

# Urban Design 5

The Development Guidelines and Streetscape Standards established in this chapter will ensure that new development in the Station Area corresponds to, supports, and accomplishes the vision and goals set forth in this document. These Guidelines and Standards promote vibrant and attractive new development, streetscape improvements, and public gathering places.

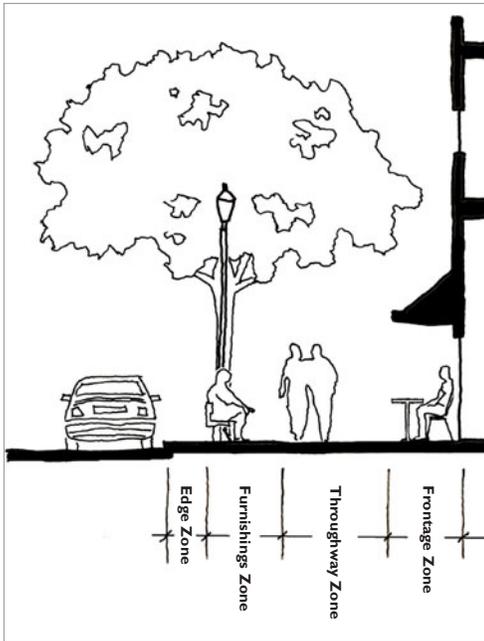
The Development Guidelines and Streetscape Standards serve as the primary authority for all design issues in the Station Area, regardless of whether they are addressed in San Mateo's Zoning Code. Although no conflicts are anticipated with other documents, should any arise these Development Guidelines and Streetscape Standards shall take precedence over the Code, and by extension the San Mateo Rail Corridor TOD Plan and El Camino Real Master Plan, where either one applies in the Station Area. Any projects not within a designated area described in this chapter are subject to the existing regulations in the City's Code. The multi-family residential areas off of El Camino Real are not the subject of focus of the design guidelines in this chapter, as the City's Multi-Family Design Guidelines address that type of development.

The Development Guidelines and Standards contain language that reflects the following principles:

- “Shall” or “Must” indicate a design standard and means that conformance is mandatory.
- “Should” or “Strongly Encouraged” mean that conformance will be strongly encouraged by the City through the review process and that the guideline is intended to be a recommendation about how to implement the goals for development.

## *Focus Areas*

The Design Guidelines and Streetscape Standards are created to bring to fruition the urban design concepts proposed in the focus areas below. These concepts embody the Guiding Principles and are illustrative of the type of development and public improvements that are envisioned for the implementation of this Station Area Plan. Following a discussion of the focus areas in this section, specific development standards and streetscape standards are listed in the sections that follow.



*Station Area Sidewalks*

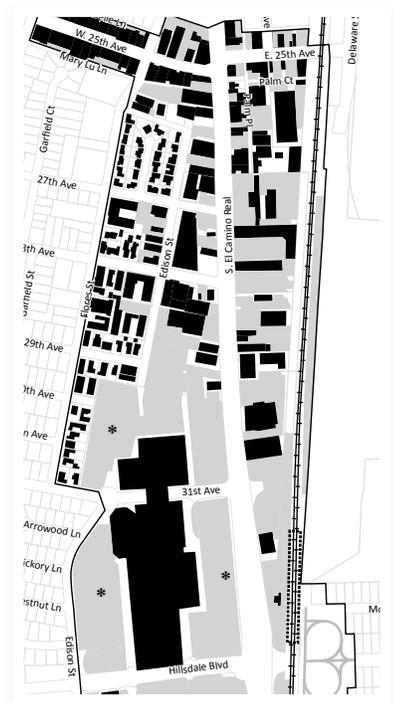
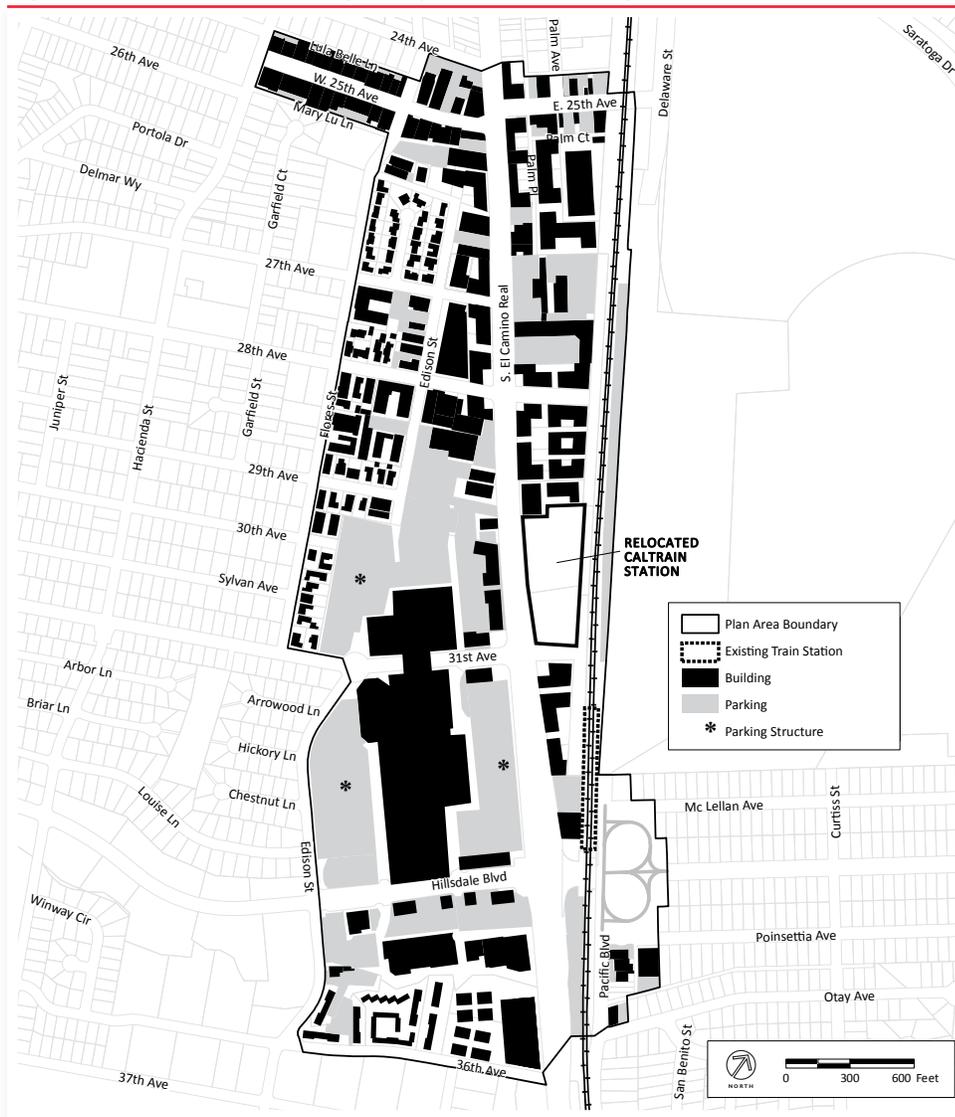
In areas of high pedestrian activity, sidewalks should be considered to have four zones: edge, furnishing, pedestrian, and frontage. The edge zone is the area where the sidewalk transitions to the street, providing space for motorized vehicles and for passengers to get in and out of vehicles. The furnishing zone is the area of the sidewalk housing street trees, street furniture, and lights. The throughway zone is the segment of the sidewalk set aside for pedestrian travel. Finally, the frontage zone is where the transition to private property takes place, where the doors and windows of buildings facing the sidewalk open onto the public right-of-way.

*El Camino Real*

El Camino Real is envisioned as a bustling corridor that serves as an efficient transportation thoroughfare and vibrant focus of activity, lined with consistent storefronts, an attractive streetscape, and a lively mix of residential and office uses. The development pattern will be significantly improved to promote livability in the Station Area. Figure 5-1 depicts how well-designed, human-scaled buildings line the street edge, replacing large parking lots and auto-oriented development and providing a more pleasant and active environment. Buildings will have a strong presence and contribute to a sense of place. While the right-of-way (ROW) and curb-to-curb widths of El Camino Real will remain wide to provide for heavy vehicular traffic, improvements can be made to make it a more pleasant environment for pedestrians. From 25<sup>th</sup> to 31<sup>st</sup> Avenues, a landscaped median, enhanced crossings, and streetscape improvements are proposed, as shown in the section in Figure 5-2. While the Plan envisions a bustling corridor north of 31<sup>st</sup> Avenue, there is a strong need to provide the setting for feasible affordable housing development at appropriate places. To this end, the Plan has policies supportive of residential-only buildings south of 31<sup>st</sup> Avenue, fronting El Camino Real. Figure 5-3 shows a plan of a potential residential development at the corner of 36<sup>th</sup> Avenue and El Camino Real. This potential development illustrates how housing could be designed to face onto El Camino Real while creating livable homes. It shows buildings raised a half-story above the street and includes an interior courtyard.

Development on large parcels will include pedestrian paseos to ensure mobility and accessibility while providing opportunities for an enhanced public realm. Figure 5-4 shows how the existing alley, Palm Place, can be integrated into a larger mixed-use development and be featured as a pedestrian paseo. These pedestrian paseos will be places of small gatherings and nooks of commerce. Figure 3-4 in Chapter 3 is a visual simulation illustrating a potential look and feel of a pedestrian paseo.

Figure 5-1: Potential Building Footprints and Parking at Plan Buildout



Existing building footprints and parking. A before and after comparison of the development pattern in the Station Area reveals a more walkable block-pattern and more buildings developed to the edge of the street, enhancing the pedestrian experience on El Camino Real.

Figure 5-2: El Camino Real Street Sections

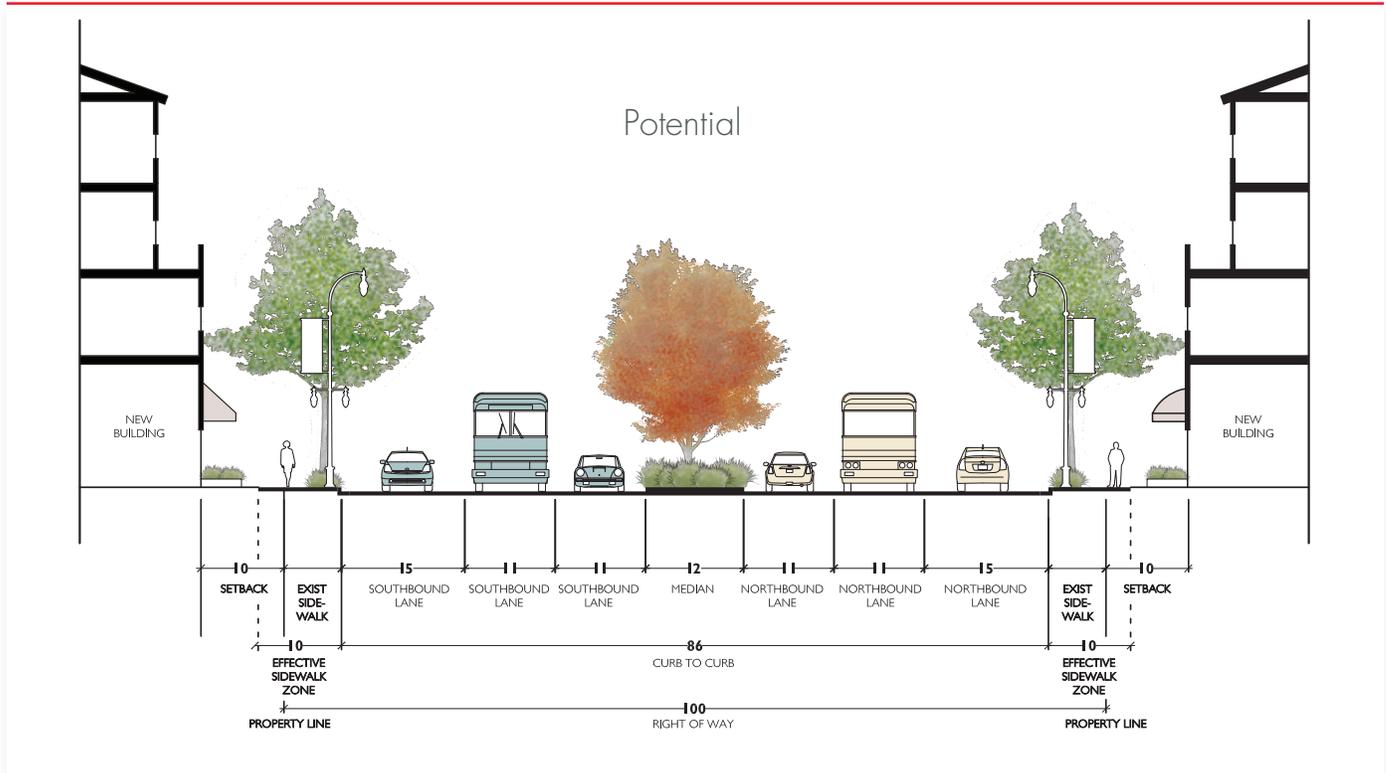
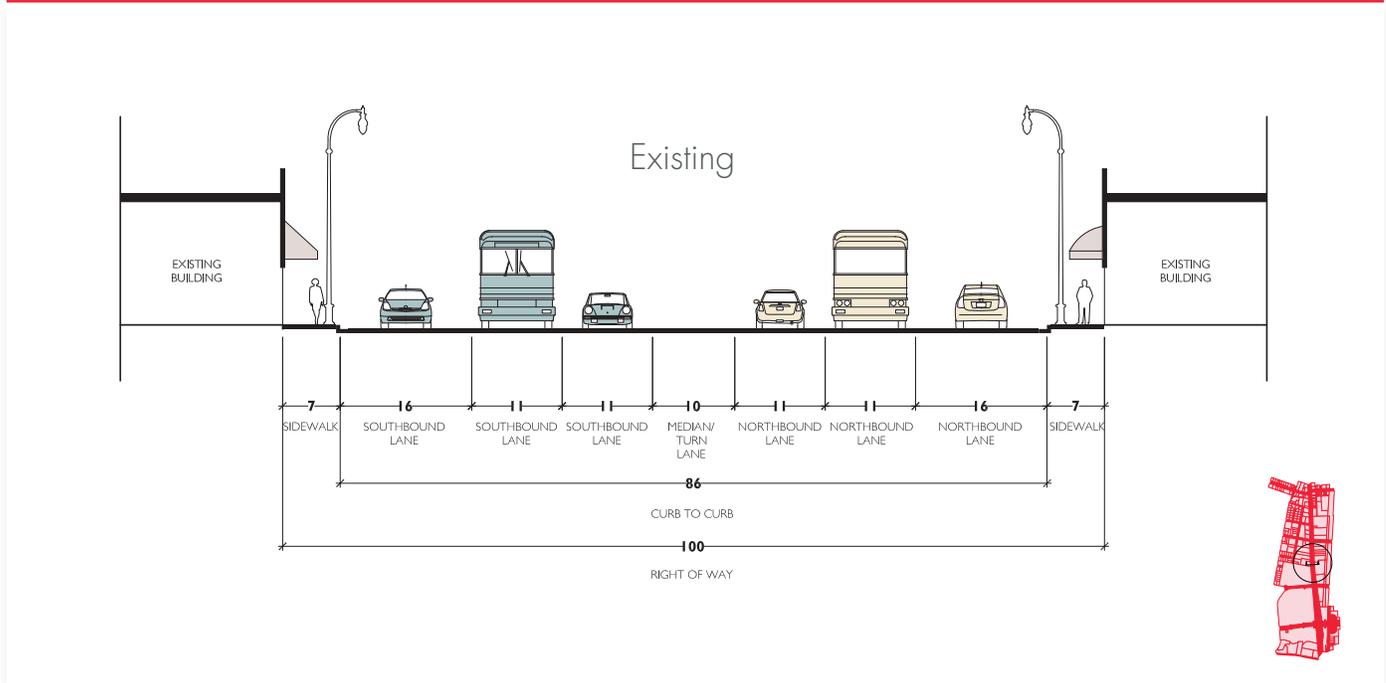


Figure 5-2: El Camino Real Street Sections

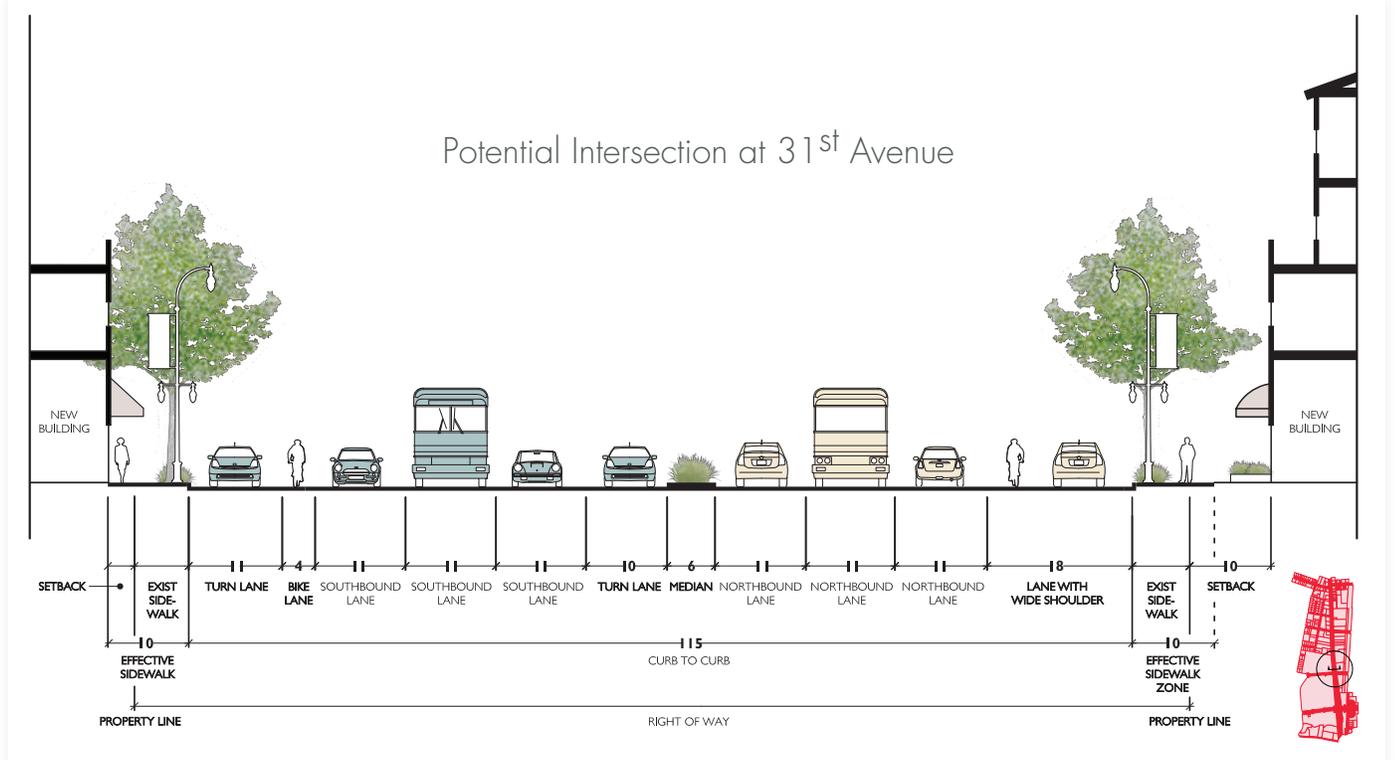
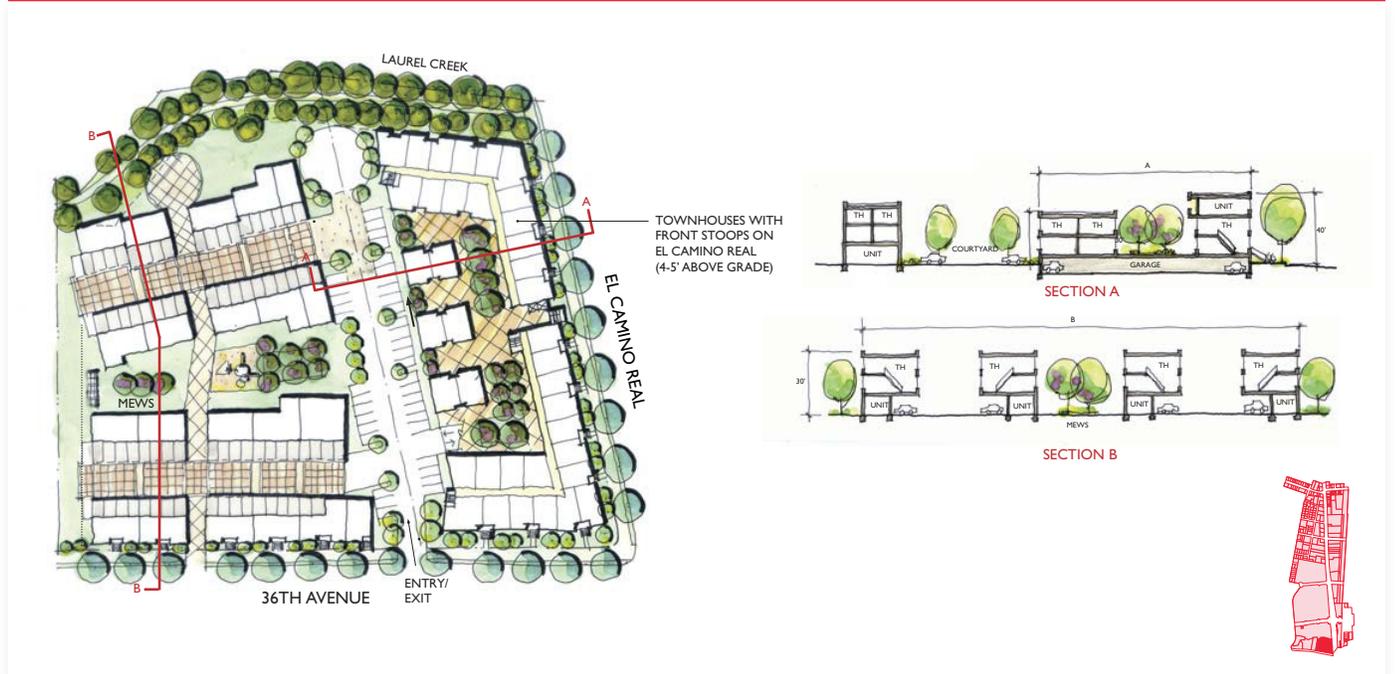


Figure 5-3: Potential Residential Development at El Camino Real and 36<sup>th</sup> Avenue

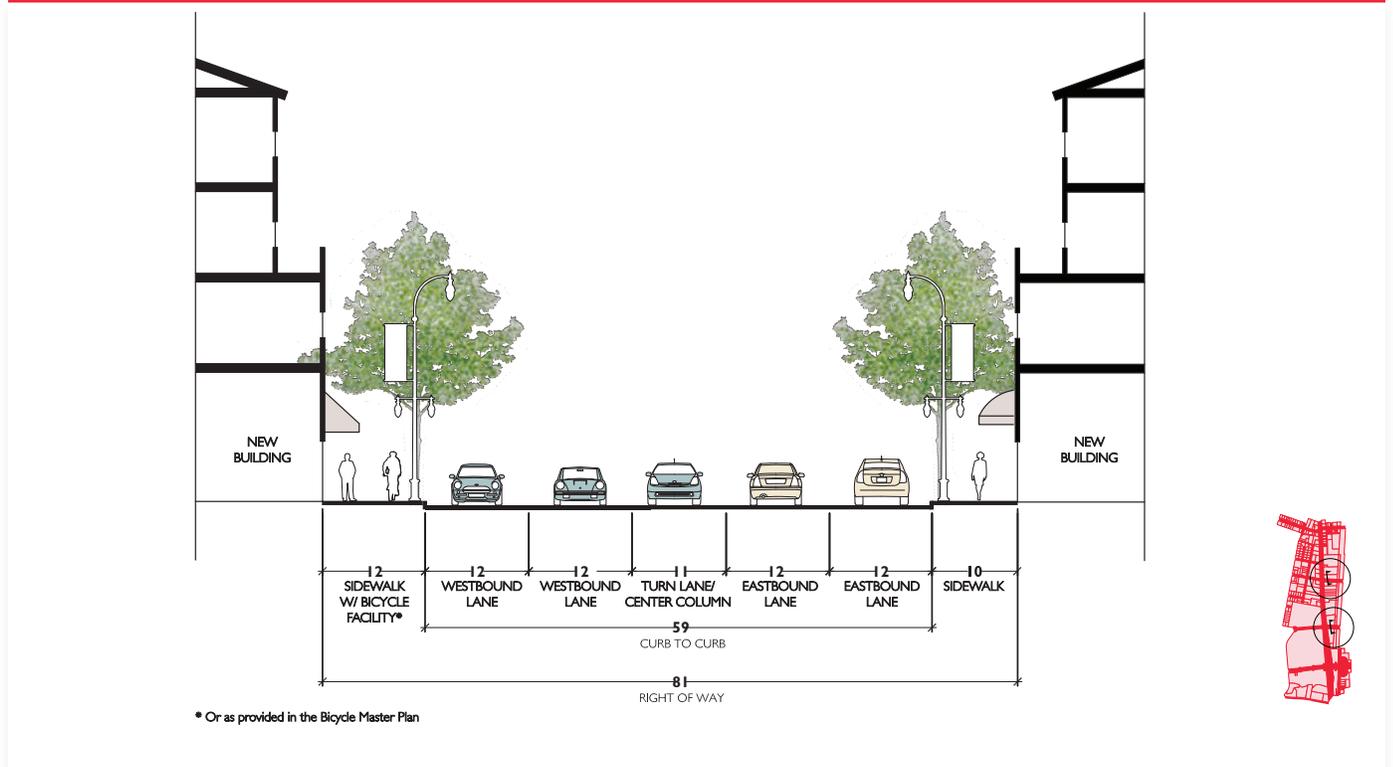


*East-West Avenues*

The east-west avenues will connect the Station Area to established residential neighborhoods in the west and Bay Meadows I and II in the east. They will extend the type of building and street character desired along El Camino Real in order to establish a cohesive Station Area identity. They include 28<sup>th</sup> and 31<sup>st</sup> Avenues, while 25<sup>th</sup> Avenue is a separate focus area described below. A street section illustrating both 28<sup>th</sup> and 31<sup>st</sup> Avenues between El Camino Real and the train tracks is shown in Figure 5-5 and a street section illustrating 31<sup>st</sup> Avenue as it passes through the Hillsdale Shopping Center is shown in Figure 5-9.

Figure 5-4: Potential Pedestrian Paseo Development along Palm Place



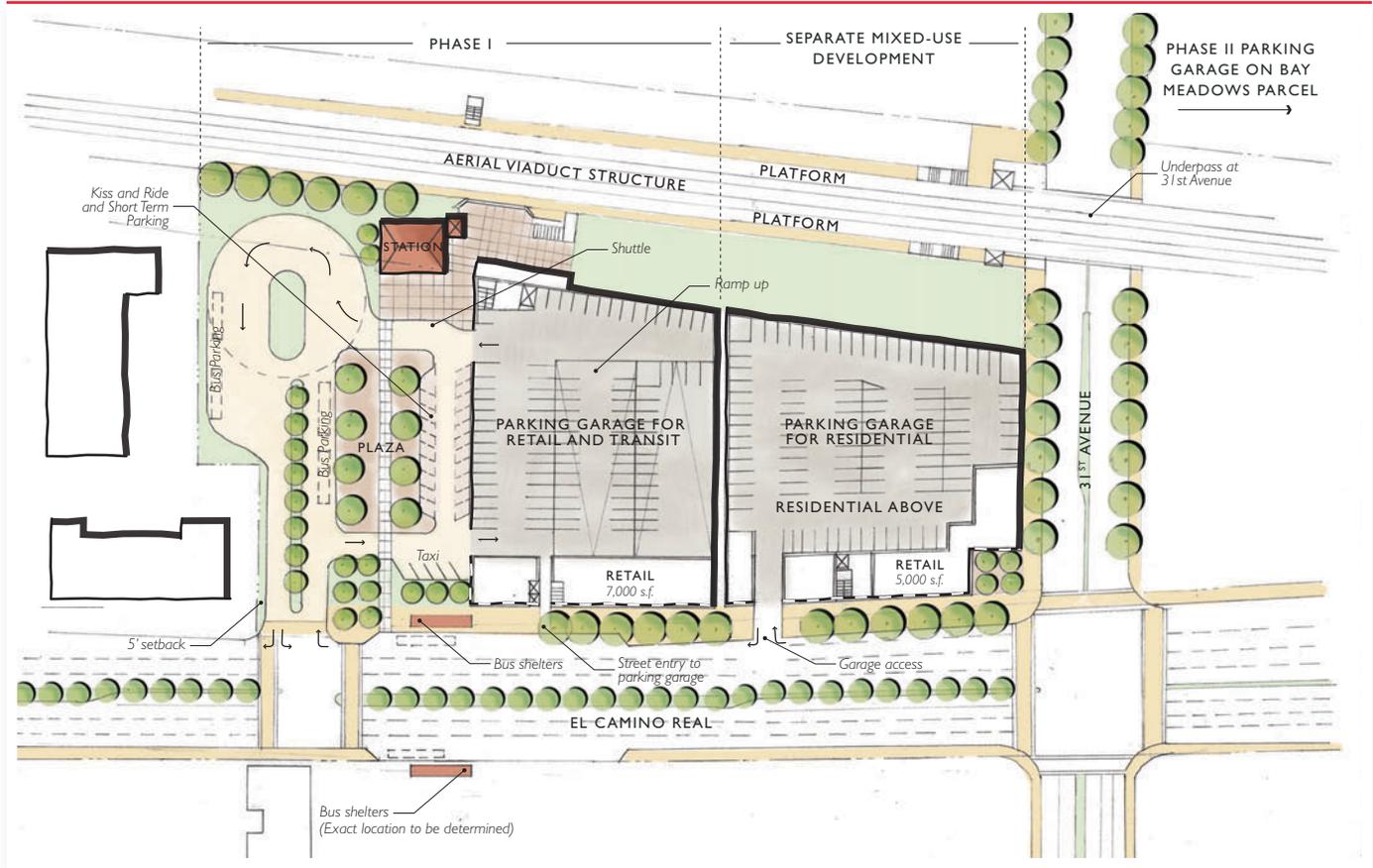
Figure 5-5: Potential 28<sup>th</sup> and 31<sup>st</sup> Avenues East of El Camino Real

### Transit Center

A Transit Center with adjoining TOD is proposed for the parcels between the Peninsula Station development and the future 31<sup>st</sup> Avenue extension. The Transit Center will be the activity hub of the Station Area, providing direct and safe rider access to Caltrain and serving as an intermodal hub between separate transit systems. This Plan presents a Transit Center Program, and an alternate 31<sup>st</sup> Avenue Alternative Program is included in Appendix B to the Plan. A detailed examination of the program is presented in Chapter 6. As shown in Figure 5-6, the Transit Center Program incorporates an internal bus turnaround to provide a direct transfer point for different modes of transit. The new Caltrain Station is located midblock to accommodate this feature, and as a result, pedestrian and vehicular circulation is centrally oriented.

Well-designed parking areas, including a parking garage, and well-lit, clearly marked pedestrian paths and bicycle access will be integrated within the enhanced transit circulation system to efficiently and safely provide direct routes for commuters from their cars to the station platform. The Transit Center's central location and plaza will also provide the backdrop for a local meeting place, designed as flexible space for various community gatherings.

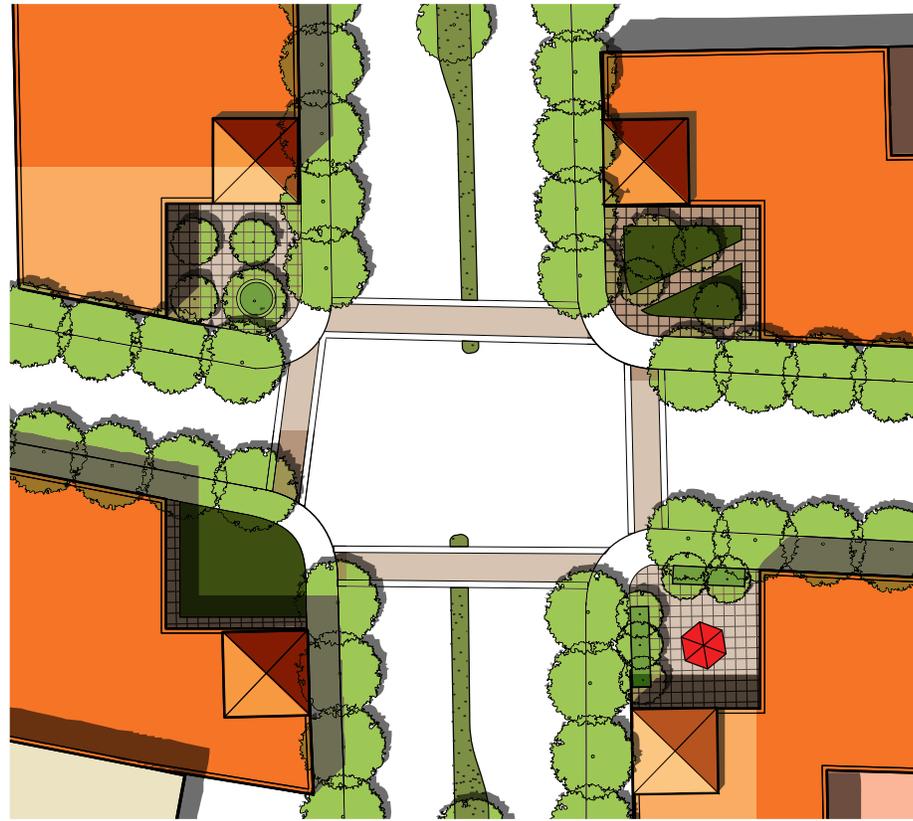
Figure 5-6: Transit Center Program



### Key Intersections

The intersections of El Camino Real with 28<sup>th</sup> and 31<sup>st</sup> Avenues and Hillsdale Boulevard provide opportunities to create distinctive places through consistent treatment of all four corners. Development on all corners of each intersection is encouraged to carve out setbacks to create vibrant and intimate spaces. Integrated together they will create a larger, cohesively planned open area. Figure 5-7 shows how development can frame a conceptual urban open space at 28<sup>th</sup> Avenue and El Camino Real. Where corner open space proves difficult to achieve due to site constraints, the key intersection node concept can also be achieved using vertical corner features on the buildings, resulting in a similarly cohesive treatment of these important intersections.

Figure 5-7: Conceptual Urban Open Space Configuration



### *Laurel Creek*

Laurel Creek is an important asset to the Station Area, providing residents and workers opportunities for an outdoor meeting area in a creek setting. Currently, the creek is underutilized as it is largely hidden behind commercial development and is fenced off from abutting residential properties. In this Plan, setbacks in new development abutting the creek will help create a more recreation-friendly environment along the creek. Development is encouraged to orient design and landscaping treatments to Laurel Creek. Figure 5-8 is a close-up of the residential development at the corner of 36<sup>th</sup> Avenue and El Camino Real, showing its relationship with the creek.

### *Hillsdale Shopping Center*

The Hillsdale Shopping Center is an important asset to the Station Area as a regional retail and employment center. As the largest property in the Station Area, it also has a strong influence on the overall character and experience along El Camino Real and the

Figure 5-8: Potential Development at 36<sup>th</sup> Avenue and El Camino Real, with Relationship to Creek



east-west avenues. This Plan proposes guidelines for pedestrian-scaled improvements for portions of the Shopping Center facing public right-of-ways, strengthening the cohesiveness of the Station Area. It also encourages modification of the bridge over 31<sup>st</sup> Avenue, providing opportunities for more light to penetrate to the street and create an open and vibrant street-level experience. As shown in Figure 5-9, Hillsdale Boulevard is proposed to include small-scale ancillary commercial buildings in the current parking lot to help build a consistent street wall, if this is feasible given retail standards and parking requirements. The bookends of the existing parking garage along El Camino Real are envisioned to be remodeled to include ground floor retail or restaurant uses to activate the street previously dominated by parked cars.

These recommendations are intended to provide encouragement for an enhanced interface between the Shopping Center and the public realm. They are not intended to propose wholesale changes to the existing configuration of the Shopping Center. In the event that the Shopping Center is partially or completely redeveloped, it is anticipated that a Master Development Plan for the entire site will be developed. The Plan is meant to be flexible enough that the Master Development Plan could support the vision and goals of this plan using different solutions than proposed here.

Figure 5-9a: Existing 31<sup>st</sup> Avenue West of El Camino Real

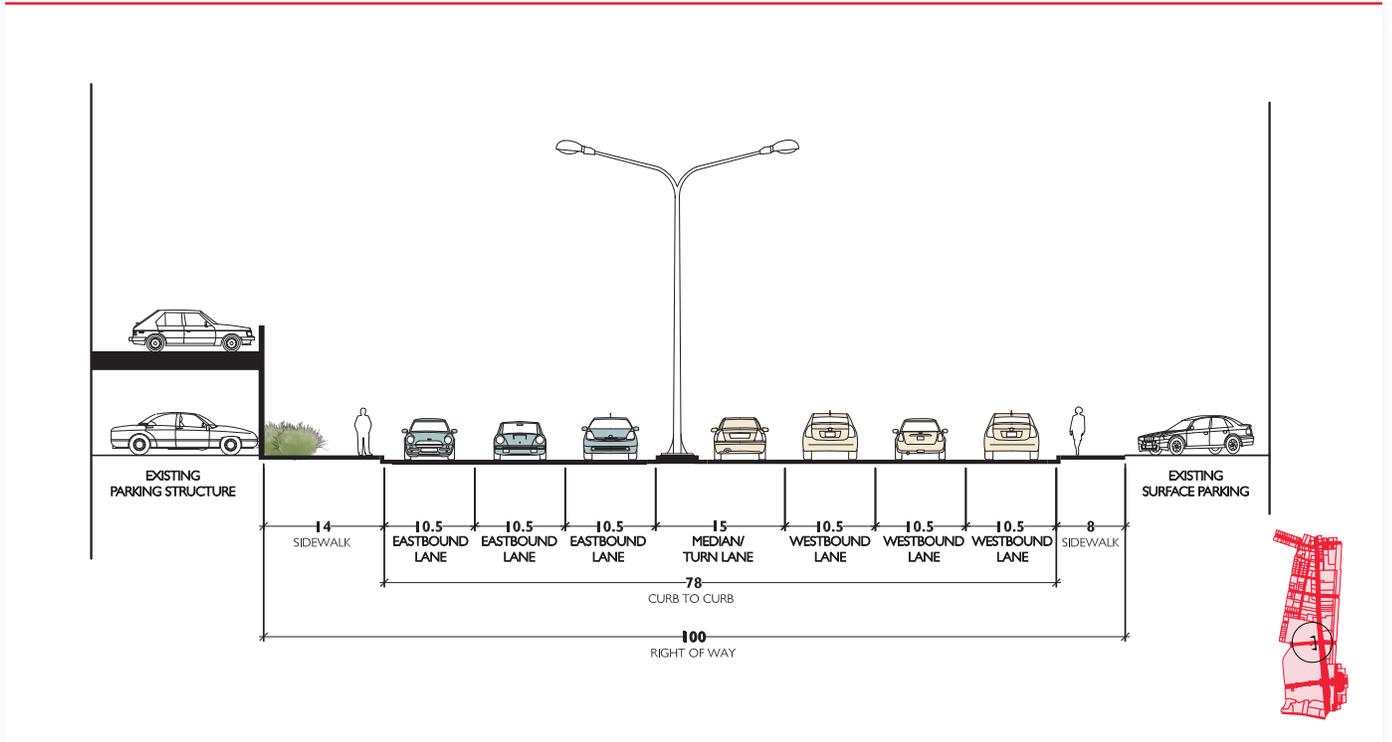


Figure 5-9b: Potential 31<sup>st</sup> Avenue West of El Camino Real

