

III. Guiding Principles & Organizing Concepts

1. PRINCIPLES FOR TRANSFORMATION

As a community, neighborhoods within the Five Wounds/Brookwood Terrace (FWBT) area represent a “small town” in close proximity to San Jose’s metropolitan core, where neighbors visit along welcoming streets, and where the scale of development and pace of life focuses on a sense of community. This community seeks to improve all neighborhoods through programs and physical improvements, and through the eventual transformation of auto-oriented and industrial uses that interrupt neighborhood life and impose visual blight.

The quality of its residential neighborhoods and commercial areas is central to the area’s livability and its role as an attractive gateway into central San Jose. This *Plan* is, therefore, committed to the comfort, safety and security of residents and businesses, and to the maintenance of our small town identity. To support these goals, future planning actions must create a small town scale and character.

This document sets forth guiding principles to set priorities for this *Neighborhood Improvement Plan*. It expects that the City of San Jose, including its City Council, Redevelopment Agency, and departments will use these guiding principles whenever making decisions that affect the community.



Mixed-Use Main Street



Livable Residential Street



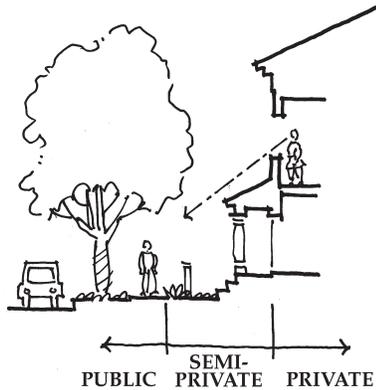
“Small Town” San Jose.

The Five Wounds/Brookwood Terrace community aspires to be a “small town” within a big city, where neighborliness is supported and many destinations can be reached comfortably on foot. Shown are images that capture essential components of this “small town” fabric: a “Town Square” (left), Mixed-Use “main street” (top), and highly livable residential streets (above).

Town Square.

Walkability & Small Town Character

Ideally, people should be able to walk easily and safely throughout the neighborhood, on streetside sidewalks and creekside trails that feel safe and comfortable. No street should be without sidewalks. Streets and trails should be enhanced for pedestrians, through the use of trees, amenities, human-scaled lighting, and traffic-calming. With a focus on neighborhood life and nighttime safety, buildings should address pedestrian routes with entries, windows, and visual appeal (through undergrounding of electrical wires and incorporation of art into the public realm, for example). Parking lots and streets should not marginalize pedestrians and bicyclists or make their needs secondary to those of the automobile.



Provide informal surveillance.

Watchful eyes, or even the perception that a neighbor may be watching, is an effective deterrent to crime - and is also an important ingredient for making places feel safe and inviting.

Neighborhood-serving retail, services, parks and schools – and regional transit - should be supported within walking distance of most homes. Retail uses and parking garages that attract large numbers of users from outside the community should be discouraged. Regional “big-box” retail is not preferred by the neighborhood. Region-serving office buildings and hotels may be permissible, so long as they help to support local businesses and amenities.

Attractive and welcoming environments are essential to neighborhood livability. The community’s residential areas should be quiet and restful. Conditions that contribute to crime, vagrancy, graffiti, and dumping such as public spaces where informal surveillance cannot occur from windows or building entries should be eliminated. Noise impacts from the freeways, collectors and arterial streets should be mitigated. In addition, commercial uses should be regulated to avoid noise and other forms of nuisance for nearby residents.

At the same time, the area’s commercial districts should be reinvigorated through enhanced streetscapes, façade improvements, and “infill” development on vacant lots, lots likely to redevelop over time, or poorly used lots. On East Santa Clara, Alum Rock, Julian, McKee and portions of William and McLaughlin, “main street” environments framed by street-facing retail and upper-story uses are encouraged. To achieve these goals, local residents, merchants, and property owners should be encouraged to participate in reshaping the community over time. Eminent domain should be a tool of last resort.

Every effort should be made to work with property owners on a voluntary basis, as a partner with the City on projects. If it is determined that the use of eminent domain may be needed, the Redevelopment Agency/City should solicit input on this decision from the Neighborhood Advisory Committee, on a case-by-case basis, to ensure that there is broad community support.



Auto-Oriented Single-Family Residential



Pedestrian-Oriented Single-Family Residential



Auto-Oriented Multi-Family Residential



Pedestrian-Oriented Multi-Family Residential



Auto-Oriented Commercial

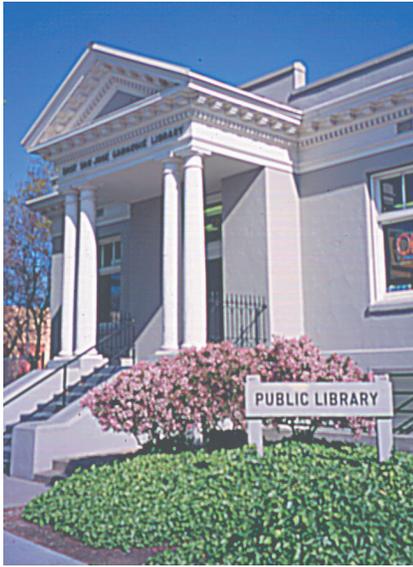


Pedestrian-Oriented Commercial

Auto-Oriented Development vs. Pedestrian-Oriented Development.

The zone between private building and street must be designed so neighbors feel protected in a way that makes them able to observe and engage life on the street. Streets should not be lined by parking lots or blank garage doors.

Cultural Enhancements



Community assets should be preserved and protected, including built assets (e.g. churches, social halls, community centers, and historic buildings), and natural assets (e.g. creek corridors and heritage trees).

Cultural events should be supported, such as community theatre, outdoor concerts, and social club activities. Public art, including that which reflect local cultural heritages should also be encouraged throughout the area.

A “Town Square” should provide a new focal point for the community, in a location that is convenient to East Santa Clara Street and regional transit. The Town Square should be attractive for all ages, offer comfortable places to sit and gather, and contain flexible spaces suitable for outdoor concerts, farmers markets, or other public events. Abutting properties should surround the Town Square with active uses and ground-floor windows and entries.



Architectural tradition.

*The neighborhoods are made up of a variety of architectural styles and contain several culturally and historically significant buildings.
(above) Carnegie Library
(below) Five Wounds Church*

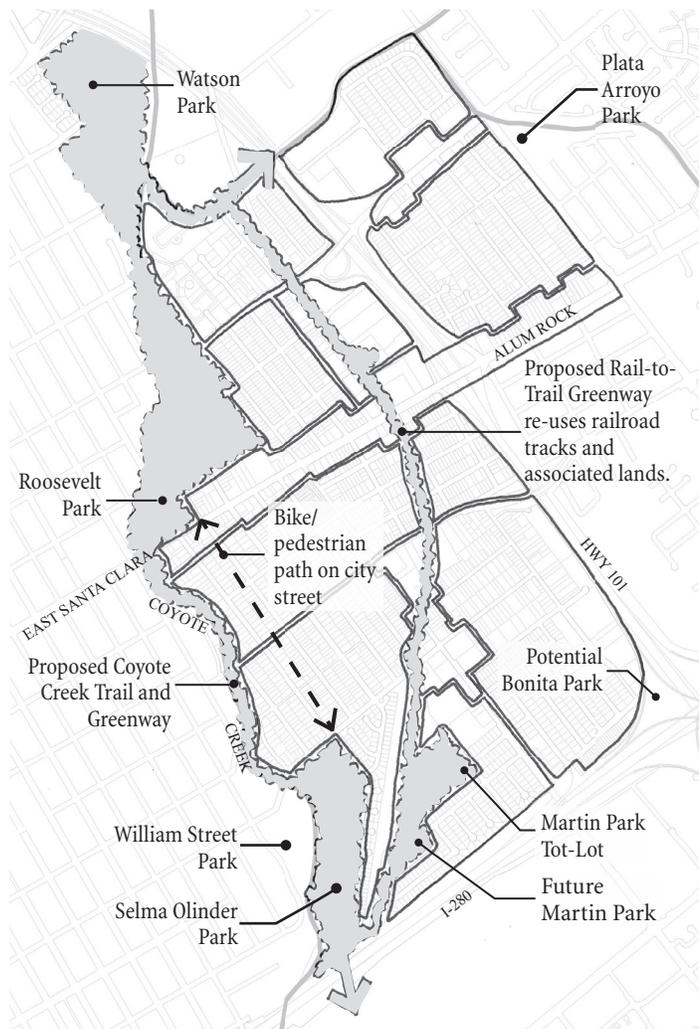
The visual quality of architecture in the FWBT area, especially lining commercial corridors, should be high-quality and respect the historic elements present in this area. For example, this part of San Jose has a set of architectural traditions that include Spanish and Portuguese Baroque (Emanueline) influences such as arches, curves, and tile roofs. Other architectural styles in this area include Craftsman influences and Art Deco influences. It is especially important that new construction incorporate aspects of these styles that respond to San Jose’s Mediterranean climate, such as deep window recesses, arcades, and light colors. All of these styles should be respected and enhanced. New development should blend with the high-quality aspects of existing development, such as the Five Wounds Church, and should frame the street with interesting architectural details and elements that create a vibrant place. Recognizable “gateways”, distinctive landscaping and monuments, should be incorporated into the street design to indicate transition into the FWBT area as well as between different neighborhoods within the district. Styles and materials should reflect the community and surrounding architecture.

Recreation and Activities

Residents in the community, especially youth, should be well-served by parks. No resident should need to cross a busy street to enjoy a park. Specific new uses to be pursued include skateboard parks, playing fields, swimming pools, and rock

climbing gyms. Parks should be well maintained, and designed and developed in ways that make them safe and comfortable.

A network of trails should be provided for the enjoyment of pedestrians and bicyclists. Portions of the Coyote Creek Trail within public lands offer immediate opportunities. A trail should also be established by using the Union Pacific Railroad right-of-way. Where streets provide important links within this network, they should be well signed and landscaped. The feasibility of extending the trail network along Lower Silver Creek and through private lands should be assessed.



A network of open space safely connects neighborhoods to each other and to the larger city.
A system of parks and trails, along with tree lined streets form, a network of open space for community recreation and enjoyment. Trails are anticipated along Coyote Creek as well as through the Rail-to-Trail re-use of the Railroad right-of-way.

Economic Diversity

In accordance with our *Plan*, the community's economic health is best supported through neighborhood-serving businesses, public programs, parking for local use, and other facilities. The community should also have easy access to the region's employment opportunities via convenient public transit. Finally, housing opportunities should be provided for a range of income and age groups, to ensure a diversity of residents and family types.

Transportation

The design of city-serving streets should help meet the demands of the larger transportation system *and* support pedestrians and bicyclists within the community. The City should continue to pursue innovations that not only help traffic flow, but also maximize pedestrian comfort with street trees, minimum lane widths, traffic-calming features, timed traffic lights, and safe and comfortable places to wait for transit.

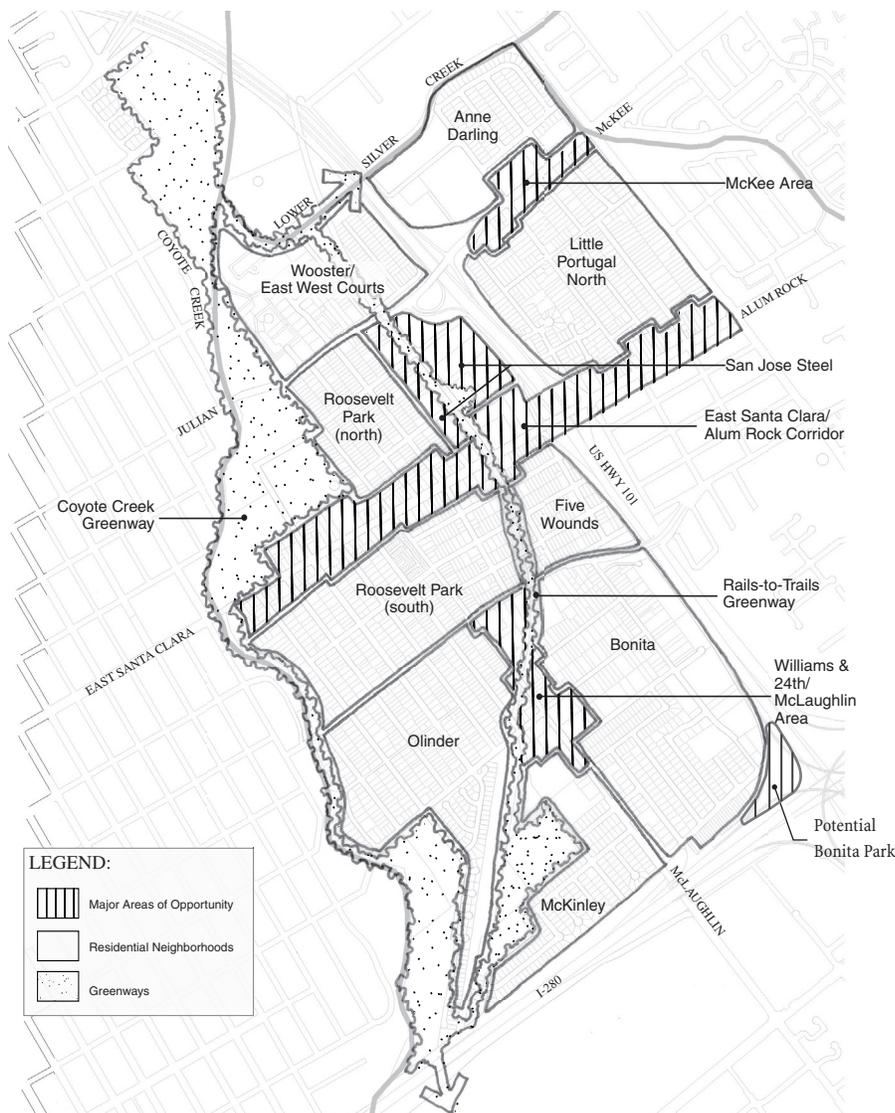
Access to regional transit is encouraged within the community, but must not compromise the area's "small town" character. Parking garages that attract regional traffic should not be built, while garages that support local businesses are encouraged. In the case of BART and potential new development along 28th between East Santa Clara and Julian, parking facilities should be designed to keep regional traffic off of local streets, perhaps by providing direct access from 101 onto those properties. On-street parking should be maintained on East Santa Clara and Alum Rock, to the extent possible, and should not be eliminated until alternative parking facilities are provided. BART, if it comes to the area, should be underground before crossing Highway 101 to minimize its impacts and provide opportunities to reconnect the fabric of the community north of Julian that is currently divided by the existing Railroad tracks.

Partnership

This is our vision. We hope all who will be involved in helping to shape the future of this area (such as our partners in the City, VTA and private developers) will work with us to create a "Small Town San Jose" that we can all enjoy.

2. ORGANIZING CONCEPTS FOR NEIGHBORHOODS AND DISTRICTS

While the *Principles for Transformation* represent general concepts to be applied throughout the planning area, place-specific intentions must also be understood. The Five Wounds/Brookwood Terrace SNI planning area is, in fact, an amalgamation of different residential neighborhoods and Mixed-Use districts, each with its own unique character and set of challenges. This section summarizes the community’s vision for each of these areas and, consequently, constitutes an important “touchstone” when considering future actions.



Districts and Neighborhoods.



Illustrative Site Plan.

Livable Neighborhoods

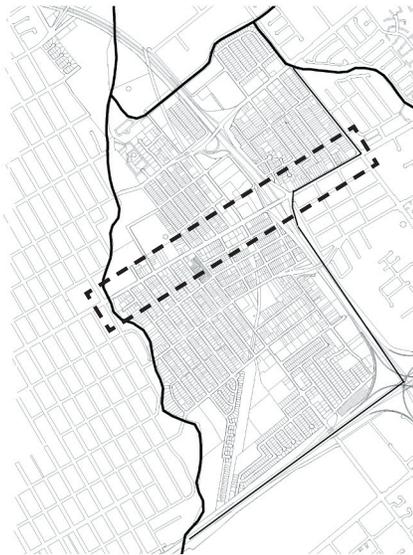
Livable residential neighborhoods represent the foundation for continued social and economic health. Except for the sub-areas noted below, the planning area's residential neighborhoods are not expected to change dramatically in terms of use. Significant improvements can be implemented, however, and include improving exteriors of buildings and landscaping, traffic-calming, street tree planting, neighborhood clean-ups and effective code enforcement. These items are further elaborated on elsewhere in this document.

East Santa Clara - Alum Rock

Decades ago, trolley service on East Santa Clara Street and Alum Rock Avenue supported the creation of civic, commercial and mixed-use buildings, thereby helping to form the community's primary focus. Today, these streets continue to serve the community with commercial establishments, social clubs and civic institutions, such as the Five Wounds Church and the Carnegie Library. Many of these uses also serve people from outside of the planning area, and the corridor's regional focus is likely to increase as Light Rail/street car and BART service arrive.

While this corridor will continue to serve the larger city and region, the character of East Santa Clara - Alum Rock is decidedly "small town" -- with a walkable and human-scaled environment that should be maintained. The community recognizes that its "main street" will mature, as existing commercial uses densify into street-oriented, mixed-use buildings. While these new buildings may be somewhat taller, especially in light of their proximity to regional transit, they should not overwhelm their residential neighbors or important landmarks such as Five Wounds Church.

A pedestrian-friendly continuum of shops and other active uses is desired, and should be supported by an attractive streetscape with awnings, comfortable seating areas, and a dense canopy of trees. Upper-story housing and offices will frame the "main street," and will make the corridor active and safe around-the-clock. Daytime shopping and employment will give way to evening activity associated with great restaurants, social clubs, and small theatres. Residents on upper floors will watch over this rich urban scene and make it a more vibrant place.



Locator Map.
East Santa Clara & Alum Rock Corridor

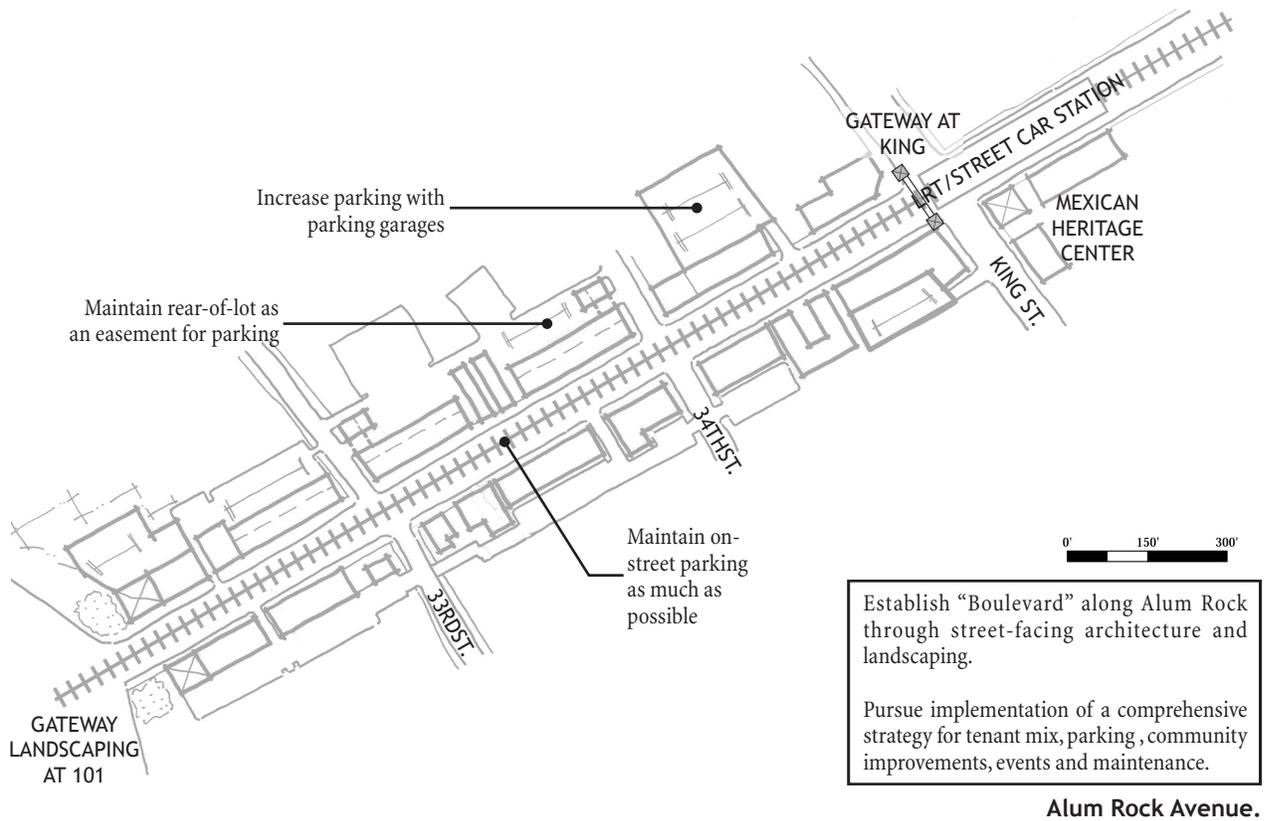
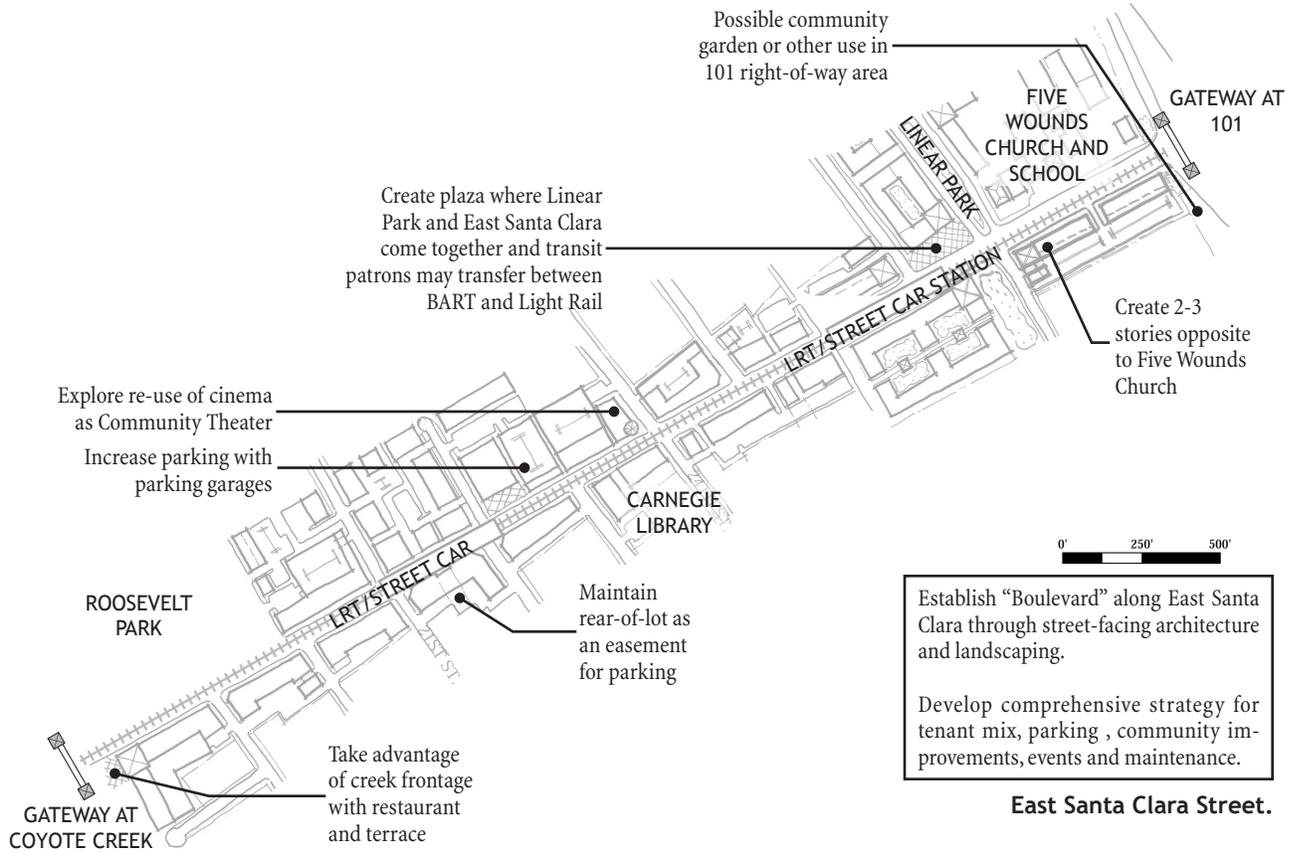
Civic features, such as Five Wounds Church, Carnegie Library and Roosevelt Park, mark prominent positions along the “main street” and might be combined with public art, special signage and landscaping to enhance the street’s identity. Roosevelt Park with its Coyote Creek frontage and community services forms an important western gateway to East Santa Clara. Five Wounds Church marks East Santa Clara’s eastern gateway. While at the eastern edge of the planning area at King and Alum Rock, the Mexican Heritage Center, highlights this portal to the area, and the future light rail station at King may present a “gate-making” opportunity. Finally, Highway 101 is a de-facto gateway that will require persistent action to transform it into a more attractive point of entry and less of a pedestrian barrier and point of rush-hour congestion.

While the corridor is to be focused on the pedestrian, parking is a necessity and should be accommodated away from sidewalks – either behind or above a continuous band of storefronts or other active ground-floor uses. One tool is through rear-of-lot easements -- a grant of land by the property owner to provide a shared area of parking for public use. Furthermore, merchants should be supported by a comprehensive parking strategy (see *Top Ten Priority # 9*), in locations and with pricing structures that encourage patronage, while discouraging over-use by commuters using regional transit.

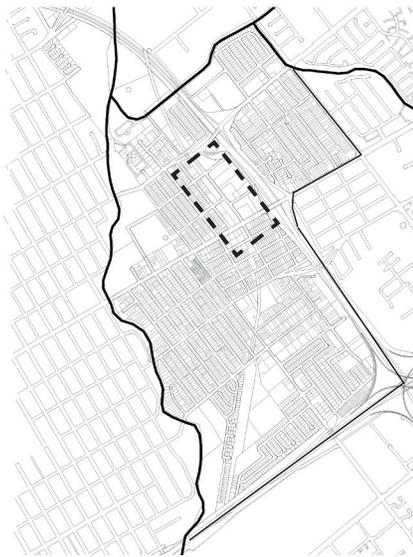
In short, the East Santa Clara - Alum Rock corridor forms the central “backbone” of the surrounding community, in terms of community life and unique urban amenities. The recommendations for private and public improvements contained in the next chapters support this goal (also see *On-Deck Priority # 14*).

Mixed-Use Boulevard.
Mixed-use buildings (similar to those used in the Jackson-Taylor District of San Jose) will help transform the East Santa Clara - Alum Rock corridor into an active “boulevard” with street-facing shops.





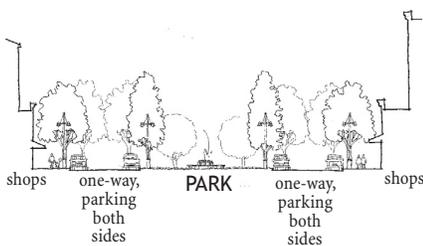
**The Town Square & San Jose Steel Redevelopment
(On Deck Priority #12-13)**



Locator Map.
*Town Square and San Jose Steel
Redevelopment*

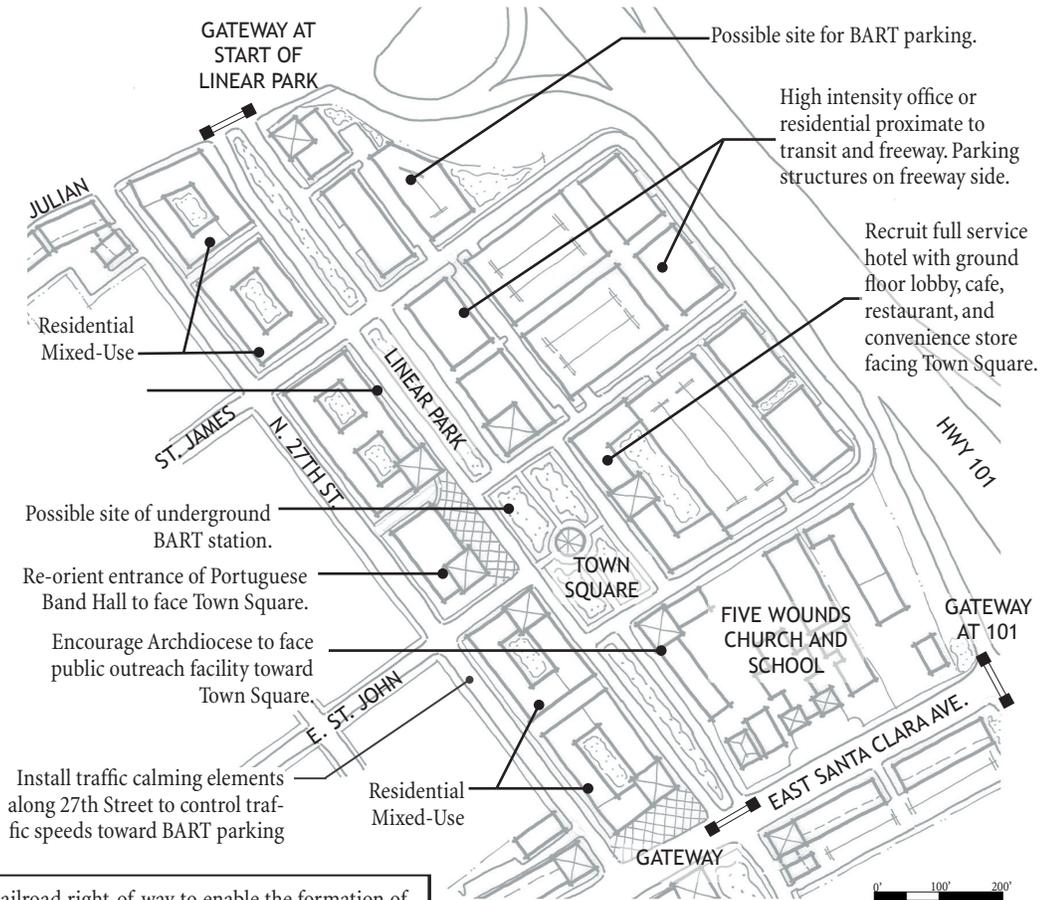
If the East Santa Clara & Alum Rock corridor is the community’s backbone, then the proposed Town Square is its heart. New development, envisioned to be a combination of offices, housing, small shops and perhaps a new hotel, will provide a vehicle for creating a great civic place. Thus, industrial lands that once benefited from access to the Union Pacific Railroad will transform into uses that complement the site’s proximity to the new Light Rail/Street Car line along East Santa Clara & Alum Rock, uses associated with the potential new BART station, and uses that are compatible with the community’s aspirations for the future of the area.

The Town Square grew out of extensive discussion by the Neighborhood Advisory Committee, and its strong desire to have a “small town” focal point modeled on Old World traditions. The Town Square would contain inviting places to meet and greet neighbors and associates, as well as having the capacity to accommodate community events. Playfields are not envisioned for this urban gathering place, although lawn areas might be used for an informal game of catch. A small play lot will serve residents from the area, and public art will be encouraged to punctuate this important civic space. It is envisioned that new Mixed-Use development, the Five Wounds Church, and the Portuguese Band of San Jose hall will frame the Town Square. Because of its regional visibility and access, and because it does not immediately abut existing residences, the community supports mid-rise development near the freeway. The maximum height of development will step down as it approaches existing residential uses to the west and Five Wounds Church to the south.



Linear Park at 28th Street.
*Section illustrating Linear Park’s relationship
to new street and adjacent buildings.
Sidewalks at 15’ wide encourage strolling
along retail lined street.*

No specific development program is presumed, except that storefronts and other active ground-floor uses should face the Town Square and line sidewalks between the Town Square and East Santa Clara. A Linear Park is called for to strengthen pedestrian and visual connections between East Santa Clara, the Town Square, and Julian Street. This Linear Park is also a continuation of a Rail-to-Trail concept along the Railroad right-of-way. This Linear Park offers flexibility for future accommodation of portals and ventilation associated with the BART station, the tracks for which will be deep underground. BART parking – while needed to support regional transportation goals – should be minimal and any parking structure should have access and a location that minimizes its disruption to walking and neighborhood livability.

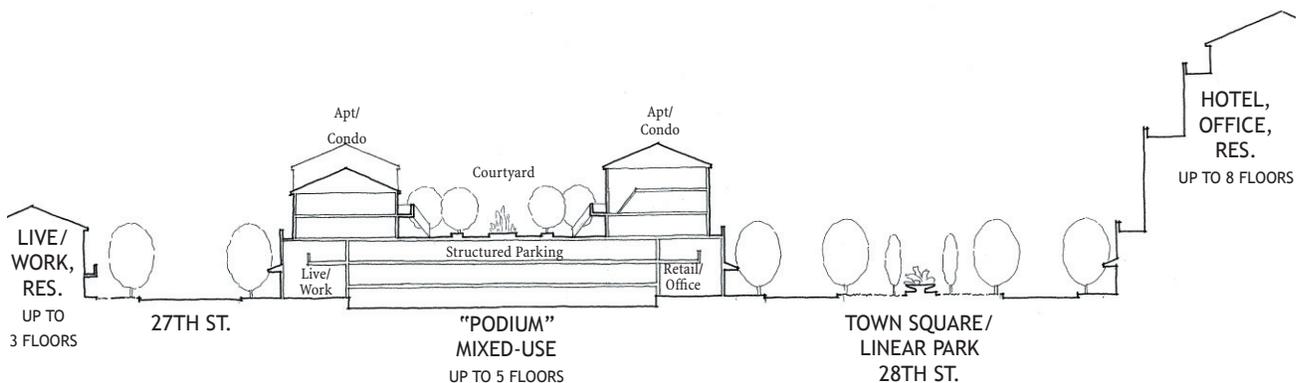


Rededicate Railroad right-of-way to enable the formation of Linear Park and Town Square. Developable land to be available to adjacent properties. (Additional dimension is critical to having buildings face both 27th Street and Linear Park).

Develop comprehensive retail strategy to extend East Santa Clara Street activity up 28th Street toward Julian Street

Town Square and San Jose Steel Redevelopment.

Illustrative Plan (above) and Section (below) illustrating Town Square and relationships to adjacent uses. Parking structure is internalized and allows for active, pedestrian-oriented uses along streets.



Neighborhood Centers

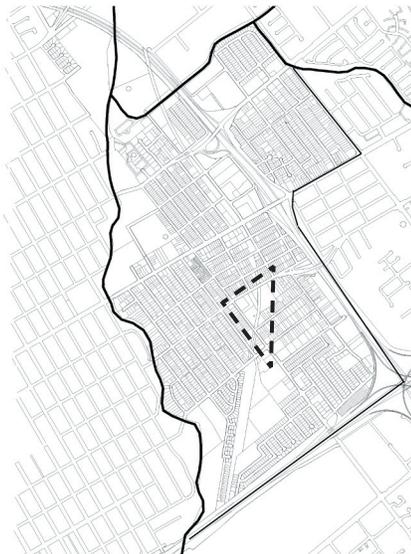
Community concern has focused on older commercial areas that do not offer the attractive face, pedestrian-orientation, or contemporary retail venues that many in the community desire. This planning initiative presents an opportunity to accelerate and shape positive change in these areas, and to help establish shops and services that surrounding neighborhoods desire – thereby improving the livability of the neighborhoods and reducing overall auto use.

William Street at 24th - McLaughlin

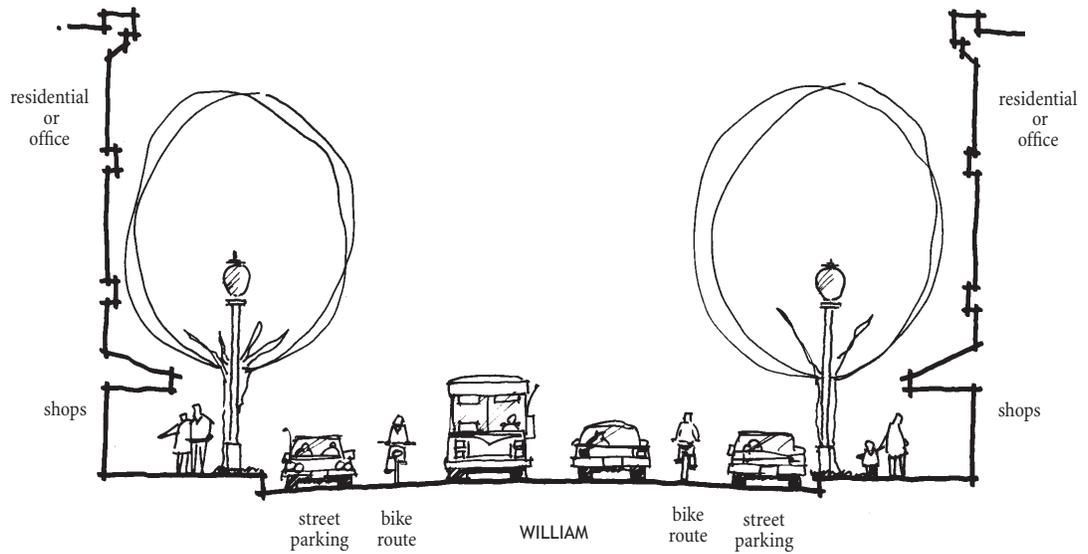
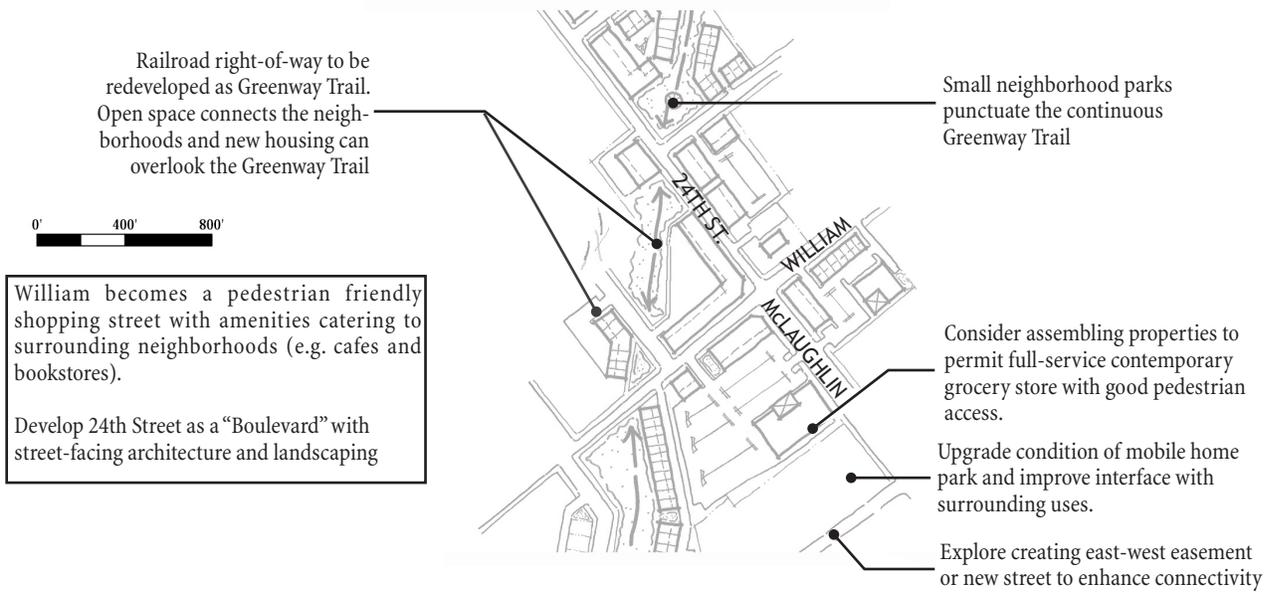
In the southern portion of the planning area, positive change is sought around the intersection of William Street and 24th - McLaughlin, where many older commercial and industrial uses “face” streets with parking lots, the rear of buildings, or high, unattractive fencing. Facades are generally in poor condition, and the community has expressed concern around apparent illicit activity, inadequate maintenance and poor site design.

Consequently, the community has identified the creation of a pedestrian-friendly shopping street along William, through the renovation or reconstruction of existing commercial uses east of the Railroad right-of-way. Through reconstruction or renovation, storefronts would face William, possibly with housing or small offices on upper floors. An attractive streetscape would support this transformation. On McLaughlin, just south of the William shopping street, it is desired that existing buildings and uses be improved. For example, the community has expressed a preference for a large modern supermarket which carries a range of good quality, fairly priced products to meet the needs of all surrounding residents.

About one block north of William Street and east of 24th Street, properties that were once associated with the Railroad are presently used for outdoor storage, auto repair, and other uses that are generally incompatible with their residential neighbors. These properties represent an opportunity to bring new housing to the area, and to line streets and new Rail-to-Trail with front yards, porch fronts, and small shops and offices. Further analysis and community input is needed to more fully develop an economic development strategy for this area capable of meeting community goals (see Top Ten Priority # 6).



Locator Map.
William at 24th - McLaughlin



William Street at 24th-McLaughlin.
 (above) Illustrative Plan
 (left) Typical "main-street" section for William. Street trees, lighting, improved sidewalks and street-facing retail contribute to creating a pedestrian oriented shopping street.

McKee at 33rd



Locator Map.
McKee Street at 33rd Street.

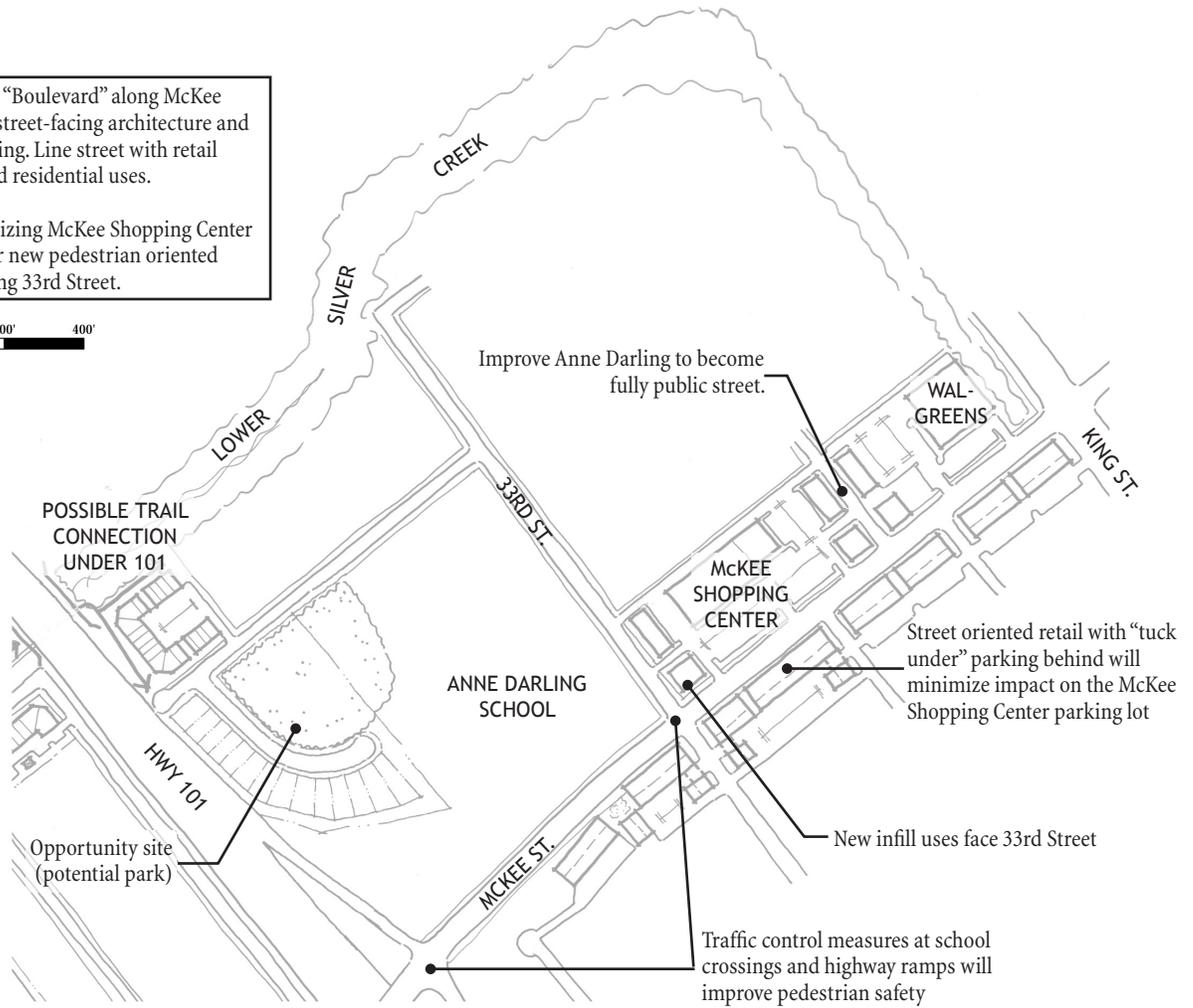
In the northeastern portion of the planning area, the McKee Shopping Center, which contains the Food Bowl market on McKee is plagued by complaints from nearby residents regarding poor physical condition of the center, alleged illicit activity, poor walking environments, and retail venues that are not valued highly by the surrounding neighborhoods. Traffic conflicts on McKee near the freeway, and student safety concerns at Anne Darling School, further suggest a need to improve the area.

Renovating the Food Bowl site has been suggested as a way to face new, pedestrian-oriented retail toward 33rd Street. Street-oriented retail could have upper-story housing or office space associated with it. In addition to new uses facing 33rd Street, the Food Bowl site could accommodate a more contemporary market or other community-oriented use (see Top Ten Priorities #3,4). New development and uses may also occur elsewhere on McKee, where older buildings and low intensities exist.

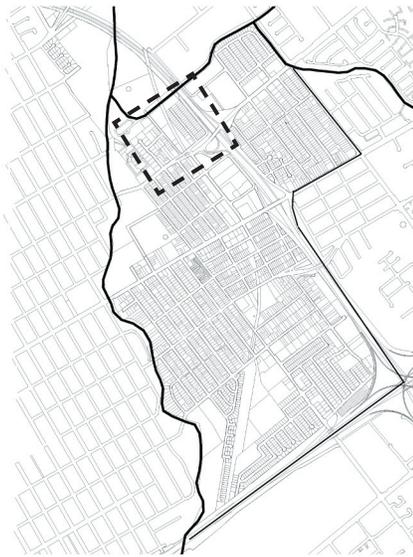
New buildings would be combined with new street enhancements to make the street more attractive, and to make it easier to negotiate on foot. Better traffic control and pedestrian measures are proposed for McKee at Anne Darling School and at the freeway, where CalTrans has jurisdiction. Proposed traffic-calming means are discussed in *Chapter IV - Public Improvements*, (p.) and in Top Ten Priorities #3 and #4.

Establish "Boulevard" along McKee through street-facing architecture and landscaping. Line street with retail shops and residential uses.

Re-organizing McKee Shopping Center allows for new pedestrian oriented retail along 33rd Street.



McKee at 33rd.



Locator Map.
East-West Courts and Wooster.

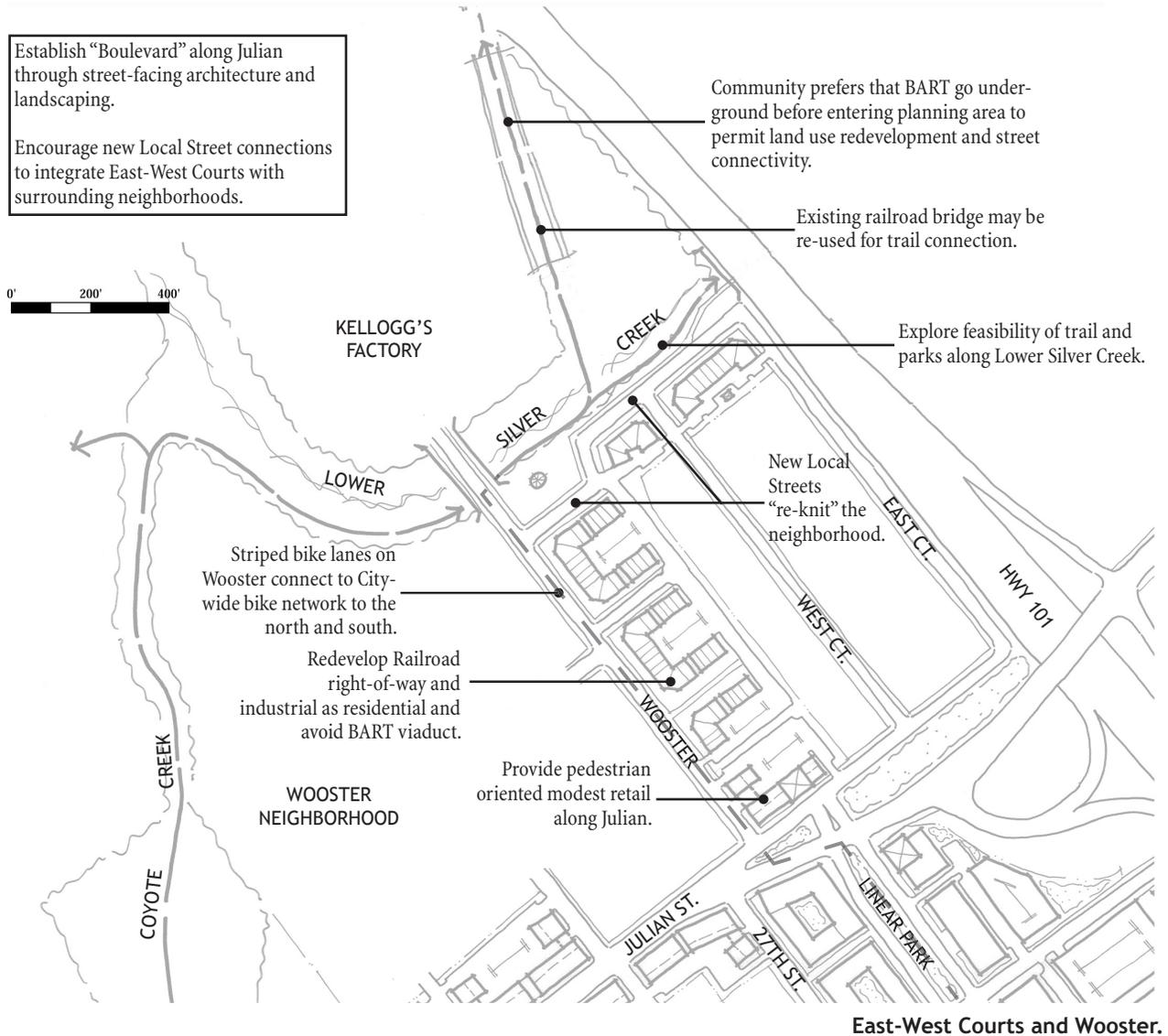
Urban Repair

In many locations, the Railroad and adjacent industrial uses have divided the area into separate – and sometimes isolated – neighborhoods. The departure of the Railroad and conversion of many industrial properties represents, therefore, an opportunity to re-knit the area with attractive new streets and construction. New homes can replace outdoor storage and other uses that detract from the area’s attractiveness and functionality. A “Rail-to-Trail” can transform the Railroad corridor into a unique and attractive asset. (Rail-to-Trail is a commonly used term to describe the conversion of abandoned rail corridors into linear open space and redevelopment opportunities.) In addition, new streets can reconnect isolated areas, to better distribute traffic, improve emergency access, and foster a shared sense of community identity.

Most neighborhoods in the planning area will benefit directly from improvements along the Railroad corridor. In addition, the planning area contains three residential areas that are relatively isolated and would benefit from new improvements and street trail connections: the East-West Court and Wooster area, the Jeanne-Forestdale area, and the Woodborough Place area.

East-West Courts and Wooster

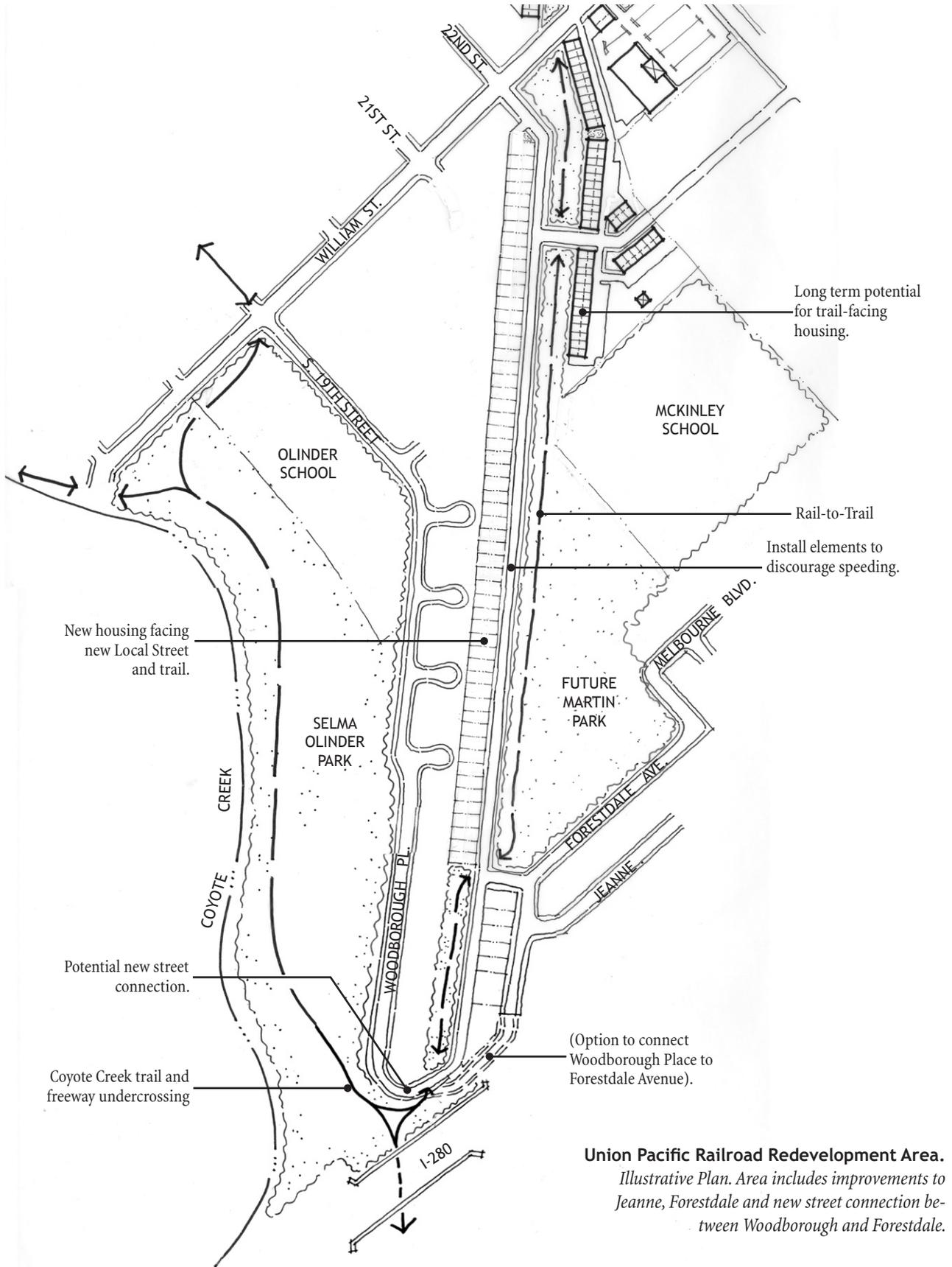
East-West Courts is a small residential area located between Julian Street, Highway 101, Lower Silver Creek and the Railroad. The Railroad and industrial uses have disturbed residents with noise, spill-over parking, and sidewalks and streets that are often blocked by trucks. Removing the Railroad will not only eliminate existing conflicts, but will also allow a new street connection and new residential development to “re-knit” East-West Courts into the larger neighborhood to the west. A new street might be aligned just south of Lower Silver Creek, to establish views and paths along the Creek. Parcels, including the Railroad right-of-way, might be assembled to help create a significant residential project, with the potential for modest retail conveniences facing Julian. To realize this vision, BART would need to move underground before entering the area (i.e. north of Lower Silver Creek) so that the east and west sides of the Railroad right-of-way can be connected.



East-West Courts and Wooster.

Woodborough Place

Woodborough Place lies just east of Selma Olinder Park. The adjacent residential development relies on this single street connection. A new street connection is encouraged from Woodborough to Forestdale. Along with improvements within Selma Olinder Park, this connection would improve emergency vehicle access, better distribute local traffic, increase neighborhood access to new park lands, and help reduce the separation that now exists among neighborhoods.



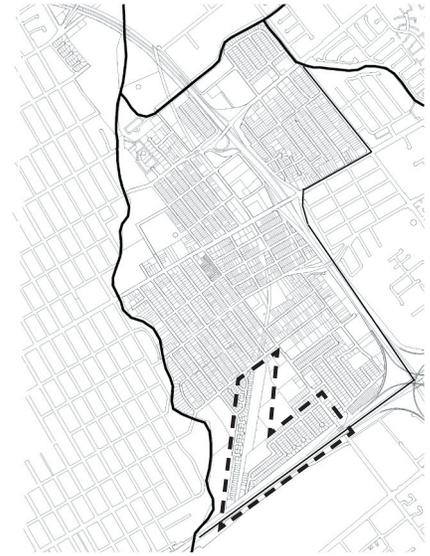
Jeanne-Forestdale

Jeanne Court and Forestdale Avenue are located in the southernmost tip of the planning area, just east of the railroad. The area feels isolated, as it has only one street connection in, and is surrounded on three sides with fences and walls along Interstate 280, the Railroad, and the future site of Martin Park. Landscaping tends to be minimal, and buildings are in fair repair and have few entries or windows facing some streets.

The conversion of the Railroad offers an important opportunity, which if combined with improvements to existing buildings and landscaping, could help integrate the Jeanne-Forestdale area into the larger community. A street connection should be encouraged from the southern end of Woodborough Place. This connection can improve emergency vehicle access in the area, and break down perceptions that this area consists of residential enclaves.

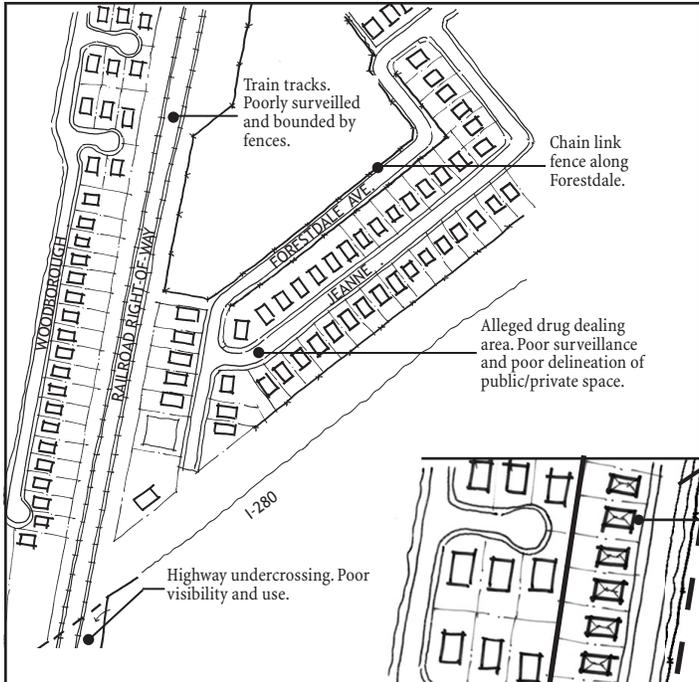
New housing could be built against the existing Railroad soundwall, thereby framing the future Martin Park with housing. Informal surveillance is needed along Forestdale which is lined by rear yard fences. Additional windows, gates or other activating elements should be encouraged to help create a better surveillance for the street and future Martin Park. Forestdale is an important route for children walking to McKinley School, yet no sidewalks are present and landscaping is minimal. A sidewalk, landscaping and street trees should be installed in the near-term along the perimeter of the future Martin Park.

Presently, many apartment buildings in the Forestdale area present relatively blank walls to the street. In the near-term, property owners should be encouraged to enhance landscaping and building maintenance in the area. In the long-term, streets can be made more inviting and by encouraging street-facing building entries and windows. Front yards might also encourage neighborhood activity with the creation of additional front entries, paired with low fences and gates at the sidewalk.



Locator Map.

Jeanne-Forestdale and Woodborough areas.



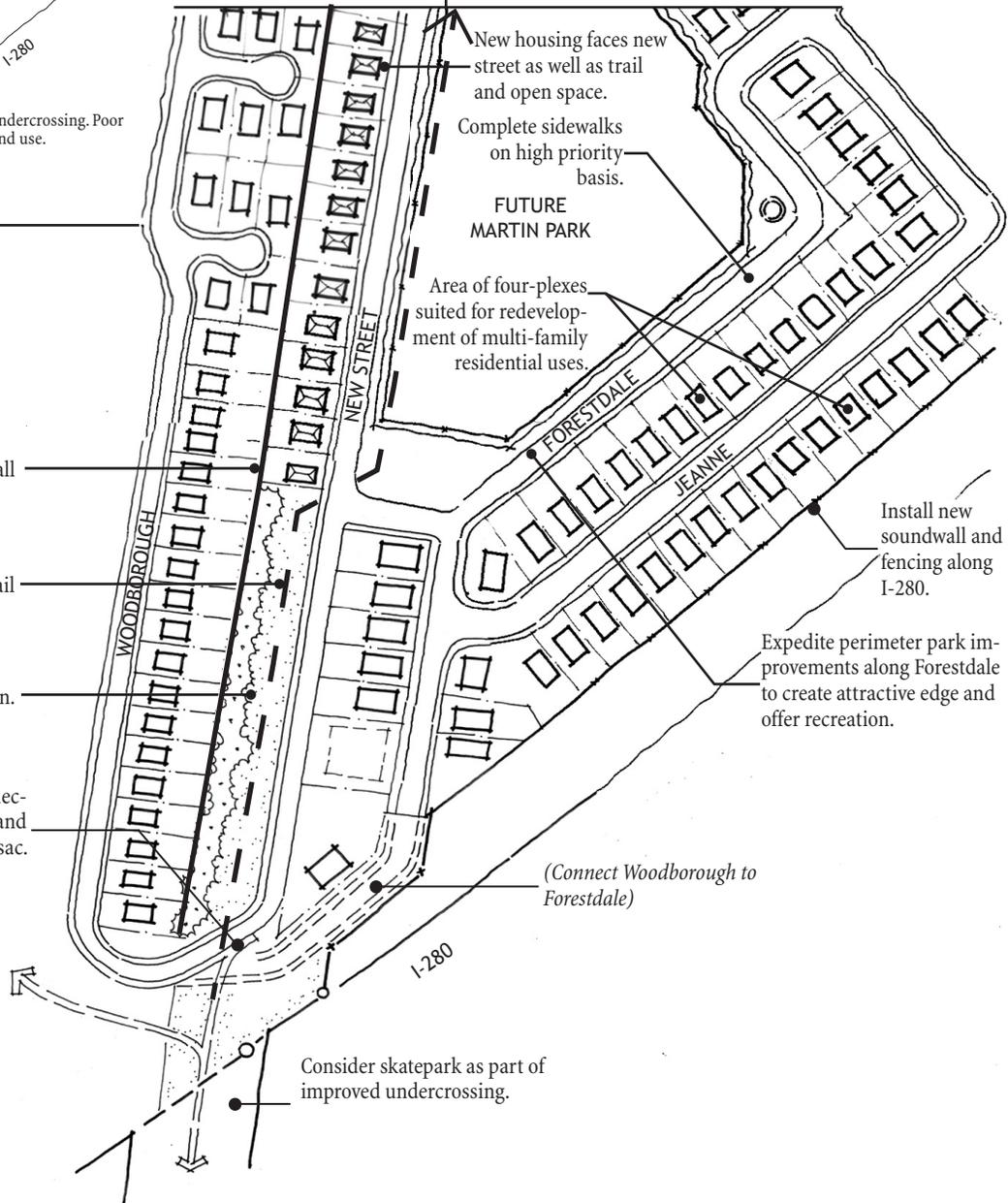
Existing conditions.

Jeanne Courts & Forestdale Improvements.

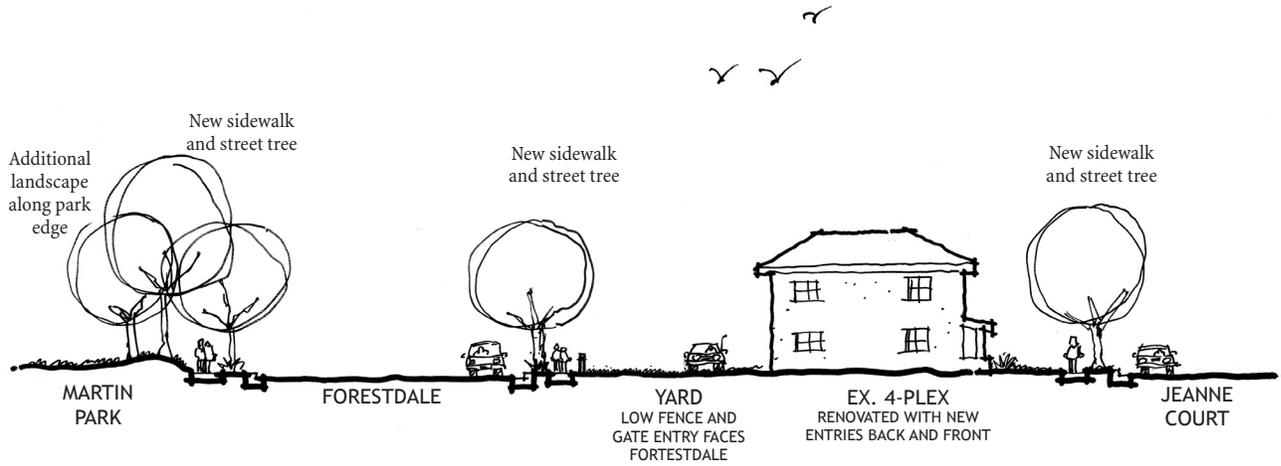
(left) Existing conditions

(below) Potential changes include:

- converting Railroad lands to trail and open space (Rail-to-Trail) and new street with street-facing housing; and
- new street connection between Woodborough and Forestdale.

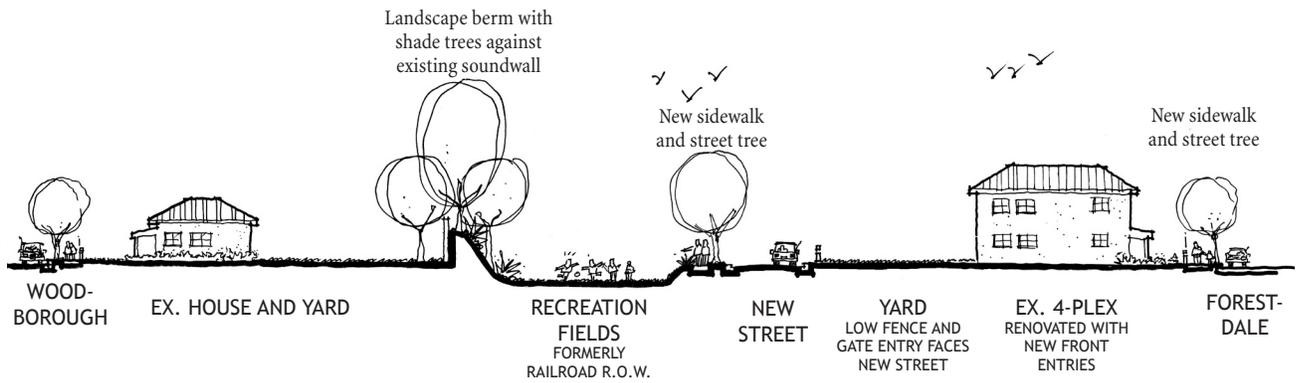


Potential change.



Jeanne Courts & Forestdale Improvements

Section illustrating gate openings to rear of existing property providing entrances along Forestdale. Other improvements include sidewalks, street trees, improved entries, and an enhanced landscape edge along Future Martin Park.



Forestdale, Railroad Right-of-Way and Woodborough Improvements.

Section illustrating conversion of the Railroad right-of-way to recreation fields and a new street with new housing facing the street and open space. Other improvements include sidewalks, street trees, improved entries, and an enhanced landscape edge along the existing soundwall.



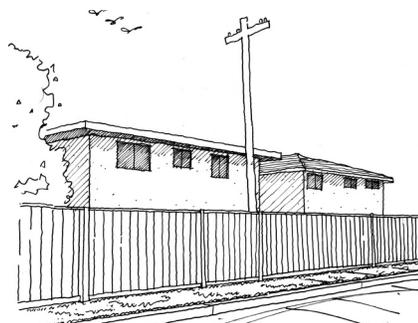
Existing conditions - front

Jeanne & Forestdale Front Facade Improvements

*(above) Existing conditions.
(right) Improvements of four-plexes include front entrances at street, porches, low fence at property edge, windows facing street*



Potential improvements to existing four-plex.



Existing conditions - rear

Forestdale Rear Facade and Greenway Improvements

*(above) Existing conditions
(top right) Improvements include improved low fence, gate openings, and facade improvements to the building.*



Potential improvements to existing four-plex.