

# SERRAMONTE BOULEVARD AND COLLINS AVENUE MASTER PLAN

## Town of Colma

Public Review Draft  
November 2019





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Public Review Draft  
November 2019

Prepared for



By **DYETT & BHATIA**  
Urban and Regional Planners

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# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



# Executive Summary

Serramonte Boulevard and Collins Avenue are two main corridors in the Town of Colma’s main economic center and some of the Town’s main civic uses. One of the Bay Area’s premier Auto Rows and regional-serving retail destinations are located on Serramonte Boulevard. The Town Hall and Colma Police Department are sited on El Camino Real, originally part of California’s historic mission trail. But the automobile-oriented streets and infrastructure within the Master Plan Area are difficult for pedestrians to navigate, and the area lacks a cohesive identity. To plan for the future for Serramonte Boulevard and Collins Avenue, this Serramonte Boulevard and Collins Avenue Master Plan aims to create public realm improvements aimed at supporting economic development, improving mobility for a variety of transportation modes, improving safety, and promoting sustainability in the public realm.

The Master Plan outlines a vision for this key commercial district and provides guidance for strategic improvements to circulation, streetscape, infrastructure, and aesthetics to improve the overall design and function of this important business community for the years to come. Specific objectives identified for the Master Plan include:

- **Streetscape and Traffic Improvements.** Carry out streetscape and traffic improvements to provide safe, accessible, attractive, and vibrant corridors with a cohesive design and aesthetic elements. Given the dominant nature of land uses—primarily automobile dealers— maintaining safe automobile access is vital to the continued success of the corridor.
- **Economic Development.** Support, retain and increase commercial business activities while fostering a dynamic and sustainable business district that can respond to changing market conditions.
- **Land Use and Urban Design.** Incorporate land use and urban design elements that sustain and enhance the function and unique identity of Serramonte Boulevard and Collins Avenue.

- **Sustainability.** Create design alternatives that promote sustainable development and green infrastructure along the corridor.

To fulfill these objectives, the Master Plan recommends changes within the right of way along both corridors that address pedestrian and vehicular safety and function, and establishes an overall urban design strategy for the Plan Area, with design standards and guidelines intended to regulate and direct both public realm improvements and private development.

Throughout the Plan Area, improved pedestrian safety measures, including mid-block crossings featuring push-button activated crossing beacons and pedestrian refuges, safe harbors, sidewalk bulb-outs, high-visibility crosswalks, and improved street lights, make a safer and a welcoming public realm. The public realm encompasses all streets, parks, green spaces, and other outdoor areas that are open and available to everyone. Street trees, colorful drought-tolerant planting, and bioretention areas to filter and retain stormwater enhance the public realm and add visual interest and sustainable functionality.

In addition, design standards and guidelines for wayfinding, street furniture, paving, and building form ensure the development of the area’s long-term identity and prosperity. Along the portion of Serramonte Boulevard between Junipero Serra Boulevard and El Camino Real (Serramonte West), a road diet would convert the existing four lane roadway to one lane in each direction with a center two-way left turn lane, providing improved driveway access, increased pedestrian safety, while maintaining sufficient vehicular capacity.

Upon completion, the Serramonte Boulevard and Collins Avenue Master Plan will strengthen this key commercial corridor and the Town of Colma as a whole. Planned streetscape improvements will help the corridor function better for all road users from a safety perspective, while establishing a more cohesive urban design and identity.



Serramonte West: Today



Serramonte West: With recommended improvements



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# INTRODUCTION

# Chapter 1: Introduction

Serramonte Boulevard and Collins Avenue together represent the Town of Colma’s economic engine. The corridor is home to one of the major auto rows in San Mateo County, as well as shopping centers and civic uses including Colma’s Town Hall and Police Station. In 2017, the City Council elected to develop a master plan for the area to guide improvements aimed at supporting economic development, improving mobility for a variety of transportation modes, and promoting sustainability in the public realm.

Implementation of the Serramonte Boulevard and Collins Avenue Master Plan will strengthen this key commercial corridor and the Town of Colma as a whole. Planned streetscape improvements will help the corridor function better for all road users from a safety perspective, while establishing a more cohesive urban design and identity.

This introductory chapter includes background information that provides context for the Serramonte Boulevard Collins Avenue Master Plan. It describes the purpose and objectives of the Master Plan, existing conditions in the Plan Area, the Master Plan’s relationship to other plans, the planning process and community outreach, and an overview of the Master Plan’s organization.

## 1.1 PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVES

The primary purpose of the Serramonte Boulevard and Collins Avenue Master Plan (Master Plan) is to improve the overall design, function and identity of the corridors with a view to supporting the Town of Colma’s main economic engine and one of the premier auto rows in the Bay Area. The Master Plan thus addresses the design of the right of way, connections and accessibility, safety and operational challenges, identity and character, sustainability, and green infrastructure.

The Master Plan outlines a vision for this key commercial district and provides guidance for strategic improvements to circulation, streetscape, infrastructure, and aesthetics to improve the overall design and function of this important business center in the years to come. Specific objectives identified for the Master Plan include:

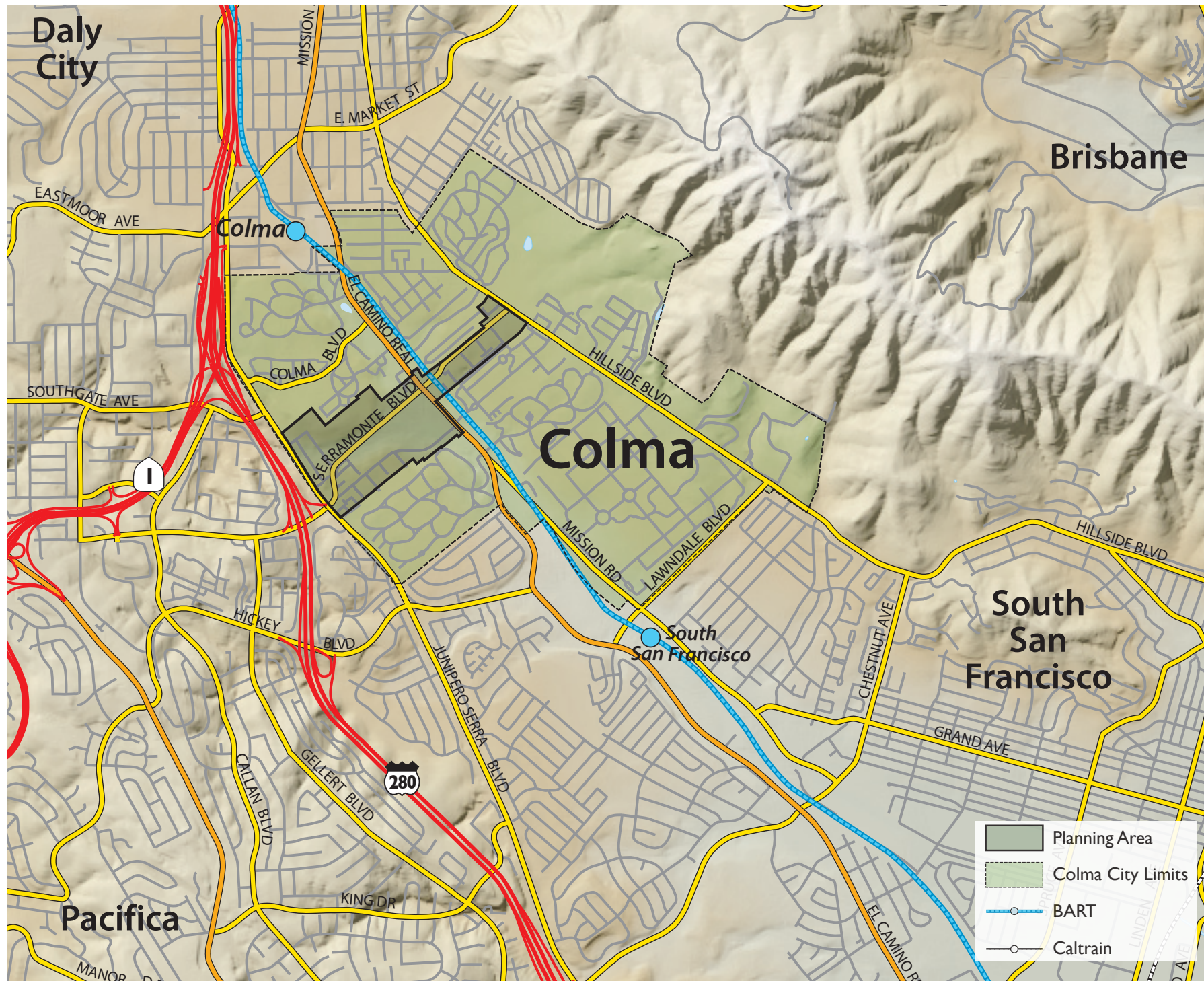
- **Streetscape and Traffic Improvements.** Carry out streetscape and traffic improvements to provide safe, accessible, attractive, and vibrant corridors with a cohesive design and aesthetic elements. Given the dominant nature of land uses—primarily automobile dealers— maintaining automobile access is vital to the continued success of the corridor.
- **Economic Development.** Support and increase commercial business activities while fostering a dynamic and sustainable business district that can respond to changing market conditions.
- **Land Use and Urban Design.** Incorporate land use and urban design elements that sustain and enhance the function and unique identity of Serramonte Boulevard and Collins Avenue.
- **Sustainability.** Create design alternatives that promote sustainable development and green infrastructure along the corridor.



Collins Avenue: Today



Collins Avenue: With recommended improvements



4 **Figure 1-1: Regional Context**

## 1.2 PLAN AREA AND CONTEXT

Colma is located between the cities of Daly City and South San Francisco in northern San Mateo County. To the east lies the San Bruno Mountain State Park, and along the western border of the Town lies the junction of Highway 1 and Interstate 280. As shown on Figure 1-1: Regional Context, El Camino Real, or State Route 82, runs north-south through the middle of Town, and BART runs underground and roughly parallel to the El Camino Real corridor, with a BART station just to the north of Town (Colma station, located in unincorporated San Mateo County) and to the south (South San Francisco station). As is indicated in the Regional Context map, the Serramonte Boulevard and Collins Avenue Master Plan Area (Plan Area) is located in the western portion of the Town of Colma.

Figure 1-2: Planning Area shows the extent of the Plan Area. Junipero Serra bounds the Plan Area to the west, and Hillside Boulevard to the east. The Plan Area includes the entire length of Serramonte Boulevard from Junipero Serra Boulevard to Hillside Boulevard, and Collins Avenue from its intersection with Serramonte Boulevard at the western end, and El Camino Real at the eastern end.

The Serramonte Boulevard and Collins Avenue corridors are vital east-west connectors through Colma, and Serramonte Boulevard is the Town's primary commercial corridor.

### EXISTING CONDITIONS

#### LAND USES

The 138-acre Plan Area comprises 34 properties developed primarily with commercial, industrial and public uses. The majority of the properties fronting Serramonte Boulevard are occupied by car dealerships, as well as commercial centers on the western end, and the Town of Colma's Town Hall and police station at El Camino Real. Collins Avenue properties are occupied by an assortment of light industrial and auto-dealership-serving uses, as

well as an assisted living community located at El Camino Real. The Kohl's site, which was identified in the 2014 Town of Colma Land Use and Urban Design Strategy as a location for a Town Center mixed-use development, represents a significant opportunity site. The advent of autonomous vehicles and potential corresponding changes to automobile-oriented commercial uses' site utilization needs represent potential opportunities for the introduction of new or additional commercial uses along the corridor such as office or hotel. Development of these additional uses is, however, somewhat restricted by existing height and Floor-Area-Ratio (FAR) standards along the corridors.

## URBAN DESIGN

While these two corridors are the home of the Town of Colma's economic engine, they lack cohesion in urban design and lack a sense of place due to varying setbacks, landscaping, and public realm treatments. Opportunities thus exist to implement changes to the public right of way and with a view to the creation of a more inviting public realm, as well as to incorporate sustainable design features such as green infrastructure and other low-water use plantings. Additionally, vacant or underutilized sites within the Plan Area present opportunities for development that contribute to a more attractive, cohesive identity along the corridors.

## MOBILITY

Both Serramonte Boulevard and Collins Avenue were found to have excess vehicular roadway capacity, meaning the width (in the case of Collins Avenue) or number (in the case of Serramonte Boulevard between Junipero Serra Boulevard and El Camino Real) of travel lanes in each case could be reduced without significant impacts to vehicle travel times. This excess vehicular roadway capacity presents opportunities to redistribute portions of the right of way to other roadway users or uses such as pedestrians, cyclists, parking or landscaping. Nevertheless, tradeoffs



Figure 1-2: Planning Area



Serramonte Boulevard: Today



Serramonte Boulevard: With recommended improvements

and decisions must be made regarding the redistribution of this excess right of way given that not all modes or uses can be, nor often should they be, accommodated within a given roadway. What's more, given the dominant nature of land uses—primarily automobile dealers—automobile access is vital to the continued success of the corridor.

### Serramonte Boulevard

Serramonte Boulevard is a four-lane east-west oriented arterial with 11-foot travel lanes. A raised, planted median is present on Serramonte Boulevard to separate east and westbound lanes, but tapers down and ends a short distance east of the intersection with Junipero Serra Boulevard. A small raised island is present at the Serramonte Boulevard and Collins Avenue intersection, which allows for a single line of eastbound traffic to access Collins Avenue directly while two lanes extend down Serramonte Boulevard. The posted speed limit along Serramonte Boulevard is 30 mph, however the excess roadway capacity lends to speeds beyond the posted limit. There are many driveways located along Serramonte Boulevard between Junipero Serra Boulevard and Hillside Avenue, however no center two-way left turn lane is present. Drivers wishing to make a left-turn into any of these driveways have to slow or stop in the travel lane to wait for an adequate gap in traffic.

Five-foot sidewalks exist on both sides of Serramonte Boulevard from Junipero Serra Boulevard to El Camino Real (Serramonte West); from El Camino Real to Hillside Boulevard sidewalks are provided on the south side of Serramonte Boulevard only (Serramonte East). Long expanses between pedestrian crossings along Serramonte Boulevard, however, often cause pedestrians to navigate dangerous crossings at uncontrolled points along the roadway. While no marked bicycle facilities are provided on Serramonte Boulevard, cyclists are permitted to ride in the roadway and/ or on sidewalks. Transit facilities adjacent to Serramonte Boulevard include Sam Trans Route 112, Route 120 and Route 122 at the intersection of Junipero Serra Boulevard and Serra-

monte Boulevard, providing service between the Colma Bay Area Rapid Transit (BART) Station and the Linda Mar Shopping Center in the City of Pacifica, between Colma BART Station and the Daily City BART Station, and between the South San Francisco BART Station and the Stonestown Shopping Center, respectively, and SamTrans Route ECR provides service between the Palo Alto Transit Center and the Daly City BART Station, stopping at the intersection of Serramonte Boulevard and El Camino Real.

### Collins Avenue

Collins Avenue is a two-lane east-west collector with 12-foot travel lanes. There is on-street parking along Collins Avenue between Serramonte Boulevard and El Camino Real. Collins Avenue is a heavily-traveled cut through route to access El Camino Real. The posted speed limit is 25 mph, however the wide travel lanes and lack of visual cues to slow down cause many motorists to travel at speeds higher than the posted speed limit, compromising the safety of both drivers and pedestrians. Continuous sidewalks are present along Collins Avenue with the exception of a 0.20 mile section near Serramonte Boulevard. No crosswalks are present at the intersection of Collins Avenue and Serramonte Boulevard, representing a major gap in pedestrian connectivity and a potential safety concern. While no marked bicycle facilities are provided on Collins Avenue, cyclists are permitted to ride in the roadway and/ or on sidewalks.

Collins Avenue is also a primary car-hauler off-loading zone serving the two corridors, however no designated locations for loading and unloading exist, which can result in congestion or blocking of vehicular traffic.

### 1.3 RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER PLANS

The Serramonte Boulevard and Collins Avenue Master Plan will function in the context of the plans below.

#### GENERAL PLAN UPDATE

A General Plan is a long-range planning document that acts as the foundation upon which all land use decisions are made, based on expressed community values. The General Plan is made up of a collection of “elements,” or chapters, that regulate different aspects of the Town’s built and natural environments. As of 2019, the Town of Colma is in the process of updating its General Plan to establish a vision and action plan for the Town’s long-term growth and development through 2040.

This Master Plan is intended to help shape the General Plan update and it is anticipated that its objectives and implementation actions will be incorporated into the appropriate elements.

#### TOWN OF COLMA LAND USE AND URBAN DESIGN STRATEGY

In 2014 a Land Use and Urban Design Strategy was prepared for the Town of Colma in the context of the General Plan update process. The Town of Colma Land Use and Urban Design Strategy presents a guiding land use and design framework for the General Plan’s forthcoming updated Land Use and Urban Design element, and is intended to inform and be integrated into the General Plan Update. The Serramonte Boulevard and Collins Avenue Master Plan is in line with and advances the following Land Use and Urban Design Strategy guiding principles:

- A Stronger Commercial Base, including the accommodation of expanded existing uses and the introduction of new uses that serve residents and visitors such as hotels and dining options.

- Improved Accessibility, including localized streetscape improvements that prioritize pedestrian movements, and building-to-street relationships that enhance the pedestrian realm will all help create an inviting urban environment.
- Cohesive Design Scheme, including intensification of development along and near corridors as well as a unified aesthetic.

#### TOWN OF COLMA MUNICIPAL CODE

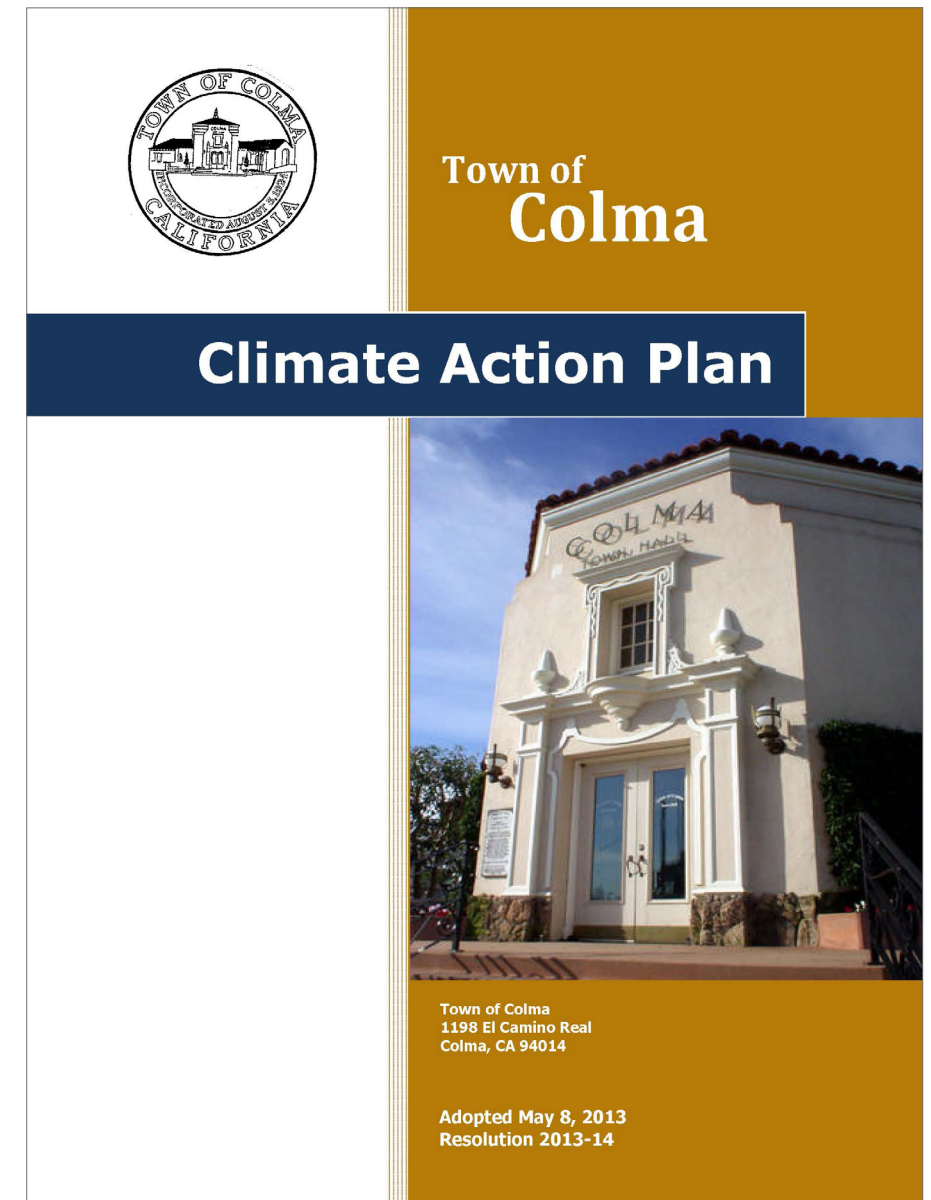
The Zoning Ordinance (Chapter 5 of the Colma Municipal Code) implements the General Plan’s land use policies by designating locations (“zones”) for specific types of land uses and physical standards for land development. Development standards include but are not limited to building height limits, maximum footprints of structures on a lot, required building setbacks from property lines, and landscaping requirements.

It is anticipated that development standards presented in Chapter 3: Streetscape and Urban Design will be ultimately be incorporated into the Zoning Ordinance through amendments to the ordinance.

#### TOWN OF COLMA CLIMATE ACTION PLAN

The 2013 Town of Colma Climate Action Plan serves as a guiding document that identifies measures and strategies that Colma can implement to reduce its Greenhouse Gas emissions (GHG) s, including energy efficiency requirements for residential and commercial projects, water conservation, bicycle lanes, green business certification programs, and recycling programs.

This Master Plan furthers the goals of the Climate Action Plan by improving walkability, and by implementing green streets and parking lot policies and guidance from San Mateo County.



The Master Plan will use other plans as guiding documents to advance existing goals and update implementation policies.



Stakeholders commenting on the Proposed Plan

## 1.4 MASTER PLAN PROCESS AND PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

### PLANNING PROCESS

The Serramonte Boulevard and Collins Avenue planning process began with community and stakeholder engagement as well as existing conditions research and field work to understand community priorities as well as site constraints and opportunities. Preliminary alternatives addressing community and stakeholder priorities as well as plan objectives were subsequently developed and analyzed. Stakeholders and decision-makers alike were given opportunities to review and provide input on the alternatives, which informed City Council's selection of alternatives to be carried forward to the Master Plan. Each step in the process was designed to allow the planning team to learn from Town residents, business and property owners, and decisionmakers about their needs and priorities, as well as to allow stakeholders and community members to provide feedback.

### RESEARCH AND ANALYSIS

Key research and analysis conducted in the context of the Master Plan included the following:

- **Existing Market Conditions Analysis.** The demographic, economic, and real estate conditions for the Master Plan study area were reviewed and analyzed, focusing on current retail sales volumes and General Fund revenue trends within the study area, and implications of the demographic, economic, fiscal and real estate findings for the current project.
- **Existing Physical Conditions Survey.** The existing physical conditions and boundaries of the study area were mapped, including street centerlines as a basis for determining the feasibility and costs of the potential improvements.

- **Site Reconnaissance/ Opportunities and Constraints.** Planning team members performed visual site inspections in early 2018 to assess existing site conditions, as well as identify potential opportunities and constraints in the context of proposed improvements.
- **Existing Transportation Conditions Data Collection and Analysis.** Field visits were conducted to record and analyze existing transportation conditions for vehicles, pedestrians and bicycles during peak travel time periods. Level of service and queuing analyses were performed for roadways and intersections for existing and future (10-year) conditions.
- **Photometric Survey.** A photometric survey was conducted to map existing lighting and illumination conditions along the corridor.
- **Alternatives Traffic Analysis.** A roadway and intersection vehicular capacity analysis of the center turn lane preferred alternative on Serramonte Boulevard was conducted, comparing preferred alternative conditions to Master Plan conditions.
- **Alternatives Costing Estimates.** High-level cost estimates were developed as a decision-making tool. Both high and low-cost options were evaluated for the sake of comparison. These options were differentiated primarily by materials; both retained the functionality of each corridor segment preferred alternative.
- **Cost-Benefit Analysis.** Using the costing estimates generated previously, the costs and benefits of implementing the streetscape improvements were analyzed in correspondence with the Master Plan. Analysis weighed the projected cost of public improvements with anticipated additional investment and added revenue generation to offset improvement costs.



Sticker activity at stakeholders meeting in May 2018



## COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Community engagement, adopted City policies and established priorities, and technical analysis of current conditions have all informed development of the Master Plan. Community engagement activities conducted throughout the planning process included stakeholder sessions and community-wide workshops, an online survey, and check-ins with and City Council. These engagement activities are summarized below. Appendix A includes engagement activity summary reports and photos.

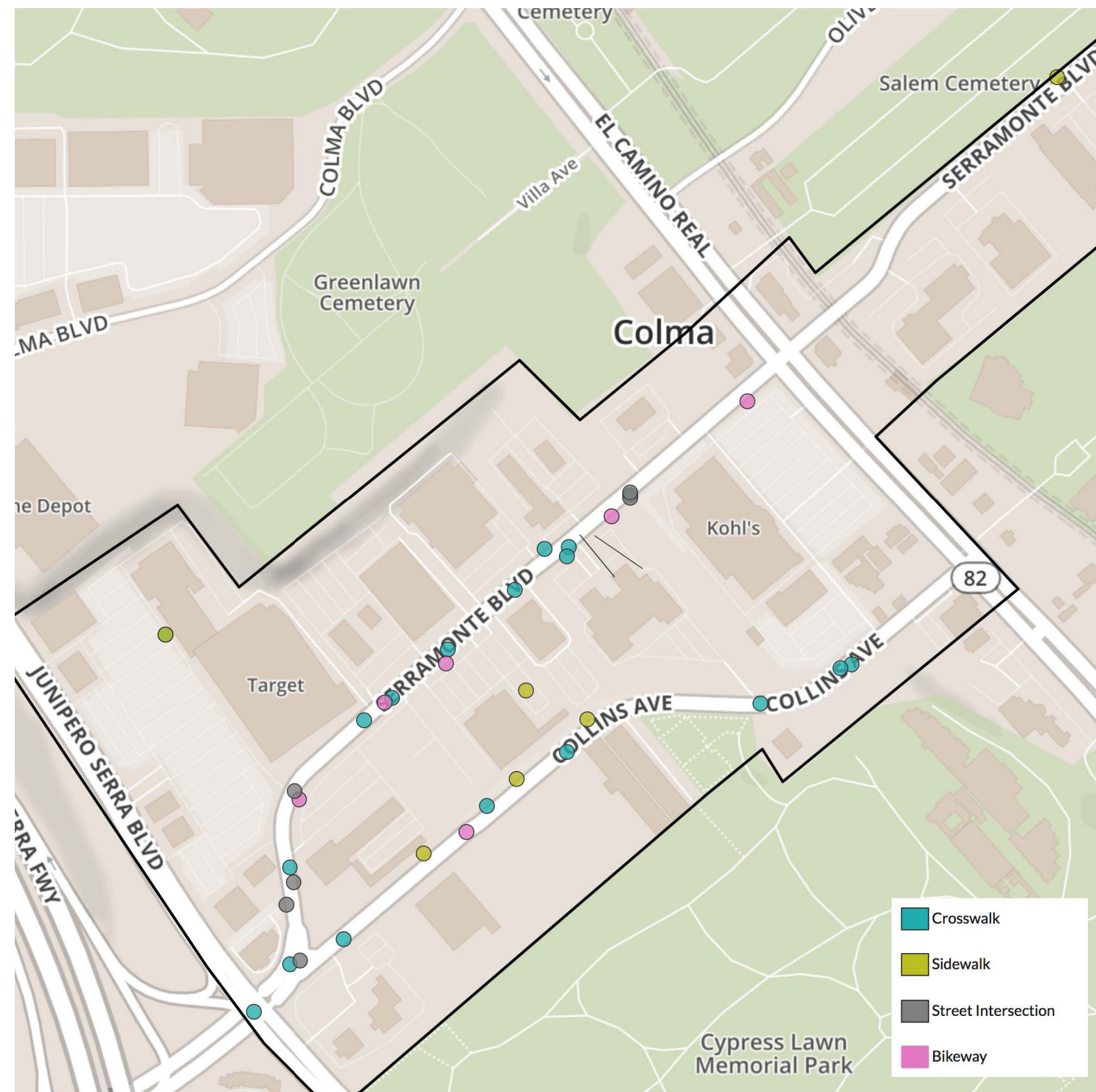
## STAKEHOLDER INTERVIEWS

Twelve stakeholders participated in stakeholder interviews in February 2018 at the Town's Police Department. The format was open-ended to allow for a wide range of discussion and input. The purpose of the interviews was to learn about stakeholders' experiences living, working, and owning businesses and property in the Corridor, and to learn from their perspectives about what is working well, and not so well, in the study area. Specifically, interviewees were asked about their priorities and vision for the Corridors, as well as key issues and challenges in the corridor's operation and development.

## ONLINE SURVEY

In order to gather input from the entire Colma community on community members' vision and priorities for the Plan Area, a survey was available online from February 2, 2018 to March 31, 2018. Community members were also provided with the opportunity to complete hard copies of the survey at a Colma senior lunch.

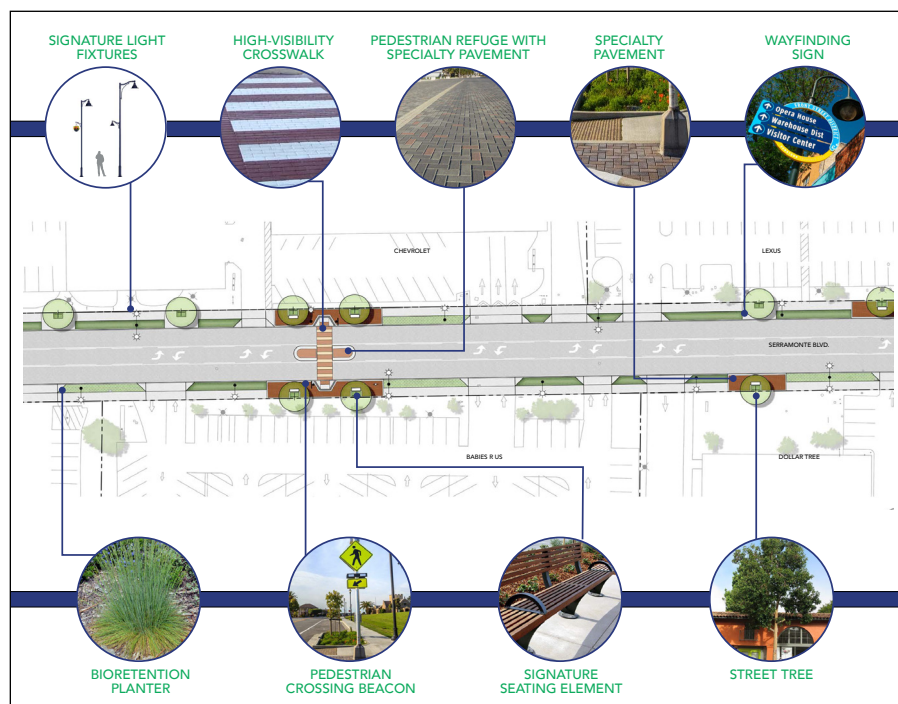
The online survey focused on the community's overall impressions of the corridors and potential improvements that could be made to the corridors in terms of ameliorating aesthetics, multimodal access and safety and overall enjoyment of one's time spent in the area. The survey was developed using Maptionnaire, an online survey tool. A total of 34 completed responses were received.



Online Survey Responses to the question, "Please pin to the map the types of improvements that you believe should be made along Serramonte Boulevard and Collins Avenue."



Community members commenting on Proposed Plan



Prototypical streetscape elements for the Serramonte Boulevard Proposed Plan (featured on board above)

## STAKEHOLDER REVIEW SESSION

Project stakeholders were invited to provide feedback on preliminary concept alternatives at a lunchtime stakeholder meeting held on May 30, 2018 at the Colma Community Center. The planning team presented preliminary corridor concepts and potential design elements, and stakeholder input informed subsequent refinement of the concepts.

## COMMUNITY MEETING

A community workshop for the Master Plan was held in May of 2019 to allow community members and stakeholders to provide input on the preferred alternatives as selected by City Council. About 10 individuals participated and offered ideas about refinements to the alternatives.

## CITY COUNCIL MEETINGS

A total of five City Council sessions were held in the context of the Serramonte Boulevard and Collins Avenue Master Plan, including a kick-off meeting at the beginning of the project, three study sessions related to concept development and concept alternative selection, and a final meeting during which Council deliberated on and provided refinements to the draft Master Plan.

## COMMUNITY CONCERNS AND PRIORITIES

Common themes among the input received through the outreach methods listed above include:

### PEDESTRIAN COMFORT AND SAFETY

- Serramonte Boulevard should be safer and easier to cross. It should also be more pleasant and attractive to walk along.

- New crossing locations on Serramonte Boulevard were proposed at various locations including the Target, the Subaru dealership, and the Ford dealership, and on Collins Avenue at the Enterprise Rent-A-Car and at the Hyundai dealership.
- The discontinuous sidewalk on the north side of Collins Avenue needs to be addressed.
- There is some concern regarding how many pedestrians actually walk along Serramonte Boulevard and whether proposed pedestrian infrastructure investments would be worthwhile.

## TRAFFIC

- Speeding is an issue on both Serramonte Boulevard and Collins Avenue.
- Turning into driveways along Serramonte is often a source of travel time delay. There is varied support for changing the configuration of the roadway to include a center turn lane.
- The Collins Avenue / Serramonte Boulevard and Collins Avenue / El Camino Real intersections need safety improvements, as there are too many close calls.
- Any streetscape improvements should manage or mitigate congestion in some fashion.
- There is a need for a stop light at El Camino Real and Collins Avenue.
- Stop sign at Serra Center Driveway (Target)

## PARKING

- Parking is a concern on both Corridors, particularly in terms of a shortage of employee parking and the Vivana Fair commercial center.

## ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

- Increasing the public's knowledge of Auto Row and other businesses in Colma through the use of monument signage and a more modern design would help to increase traffic and sales along the Corridors.
- An Auto Row association would help increase regional visibility of Colma auto dealers.

## STREETSCAPE AND BEAUTIFICATION

- The area is in need of beautification and would benefit from the addition of more restaurants and cafes, trees and landscaping, and other amenities such as a plaza, improved sidewalks, attractive lighting, and wayfinding signage.
- Collins Avenue in particular is unattractive and very dark at night due to tree growth, and would benefit from a better lighting program.

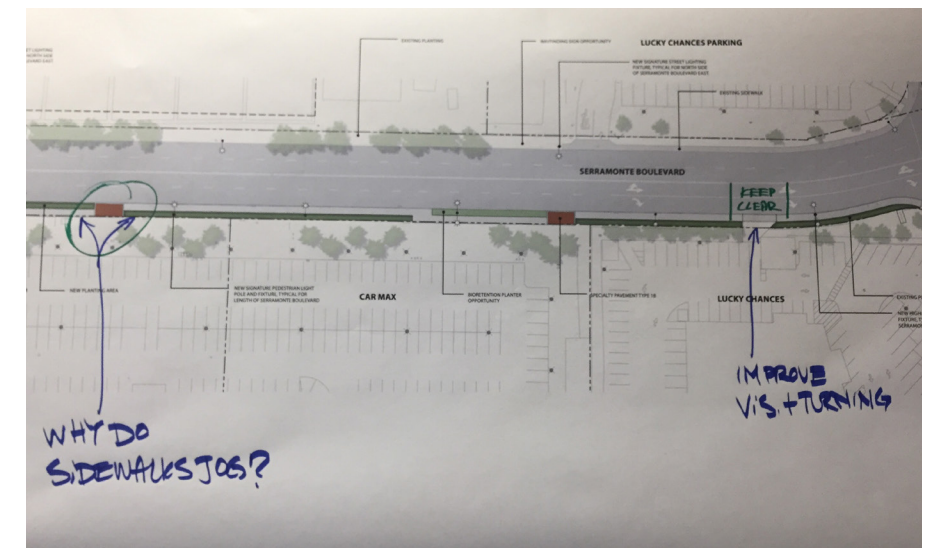
## 1.5 PLAN ORGANIZATION

The Master Plan is comprised of the following four chapters, which each address one or more of the Master Plan objectives:

1. **Introduction.** This chapter explains the plan's purpose and objectives, and provides an overview of the planning process, including community and stakeholder engagement activities.
2. **Mobility and Circulation.** The Mobility and Circulation chapter describes changes to the right of way along both corridors that address pedestrian and vehicular safety and function.
3. **Streetscape and Urban Design.** The Streetscape and Urban Design chapter establishes an overall urban design strategy for the Plan Area, as well as design standards and guidelines intended to regulate and direct both public realm improvements and private development.
4. **Implementation.** The implementation chapter presents a phasing and implementation framework for streetscape and circulation improvements in the public realm.



Stakeholders commenting on the Proposed Plan



Community comments on the Master Plan Area



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# 2 MOBILITY AND CIRCULATION

SERRAMONTE FO  
BOOK PAINT SHOP



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# Chapter 2: Mobility and Circulation

## 2.1 INTRODUCTION

In the existing Serramonte Boulevard and Collins Avenue Master Plan Area, pedestrian facilities are limited, excess road capacity leads to speeding, and insufficient turning infrastructure creates congestion. This Master Plan proposes roadway, intersection, and pedestrian reconfigurations to improve pedestrian experience and safety without negatively impacting vehicular capacity.

## 2.2 EXISTING CONDITIONS

The Plan Area is about three quarters of a mile south of the Colma BART station via discontinuous sidewalks and lack of bike lanes. The SamTrans ECR bus runs regularly along El Camino Real, with sheltered bus stops in both the northbound and southbound directions. The 112, 120, and 122 buses run along Junipero Serra Boulevard, with a sheltered bus stop for northbound buses near the intersection of Serramonte Boulevard and Junipero Serra Boulevard and an unsheltered bus stop a block north for southbound buses. Bicycle and pedestrian connections to the surrounding area are limited, with Class II bicycle lanes on Junipero Serra Boulevard but no existing bicycle infrastructure on El Camino Real, and discontinuous pedestrian facilities along surrounding streets.

Vehicle, pedestrian and bicycle data within the Plan Area was collected and evaluated. A summary of the most salient findings corresponding to this existing conditions work is provided below:

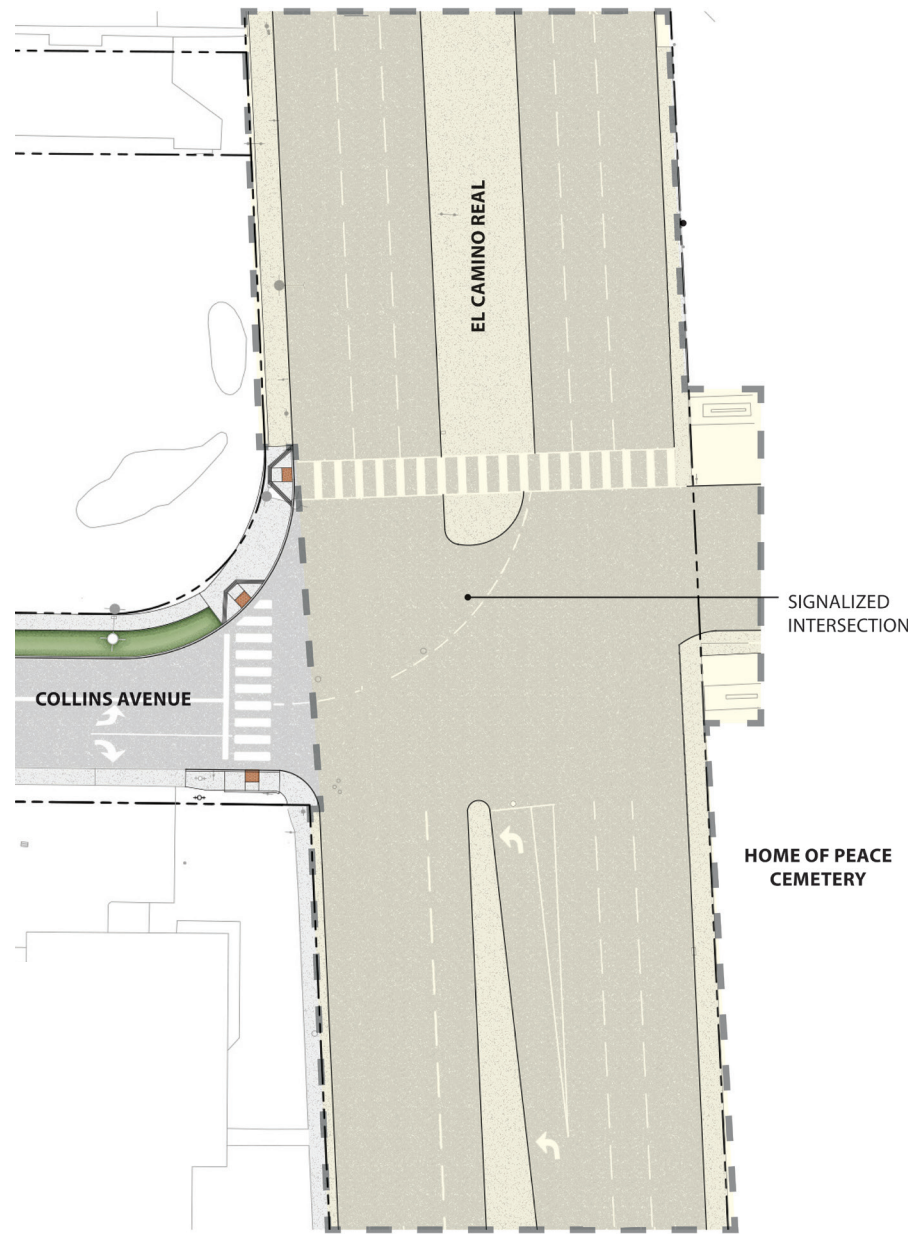
- Continuous pedestrian facilities are not available along Serramonte Boulevard or Collins Avenue.
- The highest pedestrian volumes were observed and reported during the midday peak periods. Approximately 30 pedestrians observed crossing during peak hour at the intersection of Serramonte Boulevard/Target Driveway.

- Bicycle volume is extremely low. The highest observed bicycle volume on Serramonte Boulevard during any peak periods was 3 bicyclists only.
- Daily traffic volumes on Serramonte Boulevard average approximately 20,000 vehicles per day. Traffic volumes along the Serramonte Boulevard peak during the typical morning commute to work and during the typical evening commute home.
- Left-turn queues exceed the storage capacity at three study intersections during at least one peak period under Existing Conditions.
- Under Existing Conditions, all of the study intersections operate at Level of Service (LOS) D or better with the exception of the all-way stop controlled intersection of Serramonte Boulevard/Serra Center Driveway which operates at LOS E during the weekday p.m., weekend midday, and weekend p.m. peak periods.
  - A traffic signal would be warranted based on peak hour volumes
  - There is potential to reduce vehicle delay along corridor.

**Table 2-1: Serramonte Boulevard Travel Time from 1-280 Ramps to Hillside Blvd.**

Direction	Travel Time (MM:SS)	Delay (seconds/vehicle)	Average Speed (mph)
Westbound - Weekday PM	04:36	143	15
Eastbound - Weekday PM	04:33	113	18
Westbound - Weekend Peak	04:44	147	15
Eastbound - Weekend Peak	04:51	133	17

Source: W-Trans, 2017



**Figure 2-1: Proposed El Camino Real and Collins Avenue Intersection**

## 2.3 IMPROVEMENTS

### RECOMMENDED SERRAMONTE WEST IMPROVEMENTS

- A road diet between the Serra Center Driveway and El Camino Real. The road diet would convert the existing four lane roadway to one lane in each direction with a center two-way left turn lane. The remaining right-of-way would be used to expand the sidewalks and install landscaping. The road diet provides improved driveway access, increased pedestrian safety, and maintains sufficient vehicular capacity.
- A push-button activated mid-block Rectangular Rapid Flashing Beacon (RRFB) crossing with a pedestrian refuge island and pedestrian crossing beacon between the Chevrolet dealership and the former Babies R Us project site.
- A push-button activated midblock RRFB crossing with a pedestrian refuge island and pedestrian crossing beacon at the location of the Water District easement.
- Expanded sidewalk at Serramonte Boulevard/El Camino Real and add high-visibility crosswalk striping.

### RECOMMENDED SERRAMONTE EAST IMPROVEMENTS

- No roadway configuration changes are proposed from El Camino Real to Hillside Avenue.
- Expanded sidewalk at Serramonte Boulevard/El Camino Real and add high-visibility crosswalk striping.

### RECOMMENDED COLLINS AVENUE IMPROVEMENTS

- A reduction in the travel lane width to promote safety, decrease speeds, and increase parking capacity in response to stakeholder feedback.
- Construct new on-street parking spaces.
- Construct bulb-outs at existing utilities to maintain adequate sidewalk width.
- Install cobra head street lighting.
- Implement new green infrastructure areas.
- Install black vinyl chain link fencing.
- Designate two car hauler unloading zone locations.
- A push-button activated midblock RRFB crossing with a pedestrian refuge island and pedestrian crossing beacon at the location of the Ford auto service and storage lot.

### EL CAMINO REAL AND COLLINS AVENUE:

- Install a traffic signal.
- Construct pedestrian refuge median on El Camino Real with a raised “nose” to provide an area for pedestrians to wait.

## RECOMMENDED INTERSECTION IMPROVEMENTS

### SERRAMONTE BOULEVARD AND EL CAMINO REAL INTERSECTION:

Convert the Eastbound and Westbound Serramonte Boulevard approaches to protected left-turn phasing from split phase.

- Reconfigure the Eastbound Approach as follows:
  - One left-turn lane
  - One shared through-right turn lane
- Reconfigure the Westbound Approach as follows:
  - One left-turn lane
  - One through lane
  - One shared-through right turn lane
- Update the signal infrastructure and timing in conjunction with the proposed change in phasing.
- Construct pedestrian refuge median on El Camino Real with a raised "nose" with pedestrian push buttons.

### SERRAMONTE BOULEVARD AND HILLSIDE BOULEVARD:

- Update intersection bike lane tracking through intersection.

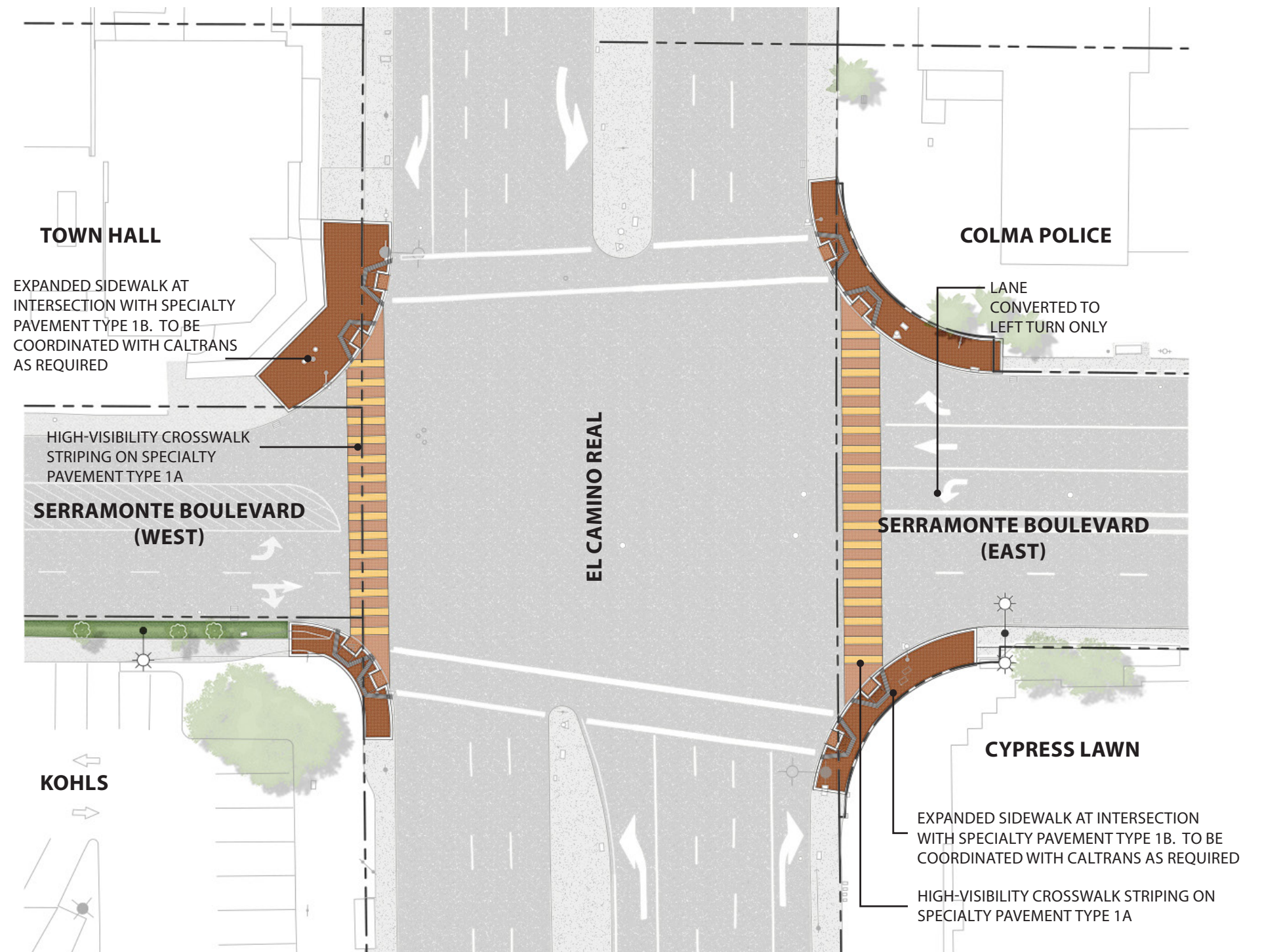
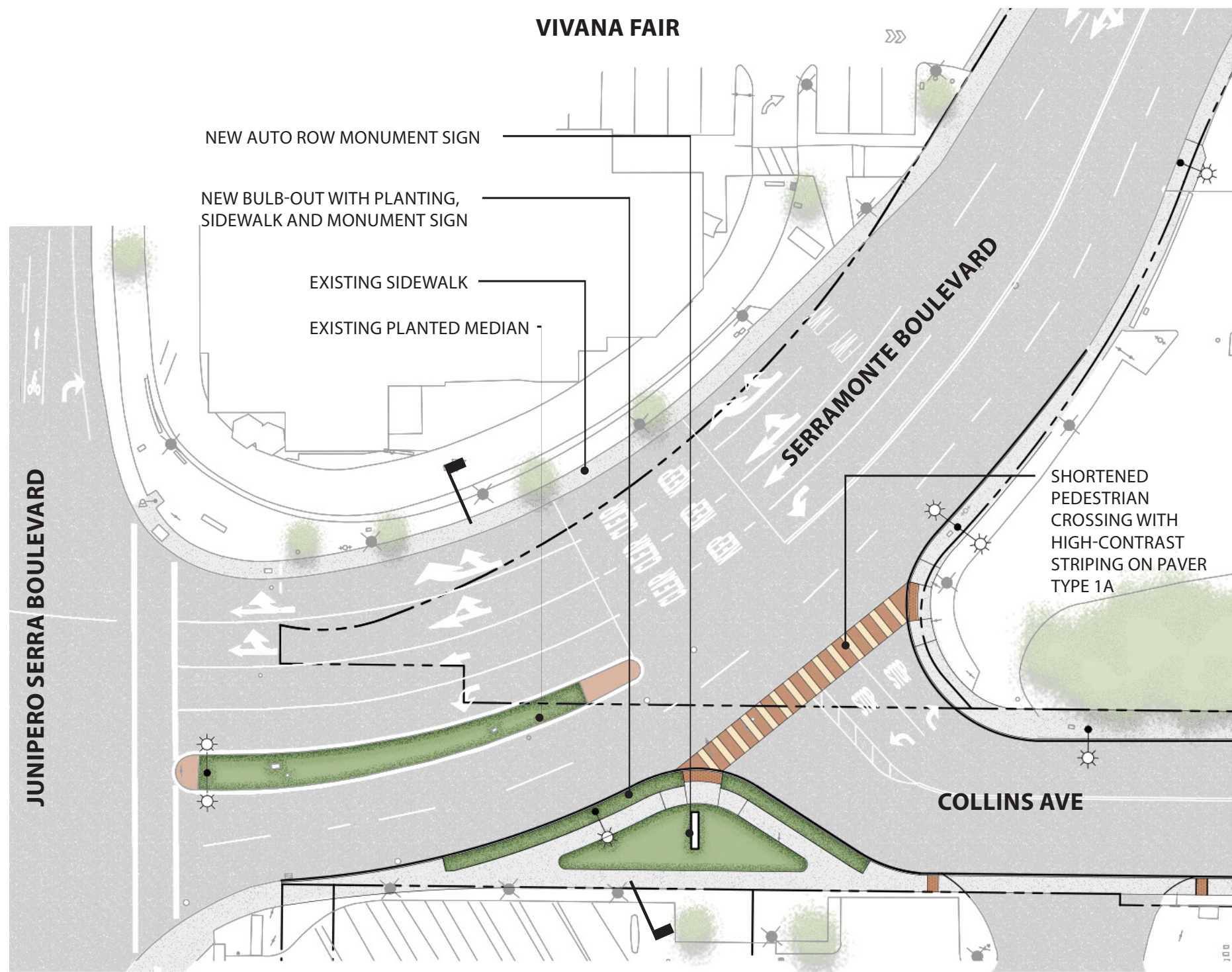


Figure 2-2: Proposed Serramonte and El Camino Real Intersection



**SERRAMONTE BOULEVARD AND COLLINS AVENUE:**

- Remove slip right-turn lane.
- Construct raised pedestrian plaza or gateway feature in place of right turn lane.
- Add marked crosswalk.
- Install accessible curb ramps.

**SERRAMONTE BOULEVARD, COLLINS AVENUE, AND JUNIPERO SERRA BOULEVARD:**

- Construct pedestrian refuge median on Serramonte Boulevard with a raised “nose” to provide an area for pedestrians similar to the refuge on Junipero Serra Boulevard.
- Add bicycle markings through intersection along Junipero Serra Boulevard.

**SERRAMONTE BOULEVARD AND THE SERRA CENTER DRIVEWAY NEAREST TO TARGET:**

- Install a traffic signal with protected-permitted left-turn phasing on eastbound Serramonte Boulevard.

16 **Figure 2-3: Proposed Serramonte, Collins, and Junipero Serra Boulevard Intersection**



## 2.4 MASTER PLAN TRAFFIC CONDITIONS

Under Master Plan Conditions, the study intersections are expected to operate at the same or better level of service as compared to Existing Conditions. The installations of traffic signals at the intersections of Serramonte Boulevard and the Serra Center Driveway, Collins Avenue and El Camino Real, and the reconfiguration of the intersection approaches at the intersection of Serramonte Boulevard and El Camino Real provide the greatest reductions in vehicle delay.

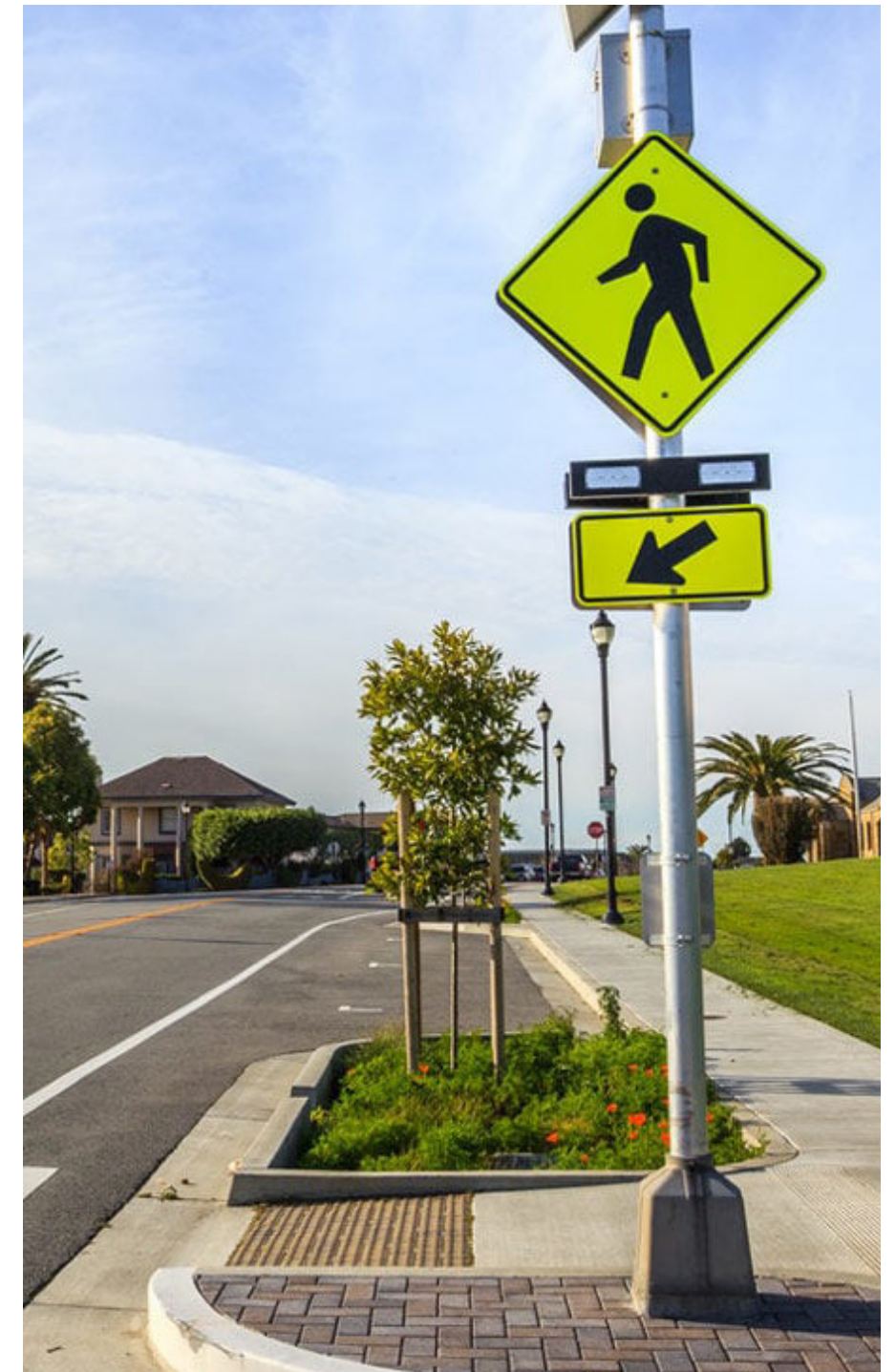
Left-turn queuing is expected to continue to exceed the storage capacity at the intersections of Serramonte Boulevard and the I-280 on-ramp, Serramonte Boulevard and Junipero Serra Boulevard, as well as El Camino Real and Serramonte Boulevard during at least one peak period under Master Plan Conditions.

The corridor travel time is not expected to experience significant changes under Master Plan Conditions.

A Performance Index analysis is typically incorporated as a method to compare project alternatives to one another, and it was applied in order to understand the impact of the Master Plan. A Performance Index is calculated for each alternative by

combining multiple measures of effectiveness into a single score which allows practitioners to compare and contrast alternatives more easily. Measures of effectiveness can include control delay, the number of vehicle stops, fuel consumption, queue lengths, and operating costs. For the purposes of this study, the Performance Index takes the total delay into account in combination with the number of vehicle stops over the course of an hour along the corridor. A low Performance Index is good, and indicates a corridor with higher vehicle through put. Upon the implementation of the Master Plan, Serramonte Boulevard would be expected to operate with a Performance Index of 42.3, down from 48.0, during the a.m. peak weekday period and 78.2, down from 96.0, during the p.m. peak weekday period. During the weekend periods, it would be expected to operate with a Performance Index of 89.3 during the midday peak, down from 112.5, during the midday peak period and 88.6, down from 105.0 during the evening peak. These reductions in Performance Index indicate that the corridor is operating better under Master Plan Conditions.

See Appendix E: Serramonte Boulevard and Collins Avenue Master Plan Circulation Analysis for full mobility analysis.



Rectangular Rapid Flashing Beacons (RRFB), similar to those on Hillside Boulevard, Colma will help pedestrians safely cross Serramonte Boulevard.



3

**STREETSCAPE  
AND URBAN  
DESIGN**

# Chapter 3: Streetscape and Urban Design

## 3.1 INTRODUCTION

Urban design—the quality and character of the public realm—is a critical component of how a place is used and experienced. This chapter includes goals, standards and guidelines for the Serramonte Boulevard and Collins Avenue Master Plan Area to enhance the identity and urban design quality of this key district in the heart of Colma. In addition, this chapter includes illustrations of conceptual designs of streets and streetscape features, as well as brief descriptions of signature design elements.

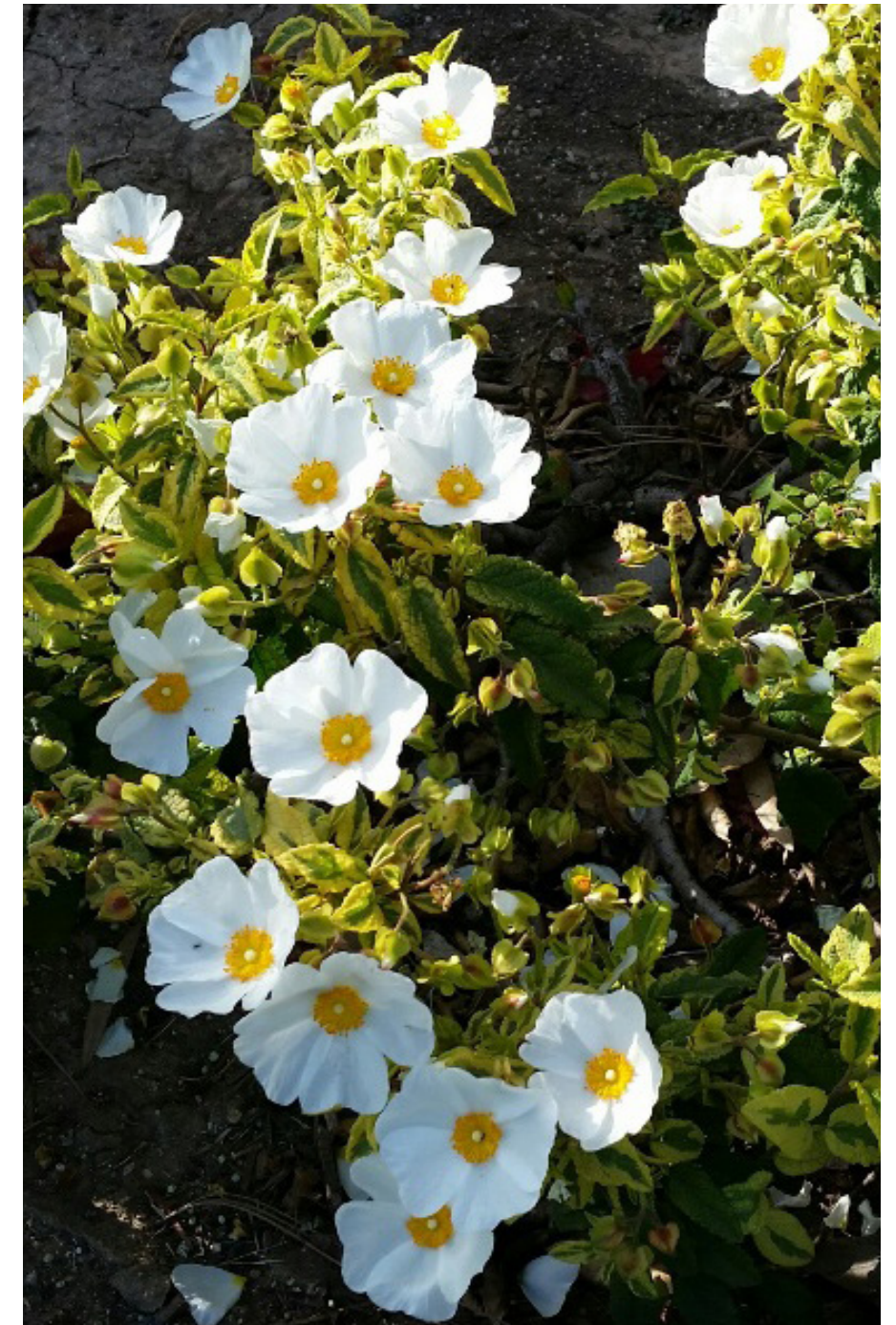
Serramonte Boulevard is the Town of Colma’s key commercial corridor and one of the major auto rows in northern San Mateo County. Several shopping centers, eating and drinking establishments, and other uses are also located along the corridor, which stretches from Interstate 280 (with Junipero Serra Boulevard adjacent to I-280 forming the city limit) to Hillside Boulevard to east, where the Lucky Chances card room—one of the Town’s principal revenue generators—is located. Collins Avenue, which runs parallel to Serramonte Boulevard, is a secondary corridor that serves car dealerships and a variety of light industrial uses.

While these two corridors are Colma’s economic engines, they lack cohesion in their urban design and lack a sense of place due to varying setbacks, landscaping, and public realm treatments. The corridors are also at times challenging or inhospitable for pedestrians. Their excess travel lane capacity also can lead to speeding, posing a threat to vehicular and pedestrian safety. Improvements to the Plan Area’s urban design character and sense of place will help ensure the continued vitality of the area into the future and promote pleasant pedestrian walking environments for the area’s workers and visitors.

While the area is largely built out, land use changes will occur over time. The Master Plan seeks to ensure that new development furthers the area’s urban design identity and image. Existing building setbacks on Serramonte Boulevard, for instance, vary from 20 to 200 feet; the standards and guidelines in this chapter call for a more consistent urban form along Serramonte Boulevard and Collins Avenue, taking into consideration the potential introduction of different land uses, such as office or hotel, along the corridors over time. The guidelines also contemplate technological shifts, such as the rise of transportation network companies (such as Uber and Lyft) and the advent of autonomous vehicles, and how these changes could alter existing auto-oriented uses and site utilization.

Section 1.2: Urban Design Strategy of the chapter outlines the approach to shape the Serramonte Boulevard and Collins Avenue corridors. Section 1.3: Public Realm Design Standards and Guidelines provides design standards, or regulations, as well as guidelines, or recommendations, that will govern public realm improvements. This section also illustrates the conceptual design for the corridor and design elements—specific streetscape features that will serve to implement design standards and guidelines. Finally, Section 1.4: Building and Site Development Standards and Design Guidelines provides standards and guidelines for development on private property.

Design Standards are mandatory, while Design Guidelines provide general direction on intended design features. Design Elements describe specific place-based interventions. Together, these design standards, guidelines and elements will shape the Master Plan Area into an attractive and functional commercial destination with a distinctive identity.



Cistus hybridus “Little Miss Sunshine”



Juncus patens

## 3.2 URBAN DESIGN STRATEGY

The primary objective of the Serramonte Boulevard and Collins Avenue Master Plan is to improve the overall design, function and identity of the corridors to support the Town's economic engine and one of the premier auto rows in the Bay Area. The Master Plan does this by addressing the design of streets, connections and accessibility, safety and operational challenges, identity and character, and by incorporating sustainable and green infrastructure features.

### URBAN DESIGN GOALS

The following goals form the foundation of the urban design strategy, which is designed to respond to the Master Plan's aforementioned objectives as well as issues and opportunities identified during existing conditions research and stakeholder and community outreach:

- UDG-1 Accommodate existing auto-oriented uses through design elements in the public and private realm, including the allocation of space for car-haulers, while maximizing the visibility of automobile merchandise.
- UDG-2 Foster a more unified identity and increase economic vitality and private property investment through strategic public realm and streetscape improvements such as consistent landscaping and tree planting, street lighting, street furnishings, and signage.

- UDG-3 Support the development of a safer and more aesthetically pleasing pedestrian realm while preserving automobile capacity and access through pedestrian-oriented design features such as mid-block crossings and wider sidewalks.
- UDG-4 Promote safer and more operationally efficient intersections for both pedestrians and vehicles through geometry changes, signalization, and pedestrian features.
- UDG-5 Create a more cohesive urban street wall through the regulation of setbacks, building form and site design, landscaping and parking.
- UDG-6 Forward sustainable design in both the public and private realm through the inclusion of sustainable landscaping and green infrastructure and sustainable building and site design.

Table 3-1 shows the relationship between each section of this chapter and the aforementioned goals.

**Table 3-1: Master Plan Elements and their Relationship to Urban Design Strategy Goals**

Section	Goal 1	Goal 2	Goal 3	Goal 4	Goal 5	Goal 6
Streetscape Design	✓	✓	✓	✓		
Wayfinding and Gateways	✓	✓				
Green Infrastructure and Landscaping		✓				✓
Land Use and Development	✓				✓	
Building-to-Street Relationship	✓				✓	
Building Form, Articulation and Design	✓		✓		✓	
Building Orientation and Entries	✓		✓		✓	
Open Space			✓		✓	✓
Sustainable Design					✓	✓
Parking and Site Access				✓	✓	✓



Eriogonum latifolium



Lomandra Breeze

### 3.3 PUBLIC REALM DESIGN STANDARDS & GUIDELINES

The public realm is defined by various design elements including streetscape furnishings and dimensions, wayfinding and gateways, and landscaping. This section seeks to establish a cohesive public realm character for the Master Plan Area that reflects the various conditions along Serramonte Boulevard and Collins Avenue, composed of guidelines and standards for:

- **Streetscape Design**, which address select elements within the right-of-way;
- **Wayfinding and Gateways**, which provides additional design details that enhance access and comfort of the street environment; and
- **Green Infrastructure and Landscaping**, which provides direction on the incorporation of green infrastructure and landscaping in street and site design to manage stormwater and create healthy urban environments.

Public realm improvements outlined in this section seek to achieve community and stakeholder concerns and priorities while reflecting consideration of existing conditions. Analysis of existing conditions included detailed engineering survey (assisted by new aerials flown specifically for this project), evaluation of lighting conditions, as well as transportation and urban design assessments. The analysis revealed the potential for accommodating automobile capacity in a reconfiguration of Serramonte Boulevard between Junipero Serra Boulevard and El Camino Real, or “Serramonte West” as it is referred to in this Master Plan, of four travel lanes to two lanes and one center turn lane, and using the excess right-of-way for enhanced streetscape conditions such as widened sidewalks and landscaping improvements. The shortened roadway width also meant that mid-block crossings, or crossings between intersections, were more feasible from a safety perspective.

Community and stakeholder input emphasized improvements to pedestrian comfort and safety, including providing continuous sidewalks and additional mid-block crossings, while maintaining parking and truck access. Community members and stakeholders also expressed a desire to see improvements to the aesthetics of the Master Plan Area through enhanced, uniform landscaping and streetscape elements such as lighting and gateway signage that will draw visitors and increase enjoyment of the area for employees. The standards and guidelines presented in this chapter respond to these existing conditions and priorities, providing the framework for a more cohesive, attractive, and safe public realm for the Serramonte Boulevard and Collins Avenue corridors.

#### STREETSCAPE DESIGN

Streetscape design affects the physical and perceived comfort and safety of the public realm for all modes of transportation, including automobiles, public transportation, bicycles and pedestrians. Streetscapes—the elements within a right-of-way, including trees, sidewalks, streetlights, and crosswalks—shape the identity of an area and define the pedestrian and vehicular experience along a street. In the Master Plan Area, a welcoming materials palette, including sidewalk, crosswalk, and median pavers, high-contrast crosswalk striping, and high-quality hardwood benches, will not only enhance pedestrian safety and comfort, but will set the stage for the area’s cohesive identity. Well-lit streets with pedestrian-scale lighting, spaced for optimal light coverage at night, increase user visibility and give the streetscape a considered rhythm. The Master Plan calls for signature contemporary streetlights all along Serramonte Boulevard: high-low lights serving pedestrians and vehicles, and pedestrian-only lighting in between for even better pedestrian visibility. Additional details on street lighting design, streetscape furnishings, and materials specifications are provided in the Design Specifications Appendix. The streetscape improvement guidelines and streetscape plans and sections that follow detail roadway and public realm improvements for the three Master Plan Area corridors.



Site furnishings, lighting, planting palette, and materials





Pedestrian-oriented streetscape



Pedestrian crossing refuge

## GENERAL DESIGN STANDARDS

The following design standards direct streetscape design throughout the Plan Area:

- DS-1 Travel lanes shall be no more than 12 feet in width and no less than 9 feet. It is recommended that travel lanes be 11 feet in width.
- DS-2 Sidewalks shall be at least five feet wide (4.5' if no additional width is available) with eight feet of unobstructed overhead clearance.
- DS-3 All pedestrian pathways shall be clear of obstructions, including both temporary and permanent poles and signs.
- DS-4 All pedestrian facilities will comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act requirements.
- DS-5 New pedestrian crossings shall be designed with Universal Design Standards, such as tactile pads oriented perpendicular to street centerlines at pedestrian crossing curb ramps and accessible pedestrian signals that provide audible cues.<sup>1</sup>
- DS-6 Intersections shall have pedestrian push buttons at crosswalks that are at signalized intersections.
- DS-7 If new construction is happening at an intersection the pedestrian facilities shall be updated to be ADA compatible if not already.
- DS-8 Crosswalks shall be lit to maintain minimum lighting standards as in the most current Caltrans Standards.

<sup>1</sup> Universal Design is design that makes it possible for individuals of all ages and abilities to safely navigate the street environment. See, for example, NACTO's Transit Street Design Guide: <https://nacto.org/publication/transit-street-design-guide/stations-stops/stop-design-factors/universal-design-elements/>.

- DS-9 Parking lanes shall end at least 20 feet in advance of intersections.
- DS-10 The maximum slope of the driveway ramp for a setback sidewalk design shall be 1:10 (10-percent), given this slope the ramp can rise 1.1857 inches per foot or 7.125 inches over six feet.
- DS-11 Loading zones shall be 8 feet wide and 100-125 feet long.
- DS-12 Maximum grade of all roadways and driveways shall not exceed 12-percent, and gradient changes or transitions should be limited to 7-percent or less.
- DS-13 The turning radius of a fire apparatus access road shall be a minimum of 28 feet interior and 45 feet exterior centerline radius.

## GENERAL DESIGN GUIDELINES

General streetscape improvements to be made throughout the Plan Area seek to:

- DG-1 Accommodate individuals of all ages and ability in the design of the public realm through Universal Design elements.
- DG-2 Develop a memorable streetscape identity with consistent streetscape elements throughout, including distinguishing elements such as monument signage, landscaping, or lighting at major activity centers and focus areas.
- DG-3 Reduce visible utility equipment where possible. When located along streets, ensure that utility equipment such as utility boxes, manholes, and grates are placed underground or designed and located to maintain a cohesive streetscape design, permit regular spacing of plantings and lighting, and minimize streetscape clutter. Coordinate with

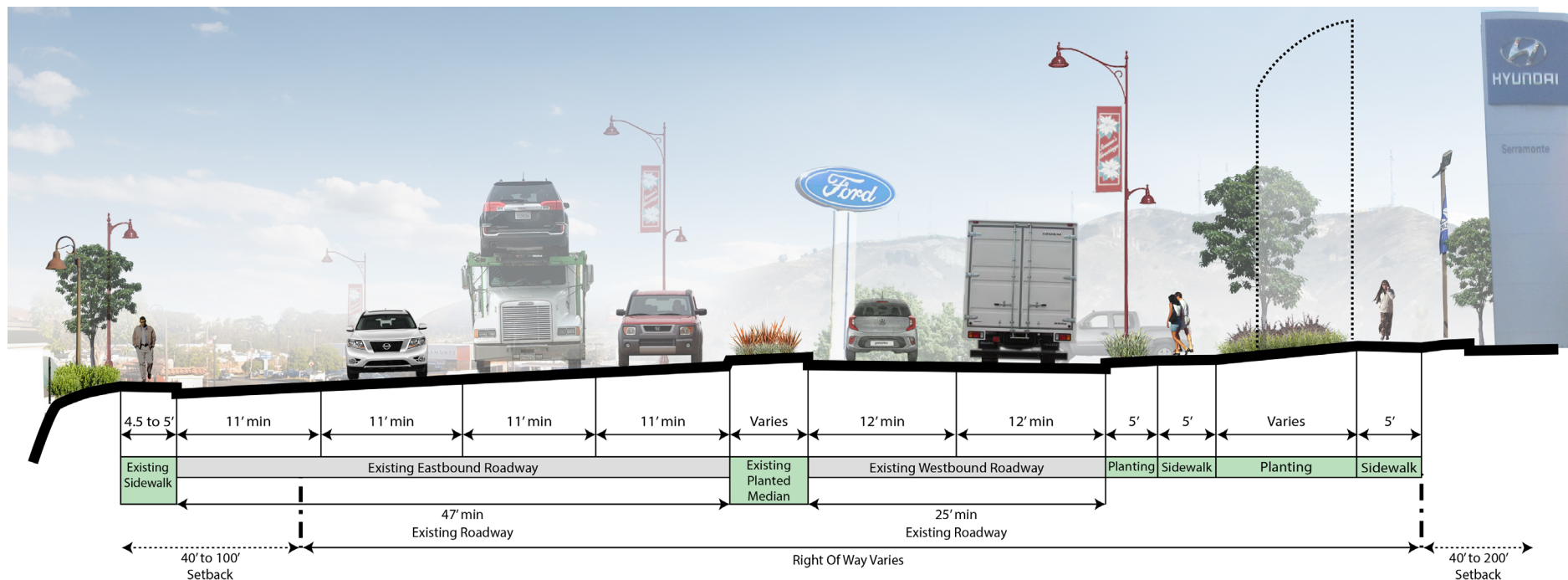
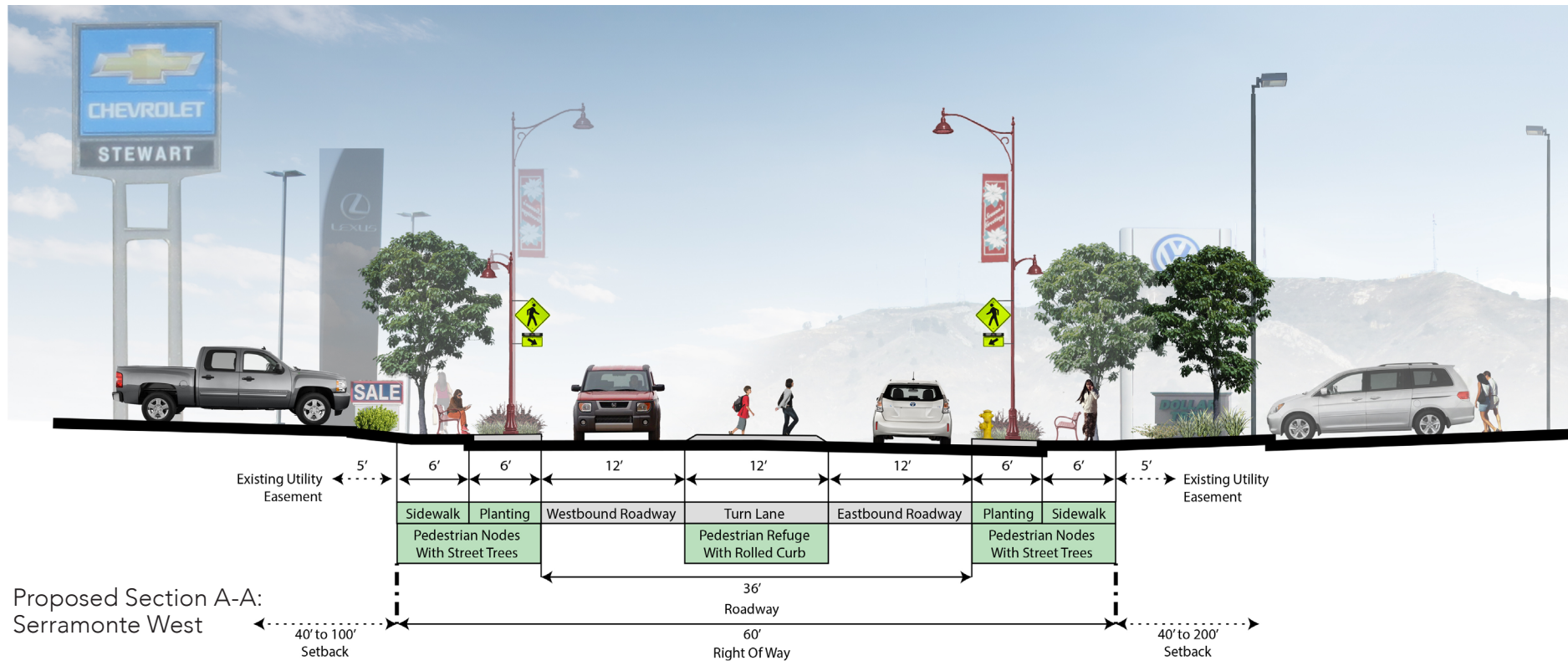


- appropriate agencies on the design of visible utility equipment located in the public realm.
- DG-4 Enhance the streetscape at the pedestrian scale with wide sidewalks and amenities for pedestrians such as comfortable street furnishings, sufficient and attractive lighting, street trees for shading and aesthetics, and green infrastructure for stormwater management and aesthetics.
- DG-5 Improve pedestrian safety by installing mid-block street crossings with pedestrian refuges in medians, and by incorporating visual cues such as Rectangular Rapid Flashing Beacons (RRFBs) at mid-block crossings, differentiated paving treatment, and crosswalk markings.
- DG-6 Minimize the width and number of curb cuts where possible, to increase capacity for landscaping, reduce disturbance to pedestrian through-travel and increase pedestrian safety.
- DG-7 Extend the sidewalk width where feasible and appropriate to accommodate green infrastructure and street furniture.
- DG-8 Maximize lighting for pedestrian safety along roadways and in parking lots. Ornamental double-head or “high-low” pedestrian- and automobile-oriented lighting is recommended where appropriate to ensure proper illumination for vehicles, pedestrians, and cyclists.
- DG-9 Work with property owners and tenants to ensure the provision of bicycle racks and trash/recycling receptacles at destinations such as shopping centers and stand-alone businesses.
- DG-10 Construct parking lanes to the desirable minimum width of eight feet. However, to provide better clearance from the traveled way and to accommodate use of the parking lane during peak periods as a

- through-travel lane, a parking lane width of 10 to 12 feet may be desirable.
- DG-11 Maintain and enhance existing on-street parking through the exploration of parking management tools including permitting, time limits and signage.
- DG-12 Avoid locating driveways where sight distance is limited. Or, consider site distance from existing driveways by designating no parking areas adjacent to driveways and minimize other visual obstructions.
- DG-13 Locate vertical obstructions outside of the sight distance triangle when possible. A sight distance triangle is located at an intersection. The distance from a driver approaching an intersection up the intersecting street to the left and right is defined as the triangle. Each leg of the intersection must provide sufficient sight distance to the adjacent approaches creating a triangle to ensure safe traffic movements.
- DG-14 Site driveways as far away from intersections as practical, particularly if the driveway is located near an arterial street.
- DG-15 Ensure that loading zones do not have parking on at least one side of the loading zone for ease of the driver.
- DG-16 Ensure that loading zones do not block sight lines.
- DG-17 Construct roadways and driveway driving surfaces with an all-weather driving surface to accommodate emergency vehicles.
- DG-18 Refer to the accompanying Design Specifications Appendix B for a detailed palette of streetscape design elements, which include furnishings and lighting fixtures.



Loropetalum chinense



## SERRAMONTE BOULEVARD WEST DESIGN STANDARDS

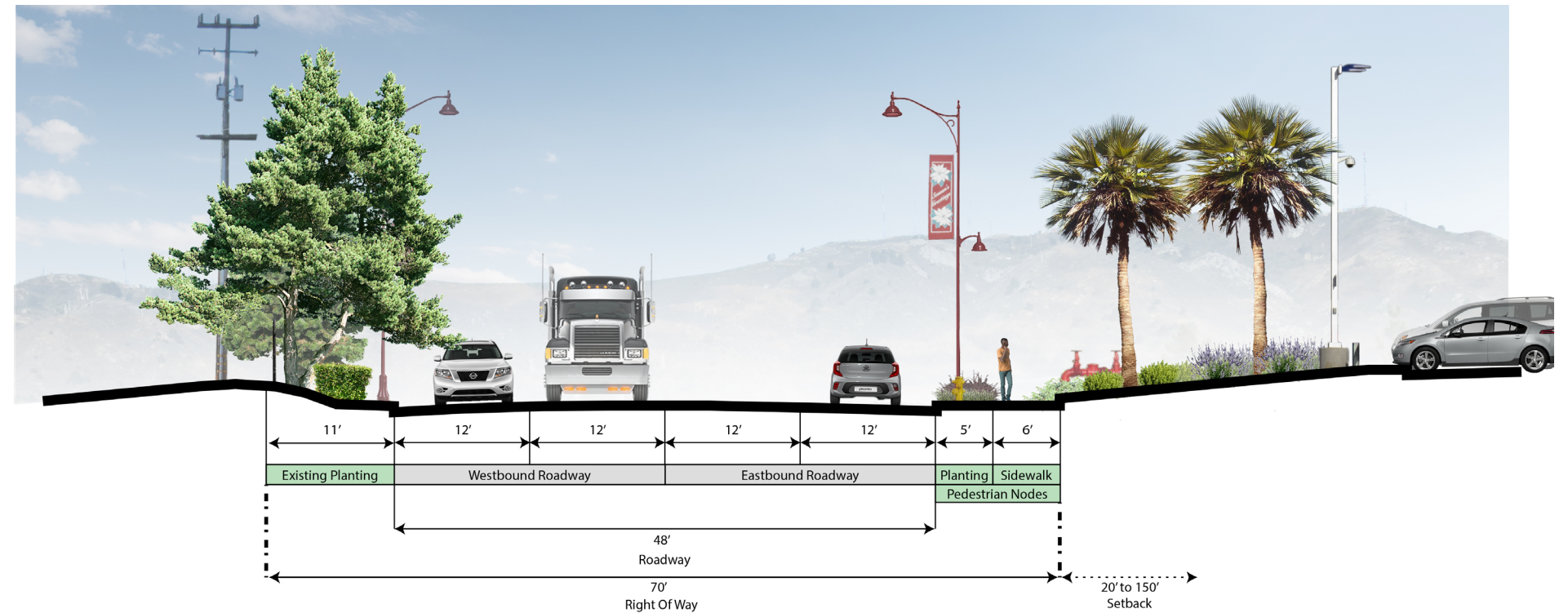
The following standards will improve the streetscape along Serramonte West Boulevard:

- DS-14 Serramonte West shall be characterized by two travel lanes separated by a center turn lane, or a refuge island at mid-block pedestrian crossings.
- DS-15 There will be no on-street parking along Serramonte West.
- DS-16 Serramonte West shall have a 6-foot wide pedestrian path on either side of the roadway.
- DS-17 Mid-block pedestrian crossings shall have a paved median island with mountable curbs to allow passage of emergency vehicles.
- DS-18 Mid-block crossings will be marked by Rectangular Rapid Flashing Beacons (RRFBs) to maximize visibility of pedestrians to oncoming traffic.
- DS-19 Street trees shall be planted on either side of the roadway on the outer edge of sidewalks along Serramonte West.
- DS-20 Concrete unit pavers or decorative concrete or asphalt treatment on the median and in crosswalks shall contrast with surrounding asphalt and concrete.
- DS-21 Sidewalks shall be buffered from travel lanes by planting strips.

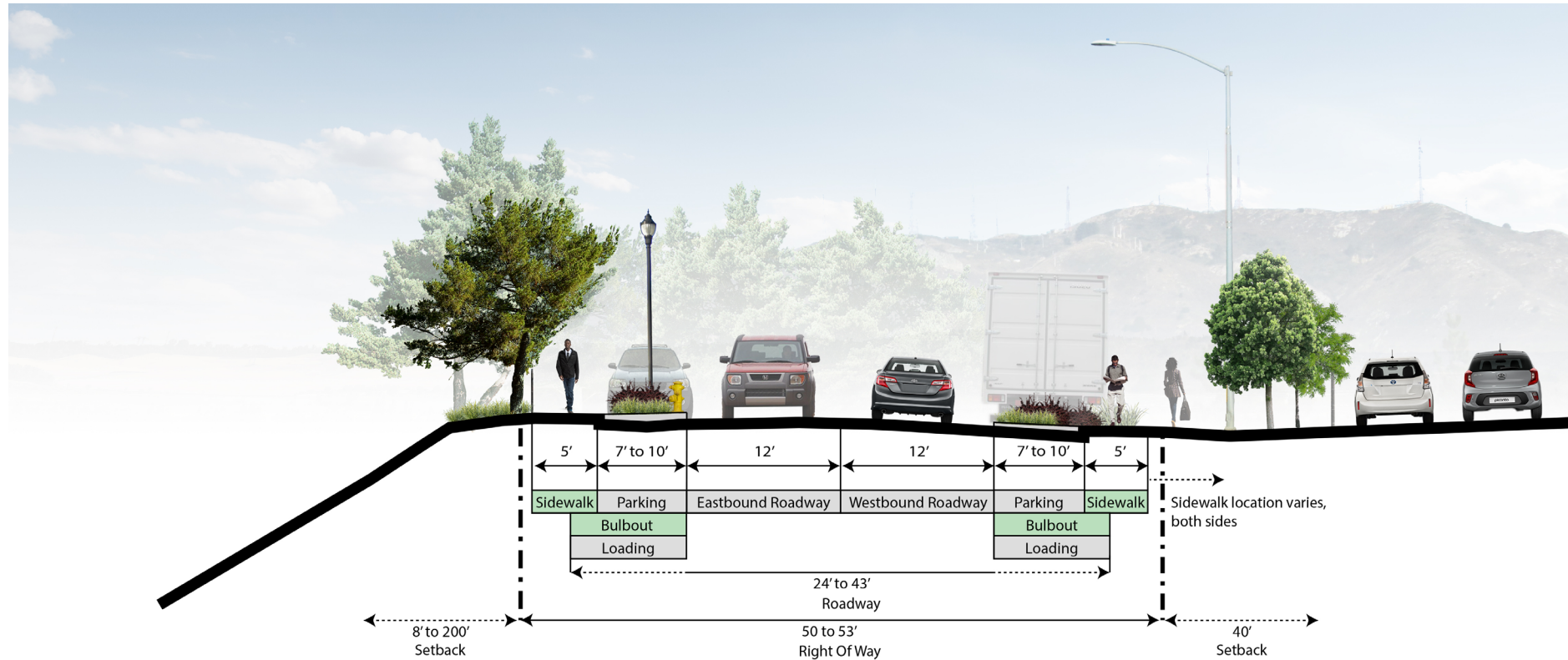
### SERRAMONTE BOULEVARD EAST DESIGN STANDARDS

The following standards will improve the streetscape along Serramonte East Boulevard:

- DS-22 Serramonte East shall be characterized by four travel lanes, including two for each direction of travel
- DS-23 There will be no on-street parking along Serramonte East.
- DS-24 Serramonte East shall have a 6-foot wide pedestrian path on the south side of the roadway only.
- DS-25 Mid-block pedestrian crossings shall have a paved median island with mountable curbs to allow passage of emergency vehicles.
- DS-26 Mid-block crossings will be marked by Rectangular Rapid Flashing Beacons (RRFBs) to maximize visibility of pedestrians to oncoming traffic.
- DS-27 Concrete unit pavers or decorative concrete or asphalt treatment on the median and in crosswalks shall contrast with surrounding asphalt and concrete.
- DS-28 Sidewalks shall be buffered from travel lanes by planting strips.



Proposed Section C-C:  
Serramonte East

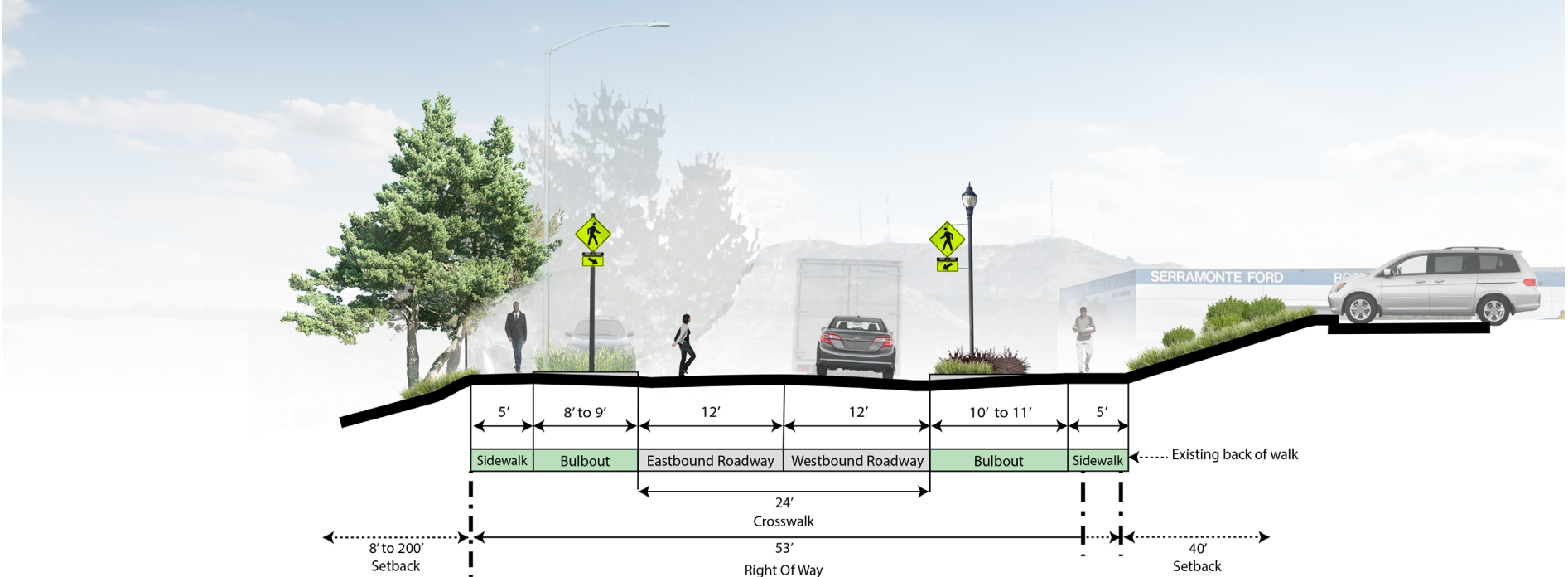


Proposed Section D-D:  
Collins Avenue West

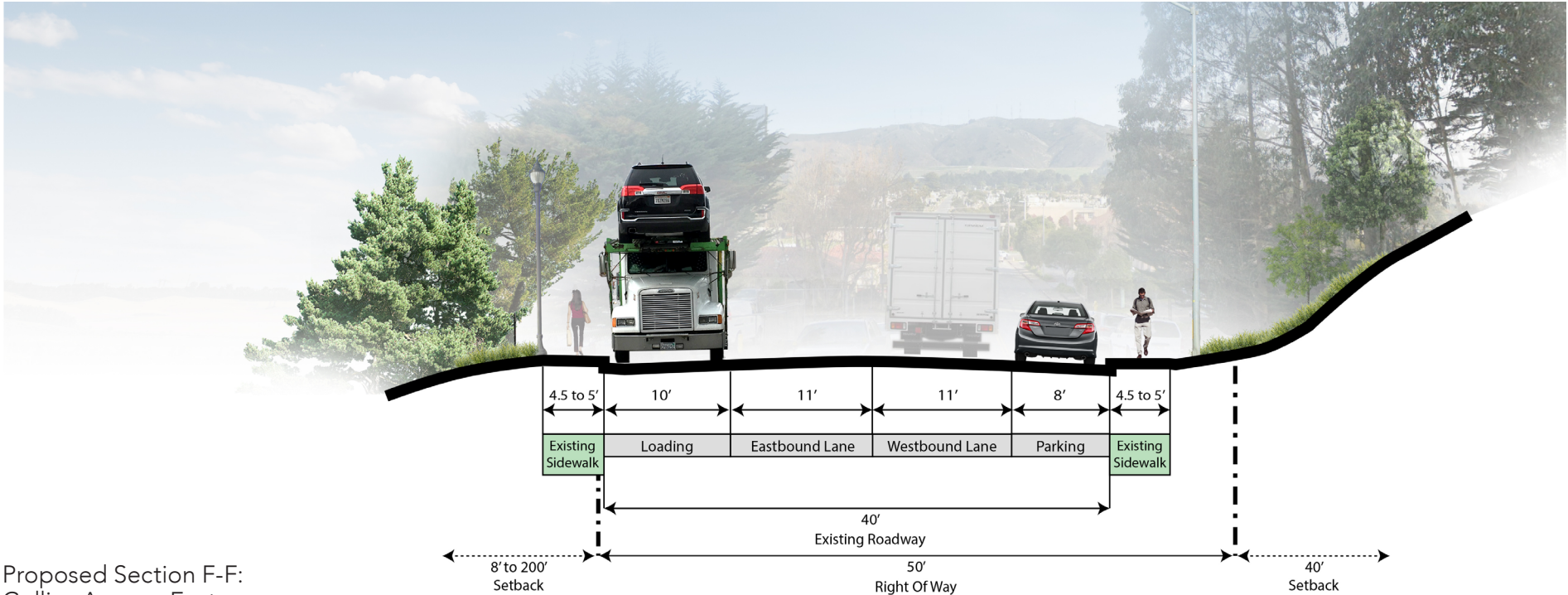
## COLLINS AVENUE DESIGN STANDARDS

The following standards will direct streetscape redevelopment along Collins Avenue:

- DS-24 Two travel lanes, sized for regular access by large trucks, shall be bordered to the extent feasible by seven or eight-foot-wide parking aisles.
- DS-25 Pedestrian access will be provided on both sides of the street with a standard five foot sidewalk.
- DS-26 The sidewalk will be kept clear by placing utilities in planted bulb-outs.
- DS-27 Mid-block pedestrian crossings shall include bulb-outs, high visibility pavement, shark tooth markings, and RRFBS as well as textured pavement to either side of the crosswalk to further reduce traffic speeds.
- DS-28 Standard cobra head fixtures will continue to provide street lighting on Collins.
- DS-29 Pedestrian lighting will be introduced using standards used elsewhere in Colma, including recent improvements at Hillside Boulevard.
- DS-30 Chain link fencing shall be black vinyl, where used.
- DS-31 Utilities should be undergrounded. Support utility providers in the undergrounding of new utilities. Continue to work with PG&E and public agencies to underground existing overhead utility lines.



Proposed Section E-E:  
Collins Avenue Crosswalk



Proposed Section F-F:  
Collins Avenue East

## SERRAMONTE BOULEVARD DESIGN ELEMENTS

The Design Elements proposed for Serramonte Boulevard West are as follows and as illustrated in Figures 3-1a—3-2b:

The layout of improvements on Serramonte Boulevard strikes a balance between pedestrian access and safety; business access and visibility, loading / unloading zones for car haulers; and provisions for green infrastructure and utilities.

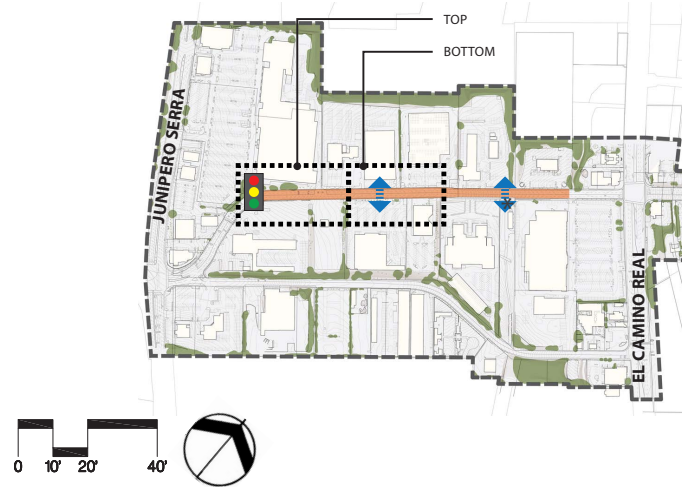
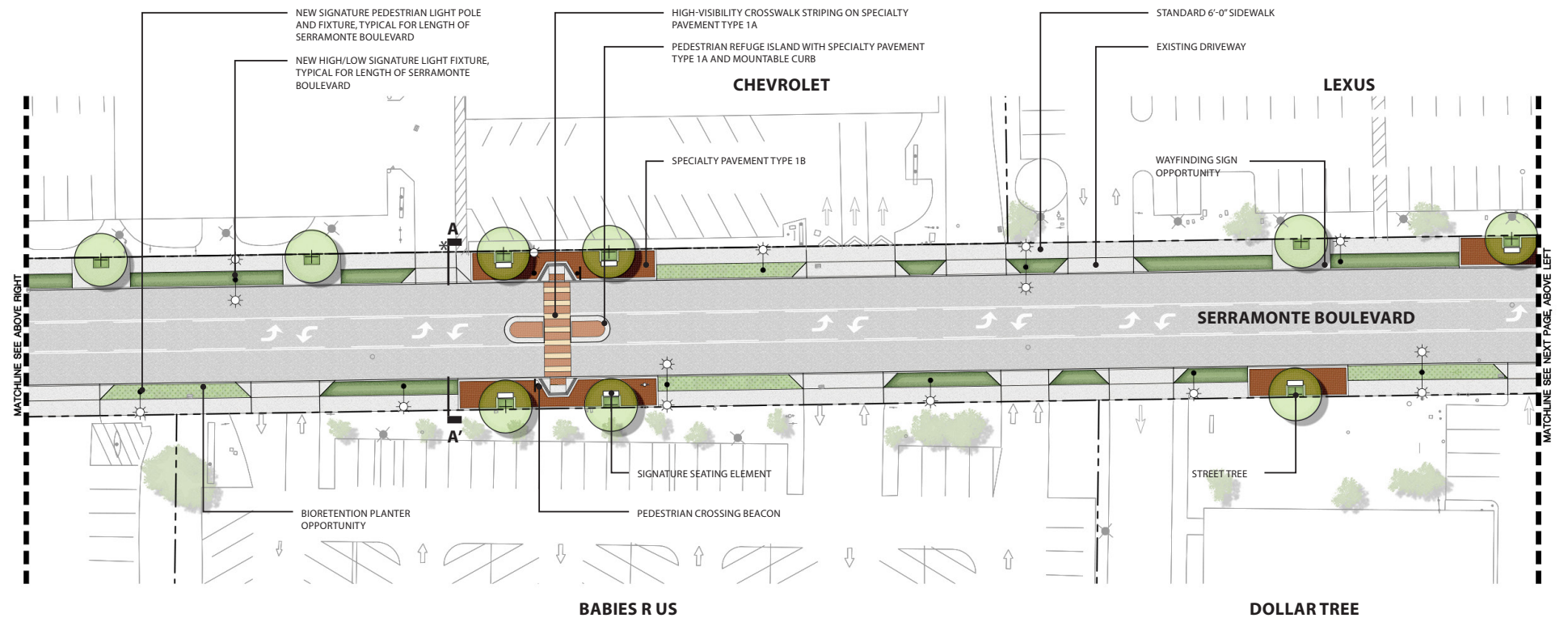
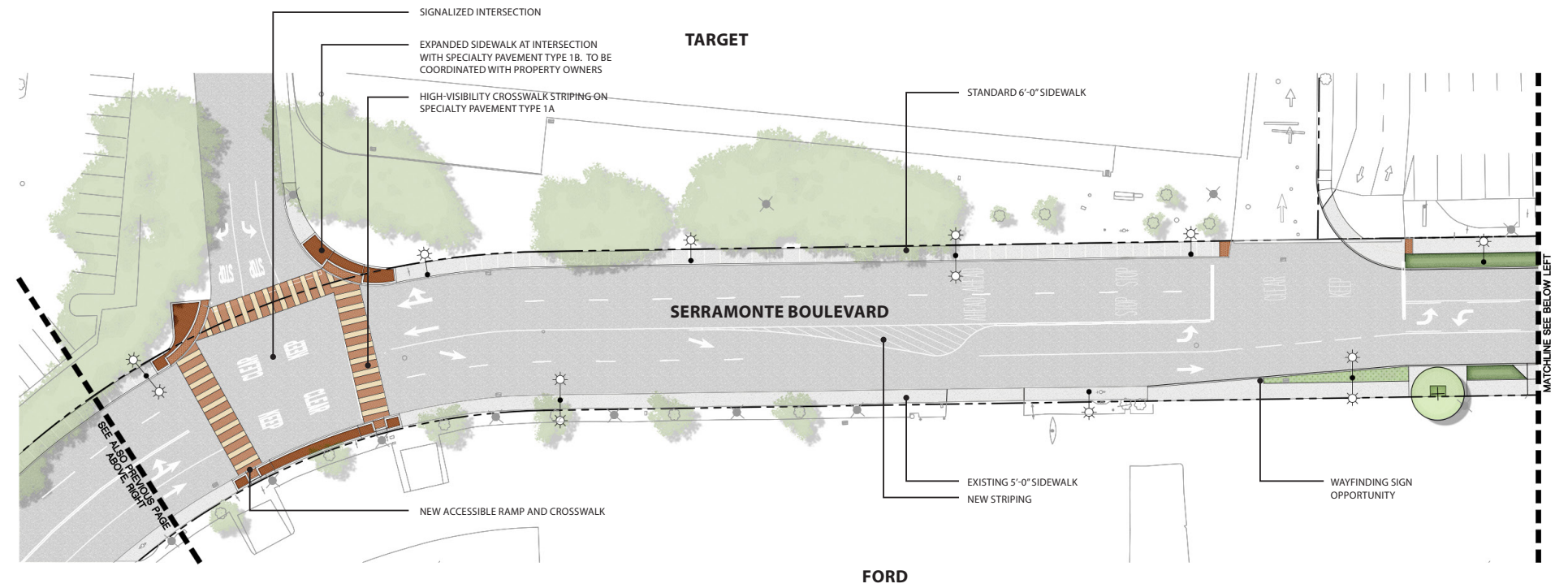
- DE-1 Locate pedestrian crossings to minimize conflict with vehicles turning into and out of the numerous driveways along the corridor.
- DE-2 Establish regularly spaced pedestrian “nodes” along the corridor using special paving techniques.
- DE-3 Install street furnishings such as benches and planters at pedestrian nodes and where appropriate.
- DE-4 Create six- foot planting strips between the roadway and sidewalk.



\*Section B-B can be found on page 26 of this document.

Figure 3-1a: Proposed Plans– Serramonte West

- DE-5 Provide street furniture at these nodes to create resting places
- DE-6 Plant trees at pedestrian nodes at the back of the sidewalk to minimize conflicts between trees and vehicles.
- DE-7 Locate green infrastructure at pedestrian nodes.
- DE-8 Strategically locate bioretention areas in planting strips to maximize the potential for stormwater treatment while minimizing rework of grading and utilities.
- DE-9 Install signature lighting and pedestrian nodes with specialty pavement to create a unified sense of place along the corridor.



\*Section A-A can be found on page 26 of this document.

**Figure 3-1b: Proposed Plans–Serramonte West**

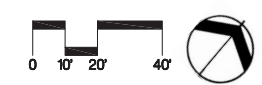
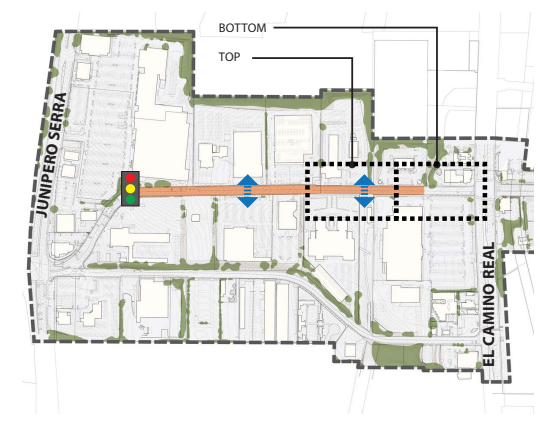
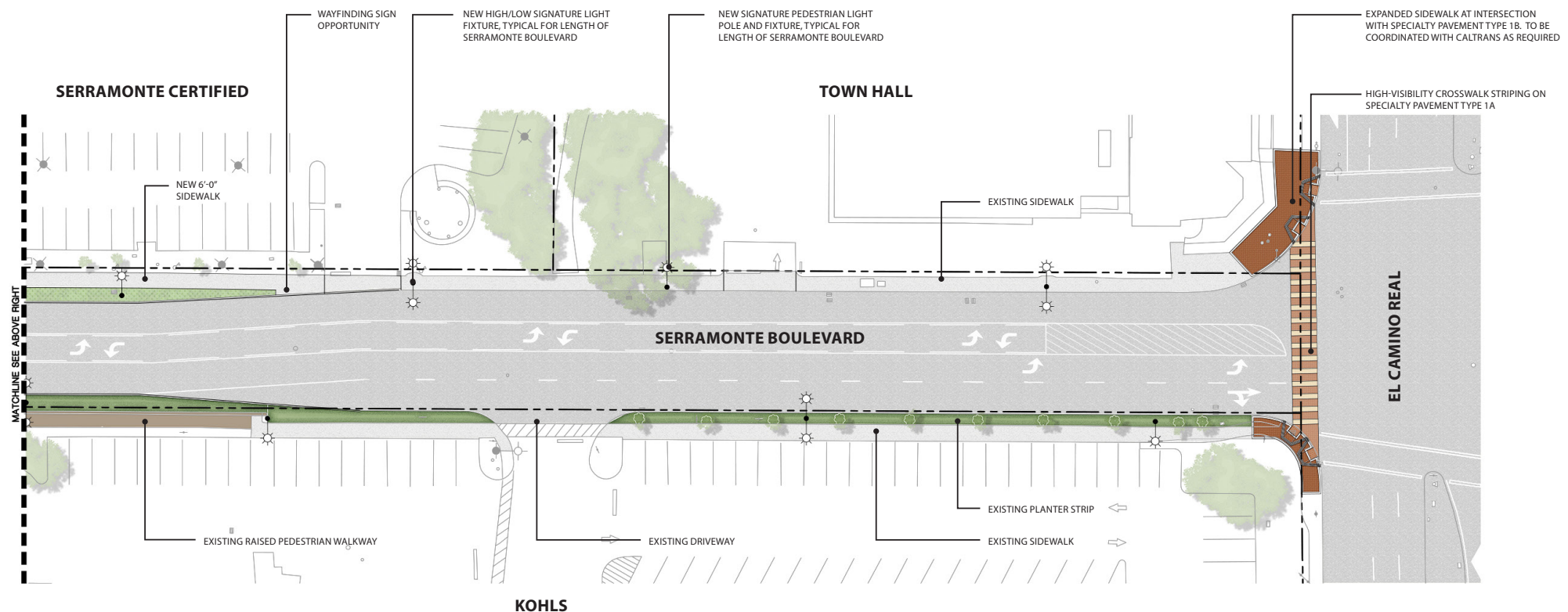
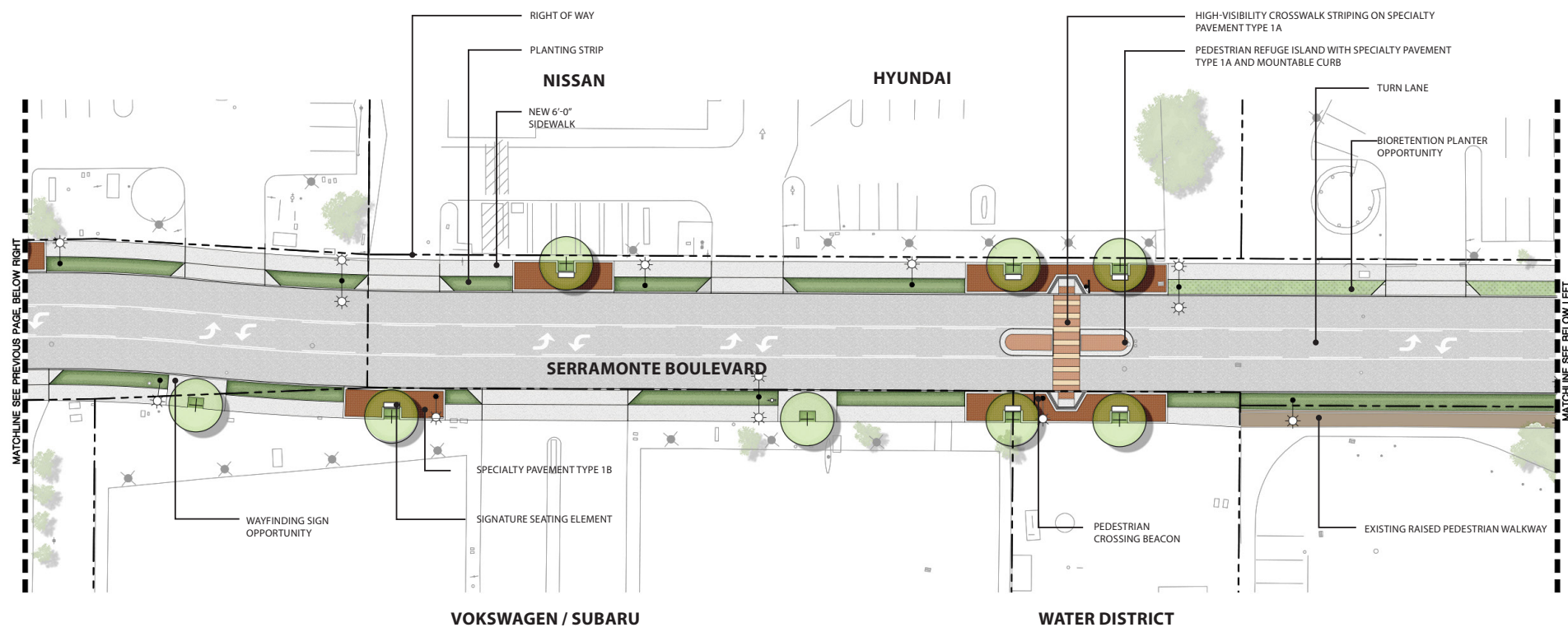
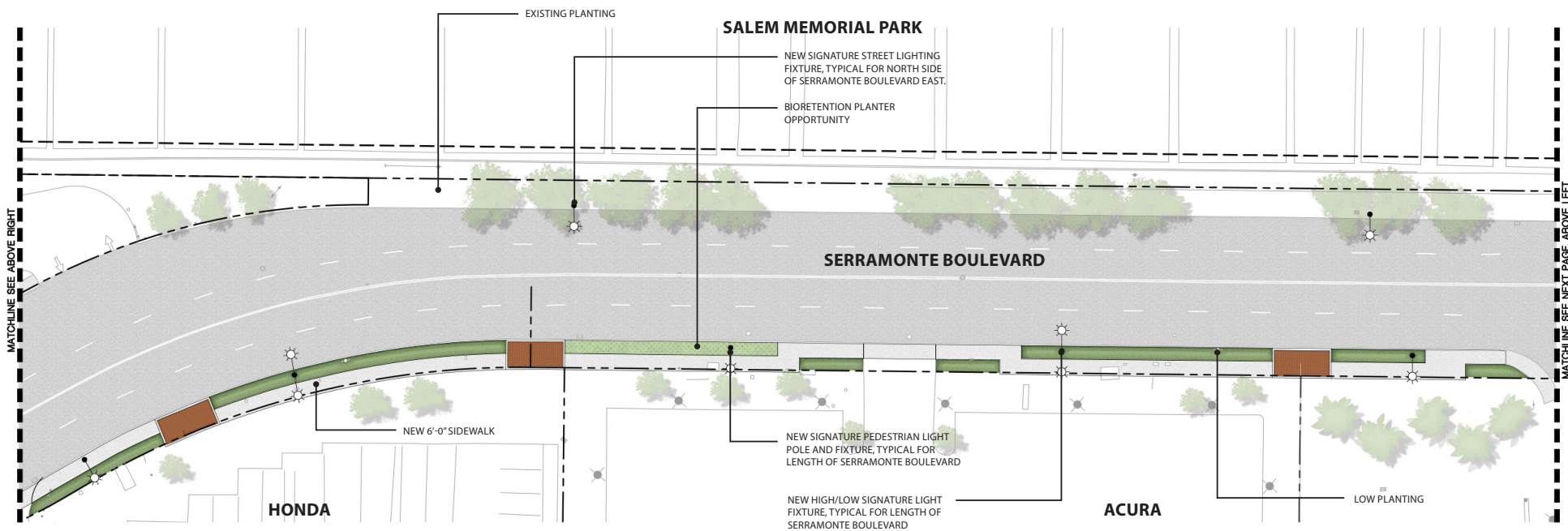


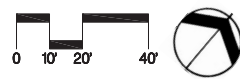
Figure 3-1c: Proposed Plans–Serramonte West



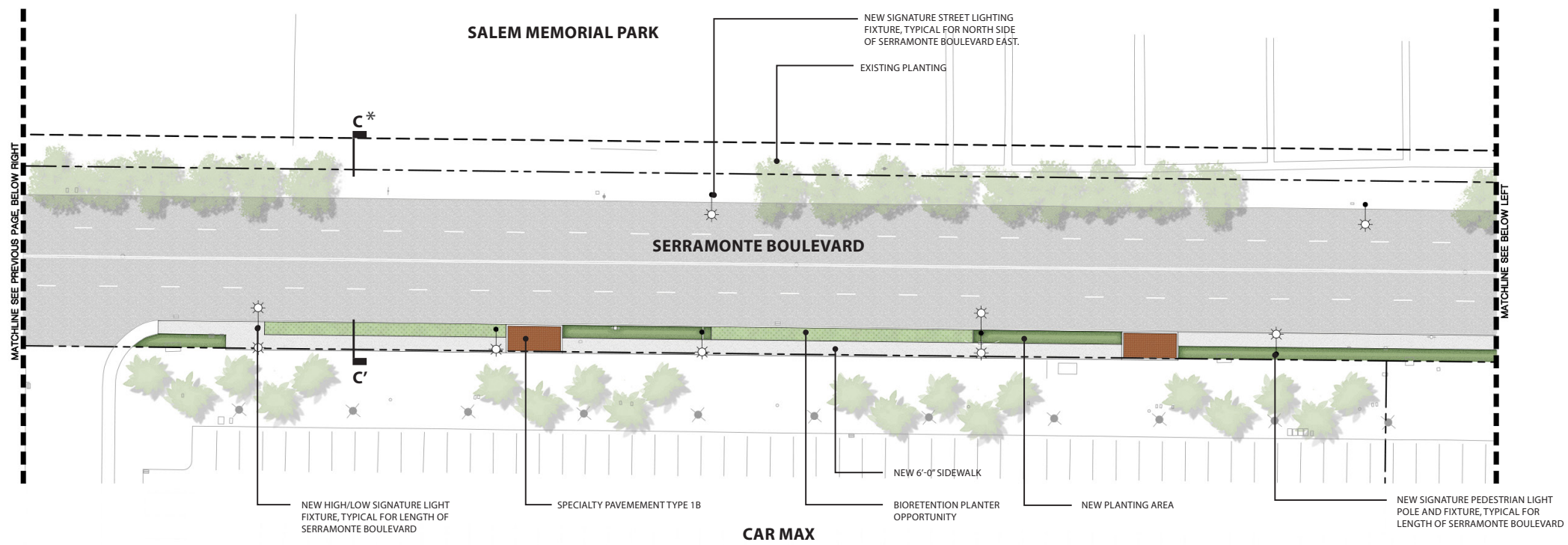
**SERRAMONTE BOULEVARD  
AND COLLINS AVENUE MASTER PLAN**



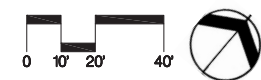
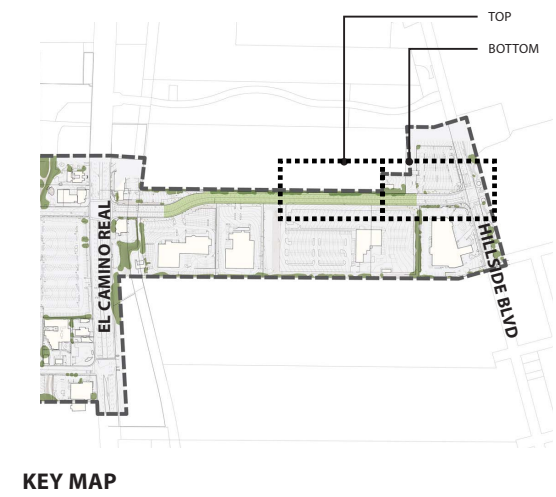
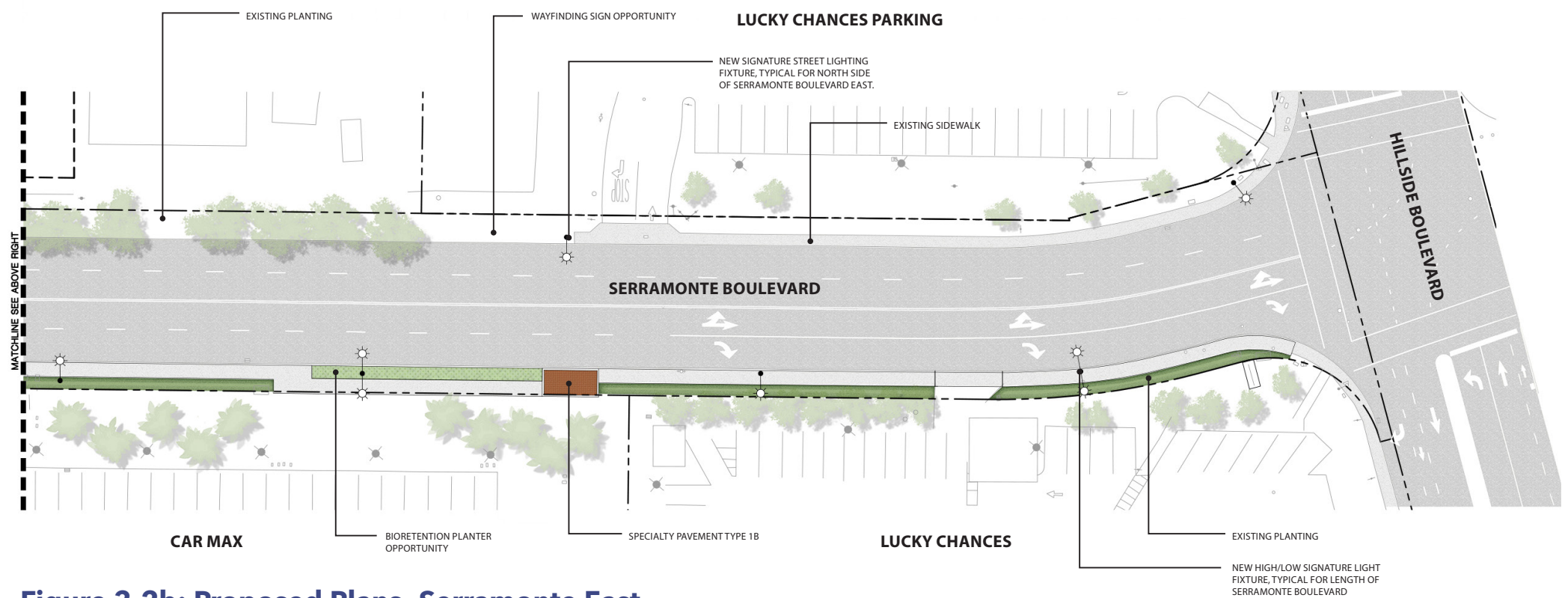
**KEY MAP**



**Figure 3-2a: Proposed Plans—Serramonte East**



\*Section C-C can be found on page 27 of this document.



**Figure 3-2b: Proposed Plans–Serramonte East**

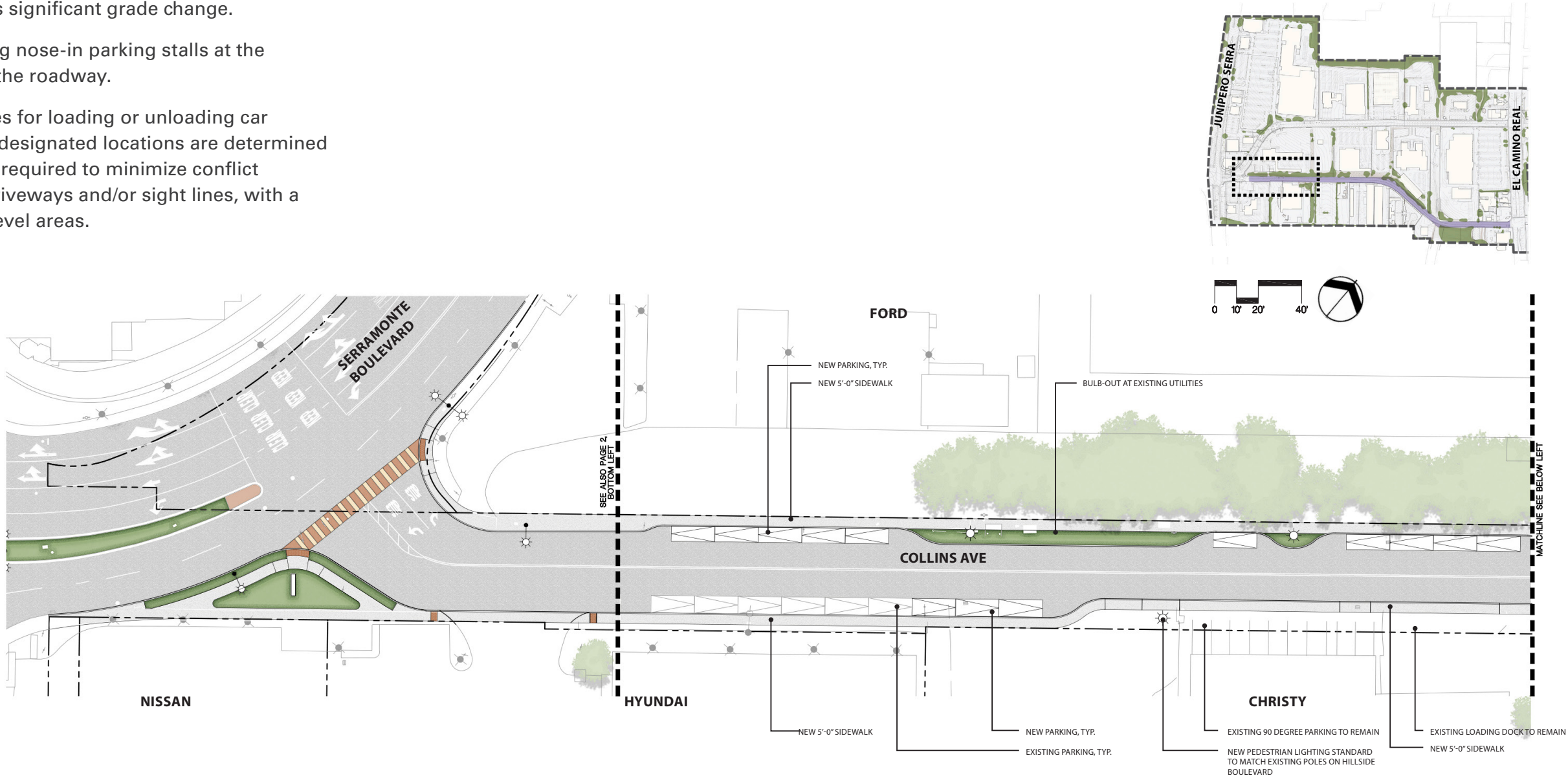
**COLLINS AVENUE DESIGN ELEMENTS**

The Design Elements proposed for Collins Avenue are as follows and as illustrated in Figures 3-3a–3-3d:

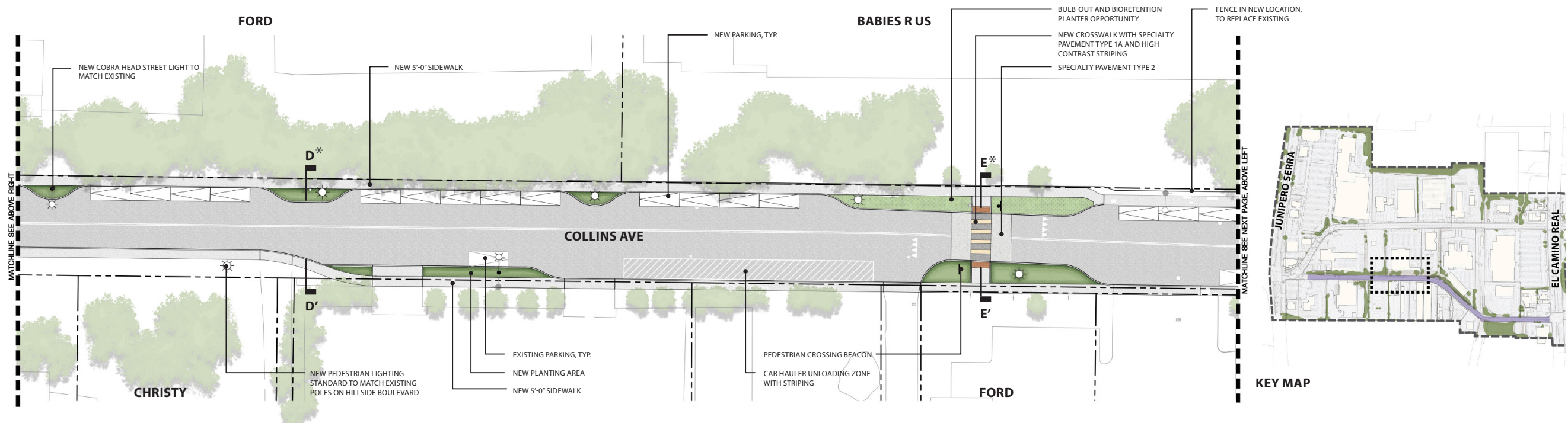
The layout of improvements on Collins Avenue strikes a balance between pedestrian access and safety; on-street parking and loading / unloading zones for car haulers; and provisions for green infrastructure across significant grade change.

- DE-10 Preserve existing nose-in parking stalls at the western end of the roadway.
- DE-11 Locate two zones for loading or unloading car haulers. These designated locations are determined based on space required to minimize conflict with adjacent driveways and/or sight lines, with a preference for level areas.

DE-12 Locate bulb-outs in areas where utilities and/or sight lines preclude parking, and where bioretention is the most feasible based upon existing grades and utilities. Bulb-outs are also used to shorten the distance for pedestrians at one mid-block crossing.

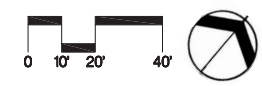


**Figure 3-3a: Collins Avenue**

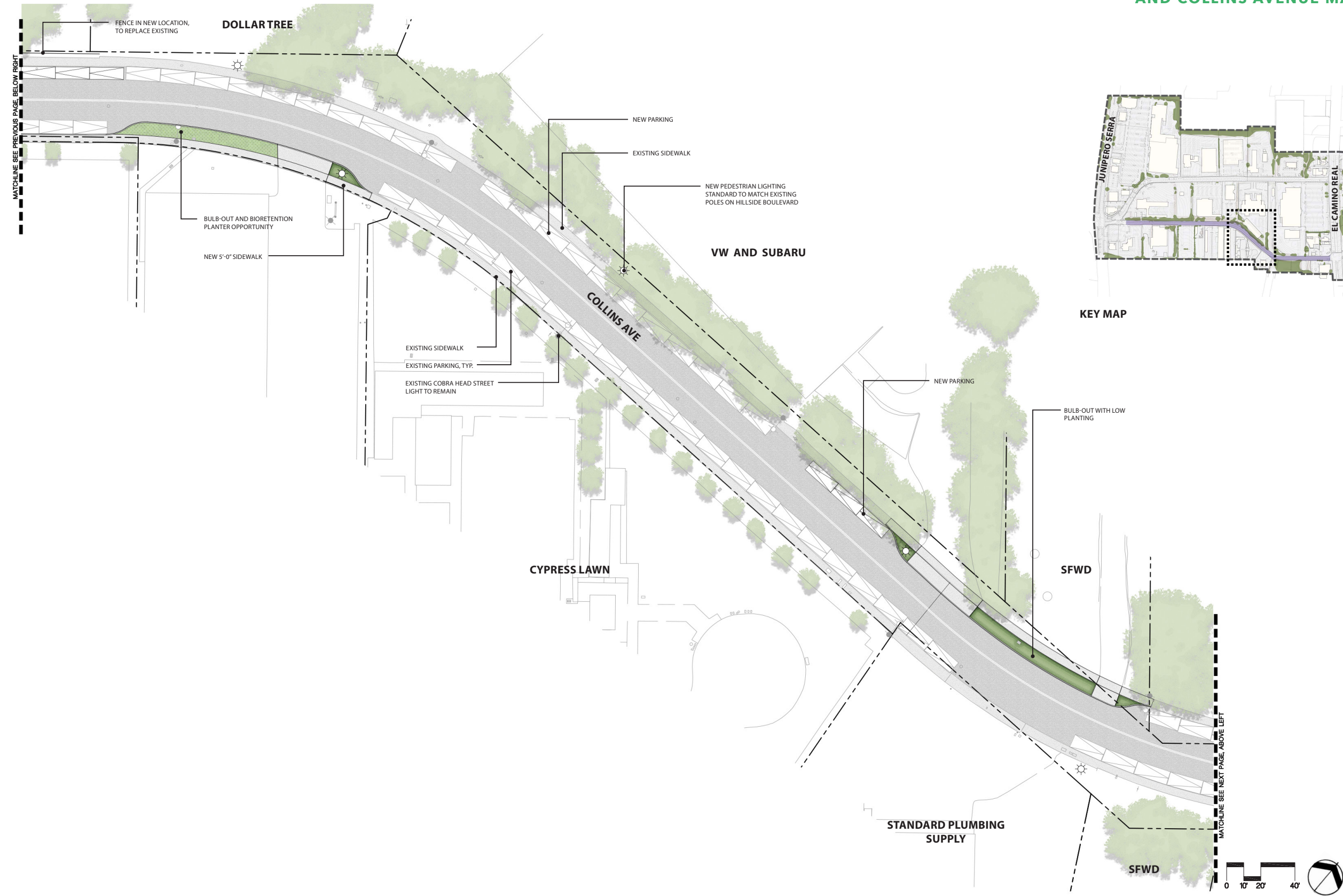


**Figure 3-3b: Collins Avenue**

\*Sections D-D and E-E can be found on page 28 and 29 of this document.



**SERRAMONTE BOULEVARD  
AND COLLINS AVENUE MASTER PLAN**



**Figure 3-3c: Collins Avenue**



KEY MAP

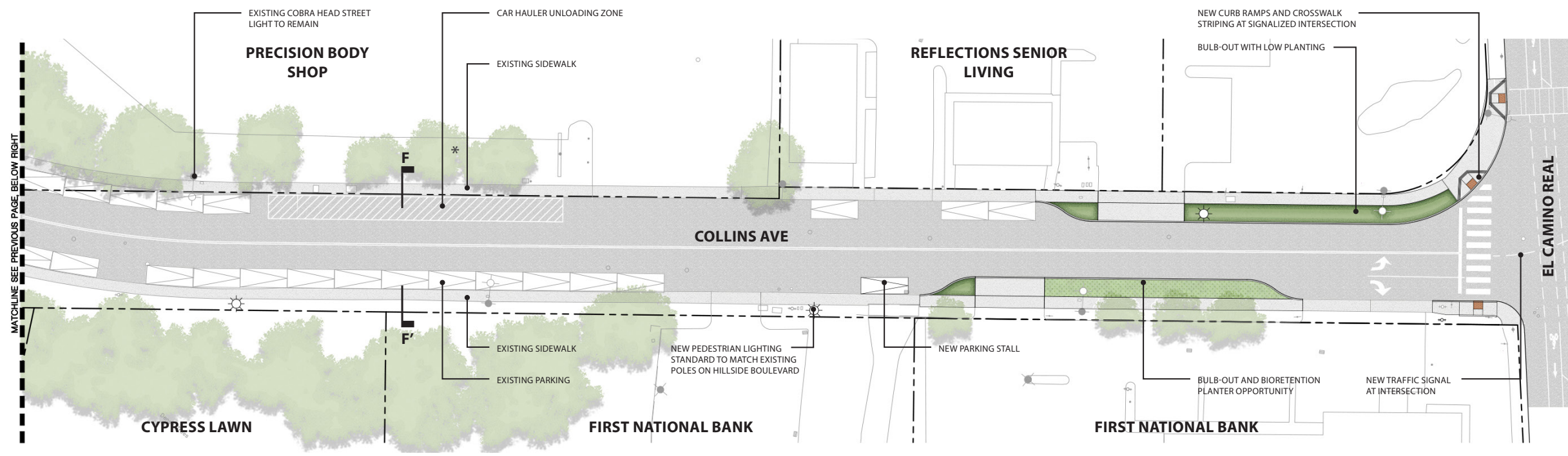
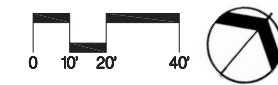


Figure 3-3d: Collins Avenue

\*Section F-F can be found on page 29 of this document.

## WAYFINDING AND GATEWAYS

Wayfinding and Gateway elements are critical factors in establishing a strong sense of place and welcome for visitors and local residents. Wayfinding elements consist of directional signage as well as physical markers such as specific streetscape elements, landmarks and landscaping. Such elements facilitate access to key destinations by providing an understanding of place and location, and also provides direction to services such as transit and public uses. Gateway features, such as monument signage or public art, further add to an area's identity and sense of place. Providing gateway features and cohesive wayfinding elements will enhance the corridors' identities and direct visitors, such as car shoppers, that may not be familiar with the area.

The signage program will include unified signage oriented towards motorists and pedestrians. Gateway features at the intersections leading into the Plan Area will create a sense of arrival and distinguish the area from other parts of the Town. The guidelines below build on the Town of Colma's 1999 General Plan, wherein the intersection of Serramonte Boulevard and Collins Avenue at Junipero Serra Boulevard is identified as a principal gateway site.

## DESIGN STANDARDS

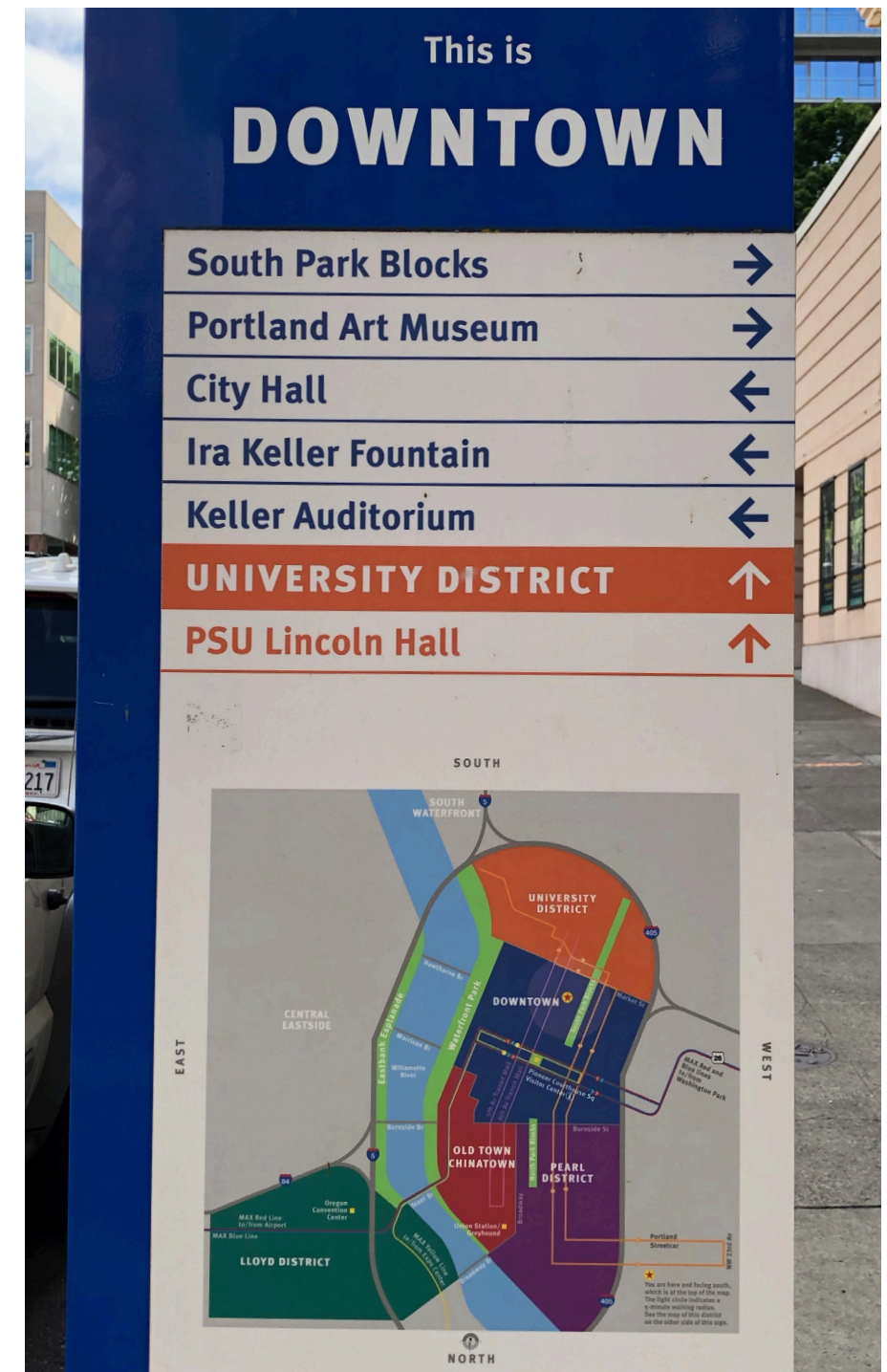
The following design standards will shape the design of wayfinding materials in the Plan Area:

- DS-32. Fonts, colors and materials shall be consistent across the wayfinding system to reinforce the identity of the street
- DS-33 Posts shall be of a color and material that is consistent with signature design elements.
- DS-34 Signs and lettering are to be sized to be clearly legible for passing vehicles, and located so that there is no visual obstruction at driveways or at pedestrian crossings.

## DESIGN GUIDELINES

Broader guidance pertaining to wayfinding and gateways for the Plan Area includes:

- DG-19 Use street elements such as lighting, banners and street furniture to reinforce the street's identity.
- DG-20 Develop highly visible and easily comprehensible wayfinding elements and directional signage scaled to both vehicles and pedestrians to ensure that residents, workers, and visitors can easily navigate the Plan Area.
- DG-21 Work with Caltrans to install freeway directional signage to improve location information to motorists to direct them to Colma.
- DG-22 Provide signage that directs people to transit stations and stops.
- DG-23 Minimize visual clutter through repetition of colors, forms and materials found in signature streetscape elements such as light standards and furnishings.
- DG-24 Develop a signage and wayfinding system that is responsive to the existing materials at municipal buildings located at Serramonte and El Camino.
- DG-25 Enhance wayfinding through repetition of materials that reinforce the identity of the corridor, including pavement treatments, street furniture, lights, and street trees.
- DG-26 Vary sign options from monumental auto-row type signage with destination and/or business identifiers in a standardized format, to a smaller monument that primarily serves as a gateway identifier for the district.



Example of wayfinding signage.



Green infrastructure is a type of landscaped infrastructure that uses vegetation, soils, and natural processes to manage stormwater, mitigate the urban heat island effect, and enhance streetscapes' identity and character.

## DESIGN ELEMENTS

Specific Wayfinding and Gateway design elements identified during the planning process include:

- DE-13 Wayfinding should be located strategically along either side of Serramonte Boulevard, mounted to light standards or on free-standing posts.
- DE-14 A bulb-out planting area will be located at the intersection of Serramonte Boulevard and Junipero Serra Boulevard provides an opportunity for gateway signage. The gateway sign must be sized and located to ensure visibility of pedestrians at the new Collins Avenue pedestrian crossing.
- DE-15 Signage elements such wayfinding and directional signage will be located at key public and commercial destinations, including Town Hall, the police station, auto dealerships and shopping centers, to help orient visitors to destinations along the corridor.

## GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE AND LANDSCAPING

Landscaping is a key element of streetscape design and is essential for placemaking and establishing a cohesive identity within the Master Plan Area. The planting palette for the Master Plan Area includes a mix of eye-catching flowers, foliage colors, and textures that provide interest in all seasons. Selected plants, including drought-tolerant native plants like hummingbird sage, coyote mint, and seaside daisy and low-water succulents like coral aloe and rock purslane, are predominantly low-growing and easily maintained. Some of the selected plants, including cape rush, Idaho fescue, and California grey rush, are approved for use in bioretention areas and can withstand both dry and inundated conditions. The planting palette also includes street trees to provide shade, habitat, and visual interest. The selected tree species, Brisbane box and water gum, are already present on Serramonte Boulevard; additional plantings will fill out the tree canopy and give the corridors a stronger visual identity. Additional details on the planting palette are provided in Appendix B: Plant, Furnishings and Materials Palette.

“Green Infrastructure” is a type of landscaped infrastructure that uses vegetation, soils, and natural processes to manage stormwater and create healthier urban environments<sup>2</sup>. At the scale of a neighborhood or project site, green infrastructure refers to stormwater management systems and features that mimic nature by absorbing and storing water, such as bioswales, pervious paving systems, and rainwater harvesting systems. Green Infrastructure not only serves as a stormwater treatment technique, but also provides ancillary benefits such as enhancing streetscapes' character and identity, mitigating the urban heat island effect, and providing natural habitats within urban settings. The Town of Colma, along with other County of San Mateo jurisdictions, has adopted a Green Infrastructure Plan as required by the State's Municipal Regional Water Quality Permit. The plans represents a

<sup>2</sup> San Mateo County Office of Sustainability.



commitment among cities within San Mateo County to incorporate Green Infrastructure into public and private projects. The policies below reflect this commitment to the incorporation of Green Infrastructure in public realm landscaping within the Master Plan Area. For Green Infrastructure and landscaping strategies related to private development, see Sustainable Design, in Section 3.4: Building Development Standards and Design Guidelines.

## DESIGN GUIDELINES

General Green Infrastructure and landscaping improvements that should be made throughout the Plan Area include:

- DG-27 Maximize the use of new bulb-outs and planter strips along both Serramonte and Collins to accommodate significant grade changes and to existing drainage patterns in the Plan Area.
- DG-28 Consider the use of permeable paving in parking lanes, including pervious concrete or pavers, for stormwater management and traffic calming purposes.
- DG-29 Locate Green Infrastructure in areas that require the least intervention to achieve appropriate grading, drainage, and utility connections.
- DG-30 Include raised curbs alongside Green Infrastructure for pedestrian safety, and curb cuts to receive storm flows.
- DG-31 Utilize cobble splash blocks and weirs as required to absorb flows and facilitate ponding.
- DG-32 Employ the use of bioretention or flow-through planters in planting areas and curb extensions to provide retention basins and improved stormwater management, consistent with the San Mateo County

Sustainable Green Streets and Parking Lot Design Guidebook.

- DG-33 Refer to the San Mateo County Sustainable Green Streets and Parking Lot Design Guidebook for detailed stormwater facility strategies.
- DG-34 Expand tree planting within the public right of way and develop programs that promote tree planting on private properties. Use native and drought tolerant trees/planting.
- DG-35 Refer to the Design Specifications Appendix for a detailed recommended tree planting palette.
- DG-36 Incorporate flowering plants/plants with bright colors where appropriate.

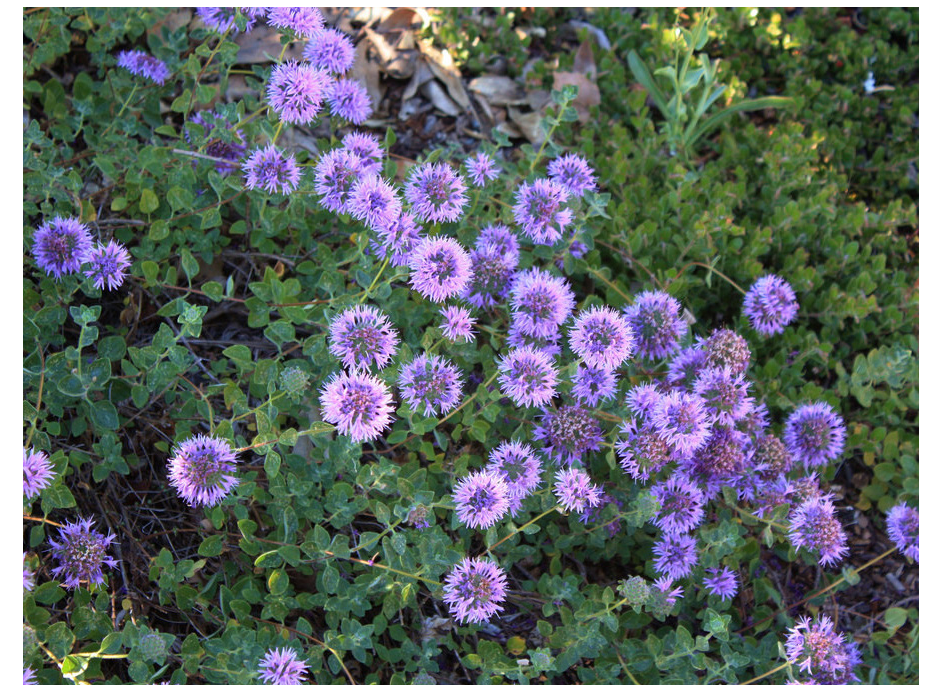
## DESIGN ELEMENTS

Specific Green Infrastructure design elements identified during the planning process include:

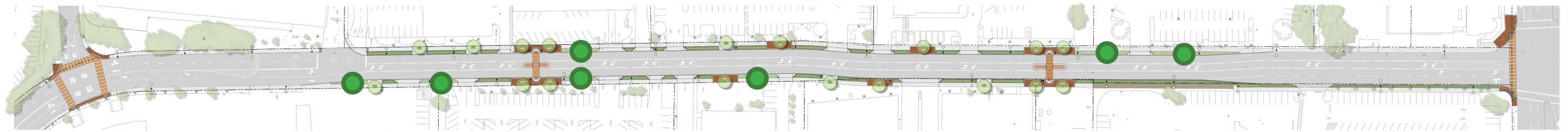
- DE-16 Recommended locations for bioretention planters within the public right of way are illustrated in Figures 3-4a–3-4c.
- DE-17 Where slope or other conditions preclude the use of bioretention strategies, green infrastructure includes planting areas to increase permeable surface area.
- DE-18 Evergreen street trees are selected to act as “interceptor trees,” capturing moisture on their leaves and branches to slow runoff.



Permeable paving is used for stormwater management and traffic calming purposes.



Mondardella villosa



**Figure 3-4a: Biorentention Locations–Serramonte West**



**Figure 3-4b: Biorentention Locations–Serramonte East**



**Figure 3-4c: Biorentention Locations–Collins Avenue**

### 3.4 BUILDING AND SITE DEVELOPMENT STANDARDS AND DESIGN GUIDELINES

This section describes the desired overall scale and design character of buildings and sites within the Master Plan Area. Elements such as building height, massing and parking design contribute greatly to a corridor’s character. For instance, long, uninterrupted stretches of walls without doors, windows, or articulation can alienate and discourage pedestrians from accessing an area. The standards and guidelines presented in this chapter provide the framework for a pleasant, appealing built environment for the Serramonte Boulevard and Collins Avenue corridors.

Topics addressed in this section include:

- Land Use and Development, which outlines development intensity requirements for different uses along the corridors;
- Building to Street Relationship, which focuses on the interface between the right-of-way and buildings fronting onto it;
- Building Form, Articulation and Design, which provides direction on the visual design and scale of development;
- Building Orientation and Entries, which defines the approachability of buildings from the perspective of pedestrians and vehicles along the public right of way;
- Open Space, which recommends ways of incorporating open space along the corridors should more active uses be introduced;
- Sustainable Design; which highlights measures designed to encourage more energy efficient buildings and environmentally-friendly streets and landscaping; and

- Parking and Site Access, which addresses the appropriate provision and design of parking and vehicular site access.

In addition to the standards and guidelines presented here, development will be subject to other Town requirements related to site planning and building design, including but not limited to:

- Local and Regional stormwater management requirements

- Town of Colma Municipal Code:
  - Zoning and Design Review (Ch. 5.03)
  - Building and Construction Regulations (Ch. 5.04)
  - Tree Cutting & Removal (Ch. 5.06)
  - Water Efficient Landscape Regulations (Ch. 5.11)
- California Green Building Code

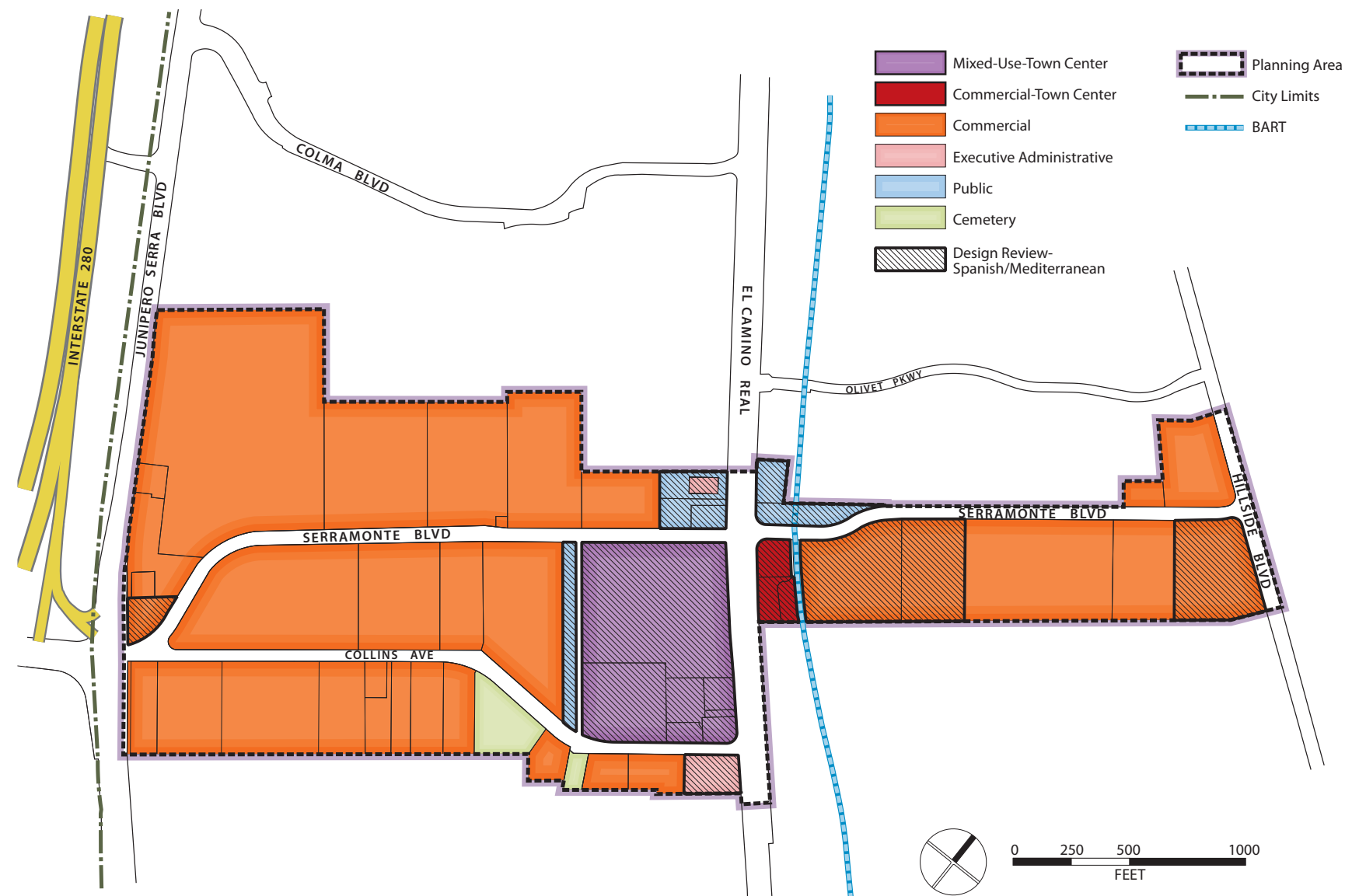


Figure 3-5: Land Use and Development Map of Serramonte Boulevard and Collins Avenue

## LAND USE AND DEVELOPMENT STANDARDS

Recommended development standards for the Serramonte Boulevard and Collins Avenue Master Plan are presented below in Table 3-1. Development standards are organized based on the land uses established in the Town of Colma’s 2014 Land Use and Urban Design Strategy, which identifies a framework in which a new Town Center is envisioned on the existing Kohl’s parcel at the southwest corner of El Camino Real and Serramonte Boulevard, complemented by commercial uses facing El Camino Real intended to project a unified identity with the Town Center, as well as commercial uses throughout the remainder of the Serramonte Boulevard and Collins Avenue Master Plan Area.

The development standards below are consistent with the height and Floor Area Ratio (FAR) recommendations from the Town of Colma’s 2014 Land Use and Urban Design Strategy, and include additional guidance on site design in order to foster a more uniform streetscape that is adaptable to new types of development and changing needs of automobile-oriented commercial uses. The standards allow for the development of both new auto row-oriented uses that will have an urban character, and other commercial uses such as office buildings or hotels.

### DESIGN STANDARDS

The following design standards will shape future land uses and development intensities in the Plan Area:

- DS-35 Allow continued operation and intensification of existing automobile-oriented uses, as well as the introduction of office and hotel uses.
- DS-36 Introduce a Mixed Use-Town Center land use designation as per the 2014 Town of Colma Land Use and Urban Design Strategy in order to provide for the future development of a Town Center.

- DS-37 Allow greater intensities and building heights as detailed in Table 3-2 below to encourage the development of hotel and office uses.
- DS-38 Require minimum and maximum setbacks along corridor segments as indicated in Table 3-2.



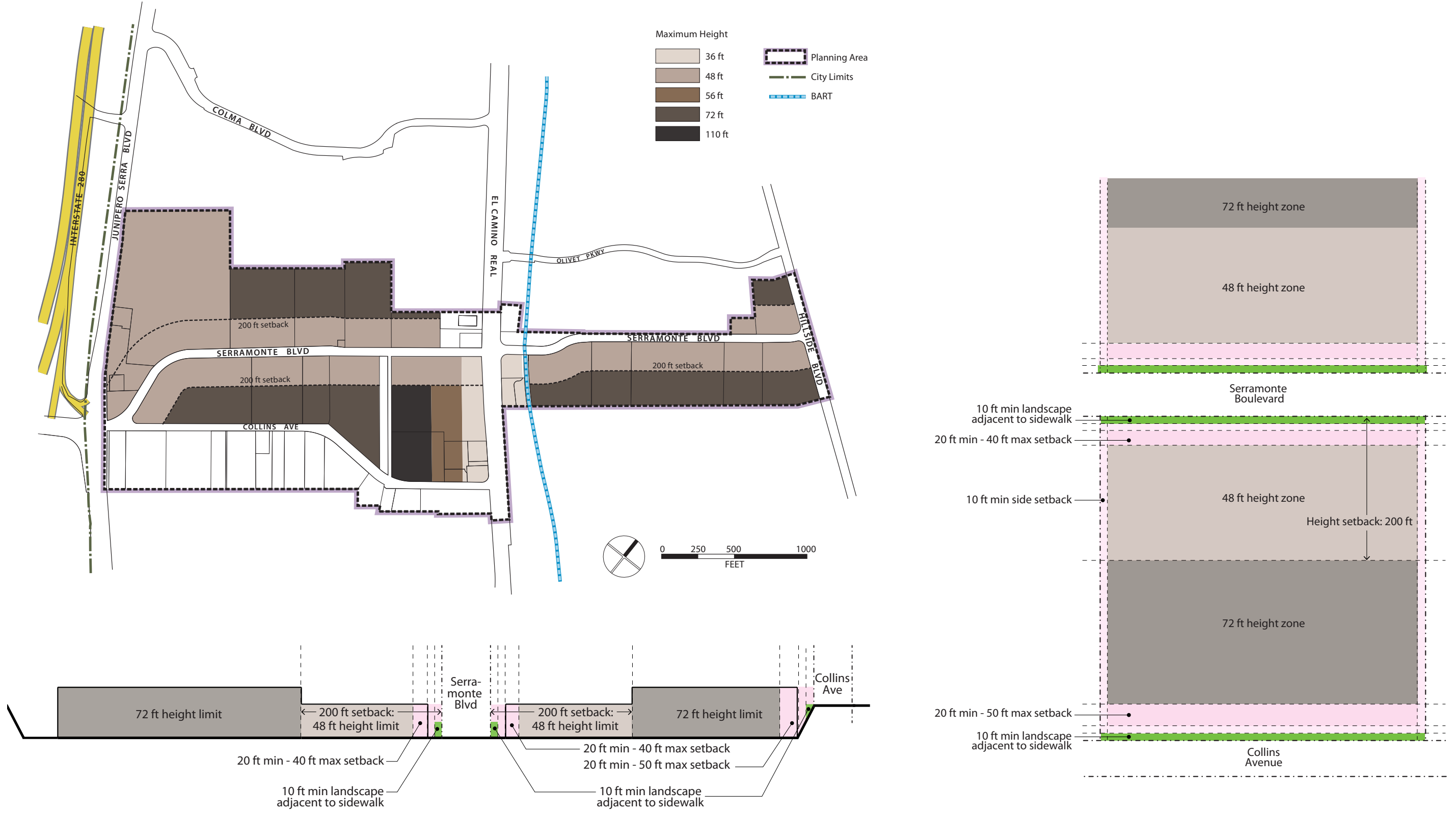
Example of Active Building Design

**Table 3-2: Development Standards**

Land Use	Mixed-Use Town Center (MU-TC)	Commercial (C)	Commercial-Town Center (C-TC)
Maximum FAR	3.0	1.5	1.0
Maximum Lot Coverage	75%	60%	75%
Maximum Height			
Along Serramonte Boulevard and El Camino Real	36 ft. - 110 ft. (See Height Diagram)	48 ft. for the first 200 ft. of the linear lot measured from the back of walk, stepping back to 72 ft. thereafter.	36 ft.
Along Serramonte Boulevard and Junipero Serra Boulevard	Current Zoning 36'	48 ft.	N/A
Along Collins Avenue	Current Zoning 36'	Current Zoning 36'	Current Zoning 36'
Setbacks			
Along Serramonte Boulevard	Min. 20 ft.; Max. 40 ft. front setback. Min. 10 ft. landscaped strip adjacent to sidewalk. Min. 10 ft. side setbacks.	Min. 20 ft.; Max 40 ft. front setback. Min. 10 ft. landscaped strip adjacent to sidewalk. Min. 10 ft. side setbacks.	Min. 15 ft.; Max. 25 ft. Min. 10 ft. landscaped strip adjacent to sidewalk.
Along Collins Avenue	Min. 20 ft.; Max. 50 ft. front setback. Min. 10 ft. landscaped strip adjacent to sidewalk. Min. 10 ft. side setbacks.	Min. 20 ft.; Max 50 ft. front setback. Min. 10 ft. landscaped strip adjacent to sidewalk. Min. 10 ft. side setbacks.	Site Specific PO Standards

Source: Dyett & Bhatia, 2018.

**SERRAMONTE BOULEVARD  
AND COLLINS AVENUE MASTER PLAN**



**Figure 3-6: Height Development Standards**

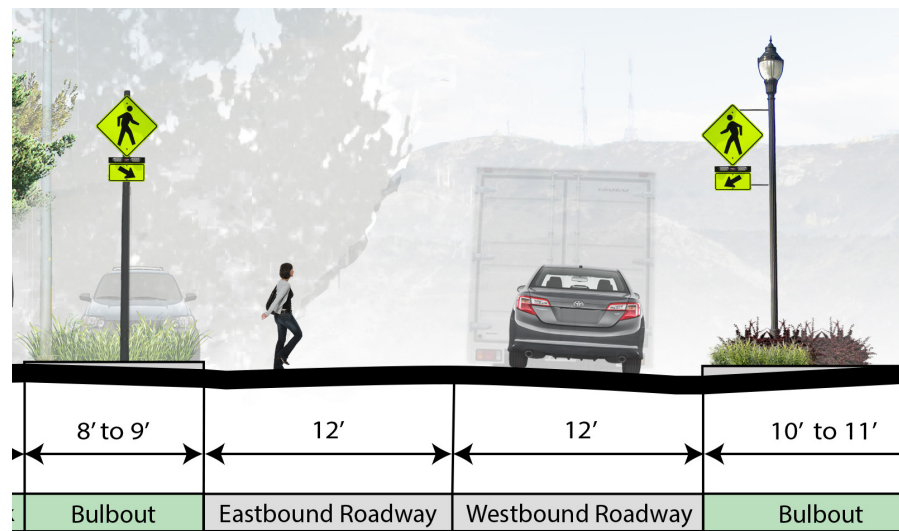
## BUILDING-TO-STREET RELATIONSHIP

As new and infill development occurs along Serramonte Boulevard and the Collins Avenue corridors, it will be important to establish a well-defined, consistent public realm that is aesthetically pleasing and that provides a comfortable environment for drivers and pedestrians. This will be accomplished not only through streetscape improvements but also through a carefully-designed interplay between the built environment and the street. Many of these elements are described in more detail in Section 3.3: Development Standards and Building Design Guidelines.

### RELATIONSHIP TO URBAN DESIGN STRATEGY GOALS

The building-to-street relationship design standards and guidelines presented here respond to the following Urban Design Strategy Goals:

- Goal-1. Accommodate existing auto-oriented uses through design elements in the public and private realm, including the allocation of space for car-haulers, while maximizing the visibility of automobile merchandise.



Examples of planter strips and bulb-outs in setbacks

- Goal-5. Create a more cohesive urban street wall through the regulation of setbacks, building form and site design, landscaping and parking.

### DESIGN STANDARDS

The following design standards will improve the building-to-street relationship in the Plan Area:

- DS-39 Ensure that site planning, location of building entrances, and design of building façades heighten pedestrian comfort, create an active and inviting public realm, and provide clearly demarcated and safe entrances for pedestrians along sidewalks, while recognizing the need for automobile accessibility given the nature of business establishments.
- DS-40 Screen utility structures, mechanical equipment, trash containers and rooftop equipment appurtenant to buildings with either landscaping or fencing.
- DS-41 Accommodate individuals of all ages and abilities are accommodated in building design through Universal Design elements.<sup>3</sup>
- DS-42 Maintain a consistent street frontage along the length of Serramonte Boulevard, with parking, except for auto sales inventory, located along the side or at the rear of parcels.
- DS-43 The Land Use and Development Guidelines for more specific development guidelines pertaining to setbacks and landscaping strips.

<sup>3</sup> For additional Universal Design resources as they pertain to buildings, see: <http://universaldesign.ie/Built-Environment/Building-for-Everyone/#figBfE2EntrancesAndHorizontalCirculation>

- DS-44 For buildings that front onto Serramonte Boulevard, ensure that the primary entrance is on Serramonte Boulevard, visible from the right-of-way, and at-grade or accessible by ramps. Secondary entrances may be located on side streets or may be internal to large parcels.

- DS-45 Provide a continuous planter strip in setbacks adjacent to the sidewalk on Serramonte Boulevard and Collins Avenue of a minimum of 10 feet.

### DESIGN GUIDELINES

The following design guidelines are intended to provide further guidance on the desired building-to-street relationship in the Plan Area:

- DG-37 Design building facades at a pedestrian scale to heighten pedestrian comfort and access, and to create an active and inviting public realm.
- DG-38 Use Universal Design elements such as minimal level changes and at-grade or ramped entries to buildings to accommodate individuals of all ages and abilities in building design.
- DG-39 Design planter strips to accommodate stormwater management where possible, and using native, low-water use plants.
- DG-40 Refer to Green Infrastructure and Landscaping, for additional landscaping guidelines, and to the accompanying Design Standards for the recommended landscaping palette.
- DG-41 Where surface parking is not associated with automobile dealership merchandise is provided along street frontages, plant leafy street trees within the setback to provide visual relief and to moderate glare from windshields.

## BUILDING FORM, ARTICULATION AND DESIGN

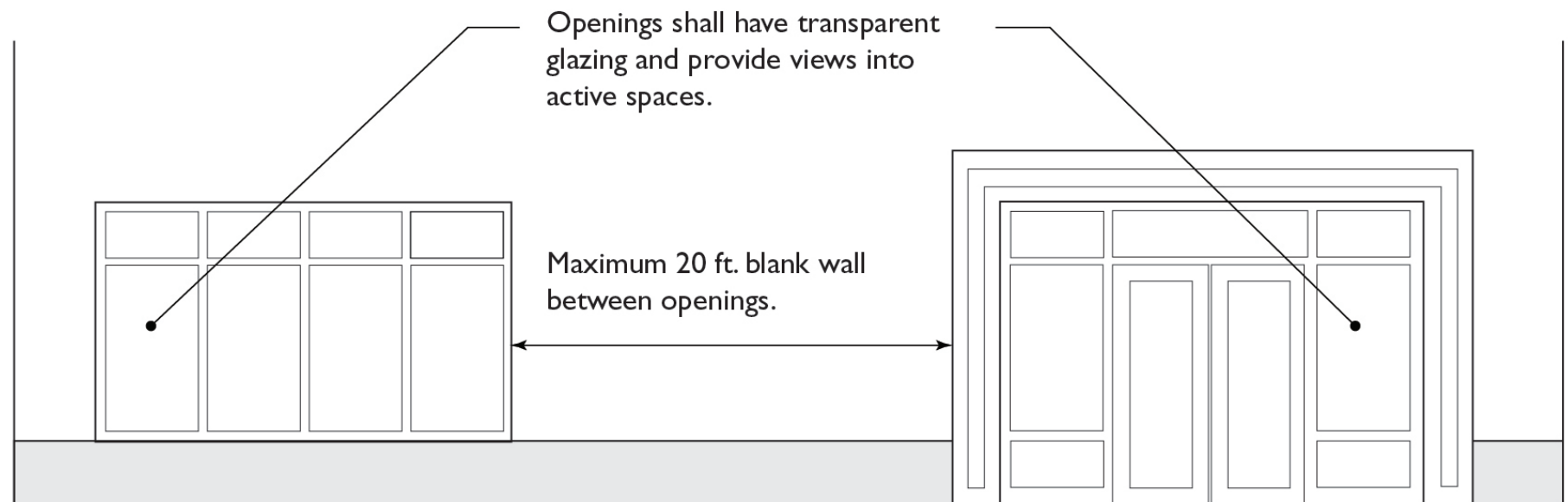
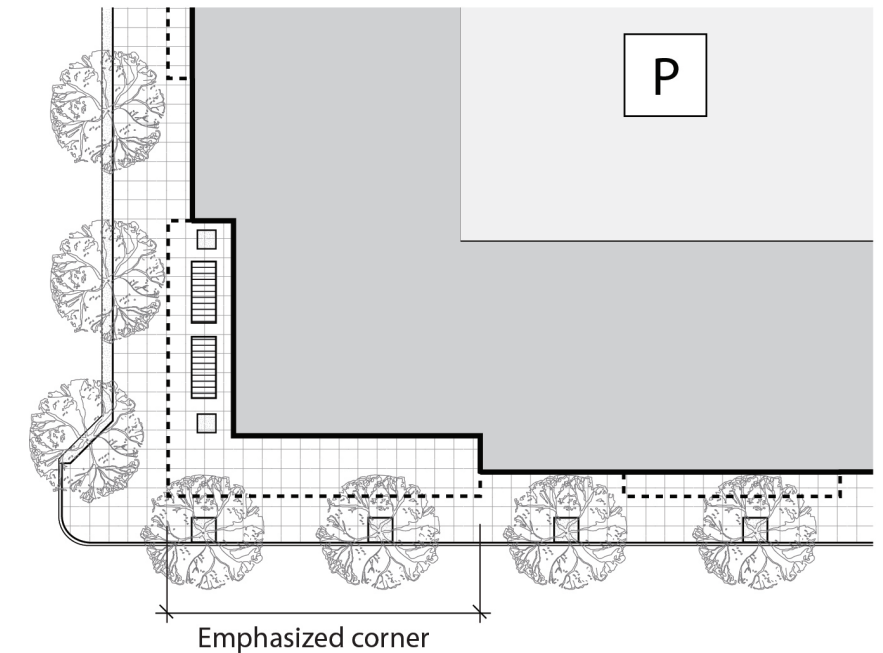
Building form, articulation and design guidelines introduce a scale of development appropriate to the desired character of each street within the Master Plan Area and add visual interest and details to new buildings. The following guidelines will help prevent construction of large, boxy, blank buildings that compromise the overall character of the streets and will encourage visual interest and variation in building form to achieve a varied and engaging urban environment.

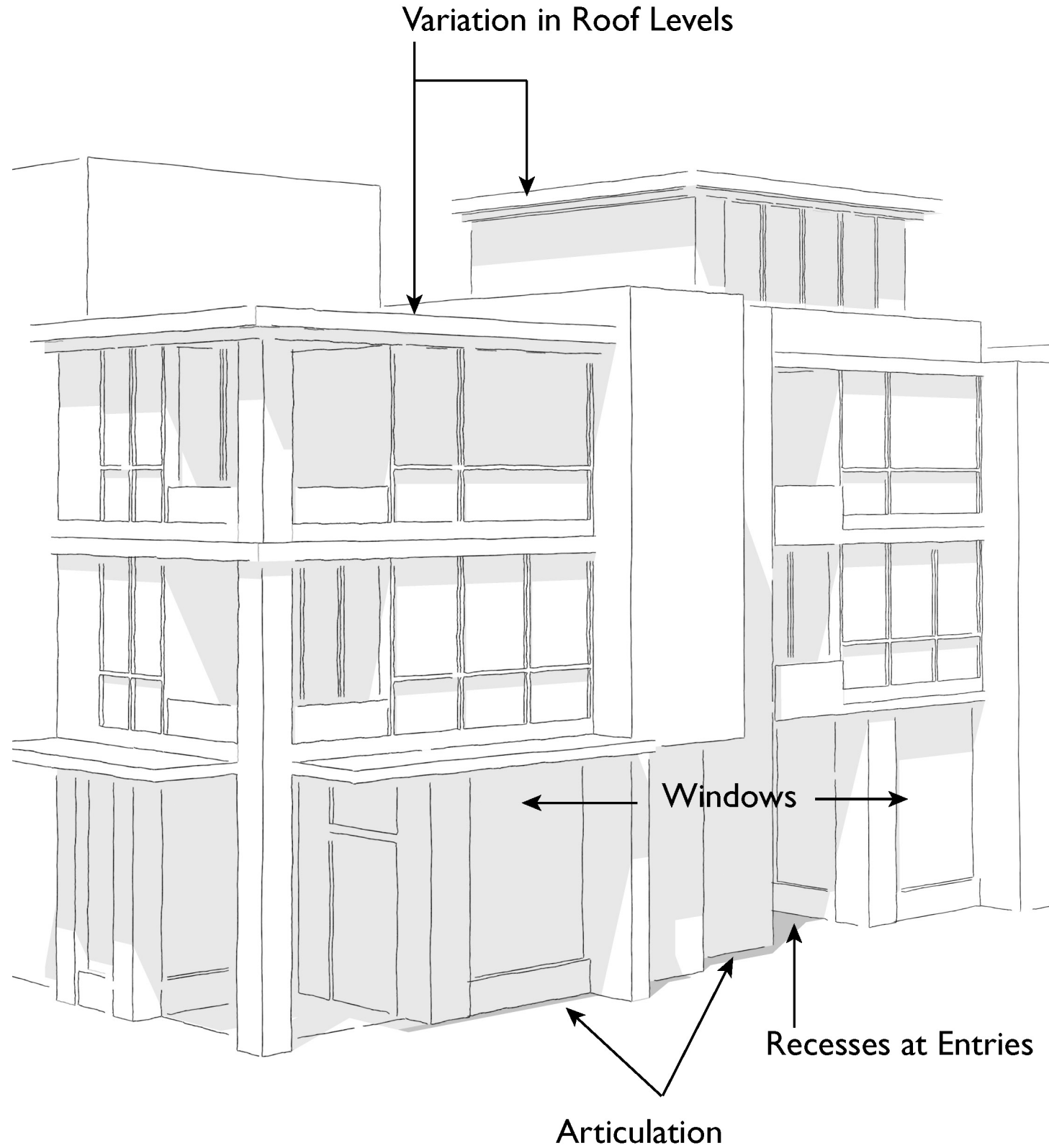
### DESIGN STANDARDS

Building form, articulation and design standards applicable to the entire Plan Area include:

- DS-46 On Serramonte Boulevard, allow buildings to step up in height after the first 200 feet of the linear lot measured from the back of walk.
- DS-47 As per the 2014 Land Use and Urban Design Strategy, allow taller buildings on the west side of the Town Center site, where tall buildings will not obscure views of nearby hills, detract from the rural quality of El Camino, or over-shadow existing civic structures along El Camino Real.
- DS-48 Refer to Table 3-2 for specific height guidelines.
- DS-49 Require development along Collins Avenue to maintain or plant large-scale trees along the rear property line to separate potentially incompatible commercial uses and development from adjacent cemetery uses.

- DS-50 Ensure that private signage complements the architectural style and character of the associated building.
- DS-51 Require new building lighting to comply with Dark Sky best practices, including being shielded and down-directed to minimize off-site glare; use appropriate decorative fixture styles that complement the building's architecture, and to be thoughtfully placed to accentuate building entries, signage and architectural elements, and maintain public safety.





### DESIGN GUIDELINES

The following design guidelines are intended to provide further guidance on building articulation, form and design in the Plan Area:

- DG-42 Office, hotel and mixed-use buildings should have a clearly articulated ground floor.
- DG-43 Design buildings with a cohesive and consistent architectural style, paying particular attention to building facades.
- DG-44 Ensure unified and harmonious building façades by integrating all architectural elements, including signs, balconies, building entrances, and lighting. Windows should have regular patterns and be coherent in shape and proportion.





- DG-45 Reduce the impact of blank walls by providing special landscape treatment, murals or other public art, or unique building design elements such as variation in height and massing.
- DG-46 Along El Camino Real, incorporate Spanish/Mediterranean architectural design elements as outlined in the Town of Colma Zoning Code Design Review Design Standards.

### Town Center

The following guidelines provide additional direction on the building form and articulation of the potential Town Center:

- DG-47 Provide pedestrian-scaled façade articulation such as vertical elements, horizontal banding, and individualized storefront design at the ground level to enhance approachability and pedestrian comfort.
- DG-48 Emphasize and highlight architectural features at block corners through changes in height, massing, or materials, or by introducing public plazas and grand entries.
- DG-49 Use awnings, canopies, and overhangs to provide shelter and shade over main entrances to retail establishments and along the sidewalk at pedestrian-oriented retail streets, except where these treatments would conflict with the viewing of vehicle sales inventory.

## BUILDING ORIENTATION AND ENTRIES

Building orientation and the design of entries are integral to how we access and use buildings. Windows, doors, awnings and entry plazas are the key elements that define a building's orientation and determine its approachability from the pedestrian's perspective. The placement and design of such elements affects how we experience, identify with, and navigate the built environment.

### DESIGN STANDARDS

Building orientation and entry standards applicable to the entire Plan Area include:

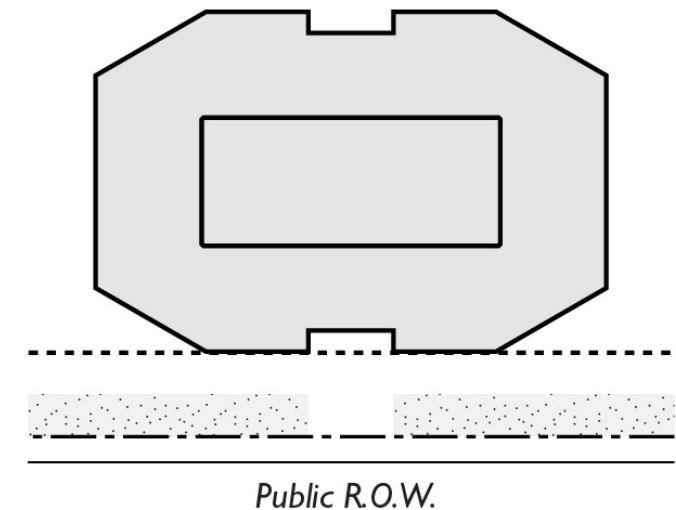
- DS-52 Orient buildings such that primary facades and entrances are visible and physically accessible from the public right-of-way.
- DS-53 Orient active tenant spaces and windows toward the primary street to engage pedestrian interest and to maximize safety by encouraging 'eyes on the street'.
- DS-54 Locate primary facades parallel to the street edge to form a coherent street wall.

### DESIGN GUIDELINES

The guidelines provide further direction on the desired building orientation and entries design:

- DG-50 Landscaping, overhangs, and canopies should not obstruct views or access to entrances, but should frame and clearly define entrances.
- DG-51 Corner buildings should reflect their prominent location by directly addressing both streets they front. Where two streets are equally important, both streets should be considered as primary frontages.

Where possible, place buildings parallel to the street edge to form a continuous street wall.



Spanish Mediterranean Style



Sustainable design promotes livability and the employment of green infrastructure. *Hillside Boulevard, Colma.*



Small open spaces can be incorporated along the Serramonte Boulevard and Collins Avenue corridors.

## OPEN SPACE

Open spaces provide spatial and psychological relief within an urban built environment, as well as areas for rest and congregation. Different types of open spaces, including private and publicly accessible open spaces, serve to meet varying open space needs. While a large public open space is not envisioned along the Serramonte Boulevard and Collins Avenue corridors given that they are likely to remain non-residential, small open spaces can be incorporated into commercial and mixed-use developments to provide areas for rest, dining, and congregation for employees and visitors alike.

The following open space goals, Design Standards and Design Guidelines seek to provide opportunities for rest and congregation as land uses and character along the corridors change.

### DESIGN STANDARDS

General open space standards to be adhered to include the following:

- DS-55 Include features and amenities in open space areas like wind breaks, shade, drinking fountains or water bottle refilling stations, appropriate lighting, and movable furniture to ensure user comfort.

### DESIGN GUIDELINES

The following guidelines provide additional direction on the desired design of open spaces in the Plan Area:

- DG-52 Consider requiring new retail, office or hotel uses to provide publicly-accessible open space, pocket parks or plazas in concert with new development.

- DG-53 Explore the possibility of daylighting Colma Creek in a portion or throughout the entirety of the Town Center as part of the site's retrofit.
- DG-54 Landscaped and common areas in new development should be maintained privately.
- DG-55 Landscaping in open spaces should incorporate sustainable landscape design with the use of hardy, native, low-water consumption, drought-tolerant planting and ground covers, as well as stormwater management systems.

## SUSTAINABLE DESIGN

Sustainable design has myriad benefits, including reducing emissions as well as reducing energy, water and Heating, Ventilation, and Air Conditioning (HVAC) costs. According to Colma's 2013 Climate Action Plan, at the time of adoption commercial buildings' energy usage accounted for over one third of the Town's greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions. In this context, maximizing the energy efficiency of non-residential buildings in Colma represents a crucial aspect of Colma's efforts to meet the Town's GHG reduction target. Other elements of sustainable design include reducing impervious surfaces and encouraging the employment of green infrastructure.

The following guidelines, which build on policies introduced in Colma's 2013 Climate Action Plan, seek to ensure that sustainable design is incorporated into development throughout the Master Plan Area to promote livability and sustainability. All buildings would be required to comply with the Town of Colma building standards, including the California Green Building Standards Code, or Part 11 of Title 24 of the California Code of Regulations.

## DESIGN STANDARDS

Sustainable design standards to be adhered to throughout the Plan Area include:

### Sustainable Building Design

- DS-56 Consistent with the 2013 Town of Colma Climate Action Plan, require all new and remodeled residential and commercial projects to earn a minimum number of “green points” on either the GreenPoint Rated or LEED checklists.
- DS-57 Consistent with the 2013 Town of Colma Climate Action Plan, require the replacement of commercial parking lot lighting with energy efficient lighting (for example LEDs, induction lighting, etc.)

### Sustainable Green Streets and Parking Lot Design

- DS-58 Require implementation of the following design strategies from the 2009 San Mateo County Sustainable Green Streets and Parking Lot Design Guidebook in new development:
- Minimize impervious surfaces in surface parking lots, pathways, and driveways by using permeable paving or incorporating landscaping.
  - Design sites and parking lots to drain stormwater runoff on the landscaped surface.
  - Install stormwater facilities along streets and in parking lots that actively capture and treat runoff from impervious surfaces.
  - Refer to the General Design Guidelines for recommended stormwater facility locations.

- DS-59 Prohibit new lawns or turf areas. Encourage a transition to sustainable landscape design with the use of hardy, native, low-water consumption, drought-tolerant planting and ground covers, as well as stormwater management systems.

## DESIGN GUIDELINES

General sustainable design guidelines providing additional direction on the incorporation of sustainability features include:

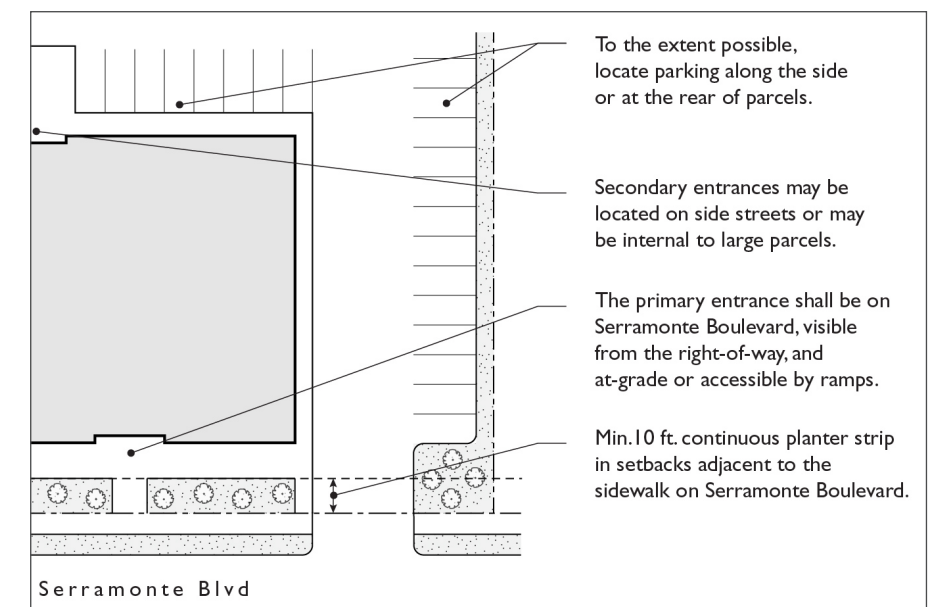
- DG-56 Use pervious concrete and asphalt or permeable joint pavers in parking lots in combination with landscape-based stormwater management such as vegetated swales or infiltration planters to manage stormwater runoff.
- DG-57 Refer to the Design Standards for a detailed planting palette. Additional planting recommendations may be found in the Bay-Friendly Landscape Guidelines.

## PARKING AND SITE ACCESS

Parking and site access are key components of development in the Plan Area. The design of parking—whether surface or structured—directly impacts the built environment, both physically at the development scale, as well as visually at the pedestrian scale. While many existing automobile showrooms along the corridor locate large surface parking lots for their merchandise between the street and their building, others concentrate parking to narrow lots on the side or to the rear of their parcels, allowing the building to be brought closer to the street. Locating the majority of surface parking to the side or rear of parcels will contribute to a more unified street wall and, consequently, a more hospitable pedestrian environment as the corridor develops, taking into consideration the potential new land uses and new automobile dealership site usage needs as autonomous vehicles are popularized. Structured parking may also be considered by property owners and developers along with these different uses and changing site usage needs.



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Street parking and site access strategies along Serramonte Blvd.

In terms of site access, improperly designed curb cuts and driveways may present safety issues for pedestrians or line of sight issues for vehicles. Too many curb cuts can also create an inhospitable pedestrian environment. Considerations for high quality parking design and thoughtful site access design should be integrated into all new development throughout the Plan Area.

The following parking and site access goals, Design Standards and design guidelines seek to ensure appropriate parking and site access strategies are applied along the corridors:

## DESIGN STANDARDS

The following design standards will shape the design of parking and site access in the Plan Area:

### Parking

#### Surface Parking

- DS-60 To the extent possible, and where appropriate, locate surface parking along the side or at the rear of parcels.
- DS-61 Screen surface parking lots not used for displaying automobiles for sale in ways that allow buildings and landscaping to be the primary focal elements viewed from streets.
- DS-62 Design clearly-marked, separated, and accessible pedestrian walkways in surface parking areas to reduce conflicts between pedestrians and motorists.

#### Structured Parking

- DS-63 Locate structured parking to the side or rear of buildings.

### Parking Management

- DS-64 Consistent with the Town of Colma Climate Action Plan, require that new businesses with 50 employees or more implement Transportation Demand Management (TDM) strategies, and promote TDM strategies among existing businesses.
- DS-65 Allow for reduced parking requirements for commercial space with monitored Transportation Demand Management (TDM) plans.
- DS-66 Consistent with the Town of Colma Climate Action Plan, require prioritized/ preferential parking for low-carbon fuel vehicles.

### Bicycle Parking

- DS-67 Require the provision of bicycle parking for new development as follows:
  - a. 1 space per 2,800 square feet for commercial uses;
  - b. 1 space per 3,200 square feet for office uses.
  - c. 1 space per unit for residential uses.
- DS-68 Locate short- and long-term bicycle parking near building entrances and exits and ensure that it is secured and weather-protected.

### Site Access

- DS-69 Allow a maximum of two curb cuts per lot for new development.
- DS-70 Locate new curb cuts at least 20 feet from intersections or street turns of 90 degrees or more to allow for adequate queuing and visibility.

- DS-71 Provide a minimum five-foot-wide, level accessible path of travel across driveways.

## DESIGN GUIDELINES

Parking design and site access measures that are to be encouraged include:

### Structured Parking

- DG-58 Encourage adaptive design of all new parking garages such as the use of flat floor plates and adequate space between floors so that garages may accommodate other uses should parking and automobile storage needs change.
- DG-59 To enhance the appearance of parking structures, consider using living walls or landscaping, and high-quality and multi-layered facades, such as glass, perforated metal, or decorative screens, as façade treatments.

### Site Access

#### Town Center Site

The following guidelines will shape the site access of potential development at the Town Center site, as described in the Town of Colma 2014 Land Use and Urban Design Strategy:

- DG-60 When the Town Center site is redeveloped, promote the incorporation of a new pedestrian-oriented retail street.
- DG-61 Develop a street grid that ensures easy pedestrian movement through the site. Block lengths should generally be between 150 and 300 feet.
- DG-62 Incorporate a plaza lined with active retail and restaurant uses within the Town Center.



Serramonte Boulevard

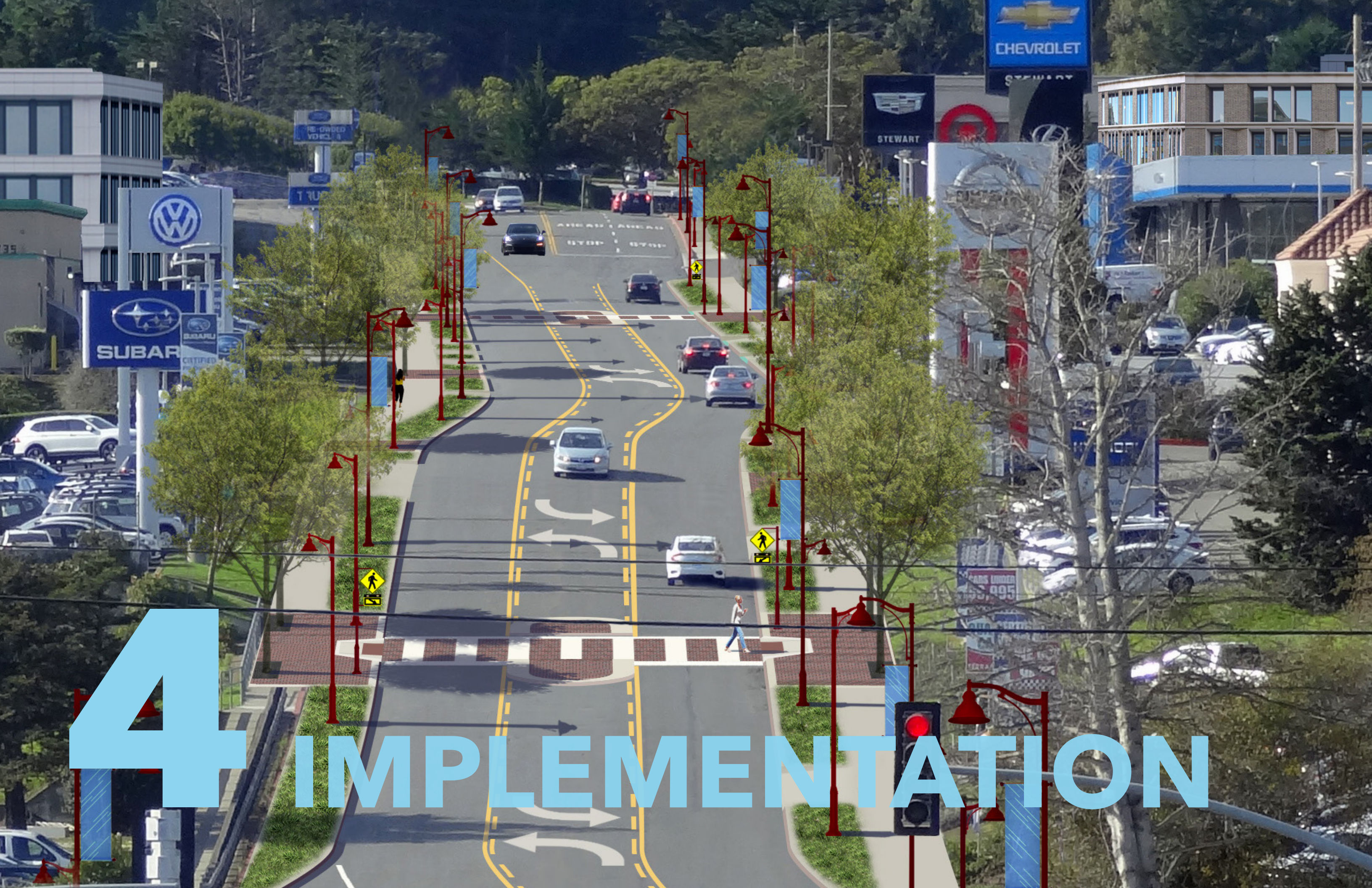


Serramonte West



Collins Avenue

Figure 3-7: Before and After Images



4

IMPLEMENTATION

# Chapter 4: Implementation

## 4.1 INTRODUCTION

Implementation of the Serramonte Boulevard and Collins Avenue Master Plan will help the corridor function better for all road users from a safety perspective and will create a stronger identity for the area. The project may be completed in phased stages, to minimize impact to customers and property owners and to spread capital costs over several years. Some of the construction costs may be offset by increased tax revenues, and public private partnerships and outside funding sources may be leveraged to ensure adequate funding.

This Implementation chapter lays out the estimated construction costs, recommended phasing, potential financing options, and a cost-benefit analysis.

## 4.2 CONSTRUCTION COSTS

The cost for the full project, including Collins Avenue and the East and West segments of Serramonte Boulevard, is estimated at \$17,975,000. This cost includes road work, demolition work, utility work, signing and striping, miscellaneous work and minor items, a 25% construction contingency estimate, and soft costs, including environmental documentation (CEQA), additional land surveying, geotechnical engineering/utility location, Caltrans permitting, design and construction management. The cost for the recommended Serramonte West work alone is \$8,085,000; and the cost for the recommended Serramonte Boulevard (East) work alone is \$3,369,000 and the cost for the recommended Collins Avenue work alone is \$6,521,000 (see Table 4-1). The Serramonte West work is the most intensive and expensive segment, as it involves the most substantial changes within the public right of way, including roadway modifications, sidewalk widening, and extensive new street furnishings. It is also the segment likely to result in the most substantial improvements in pedestrian comfort and safety.

**Table 4-1: Estimated Construction Costs**

	<i>Serramonte Boulevard (West)</i>	<i>Serramonte Boulevard (East)</i>	<i>Collins Avenue</i>	<i>Total</i>
<i>Road Work</i>	\$1,816,000	\$888,000	\$1,460,000	\$4,164,000
<i>Demolition Work</i>	\$230,000	\$50,000	\$163,000	\$443,000
<i>Utility Work</i>	\$1,430,000	\$735,000	\$1,165,000	\$3,330,000
<i>Miscellaneous Work</i>	\$370,000	\$115,000	\$160,000	\$645,000
<i>Signing and Striping</i>	\$750,000	\$100,000	\$750,000	\$1,600,000
<i>10% Minor Items</i>	\$460,000	\$189,000	\$370,000	\$1,019,000
<i>25% Construction Contingency</i>	\$1,149,000	\$472,000	\$925,000	\$2,546,000
<b>Total Construction Cost</b>	<b>\$6,205,000</b>	<b>\$2,549,000</b>	<b>\$4,993,000</b>	<b>\$13,747,000</b>
<i>Soft Costs</i>	\$1,880,000	\$820,000	\$1,528,000	\$4,228,000
<b>Total Project Cost</b>	<b>\$8,085,000</b>	<b>\$3,369,000</b>	<b>\$6,521,000</b>	<b>\$17,975,000</b>

See Appendix E: Opinion of Probable Construction Costs for detailed cost estimates, including estimates for a pared-down lower cost option.



## 4.3 PHASING AND FINANCING

### RECOMMENDED PHASING

While the full cost of Master Plan implementation is substantial, the Master Plan is modular and allows for incremental implementation. The improvement projects can be separated by each corridor and by components within phases as funding becomes available; however, care will be required to ensure that sequencing of projects is handled so that re-doing projects completed in early phases is not necessary as later projects are undertaken.

The Master Plan includes relatively inexpensive projects that can be undertaken early, such as pavement re-stripping, which would not interfere with any other parts of the Master Plan. The Town can explore funding and financing tools that could generate new revenues and/or provide a mechanism to undertake more expensive projects that are difficult to handle on a pay-as-you-go basis.

Even if funding constraints delay or ultimately prevent full implementation of the planned public improvements, the Town can prioritize the use of limited funds where they can have the greatest impact. To this end, the implementation strategy can prioritize investments in the Serramonte West corridor, which is the most visible and which is most intensively used by businesses and their patrons. This type of strategy would suggest that the Town place a lower priority on aesthetic improvements to Collins Avenue compared to improvements on Serramonte Boulevard. The Town may wish to consider trying to optimize by focusing on high-impact improvements that are relatively low-cost and/or which bring potential to leverage local resources with outside funding sources. The roadway re-configuration on Serramonte West, which could be eligible for certain types of regional, state, or federal grant funding, will be a visible improvement that may increase numbers of visitors to the area. Because taxable sales increases and card room revenue increases rely on attracting more customers to the area and encouraging existing and

new customers to spend more money in the area, this strategy would increase the potential for payback of public investments in a reasonable amount of time. In addition, the implementation strategy can also prioritize the types of improvements which are likely to make the most difference in the user experience, including pedestrian access and safety improvements.

The project can be broken down into three discrete phases (See Table 4-2). In Phase 1, the Town could complete the work for Serramonte West. Demolition work, utility work, construction of new sidewalks, paving, landscaping, and bioretention, and installation of the new traffic signal, street furniture, and lighting would improve the public realm and would create a more welcoming pedestrian environment. In Phase 2, the Town could complete the work on Serramonte East, including replacing the sidewalks, installing landscaping and storm drains, and restriping and signing the roadway. In Phase 3, the remaining work on Collins Avenue, including undergrounding the joint trench, adding the traffic signal at El Camino Real, installing lighting pedestrian improvements, storm drains, and landscaping, could be completed. This phasing plan would break up the costs for the Town and prioritize the highest impact pieces.



## FUNDING AND FINANCING

Although providing Town staff support for Plan implementation will be a key factor in the Plan’s success, the Town will also need to marshal considerable financial resources to fully implement the plan. The Town’s implementation responsibilities relating to funding will include:

**Monitor Funding Opportunities.** The Town will monitor opportunities to apply for grant funding when available. These may include options such as One Bay Area Grants (OBAG) from the Metropolitan Transportation Commission that support improvements such as bicycle and pedestrian access and safety improvements within Priority Development Areas (PDAs), including the El Camino Real PDA which includes substantial portions of the Plan Area. Other funding opportunities could include the San Mateo County Measure A and W Funds, which generate funding to support various types of transportation projects, including alternative transportation, and bicycle and pedestrian improvements consistent with the San Mateo County Transportation Authority’s strategic plan; the California Transportation Commission – Active Transportation Program, which could be a potential source for aspects of the project that improve bicycle and pedestrian safety and encourage non-motorized transportation, as the funds can be used for environmental, design, right-of-way, and construction phases of a capital projects to increase the proportion of trips accomplished by biking and walking, increase the safety and mobility of non-motorized users, and to benefit many types of active transportation users; and the California Transportation Commission – Local Streets and Road Program, a formulaic funding program for local jurisdictions to help fund basic road maintenance, rehabilitation, and critical safety projects for local streets and roads, funded by SB1.

**Reviewing and Updating the Town’s Impact Fee Program.** The Town of Colma currently does not charge development impact

**Table 4-2: Potential Phasing**

	<i>Serramonte Boulevard (West)</i>	<i>Serramonte Boulevard (East)</i>	<i>Collins Avenue</i>	<i>Total Cost</i>
<i>Phase 1:</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Demolition work</li> <li>• Utility work</li> <li>• Road reconfiguration, including sidewalks, paving, landscaping, bioretention</li> <li>• Street furniture and lighting</li> <li>• New traffic signal</li> </ul>			\$8,085,000
<i>Phase 2:</i>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Replace sidewalks</li> <li>• Lighting Installation</li> <li>• Paving, landscaping, bioretention</li> <li>• Storm drains</li> <li>• Signing and striping</li> </ul>		\$3,369,000
<i>Phase 3:</i>			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Demolition work</li> <li>• Underground joint trench</li> <li>• Install lighting</li> <li>• Storm drains</li> <li>• New traffic signal</li> <li>• Road work, including sidewalks, paving, signing and striping, ADA ramps, landscaping, bioretention</li> </ul>	\$6,521,000
<b>TOTAL</b>				<b>\$17,975,000</b>

**Table 4-3: Potential Funding Sources by Project Element**

<i>Project Elements</i>	<i>Impact Fees</i>	<i>Developer Contributions</i>	<i>Assessment or CFD</i>	<i>EIFD</i>	<i>Grants</i>	<i>Potential Grant Sources</i>
<i>Roadway Surface</i>	<b>x</b>			<b>x</b>	<b>x</b>	Local Streets & Roads Program (CA Trans. Commission)
<i>Signage and Striping</i>	<b>x</b>			<b>x</b>	<b>x</b>	Vehicle Trip Reduction Program (BAAQMD)
<i>Landscaping</i>		<b>x</b>	<b>x</b>	<b>x</b>	<b>x</b>	Urban Greening Grants (SGC)
<i>Bioretention</i>	<b>x</b>	<b>x</b>	<b>x</b>	<b>x</b>	<b>x</b>	Stormwater Grant Program (CA Water Resources Control Board)
<i>Curb, Gutter, Sidewalk</i>	<b>x</b>	<b>x</b>	<b>x</b>	<b>x</b>	<b>x</b>	Safe Routes to Schools (C/CAG), Active Transportation Program (CA Trans. Commission), Measure A (San Mateo County)
<i>ADA Ramps</i>	<b>x</b>	<b>x</b>	<b>x</b>	<b>x</b>	<b>x</b>	Safe Routes to Schools (C/CAG), Active Transportation Program (CA Trans. Commission)
<i>Street Furniture</i>		<b>x</b>	<b>x</b>	<b>x</b>	<b>x</b>	One Bay Area Grant (MTC)
<i>Street Lighting</i>		<b>x</b>	<b>x</b>	<b>x</b>	<b>x</b>	One Bay Area Grant (MTC), Active Transportation Program (CA Trans. Commission)
<i>Traffic Signals</i>	<b>x</b>			<b>x</b>	<b>x</b>	Measure W (San Mateo County), Active Transportation Program (CA Trans. Commission)
<i>Storm Drainage</i>	<b>x</b>	<b>x</b>	<b>x</b>	<b>x</b>	<b>x</b>	Measure AA (SF Bay Restoration Authority)

fees for public facilities like the types of improvements envisioned in the Serramonte Collins Master Plan; however, given the Master Plan area’s prominent central location and economic function within the Town, it may be appropriate to study the nexus between the development that may occur within the Town and the need for improvements identified in the Master Plan. If sufficient nexus is demonstrated, the Town may determine that it is appropriate to establish and collect an impact fee from new development within the Master Plan Area only, or within a larger area such as the Town as a whole, to help pay for new development’s share of the cost of the Plan’s capital improvements.

**Coordinate with Private Development Activity.** The Town will monitor new private development projects to identify opportunities for them to contribute to plan implementation – either through in-kind improvements or through contribution of funds. **Explore New Funding Sources.** The Town will convene property owners and explore interest in public-private partnerships to generate funding to help pay for new public improvements through mechanisms such as those described in the financing section below.

**Facilitate Financing Tools.** While many public improvement projects included in the Plan maybe undertaken incrementally, on a pay-as-you go basis, the Town and Plan Area stakeholders may determine that it is desirable to generate up-front funding for more expensive projects, to be repaid over time through one or more funding and financing tools.

- The Town may explore opportunities for the formation of a lighting and landscaping assessment district (LLAD), Community Facilities District (CFD), or other form of assessment/special tax district to help fund capital investments and/or ongoing streetscape maintenance activities

- The Town may consider formation of an Enhanced Infrastructure Financing District (EIFD) as a way to direct new Town tax revenues generated from within the Plan Area towards a fund that would help to pay for new capital improvements. As a mechanism that relies on future increases in existing revenues to generate funding for capital improvements, an EIFD may be found to be less effective in a largely built out area such as the Plan Area as compared to mechanisms such as the LLAD or CFD, which can generate substantial new revenues, even if limited new development occurs.

Table 4-3 provides a summary of key elements included in the design concept and potential funding sources.

**Update Land Use Controls.** The Town will consider updating land use policies to enable the Plan Area to adapt in the event that changes in market conditions and trends create the need for the Town to embrace business activities which diverge from the Plan Area's current strengths in new auto dealerships and various types of community- and destination-oriented retail sales. Such changes will seek to accommodate new uses which can generate local employment opportunities and help to maintain the tax base upon which the Town relies to generate revenues in support of high quality local services.

## PUBLIC/PRIVATE PARTNERSHIPS

The Town and private business and property owner interests are aligned around the objectives of the Plan – to create a safer and more attractive environment for businesses, their employees, and their patrons. By structuring the Plan around addressing these needs, as expressed by Plan Area stakeholders, the Town has created the opportunity to form public/private partnerships to help implement the plan. Taken as a whole, the Plan can be viewed as a virtuous circle of public/private partnership whereby the Town plans, coordinates, and organizes funding for projects that will create benefits for the Plan Area's businesses, property owners, and the public at large in the form of a more functional and attrac-

tive business district. These improvements will support business retention, expansion, and recruitment and increased patronage, leading to increases in business activity which will in turn create tax revenues that can help support additional investments in public improvements.

Public/private partnerships may take various forms, such as:

- Joint public and private funding for public improvements – the Town can contribute public funds, including its ability to secure grants from various public funding sources for public improvements while the private sector can contribute funding to leverage the public dollars either through voluntary mechanisms such as “sponsorships”, compulsory mechanisms such as development agreements or conditions of approval for development projects, or through more comprehensive mechanisms such as formation of a CFD which would garner participation of property owners within the Plan Area.
- Joint public and private funding for streetscape maintenance through mechanisms such as creation of a Lighting and Landscaping Assessment District or a similar mechanism, with the Town contributing funds as well.
- Coordination of public improvements with private development projects – the Town could seek to prioritize public improvement projects that will support new private development investments, such as programming streetscape improvements along a segment of roadway where a private owner has committed to investing in their Plan Area property.
- Joint public and private efforts to promote the Plan Area to shoppers/visitors and prospective businesses – the City and local businesses can collaborate to promote the area by coordinating marketing and outreach activities.



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## 4.4 COST BENEFIT ANALYSIS

The purpose of this section is to provide a preliminary cost benefit assessment for the proposed public improvements within the Serramonte Boulevard and Collins Avenue Master Plan area design concept. Analysis is provided for both the high-cost and low-cost options (for details on the low-cost option, see Appendix D); however, given that the low-cost option is presented for the purposes of comparison and providing examples of a range of cost estimates only, the high cost option is the focus of the analysis.

This assessment includes a quantitative element and a qualitative element. The quantitative element identifies the percentage increase in annual Master Plan Area taxable sales from the current baseline that would be necessary for the Town to achieve a ten-year payback of its investment in public improvements. The qualitative assessment then provides discussion of the likelihood that the Town would realize the revenue increases due to implementation of the public improvements necessary to achieve a ten-year payback. Considerations include the nature of the proposed improvements and their responsiveness to concerns identified by Plan Area stakeholders and the potential of the design concept improvements to help retain existing plan area business activity and stimulate sales increases, and the magnitude of revenue increases needed to meet a ten-year payback target.

The cost-benefit assessment is intended to help inform the public and decision-makers regarding the benefit of implementing the improvements associated with the proposed design relative to its cost. While the low-cost option is not intended to be interpreted as an alternative design concept, it is presented to provide a range of costing approaches. The ultimate implementation of the Master Plan could thus incorporate elements that represent a hybrid of the high- and low-cost options analyzed here.

## QUANTITATIVE ASSESSMENT

As detailed in BAE’s Existing Market Conditions memo (see Appendix E), the Serramonte and Collins Master Plan Area has generated the majority of the Town’s taxable retail sales since at least 2005. The Master Plan Area includes many of the Town’s strongest taxable retail sales generators, including all the Town’s auto dealerships, a major shopping center, and several stand-alone large-format retail stores. In 2016, the Master Plan Area generated just under 70 percent of the Town’s taxable retail sales, or \$645 million. In addition to sales tax generation, the Master Plan area includes the Lucky Chances cardroom, which generates cardroom tax - another of the Town’s important general revenue sources. Cities typically receive a local sales tax allocation of approximately one percent of taxable sales reported in their jurisdiction. This means taxable sales in the Master Plan area generated approximately \$6.45 million in annual sales tax revenues for the Town. The Lucky Chances card room is the only generator of card room taxes for the Town, which amounted to approximately \$4.0 million per year as reported in the Existing Market Conditions memo.

### REVENUE INCREASES NEEDED TO ACHIEVE TEN-YEAR PAYBACK FOR PUBLIC IMPROVEMENT INVESTMENTS

The revenue increase needed to achieve payback of public improvement investments in a ten-year timeframe is a function of the level of existing revenues and the cost of the new improvements. Considering just the Town’s existing sales tax and card room tax revenues within the Master Plan area, totaling approximately \$10.45 million, the required revenue increases to achieve a ten-year payback for public improvements are summarized in Table 4-4, simply dividing the total improvement cost under each cost scenario by ten. If the time value of money was incorporated into these calculations, the annual revenue increase would need to be somewhat larger to offset the fact that public investments would be made up-front, but the increased

revenues would accumulate over a ten-year period, during which there would be carrying costs or opportunity costs associated with the funds not yet repaid.

As shown in Table 4-4, the annual revenue increase needed under the high-cost option is approximately \$1.8 million and the annual revenue increase needed under the low-cost option is approximately \$1.2 million. On a percentage increase basis, these translate to approximately 17 and 11 percent increases from current annual Plan Area sales tax and card room revenues, respectively.

**Table 4-4: Ten-Year Payback Requirements**

	Cost Option	
	High	Low
<i>Estimated Public Improvement Cost</i>	\$17,973,600	\$11,980,500
<i>Annual Revenue Increase Needed to Achieve Ten-Year Payback (\$ increase)</i>	<b>\$1,797,360</b>	<b>\$1,198,050</b>
<i>Current Revenues</i>	\$10,450,000	\$10,450,000
<i>Annual Revenue Increase Needed to Achieve Ten-Year Payback (% increase)</i>	<b>17%</b>	<b>11%</b>

Source: BAE 2018, 2019.

## QUALITATIVE ASSESSMENT

The Existing Conditions memo outlined a number of challenges to maintaining and increasing the taxable sales and card room revenues within the Plan Area, but also highlighted the critical importance to the Town's fiscal position of doing so. A key finding in the memo is that because of the Town's limited resident population base, it is very important for the Plan Area to be visible and attractive to residents of surrounding areas who travel to Colma for shopping. Businesses interviewed as part of the Master Plan stakeholder outreach process generally focused on the need for circulation/mobility, parking, urban design, signage and pedestrian improvements for the area. Stakeholders felt that these types of improvements would help to improve access to businesses, employee and customer safety and attractiveness, and the area's visibility to the regional marketplace.

According to the Landscape Architecture Foundation's Landscape Performance Series (LPS)<sup>4</sup>, which evaluates the performance of landscape design projects throughout the world based on a series of environmental, social, and economic metrics, streetscape projects that focus on enhancing the pedestrian experience and improving multimodal connectivity and safety in existing retail corridors can have positive economic impacts. For example, three LPS case studies in Lincoln, Nebraska, Houston, Texas, and St. Louis, Missouri reported increased property values following streetscape and multimodal infrastructure investments in existing retail corridors, while the case study in St. Louis also reported an increase in sales tax following these investments. Additionally, cities up and down the Peninsula, such as Mountain View and Redwood City, have invested in streetscape improvements that have, in-part, contributed to thriving commercial districts. It should be noted, however, that streetscape and multimodal improvements are only one component of successful economic

<sup>4</sup> Landscape Architecture Foundation. Landscape Performance Series. Case Study Briefs. Accessed April 25, 2019. Available at: <https://www.landscapeperformance.org/case-study-briefs?op>

development and retail strategy, and that the nearby examples cited above were paired with other initiatives, such as encouraging complimentary pedestrian-oriented land uses and development patterns, that played a critical role in the overall success. Because of this, assessing the economic benefits strictly attributable to streetscape and multimodal improvements is challenging.

The Plan Area is a mature commercial district with relatively little vacant and underutilized land. Where there is opportunity for intensification to take advantage of the proposed increases in allowable lot coverage, floor-area-ratio, and height limits, it is likely that much of the net increase in development would be attributable uses that do not generate card room tax revenues - card rooms are a relatively unique enterprise and it is unlikely that the Plan Area would attract a second card room operation - or retail sales taxes. Brick and mortar retail faces significant barriers to expansion due to the increasing share of retail transactions conducted over the internet.

The rapid expansion of online retailing is having a noticeable impact on the retail sector, with increases in market share by online retailers drawing sales away from brick and mortar establishments, particularly impacting retailers that sell large volumes of commodity goods compared to those that sell more unique, discretionary items.<sup>5</sup> This has largely contributed to the contraction of many national and regional retail chains. Bloomberg Business Week reports that at 105 million square

<sup>5</sup> Commodity goods are those which consumers buy on a regular basis, are familiar with the available choices, and for which their purchasing decisions are based on price and convenience. These are the types of goods for which online shopping is an ideal tool. As opposed to commodity purchases, discretionary purchases involve items that consumers purchase less frequently, and which are not necessities. So-called because consumers spend their discretionary time and income on them, discretionary purchases may involve specialty items for which expert sales help is needed and/or for which the experience of purchasing the items and the sales and after-sale support experience is important. Online shopping is not as conducive to this type of purchase.



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feet, 2017 set the record for the amount of retail space closed by national retail chains, with 2018 on track to possibly surpass this record at 77 million square feet of planned closures as of April 2018.<sup>6</sup> While Town sales tax revenue trends do not indicate that local retail activity has actually begun to decline, the Town's recent budget information indicates that growth in local sales tax revenues appears to be slowing, which may hint at the local beginning of trends predicted above.

Additionally, structural changes are expected in the auto industry due to the emergence of ridesharing and autonomous vehicles which could result in consumers being less dependent on personally-owned vehicles and result in lower sales tax revenues attributable to retail automotive sales in traditional dealerships. U.S. car sales have remained strong due to unexpected increases in demand from millennials, but the industry is expected to face significant disturbances and uncertain sales patterns.<sup>7</sup> One survey of dealership owners and industry experts concludes there will be fewer dealerships in the future, with those that remain repositioning their business model so that traditional retail plays less of a role, by adding or expanding the role of finance divisions, mobility services, and fleet management.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> Retail's Real Estate Glut is Growing, Bloomberg Business Week, p. 31, April 23, 2018.

<sup>7</sup> Eisenstein, Paul and McDuffie, John Paul. (Jan 29, 2019). The U.S. Auto Industry in 2019: Twists, Turns and Bumps Ahead. Knowledge@Wharton. Available at: <https://knowledge.wharton.upenn.edu/article/the-u-s-auto-industry-in-2019-twists-turns-and-bumps-ahead/>

<sup>8</sup> Lareau, Jamie and Lutz, Hannah. (November 26, 2017). Forecasting the Future of Auto Retailing: A New Department -Mobility-Alongside Parts, Services and the F&I Office. Automotive News. Available at: [https://www.autonews.com/article/20171126/INDUSTRY\\_REDESIGNED/171129853/forecasting-the-future-of-auto-retailing](https://www.autonews.com/article/20171126/INDUSTRY_REDESIGNED/171129853/forecasting-the-future-of-auto-retailing)

Further, for Colma, it will be difficult to increase retail demand through population growth because Colma itself and the surrounding areas of the Peninsula are mature and limited in their ability to grow, which presents significant challenges to increasing residential development and population growth, and resultant expansion of the customer base.

Based on the above considerations, it is likely that any intensification of development in the Plan Area will be an incremental process that occurs over a period of more than ten years. Therefore, potential increases in overall Plan Area taxable sales and card room revenues would need to rely on the existing quantity of retail and card room space making marginal improvements in their already strong sales performance.

The addition of new non-retail and non-card room activities to the area over time may help retailers and the card room in that other uses, such as office and hotel, could bring people to the area who otherwise would not have been present, and would then represent a new "captive" base of potential patrons who can bolster demand for retailers and the card room as long as the alternative uses do not displace retail space or the card room.

If the Town is concerned about targeting new uses that could help to bolster Town revenues and/or help to replace revenues that might be lost if the Town's retail sales activity contracts due to factors mentioned above, some uses will be more attractive than others. Lodging uses, which generate transient occupancy taxes (TOT) in addition to property taxes can be a very strong revenue generator and would help to diversify the Town's revenue base. Based on BAE's experience analyzing lodging uses in infill locations within jurisdictions that collect a TOT, BAE would expect new lodging uses in Colma to be strongly net fiscally positive, depending on the land use being replaced, after accounting for changes in Town service costs and changes in Town General Fund revenues. Office uses and residential uses each have revenue generation potential because they will primarily generate revenues in the form of property taxes. Based on BAE's experience analyzing fiscal impacts of office uses in infill locations in other jurisdictions that charge a nominal business license fee, as Colma does, as opposed to a

more substantial gross receipts, or per employee-based fee, BAE would expect new office uses in the plan area to be at least fiscally neutral, if not fiscally positive. However, on a per acre basis, the fiscal benefits to the Town of Colma from new Plan Area office uses would likely be less than the fiscal benefits of a successful new lodging use. As compared to office uses, residential uses will potentially be less fiscally attractive than office uses because the two uses may have similar revenue generation potential since property tax will be the largest direct revenue generator for both office and residential development. Meanwhile, residents demand more municipal services, including recreation, than office employees who spend only a limited amount of time within the community compared to residents. Based on this, we would expect new Plan Area office uses to be more fiscally attractive to the Town than residential uses. The caveat with all of the preceding discussion regarding fiscal attractiveness of different land uses is that any project can have distinct fiscal implications due to its own unique characteristics, creating exceptions to the preceding generalizations about different land use types.

Assuming the full capital costs for design concept implementation aligning with the high-cost option, the Town of Colma would need to realize an approximately 17 percent increase in annual Plan Area sales tax and card room revenues to achieve a ten-year payback of the investments in public improvements. Given the challenges that the Plan Area will face in substantially increasing taxable sales and card room business activity (e.g., mature, mostly built out market area, strong external competitive forces, etc.), sales increases would likely be due to marginal gains from improved performance (i.e., sales per square foot) in the existing inventory of retail and card room space, rather than due to large sales volume increases from adding substantially to the existing inventory of revenue-generating space. Thus, it would be difficult for the design concept improvements to stimulate a 17 percent Plan Area sales volume increase. Given that the low-cost option retains most of the functionality of the high-cost option, the City may wish to consider incorporating some of the low-cost option's cost-saving elements into the ultimate plan designs, to reduce the overall implementation costs and reduce

the magnitude of revenue increase needed to achieve a ten-year payback. By selectively implementing a combination of elements from the high-cost and low-cost options, the Town could provide almost all of the functionality of the high-cost scenario, and achieve significant aesthetic improvements compared to existing conditions. Assuming availability of resources to fund the improvements, a reduced local investment will limit the Town's risk.

In evaluating the risk of investing in public improvements and whether a ten-year payback can be achieved under any cost scenario, the Town should also evaluate the risk of not making investments in supporting the area. Given the Town's reliance on revenues generated in the Plan Area, there is likely a great benefit to investing in the maintenance and improvement of the functionality and attractiveness of the area, even if the investments ultimately fail to generate a ten-year payback, if stakeholders agree that the investments could simply help to maintain and limit any potential revenue reductions that could occur due to factors that are largely beyond the Town's and local businesses' control. In any cost scenario, if the Town can pursue grant funding opportunities for some of the public improvements, as shown in Table 4-3, this will reduce the outlay of local funds and reduce the sales tax and card room tax increases necessary to achieve a ten-year payback on the investment of local funds.



Bulbine frutescens

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