



NOTICE OF PREPARATION OF ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT

TO: State Clearinghouse, Responsible and Trustee Agencies, and Other Interested Parties

DATE: May 18, 2017

SUBJECT: **Notice of Preparation of Environmental Impact Report**
Notice of EIR Scoping Meeting on June 12, 2017

LEAD AGENCY: City of East Palo Alto

PROJECT TITLE: University Plaza Phase II Project

PROJECT AREA: City of East Palo Alto

Notice is hereby given that the City of East Palo Alto will be the Lead Agency and will prepare an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) for the University Plaza Phase II Project. The project location, project description, and the potential environmental effects that will be evaluated in the EIR are described below. An Initial Study will be prepared to focus an EIR on the substantive issues that are specific to the project and project site, consistent with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines Section 15063(c)(3).

The City is requesting comments and guidance on the scope and content of the EIR from interested public agencies, organizations, and the general public. With respect to the views of Responsible and Trustee Agencies as to significant environmental issues, the City needs to know the reasonable alternatives and mitigation measures that are germane to each agency's statutory responsibilities in connection with the project. Responsible agencies may need to use the EIR prepared by the City when considering permitting or other approvals for the project.

We would appreciate your response at the earliest possible date. As mandated by state law, comments on the Notice of Preparation (NOP) are due no later than the close of the NOP review period on **Monday June 19, 2017 at 4PM**. Please send your written comments to Guido Persicone at the address shown below. Public agencies providing comments are asked to include a contact person for the agency.

An EIR scoping meeting will be held by the Planning Commission at its regularly scheduled meeting on:

June 12, 2017 at 7PM
East Palo Alto City Council Chambers
2415 University Avenue
East Palo Alto, CA 94303

LEAD AGENCY CONTACT:

Guido F. Persicone
Planning and Housing Manager
City of East Palo Alto, Planning Division
1960 Tate Street
East Palo Alto, CA 94303

INTRODUCTION:

The purpose of an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) is to inform decision-makers and the general public of the environmental effects of a proposed project. The EIR process is intended to provide environmental information sufficient to evaluate a proposed project and its potential to cause significant effects on the environment, examine methods of reducing adverse environmental impacts, and consider alternatives to a proposed project.

Citywide development was evaluated within the City of East Palo Alto General Update EIR, which was certified by the East Palo Alto City Council in 2016. The University Plaza Phase II Project EIR, in accordance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and CEQA Guidelines, will tier off the previous analysis completed for the City of East Palo Alto General Update EIR, where appropriate. An Initial Study will be used to focus an EIR on the substantive issues that are specific to the project and project site, consistent with CEQA Guidelines. The Initial Study will evaluate the environmental impacts of the proposed project and reflect information in the City of East Palo Alto General Plan Update EIR, information provided by applicant, and technical studies specifically prepared as a part of the environmental review process.

The EIR to be prepared for the proposed project will focus on evaluation of the project specific environmental impacts that were not addressed in the certified General Plan Update EIR. The project location, project description, and potential environmental effects that will be evaluated in the EIR are described generally below.

PROJECT LOCATION:

The proposed project is located at 2111 University Avenue on a 2.58-acre site surrounding the northwest corner of University Avenue and Donohoe Street. The University Avenue site frontage is currently developed and is occupied by retail and office uses. Regional, vicinity, and aerial maps of the project site are shown in Figure 1, Figure 2, and Figure 3, respectively.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION:

The project would demolish the existing buildings on site and construct an eight-story structure with approximately 233,840 square feet of office space and a five-story, 279,995-square-foot parking structure with 772 parking spaces. Vehicular and bicycle access to the garage would be provided via a driveway off of Donohoe Street and two right-turn-only driveways off of University Avenue. Pedestrian access would be provided to the structures from sidewalks along University Avenue and Donohoe Street.

Transportation System Modifications

The proposed project would also include two transportation system modifications: alterations to the Euclid Avenue/East Bayshore Road/Donohoe Street intersection, and the potential realignment of the northbound Highway 101 on ramp at Donohoe Street. Additional environmental review by other agencies (e.g., the California Department of Transportation [Caltrans]) may be required to supplement the EIR analysis prior to implementation of any Highway 101 on-ramp modification.

General Plan Amendment and Rezoning

The site has a General Plan designation of Mixed Use High and is zoned O/S-2 (Office). The proposed development would require a rezoning to a Planned Unit Development (PUD). A variance to reduce the minimum required parcel size for a PUD zoning (from 10 acres to 2.5 acres) is also being requested.

EIR ANALYSIS:

The EIR will assess the project's potential direct, indirect, and cumulative environmental impacts on the environmental resource areas outlined in the CEQA Environmental Checklist (CEQA Guidelines, Appendix G). Mitigation measures will be identified for significant impacts, as warranted. The EIR will address the following specific environmental resources areas as related to the proposed project:

- Aesthetics
- Agricultural and Forestry Resources
- Air Quality
- Biological Resources
- Cultural Resources
- Energy
- Geology and Soils
- Greenhouse Gas Emissions
- Hazards and Hazardous Materials
- Hydrology and Water Quality
- Land Use and Planning
- Mineral Resources
- Noise and Vibration
- Population and Housing
- Public Services
- Recreation
- Transportation/Traffic
- Tribal Cultural Resources
- Utilities and Service Systems

Alternatives: The EIR will examine alternatives to the proposed project, including a "No Project" alternative and one or more other alternatives (depending on the impacts identified). Other alternatives that may be discussed could include an alternative location, reduced scale alternative, and alternative site design. Alternatives discussed will be chosen based on their ability to reduce or avoid identified significant impacts of the proposed project while achieving most of the identified project objectives.

Cumulative Impacts: This section will address the potentially significant cumulative impacts of the project when considered together with other past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future projects in the project area.

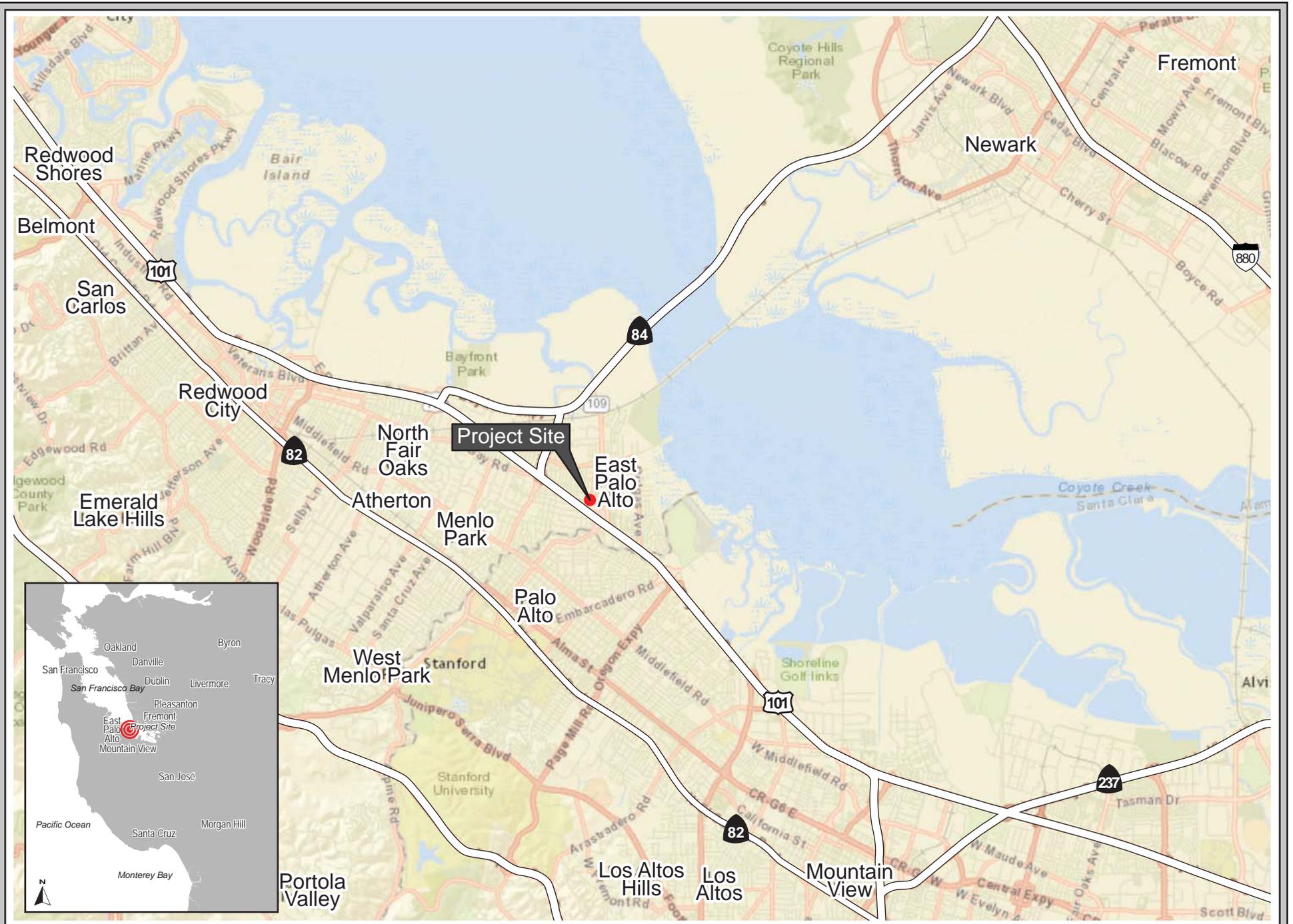
Additional Requirements: In conformance with the CEQA Guidelines, the EIR will also include the following information: 1) consistency with local and regional plans and policies, 2) growth-inducing

impacts, 3) significant unavoidable impacts, 4) significant irreversible environmental changes, 5) references and organizations/persons consulted, and 6) EIR authors.

Date: May 18, 2017

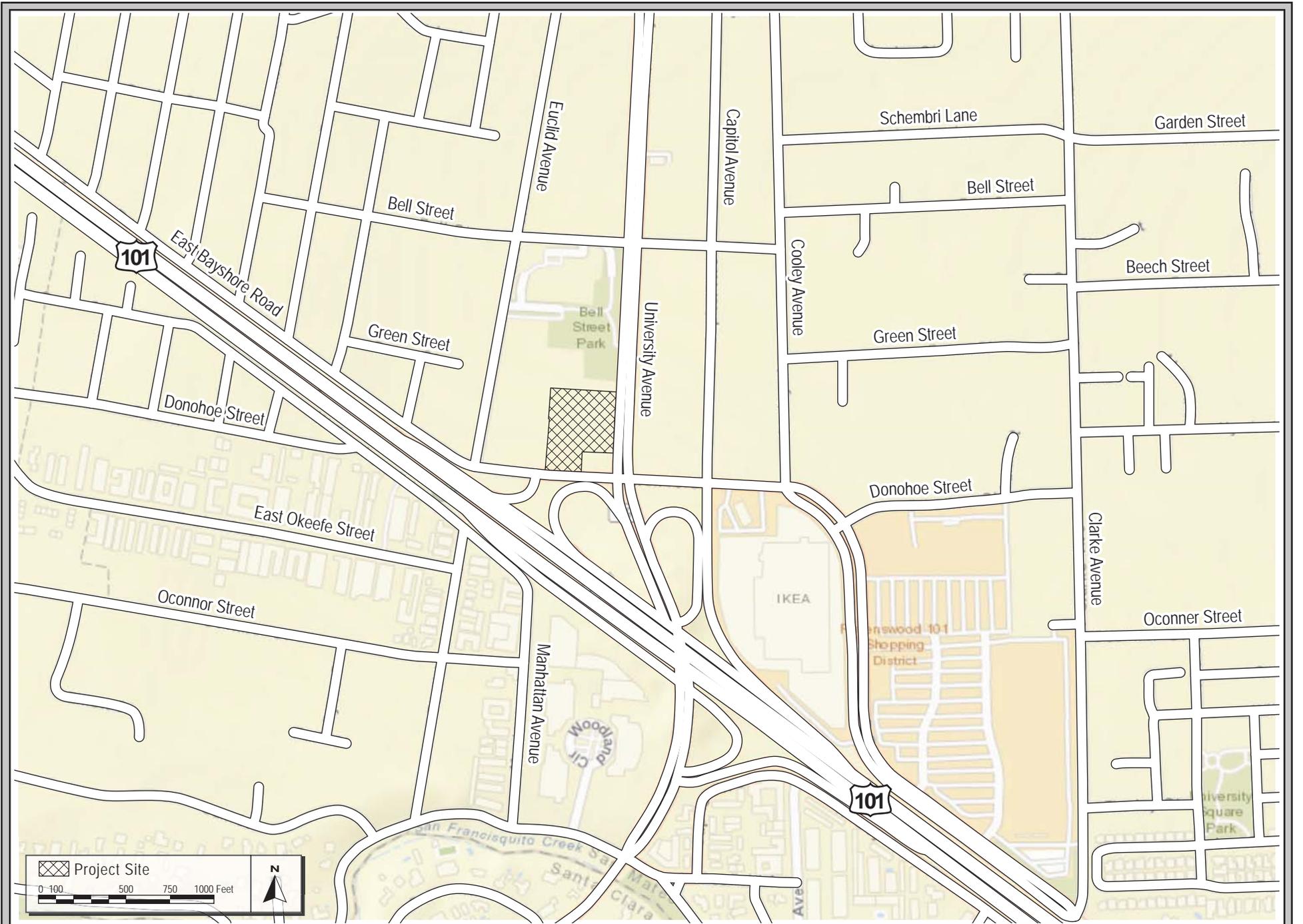
Signature: _____

Guido F. Persicone
Planning and Housing Manager
City of East Palo Alto



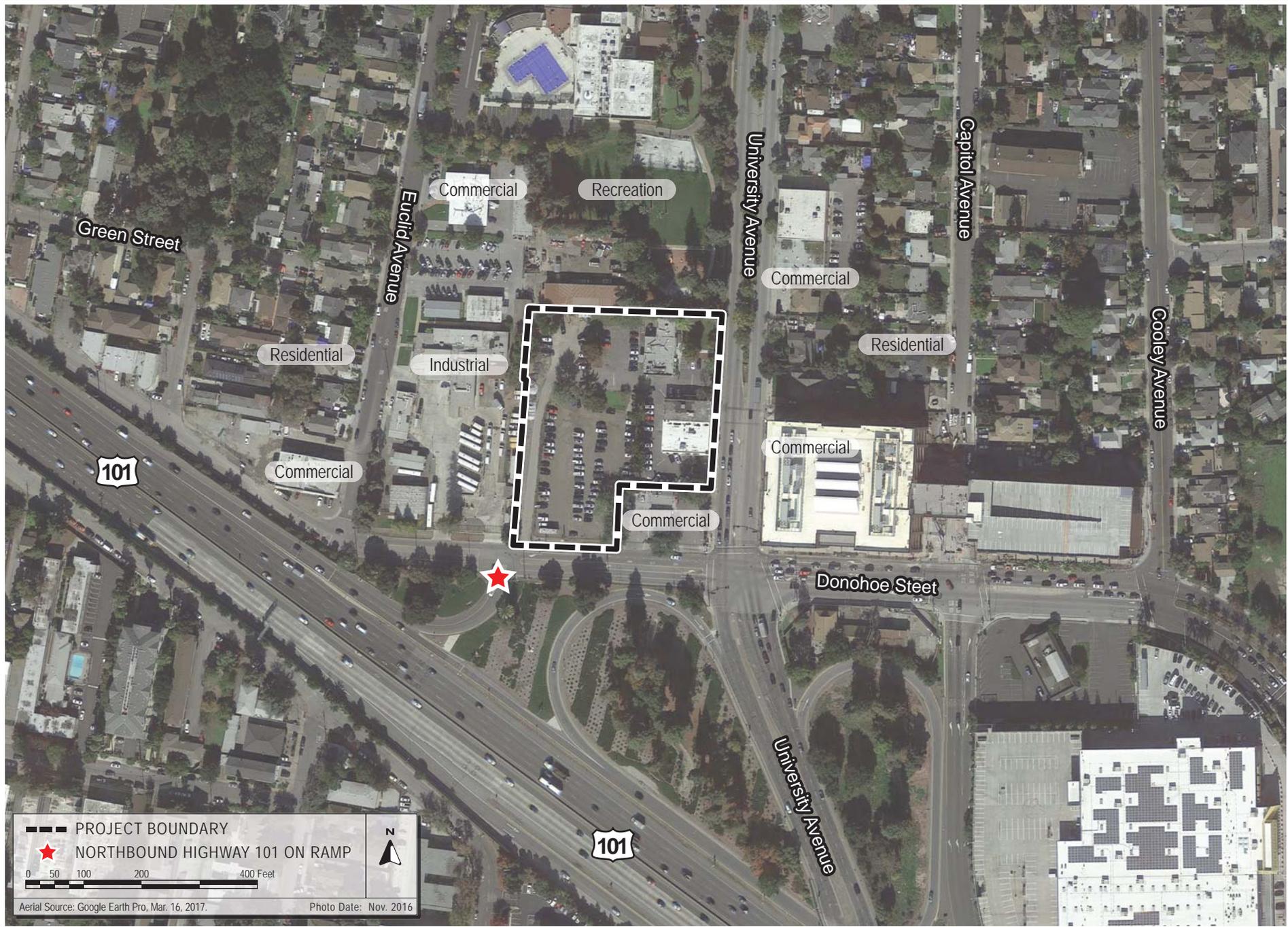
REGIONAL MAP

FIGURE 1



VICINITY MAP

FIGURE 2



PROJECT BOUNDARY
★ NORTHBOUND HIGHWAY 101 ON RAMP

0 50 100 200 400 Feet

N

Aerial Source: Google Earth Pro, Mar. 16, 2017. Photo Date: Nov. 2016

AERIAL PHOTOGRAPH AND SURROUNDING LAND USES

FIGURE 3