development (Edge Apartments) to the south, a hotel (Days Inn) to the east, and Chiles Road to the north. One-story, single-family homes are located to the west of the site across La Vida Way. I-80 is located approximately 50 feet north of, and parallel to, Chiles Road along the project frontage.

3.3 COMMUNITY HOUSING SUPPLY

The demand for rental housing in Davis is well documented. The 2017 Apartment Vacancy and Rental Rate Survey prepared for UC Davis indicates a vacancy rate of just 0.2 percent. While several apartment projects are currently proposed or recently approved, recent projects have focused on purpose-designed student housing, such as the approved Sterling Apartments, Lincoln40, and proposed Plaza 2555, Nishi, and Davis Live projects. In a Housing Workshop presentation to the Davis City Council on July 11, 2017, City staff noted that 816 to 1,059 new apartment units would be required to meet existing student housing needs.

**Figure 3-1
Regional Vicinity Map**

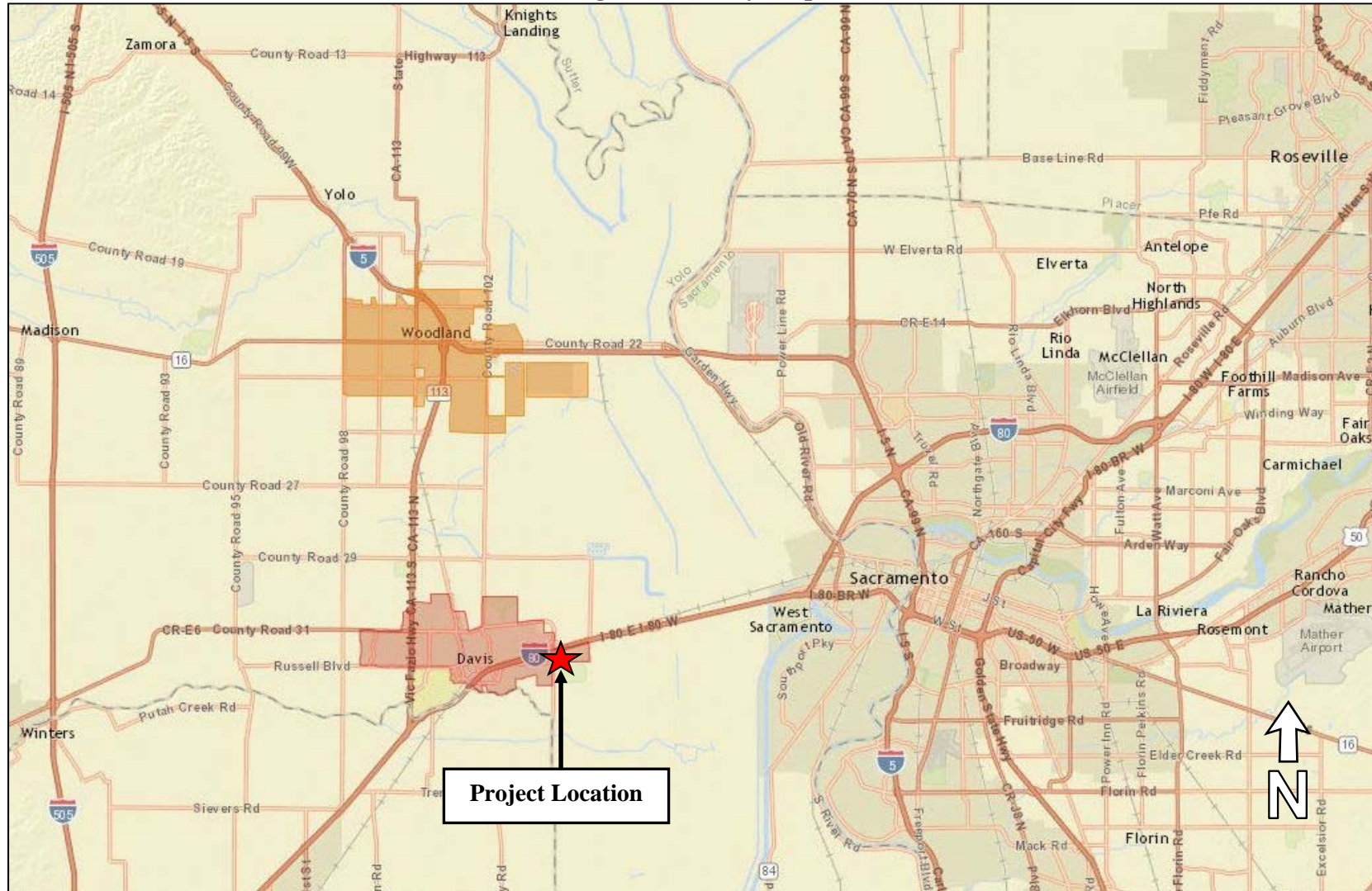


Figure 3-2
Project Location Map



Existing needs exclude both general community growth needs and demand on city rental units due to UC Davis growth. It was also noted that 1,072 apartment units were approved or potentially could be approved based on discussions and pending applications, including the proposed project.

3.4 PROJECT SITE BACKGROUND

The existing on-site building was originally constructed for Intercoast Life Insurance Company, which occupied the building from 1966 to 1970, and later occupied by Pacific Standard Life Insurance Company from 1972 to 1989. The building was subsequently leased by the University of California, Davis. The University of California, Davis had a purchase option on the building as part of its 20-year lease and declined to exercise the option to purchase based on seismic deficiencies detected by its consulting engineers and the site's isolated location relative to other properties owned by the University. The building has been vacant since October 2016, despite two years of marketing effort supported by City and regional economic development authorities. According to the project applicant, independent studies by the University, the owner and its contractor, architects and brokers, and by MarketOne Builders and Cushman & Wakefield each concluded that the current building and site are not viable for office/research and development.

3.5 PROJECT OBJECTIVES

The following objectives have been developed by the City of Davis and the Applicant for the proposed project:

1. Create a diverse community that provides housing for multiple generations and lifestyles and at densities consistent with City and Regional objectives.
2. Provide Davis residents and employees with housing options that are accessible to employment centers and are convenient to destinations for daily needs.
3. Activate an underutilized property to meet housing needs for a wide spectrum of community members with a rental housing community containing a range of unit types and sizes and a variety of indoor and outdoor amenities appropriate for long-term residency to create a safe, attractive, and active onsite community.
4. Provide convenient alternatives to auto travel by incorporating safe and convenient bicycle and pedestrian access within the site and facilitating access to the City's bicycle network, nearby parks, and transit stops.
5. Utilize advanced site and building design principles to address noise and air quality for future residents and for residential neighborhoods to the south of the site.
6. Allow appropriate transitional development on the site reflecting adjacent residential, commercial, and transportation uses.
7. Foster a sustainable community, addressing building efficiency, sustainable site design, transportation alternatives, and efficient use of land.

3.6 PROJECT COMPONENTS

The proposed project would include demolition of the existing on-site building and parking lots to construct a residential development. Currently, the project includes two development scenarios.

The Preferred Site Plan would include development of the site with multi-family rental units only (see Figure 3-3), while Alternative B would include single-family homes along La Vida Way, at the western portion of the site, and multi-family units throughout the remainder of the site (see Figure 3-4) in a similar configuration as the Preferred Site Plan.

General Plan Land Use Amendment

The Preferred Site Plan would require an amendment to the City's General Plan Land Use Map to re-designate the project site from General Commercial to Residential High Density (RHD), which permits residential uses at a density of 25.00 to 50.00 dwelling units per gross acre (du/ac) (see Figure 3-5). The Preferred Site Plan would develop the site at a density of 31.3 du/ac (net) and 30.4 du/ac (gross).

Alternative B would require an amendment to the General Plan Land Use Map to redesignate the site from General Commercial to RHD for the multi-family component of the project and Residential Medium Density (RMD) for the single-family component (see Figure 3-6). Alternative B would develop the multi-family portion at a density of 29.94 du/ac (net) and 29.38 du/ac (gross), while the single-family portion of the site would be developed at a density of 5.0 du/ac. The proposed land use changes are shown below.

South Davis Specific Plan Text Amendment

The Preferred Site Plan would require an amendment to the South Davis Specific Plan to designate the site as Residential High Density (see Figure 3-7). Alternative B would re-designate the eastern, multi-family portion of the site as Residential High Density, while the western, single-family portion of the site would be re-designated Residential Medium Density (see Figure 3-8). The required Specific Plan amendments would clarify the site's land use in the South Davis Specific Plan and ensure consistency with the proposed General Plan Amendment.

Rezone

The Preferred Site Plan would require a rezone to change the project site's zoning designation from Commercial Mixed Use (CMU) to a Planned Development (PD 2-17) (see Figure 3-9). Alternative B would require a rezone to change the zoning designation from CMU to PD 2-17 (Multi-Family Subarea) for the multi-family component of the project (6.4 acres) and PD 2-17 (Single-Family Subarea) for the single-family component (one acre) (see Figure 3-10).

CEQA Streamlining

The Legislature has adopted several statutory provisions to incentivize infill development within this region of the state that is consistent with the Metropolitan Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy (MTP/SCS) adopted by the Sacramento Area Council of Governments (SACOG) including but not limited to Public Resources Code sections 21155-21155.4, 21159.28, and 21099.

**Figure 3-3
 Preferred Site Plan**

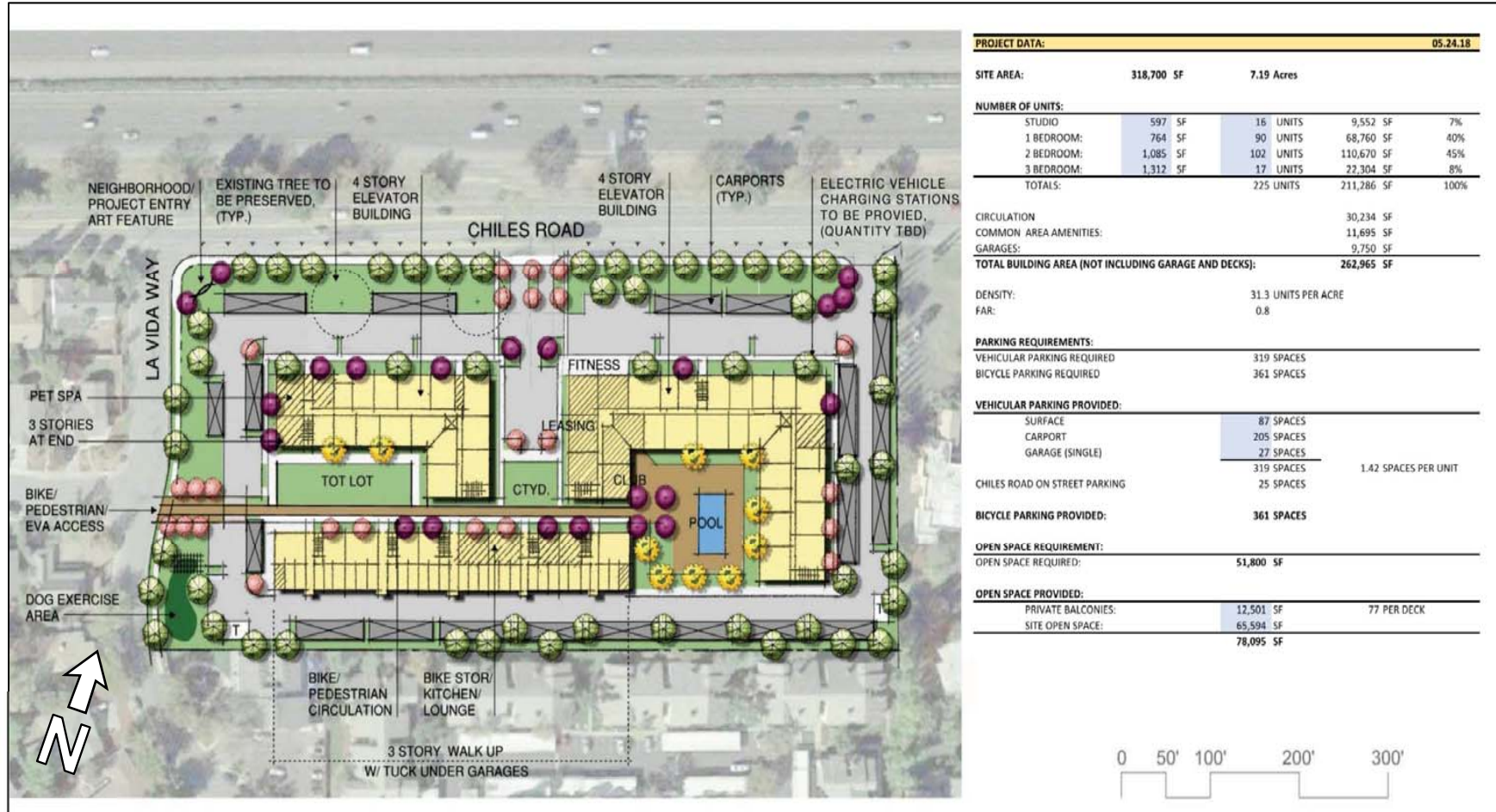


Figure 3-4
Site Plan – Alternative B



SITE AND ZONING INFORMATION

PARCEL 1 SITE AREA	6.28 ACRES
PARCEL 2 SITE AREA	0.95 ACRES
5 SINGLE FAMILY DETACHED 2-STORY HOMES ALLEY LOADED HOMES AT 2,000 - 2,300 SF	
PROPOSED ZONING	R-HD & R1/R2

PROJECT DATA

NUMBER OF UNITS		
STUDIO	12 UNITS	6%
1 BEDROOM	78 UNITS	40%
2 BEDROOM	88 UNITS	48%
3 BEDROOM	12 UNITS	6%
	188 UNITS	100%
MULTI-FAMILY DENSITY	29.95 UNITS PER ACRE	

VEHICULAR PARKING REQUIRED	266 SPACES (1.41 SPACES PER UNIT)
BICYCLE PARKING REQUIRED	304 SPACES
VEHICULAR PARKING PROVIDED	270 SPACES (1.44 SPACES PER UNIT)
BICYCLE PARKING PROVIDED	304 SPACES

Figure 3-5
Existing and Proposed General Plan Land Use Designations: Preferred Site Plan

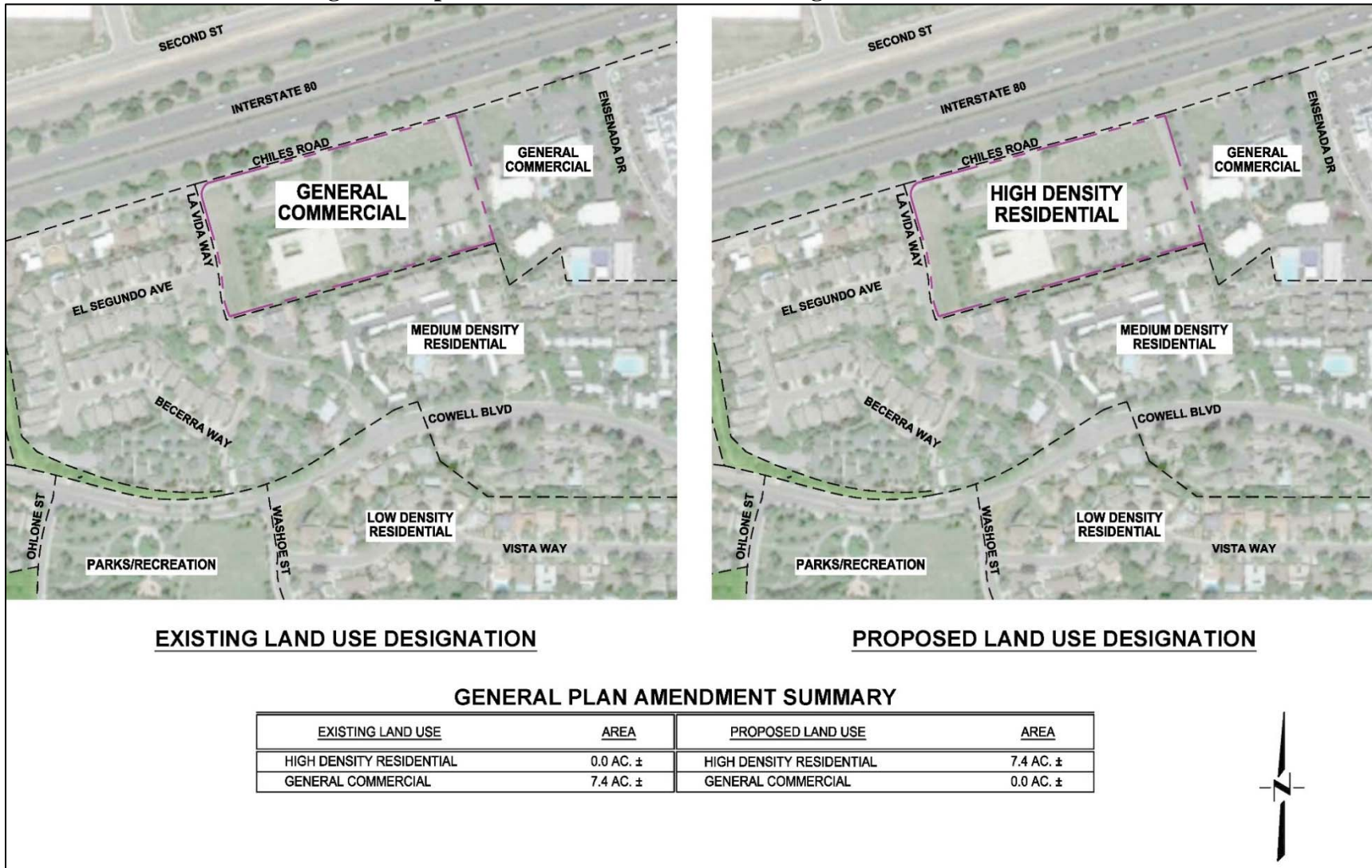


Figure 3-6
Existing and Proposed General Plan Land Use Designations: Alternative B

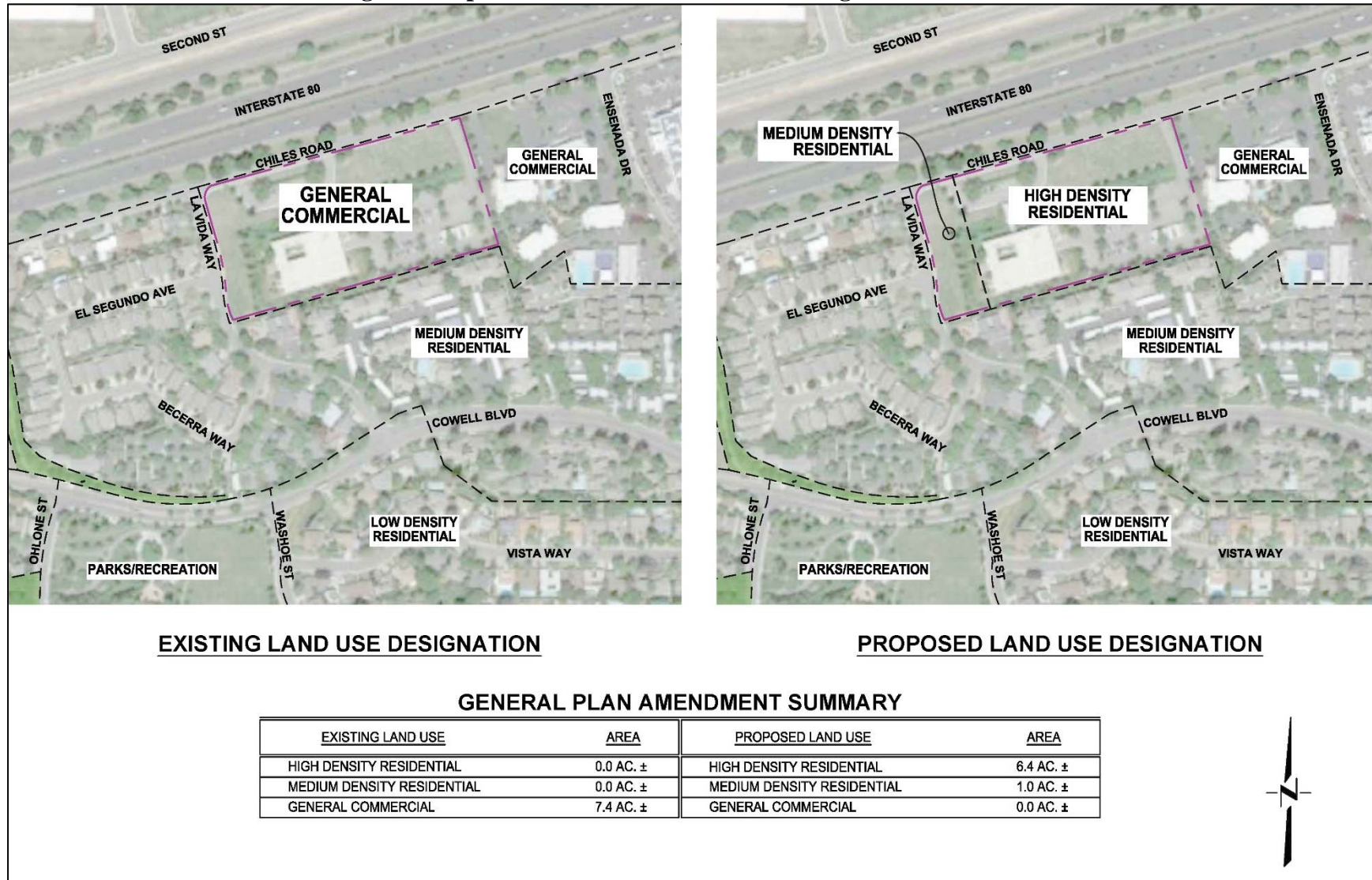


Figure 3-7
Existing and Proposed Specific Plan Land Use Designations: Preferred Site Plan

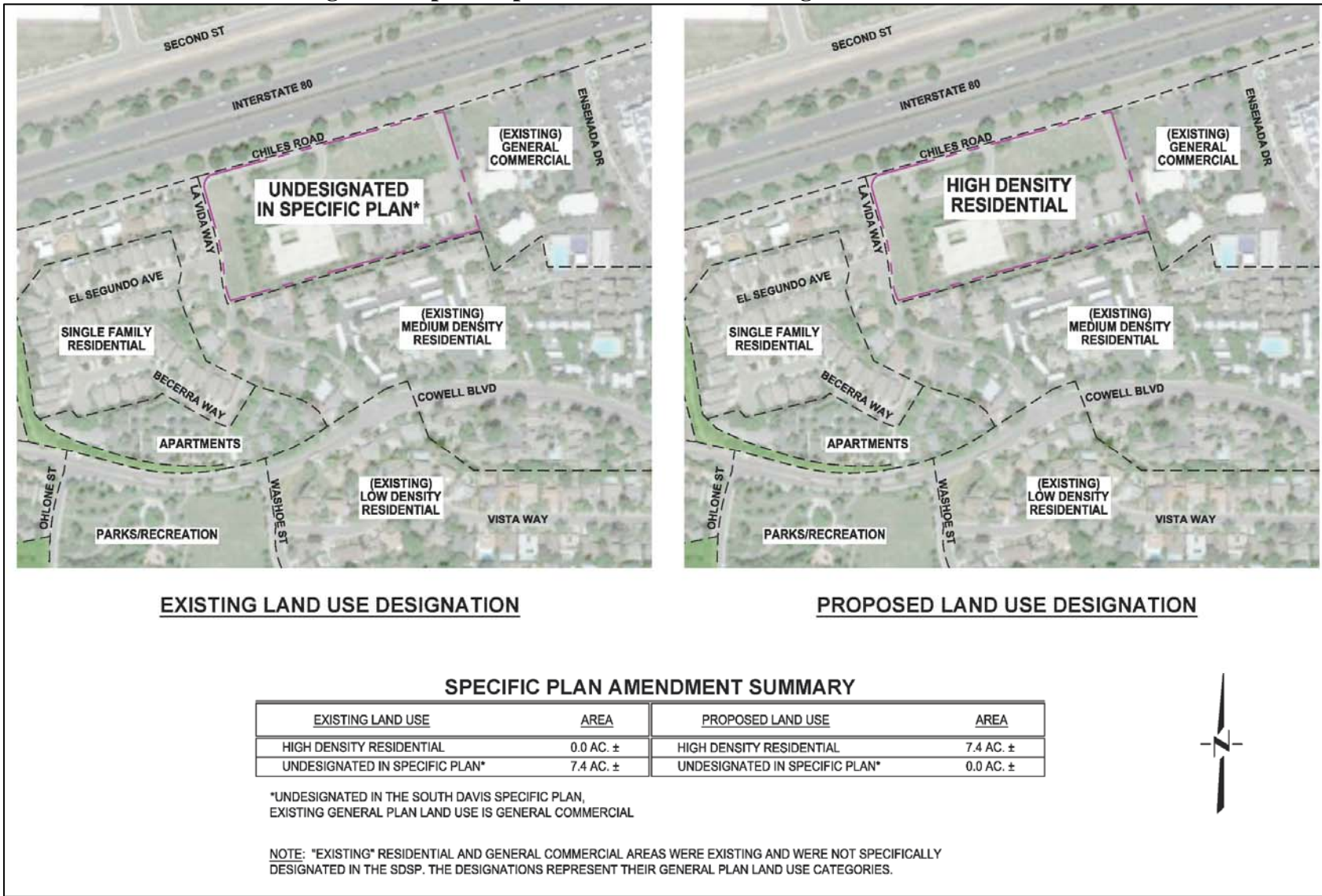


Figure 3-8
Existing and Proposed Specific Plan Land Use Designations: Alternative B

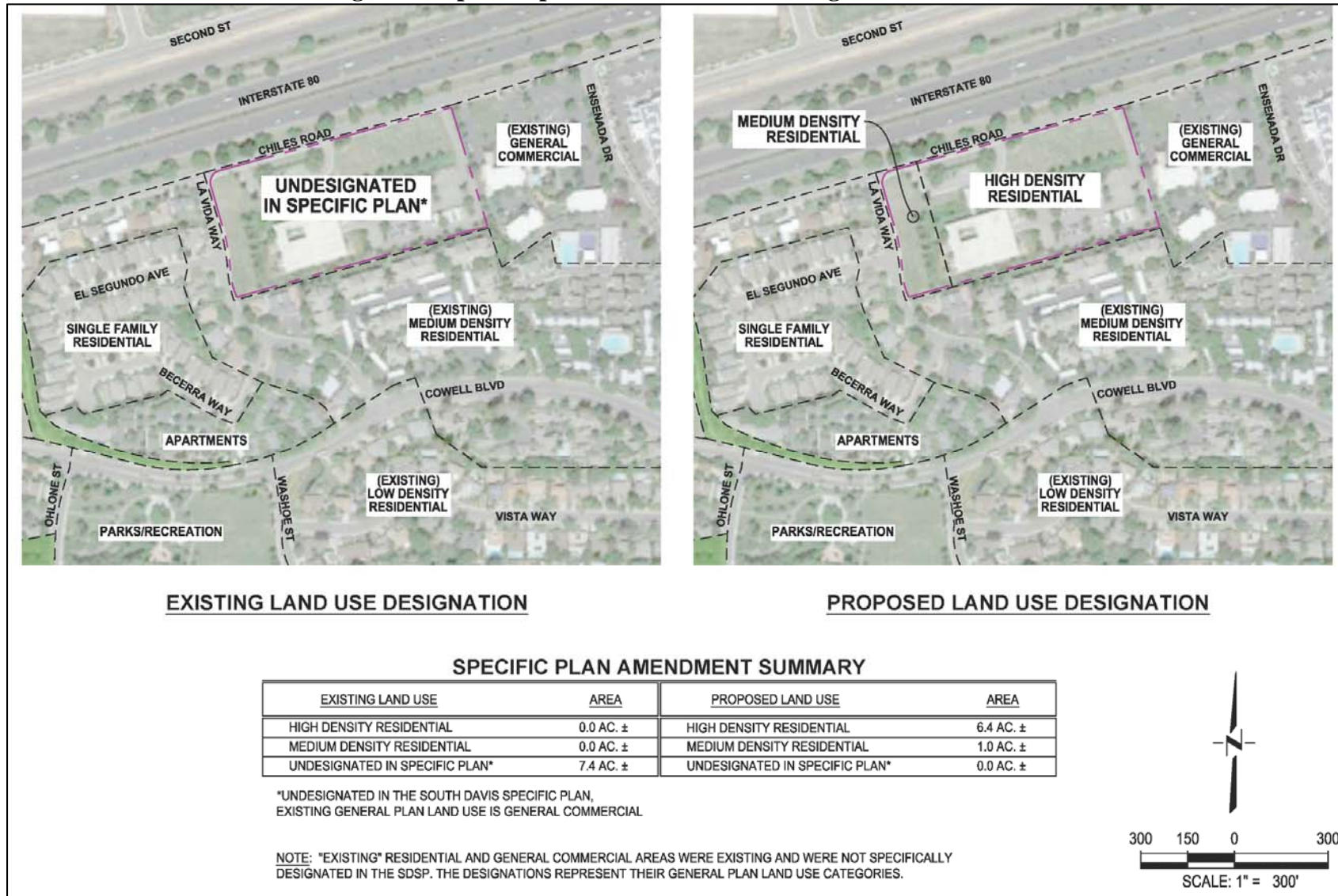
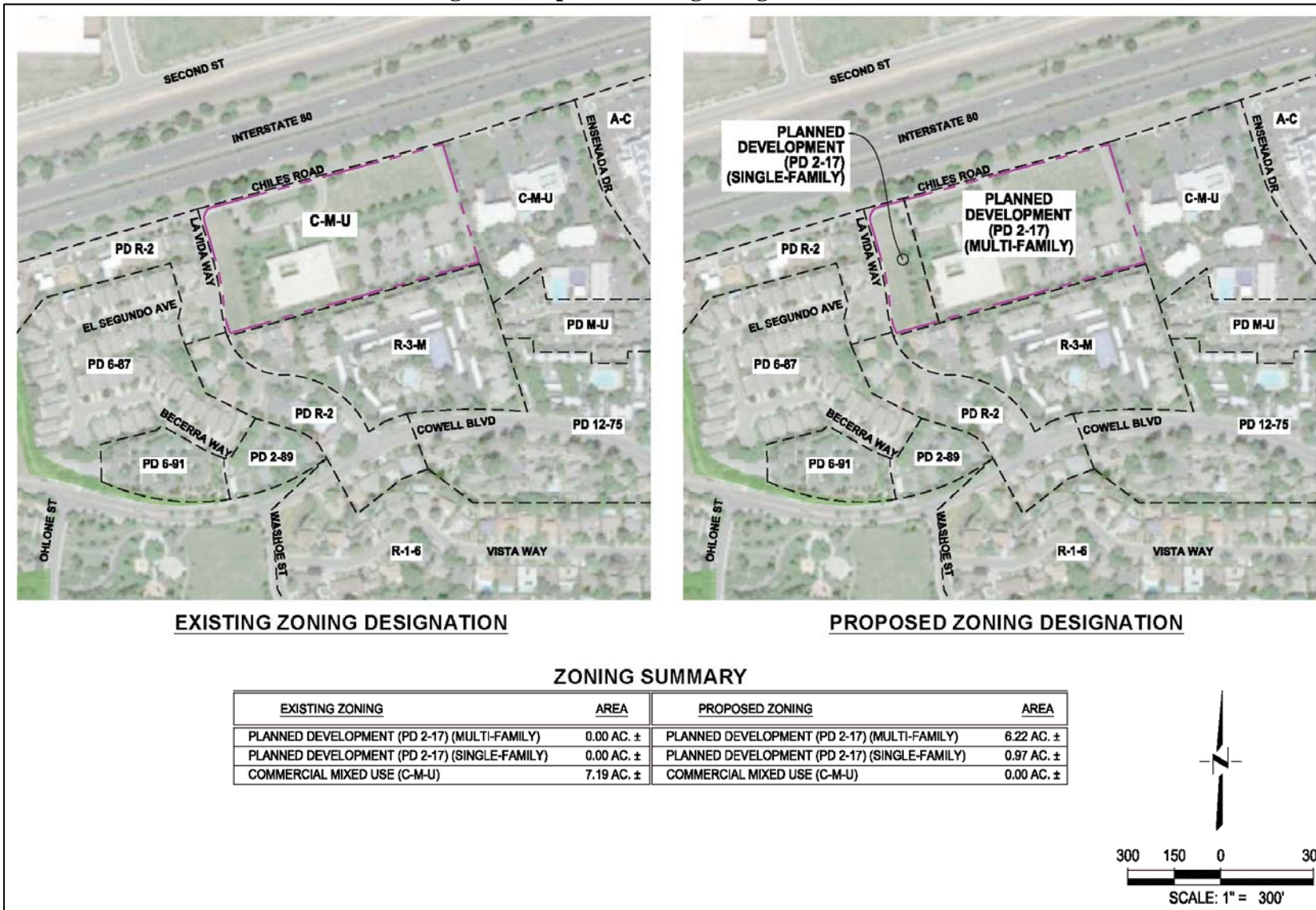


Figure 3-9
Existing and Proposed Zoning Designations: Preferred Site Plan



Figure 3-10
Existing and Proposed Zoning Designations: Alternative B



SACOG has provided letters to the City of Davis, included as Appendix A to this EIR, indicating that both the Preferred Site Plan and Alternative B are consistent with SACOG's MTP/SCS. Streamlining benefits applicable to qualifying in-fill projects that are consistent with SACOG's MTP/SCS include the following:

1. The EIR is not required to reference, describe, or discuss (1) growth inducing impacts, or (2) any project specific or cumulative impacts from cars and light-duty truck trips generated by the project on global warming or the regional transportation network. (Pub. Resources Code, § 21159.28, subd. (a).)
2. Alternative locations, densities, and building intensities to the proposed project need not be considered. (Pub. Resources Code, § 21159.28, subd. (b) and 21155.2, subd. (c)(2).)
3. Aesthetic and parking impacts should not be considered significant impacts on the environment. (Pub. Resources Code, § 21099, subd. (d)(1).)

Per the letters provided by SACOG, the project site is located within a Transit Priority Area. Transit Priority Areas are areas of the region within one-half mile of a major transit stop or an existing or planned high-quality transit corridor included in the MTP/SCS. The project is entirely within one-half mile of the Cowell Boulevard high quality transit corridor in the MTP/SCS. In addition, the site is located within a half mile of Drummond Avenue to the west and Mace Boulevard to the east, both of which are considered high quality transit corridors in the MTP/SCS.

Furthermore, the proposed project is an infill project within the Established Community designation of the MTP/SCS for the City of Davis. Within the Established Community, the MTP/SCS forecasts a range of low to high density residential, commercial, office, and industrial uses.

As discussed in greater detail below, the Preferred Site Plan would develop the project site at a density of 30 units per acre. Alternative B would develop the site at an overall density of 27 units per acre. Both development scenarios would include development of multi-family buildings with up to four stories. Thus, the project's land uses fall within the aforementioned range of general uses, densities, and building intensities. Therefore, development at the proposed densities is consistent with the build out assumptions for the area within the Established Community area of the MTP/SCS. Based on the above, the City intends to streamline the 3820 Chiles Road EIR pursuant to PRC 21159.28.

Proposed Buildings and Site Layout

The Preferred Site Plan would include a total of three multi-family residential buildings, totaling approximately 262,965 sf of building area, clustered near the center of the project site. The easternmost building would include four stories, with heights stepping down to three stories for the remaining two buildings to the west. While the building heights have not been finalized, the four-story building is anticipated to be less than 48 feet and the three-story buildings would be less than 38 feet. The Preferred Site Plan would include three courtyard areas, a tot lot play area, a pool, and bike/pedestrian access providing a central amenity corridor between the buildings. A total of 225 rental units would be provided, including 16 studios (597 sf), 90 one-bedroom units

(764 sf), 102 two-bedroom units (1,085 sf), and 17 three-bedroom units (1,312 sf). Overall, the Preferred Site Plan would include a total of 361 bedrooms. The southernmost building would include three-story walk up apartments with tuck-under garages, bike storage, and a kitchen/lounge. The first floor of the eastern building would include a fitness center, a leasing office, and a clubhouse area adjacent to the pool.

A linear green buffer would be located along the La Vida Way frontage with opportunities for shared uses between existing surrounding neighborhood residents as well as the future residents of the proposed multi-family development. The approximately 40- to 70-foot-wide open space area is anticipated to include a dog exercise area, a shade structure, seating areas, vegetated swales, and various landscaping elements, including new shade trees. Combined with the on-site circulation system, the open space area would provide an approximately 200-foot-wide buffer between the existing single-family residences on the west side of La Vida Way and the proposed multi-family units. The exterior façade of the northernmost on-site building would be located approximately 200 feet south of the nearest I-80 freeway travel lane.

Alternative B would include a total of approximately 188 apartment units, including 12 studios, 76 one-bedroom units, 88 two-bedroom units, and 12 three-bedroom units, resulting in a total of 300 bedrooms. In addition, the western portion of the site fronting La Vida Way would include five detached, two-story, single-family homes ranging from 2,000 to 2,300 sf. The single-family homes would front onto a proposed alley to the east of the buildings. Sole access to the alley would be provided by a new driveway connecting to La Vida Way.

Alternative B would include a pool and courtyard area at the center of the site, with a clubhouse located to the north of the pool. The pool/courtyard area would be encircled by the proposed multi-family buildings. A tot lot play area would be located west of the courtyard area.

Table 3-1 below provides a summary of the unit mix and number of bedrooms that would be included in each of the two development scenarios.

Table 3-1 Proposed Unit Mix		
Unit Type	Number of Units	
	Preferred Site Plan Alternative	Alternative B
Studio	16	12
One-Bedroom	90	76
Two-Bedroom	102	88
Three-Bedroom	17	12
Single-Family	0	5
Total Units:	225	193

Parking, Access, and Circulation

For the Preferred Site Plan, primary vehicle access to the proposed project site would be provided by a proposed driveway connecting to Chiles Road to the north of the site. The access point would

allow for both left and right turns in and out of the site. A secondary access near the northeast corner of the site will be limited to right turns (outbound traffic only). Vehicular access from La Vida Way would be limited to emergency vehicles.

A bicycle and pedestrian path would extend westward from the center of the site, joining with La Vida Way by way of the emergency vehicle access point at the site's western boundary. On-site vehicular circulation would be provided by a driveway that would loop around the buildings at the center of the site. The Preferred Site Plan would include a total of 319 on-site parking spaces, including 27 garage spaces, 205 carport spaces, and 87 surface parking spaces. In addition, the Preferred Site Plan would include 361 bicycle parking spaces. It should be noted that the Preferred Site Plan would meet the required number of vehicular and bicycle parking spaces required per the City's Municipal Code.

Alternative B would include a similar on-site circulation system as the Preferred Site Plan, with one full-access driveway and one right-turn only driveway provided at the Chiles Road frontage. However, as noted above, an alley would be situated at the western portion of the site to provide access to the single-family homes. Reciprocal access would not be provided between the multi-family development area and the alley. Parking would be provided in the form of covered carports at the first floor of the proposed multi-family buildings rather than detached carports around the perimeter of the on-site driveway. A total of 270 on-site vehicle parking spaces and 304 bicycle parking spaces would be provided for the multi-family development under Alternative B, which would be consistent with the amount of vehicle and bike parking spaces required per the City's Municipal Code. Parking for the single-family homes will comply with City requirements. Both alternatives would retain the existing 25 street parking spaces along Chiles Road.

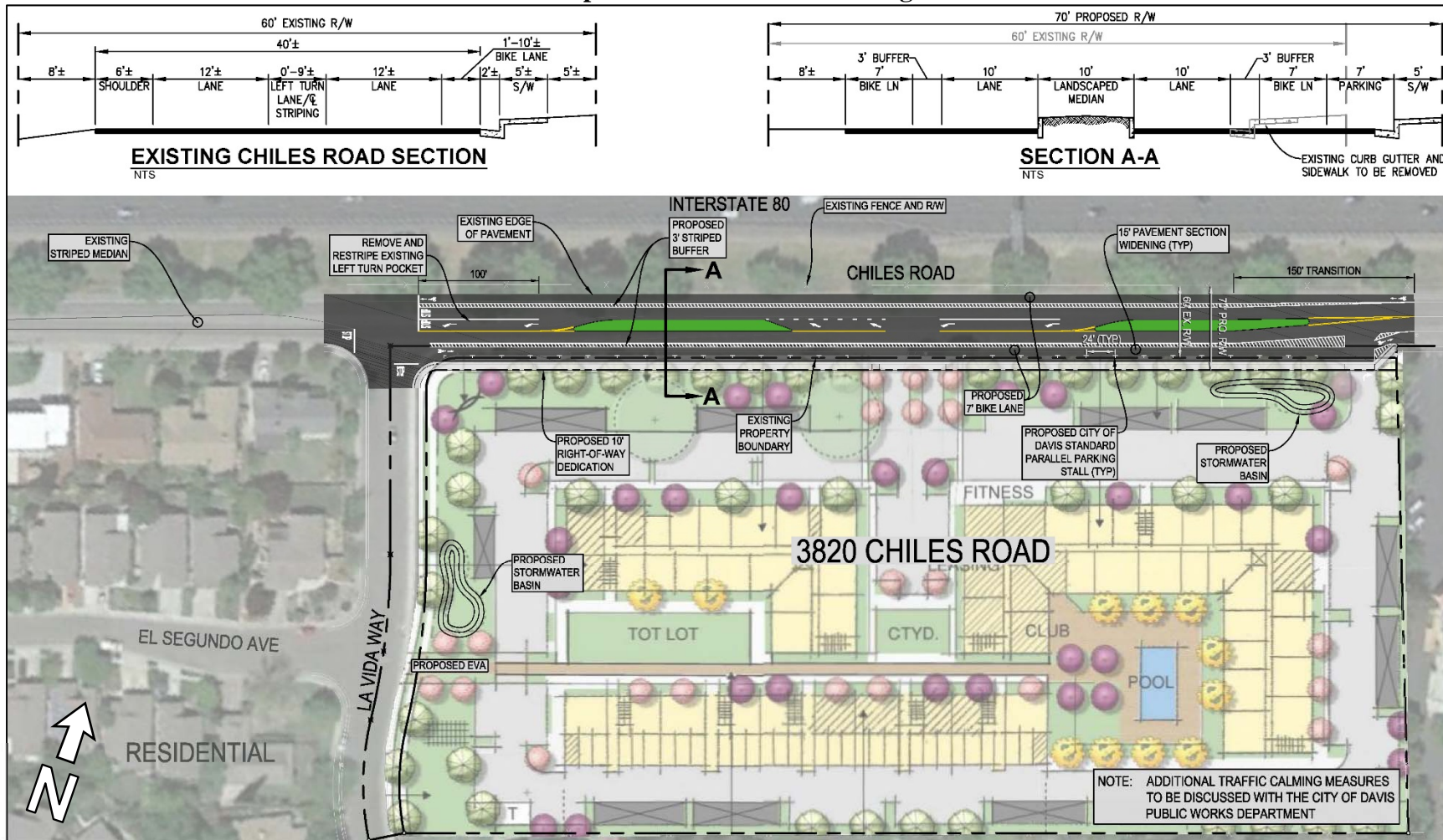
For both alternatives, the southern edge of Chiles Road along the project frontage would be widened by approximately 15 feet to create adequate width to provide a planted median and lane (travel and bike) widths in accordance with current City standards (see Figure 3-11). In order to accommodate the roadway widening, the project would include a 10-foot right-of-way dedication at the site's northern boundary. Additional roadway improvements would include the provision of a three-way stop sign at Chiles Road and La Vida Way to further slow traffic and create 'gaps' in the flow of traffic.

Alternative Transportation

Both alternatives would include dedicated bike and pedestrian access to La Vida Way, which would allow future residents to access the City's existing off-street bike path network located west of the site at Bercerra Way. In addition, the project would widen Chiles Road along the project frontage to provide a buffered bike lane. The project site is within a Transit Priority Area, as defined by SACOG, and within 1,000 feet of the Cowell Boulevard high quality transit corridor, which serves both the east and west bound routes of the P and Q Unitrans bus lines.

In addition, Cowell Boulevard is served by Yolobus Routes 44 and 231, which provide express transit to and from downtown Sacramento. Other proximate roadways include Chiles Road, La Vida Way, and Ensenada Drive, which supports the Yolobus Route 44. The walk time to both Yolobus and Unitrans bus stops is less than three minutes from the site.

Figure 3-11
Proposed Chiles Road Widening



Landscaping

For the Preferred Site Plan, the proposed project would include approximately 107,000 sf of outdoor open space/landscaping, which would be owned and maintained by the project applicant. A 30- to 35-foot wide, four-foot tall landscaped berm would be provided along the majority of the Chiles Road frontage (see Figure 3-12). On-site landscaping would include drought-tolerant, low water use species, including California natives, as well as species identified as “Arboretum All-Stars” by the UC Davis Arboretum. Plant species would be selected for their low maintenance requirements, hardiness, and low water demand. Landscape irrigation would be comprised of a low volume subsurface drip irrigation system, which would help to limit water usage by reducing overwatering and overspray.

Utilities and Service Systems

Domestic and fire water connections would be provided at two locations on the site: 1) at the existing eight-inch water main in Chiles Road; and 2) at the existing eight-inch water main in La Vida Way. The supply for fire water would be looped through the parking lot, around the south side of the proposed buildings. Water supply service would be provided by the City of Davis.

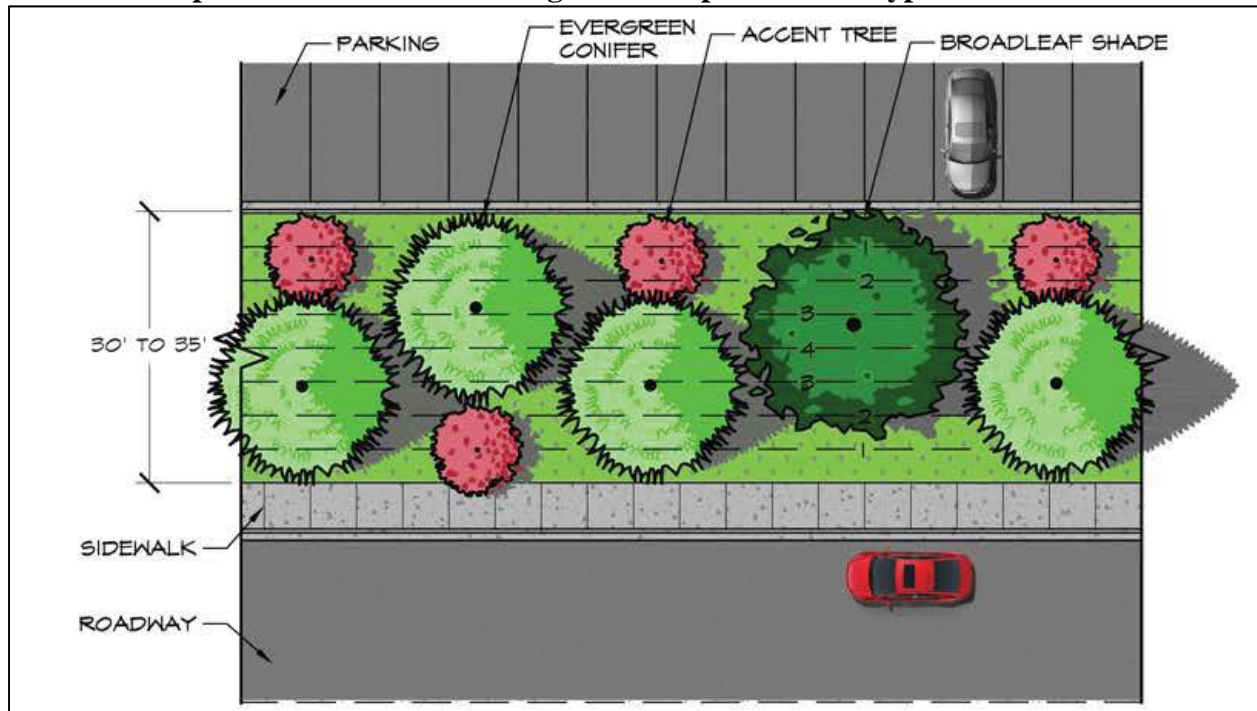
Wastewater service to the site would be provided by the City by way of a new connection to the City’s existing eight-inch sewer main located in La Vida Way. The connection would be made at a single point on the existing wastewater main, and would connect to project infrastructure near the midpoint or ends of the proposed buildings. An existing six-inch sewer stub, located on the western portion of the project site near the intersection of El Segundo Avenue and La Vida Way, may be used as the project point of connection if the location and depth are adequate to serve the proposed project.

The proposed project would include several low-impact development (LID) features, including bio-detention basins and vegetated swales, to detain and treat stormwater runoff from on-site impervious surfaces. In addition, permeable pavement may be used to allow for increased infiltration of runoff. The LIDs would be interspersed throughout the site. Two bio-detention basins would be located near the storm drain points of connection at La Vida Way and Chiles Road, respectively. Drainage outlets from the detention basins would include connections to the existing 24-inch storm drain mains in La Vida Way and Chiles Road. It should be noted that while both alternatives would involve the use of standard paving materials for most on-site parking spaces, limited areas of permeable pavement may be used to allow for stormwater infiltration.

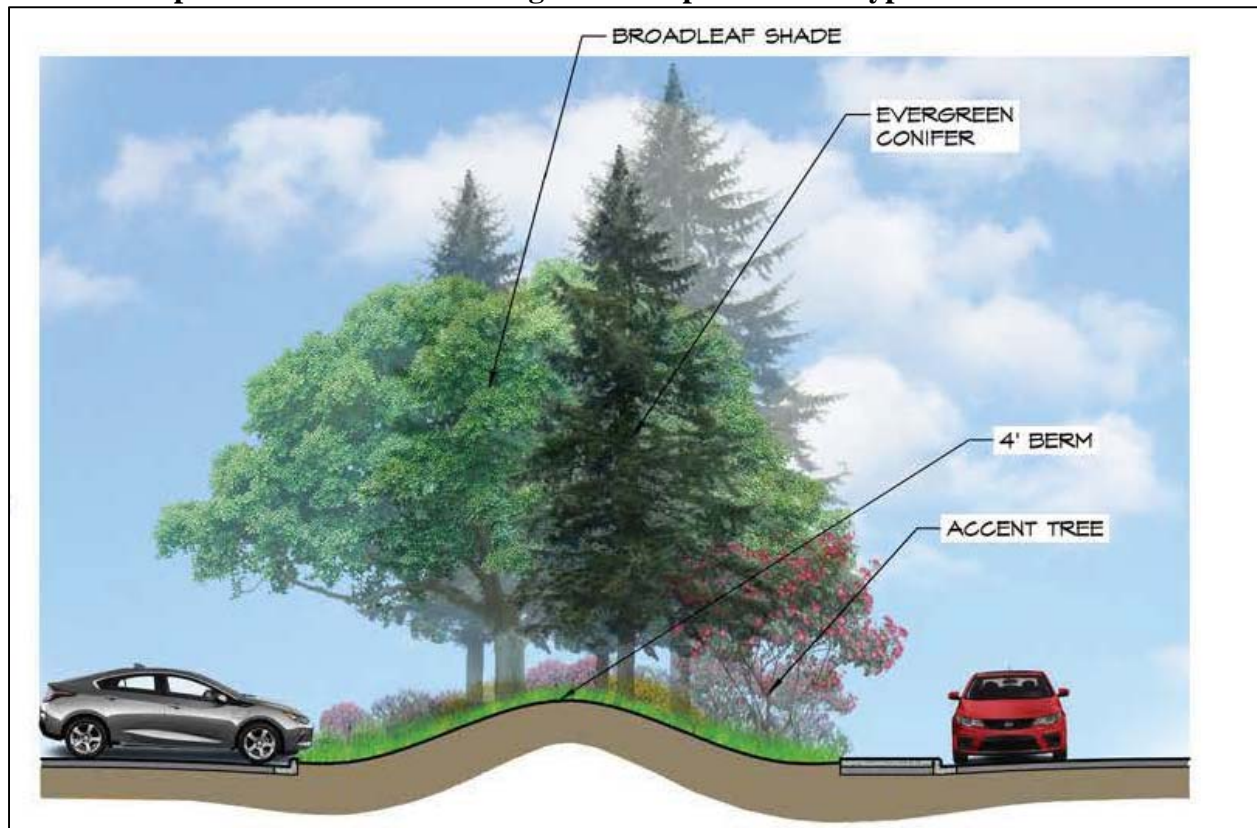
Sustainability

The proposed project would incorporate sustainability strategies and features consistent with the City of Davis’ Climate Action and Adaptation Plan (CAAP). Structures included in the proposed project would be designed to meet California’s 2016 Building Energy Efficiency (CalGreen) Standards and would include various other sustainability strategies to ensure the project achieves the equivalency of a Gold designation in Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED), from the U.S. Green Building Council (USGBC).

Figure 3-12
Proposed Chiles Road Frontage Landscaped Buffer: Typical Plan View



Proposed Chiles Road Frontage Landscaped Buffer: Typical Section View



While the specific details will need to be further determined and refined, sustainability strategies that the project is contemplating that could achieve LEED Gold equivalency are presented below:

Energy

- High-performing building envelope;
- Solar shading and building orientation to:
 - Increase passive heating in winter;
 - Reduce unwanted heat gain in summer;
 - Optimize daylighting strategies; and
 - Reduce glare;
- Efficient lighting and control systems;
- Natural ventilation;
- Efficient mechanical systems;
- Energy performance metering and tracking; and
- Carport-mounted photovoltaic systems.

Site Features

- Electric vehicle charging stations;
- Native plant landscaping;
- Stormwater management through green infrastructure and LIDs;
- Permeable paving and high solar reflective index hardscape;
- Exterior lighting designed to avoid light pollution;
- Car sharing spaces;
- Bicycle parking;
- Pedestrian-friendly building scale;
- Located within walking distance to essential services at the El Macero Shopping Center and two separate transit systems; and
- Located within close proximity to the City's existing off-street bicycle/pedestrian system.

Water

- Efficient irrigation through the use of drip irrigation and moisture sensors;
- Drought tolerant plantings; and
- Low-flow indoor plumbing fixtures.

Construction

- Use of recycled and regionally sourced materials;
- Construction and demolition waste landfill diversion;
- Construction indoor air quality best management practices; and
- Building systems commissioning.

Occupant Health and Engagement

- Nontoxic materials and low-emitting adhesives, sealants, and paints;
- Mechanical system designed to optimize occupant thermal comfort;
- Occupant control of lighting and thermal comfort systems;
- Extensive views to the outdoors;
- Green building education signage and outreach; and
- Tenant sustainability engagement programs and games.

3.7 REQUESTED ENTITLEMENTS

The following section presents the discretionary and ministerial actions that would be required to implement the proposed project.

City of Davis Discretionary Approvals

Implementation of the proposed project would require the following entitlements from the City of Davis:

1. Certification of the EIR and adoption of the Mitigation Monitoring Plan. Before the City can approve the proposed project, the City must certify that the EIR was completed in compliance with the requirements of CEQA, that the decision-making body has reviewed and considered the information in the EIR, and that the EIR reflects the independent judgment of the City of Davis. Approval of the EIR also requires adoption of a Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Plan (MMRP), which specifies the methods for monitoring mitigation measures required to eliminate or reduce the project's significant effects on the environment. The City would also be required to adopt Findings of Fact, and for any impacts determined to be significant and unavoidable, a Statement of Overriding Considerations, as part of project approval.
2. General Plan Land Use Amendments. The proposed project would require a GPA to change the site's designation from General Commercial to either: (1) RHD (Preferred Site Plan); or (2) RHD (6.4 acres) and RMD (one acre) (Alternative B).
3. South Davis Specific Plan Text Amendments. The Preferred Site Plan would require an amendment to the South Davis Specific Plan to designate the site Residential High Density. Alternative B would designate the eastern, multi-family portion of the site as Residential High Density, while the western, single-family portion of the site would be designated Residential Medium Density.
4. Rezone. The proposed project would require a rezone to change the site's zoning designation from CMU to either: (1) PD 2-17 (Preferred Site Plan); or (2) PD 2-17 (Multi-Family Subarea) (6.4 acres) and PD 2-17 (Single-Family Subarea) (one acre) (Alternative B).
5. Project Individualized Affordable Housing Plan.
6. Final Planned Development, Site Plan and Architectural Review, and (Alternative B only) Tentative Subdivision Map. The aforementioned items are anticipated for consideration post-entitlement, subject to consistency with the above approvals.

Other City of Davis Ministerial Permits

1. Demolition permit for demolition of the 53,248-sf office building; and
2. Tree modification or removal permits for any trimming, modification or removal of trees protected under Chapter 37 of the City of Davis' Municipal Code.
3. Encroachment permit for work within the La Vida Way and Chiles Road right-of-ways.

Other Agency Permits and Approvals

1. Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board (CVRWQCB) – The proposed project would disturb more than one acre of land; therefore, the project would be required to obtain coverage under the National Pollution Discharge Elimination System through the Storm Water Pollution Prevention permitting program of the CVRWQCB; and
2. Yolo-Solano Air Quality Management District – Approval of air quality permits for construction-related activities and emissions.