



CREEK PLAN

Our Neighborhood. Our Creek.

SAN MARCOS
DISCOVER LIFE'S POSSIBILITIES

Public Workshop #2

July 24, 2025



Welcome!



- I. Introductions**
- II. Alternatives Development**
- III. Stormwater Management: Emerging Plan**
- IV. Mobility: Emerging Plan**
- V. Land Use Plan: Emerging Plan**
- VI. Facilitated Discussion**
- VII. Next Steps**

What does “Specific Plan” mean?

A Specific Plan provides a special set of planning policies and development standards for a particular geographic area. A Specific Plan is separate from but must be consistent with the City’s General Plan.

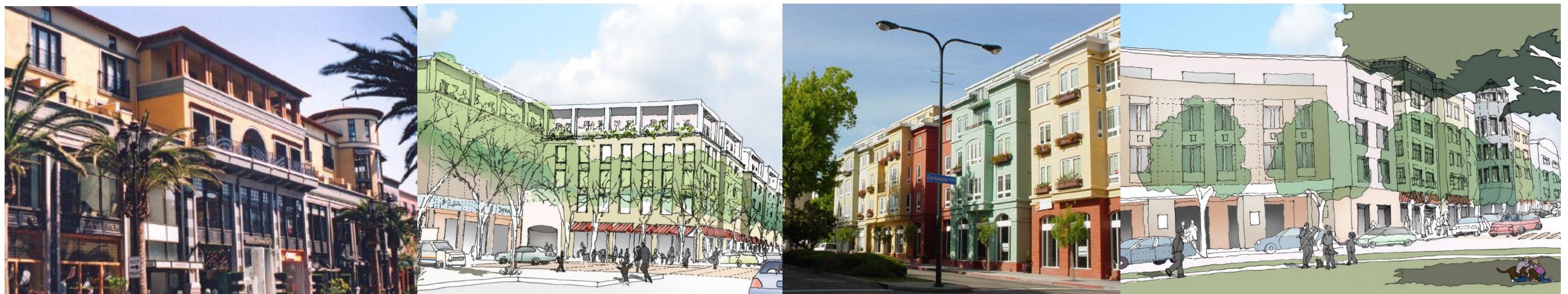
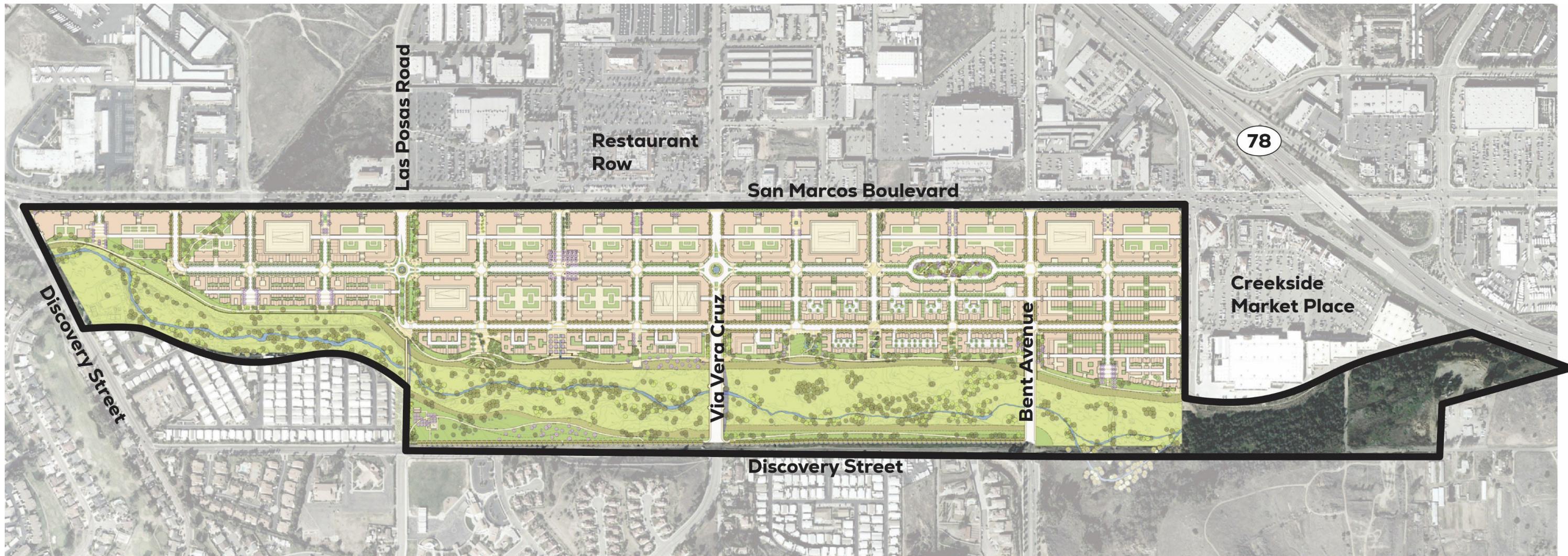
What does a Specific Plan **DO**?

- Regulates how you can use and develop your property: either on vacant property or as private redevelopment effort
- Provides development standards (for example: maximum building height, setbacks, parking requirements)
- Identifies what types of permits are required (for example: by right, conditional use permit)

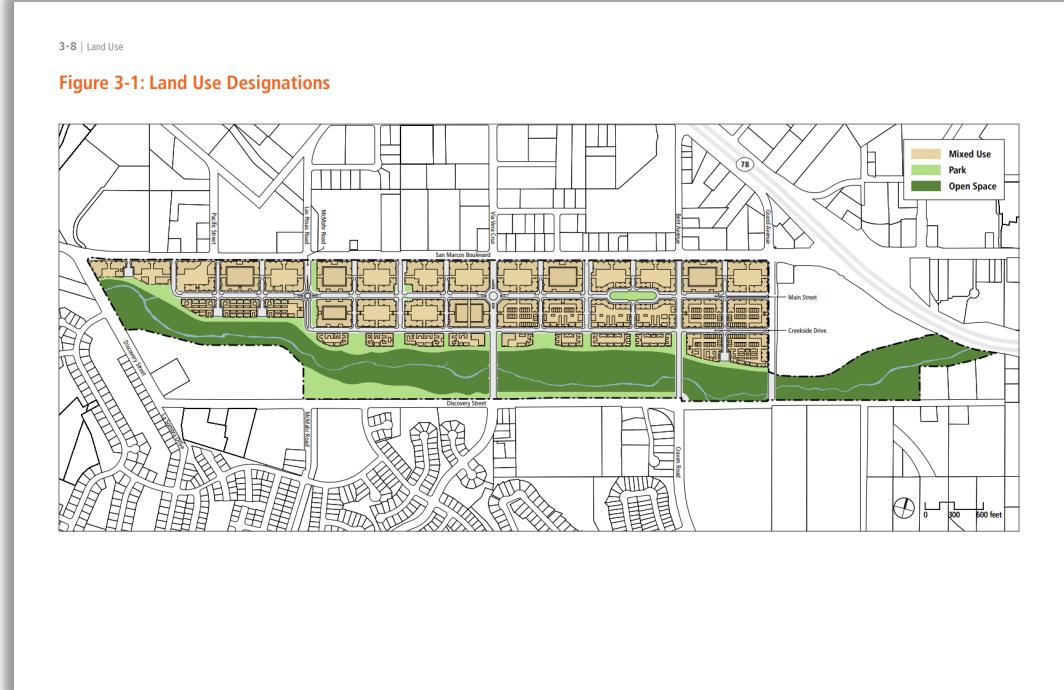
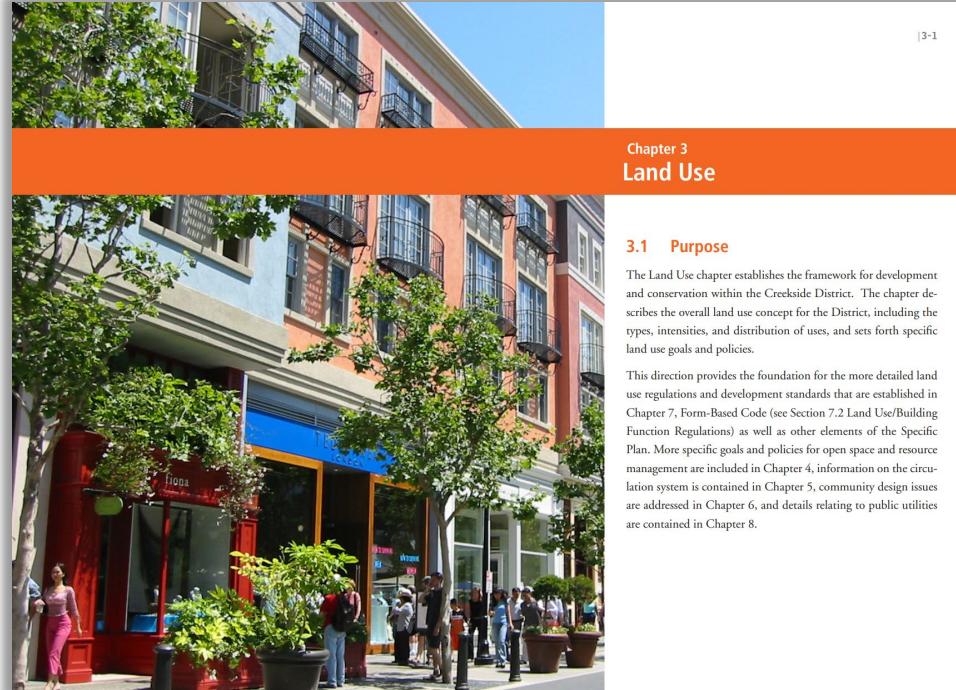
What does a Specific Plan **NOT DO**?

- Does not require property owners to redevelop; all existing conditions can remain as is
- Does not allow for parcel-specific entitlements
- Does not regulate or replace building codes or fire codes; these are covered by statewide codes
- Does not regulate anything outside the specific plan area

Current 2007 Creek District Specific Plan



Current 2007 Creek District Specific Plan



Current 2007 Creek District Specific Plan allows for:

- 2,300 housing units
- 1.2 million square feet of retail
- 600,000 square feet of office space

Envisioned as a new
“Downtown of San Marcos”

Existing Conditions



Current 2007 Creek District Specific Plan

Why change the plan?

ISSUES

- Limited new development has occurred
- Lack of private investment
- High ground-floor vacancies

OPPORTUNITIES

- Reduced flood risk
- Increased visibility/access from Paseo del Arroyo Park and new bridges
- Capitalize on development activity near the Plan area: North City, Restaurant Row

Alternatives Analysis

Stormwater



Mobility



Land Use



The project team worked with **community members**, the **Climate Action Plan (CAP) working group**, **Planning Commission**, and **City Council** to develop the Emerging Plan

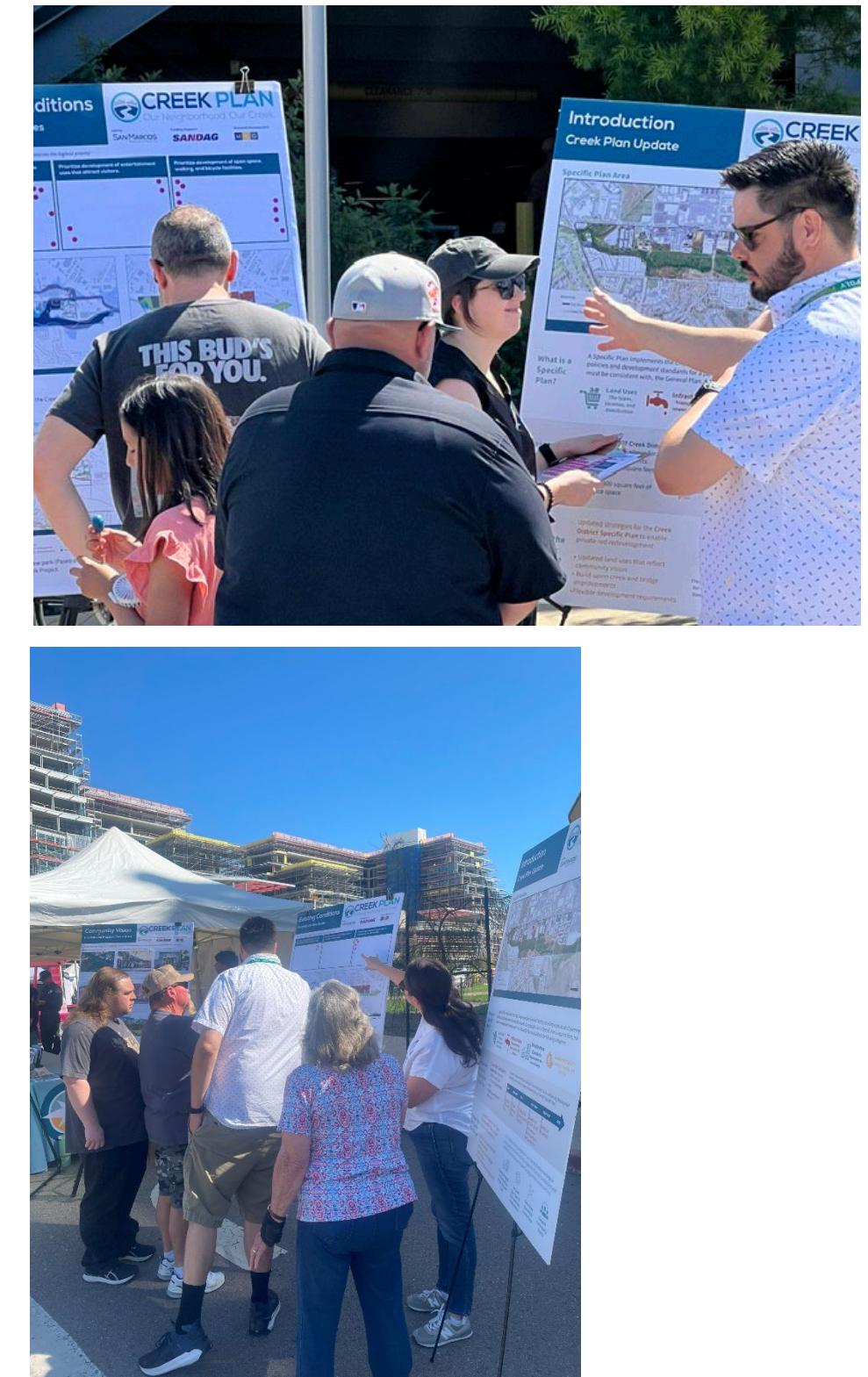
Engagement and Alternatives Analysis



Youth Commission (February 2025)



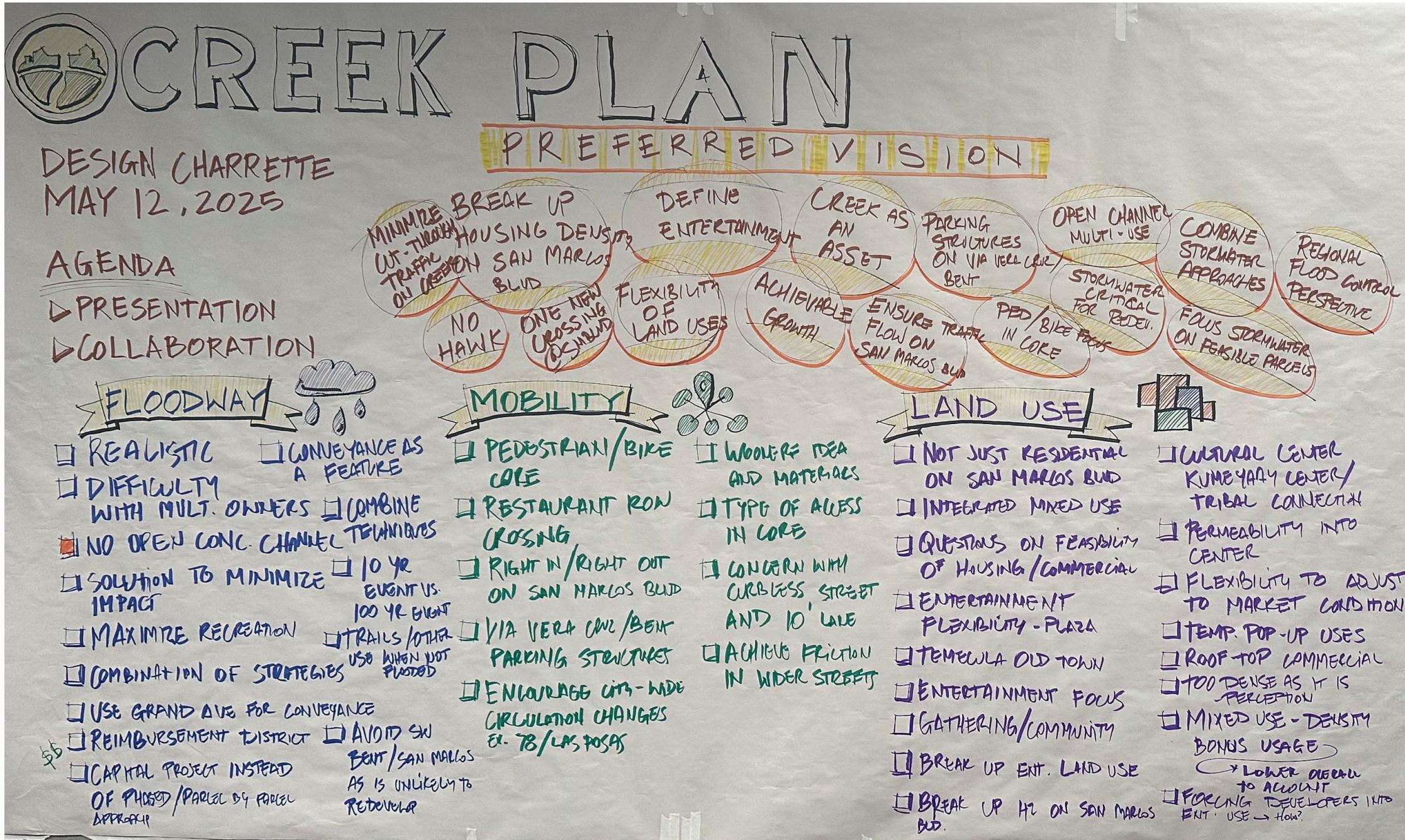
Spring Fling Festival Pop-up (April 2025)



Public Workshop #1 (April 2025)

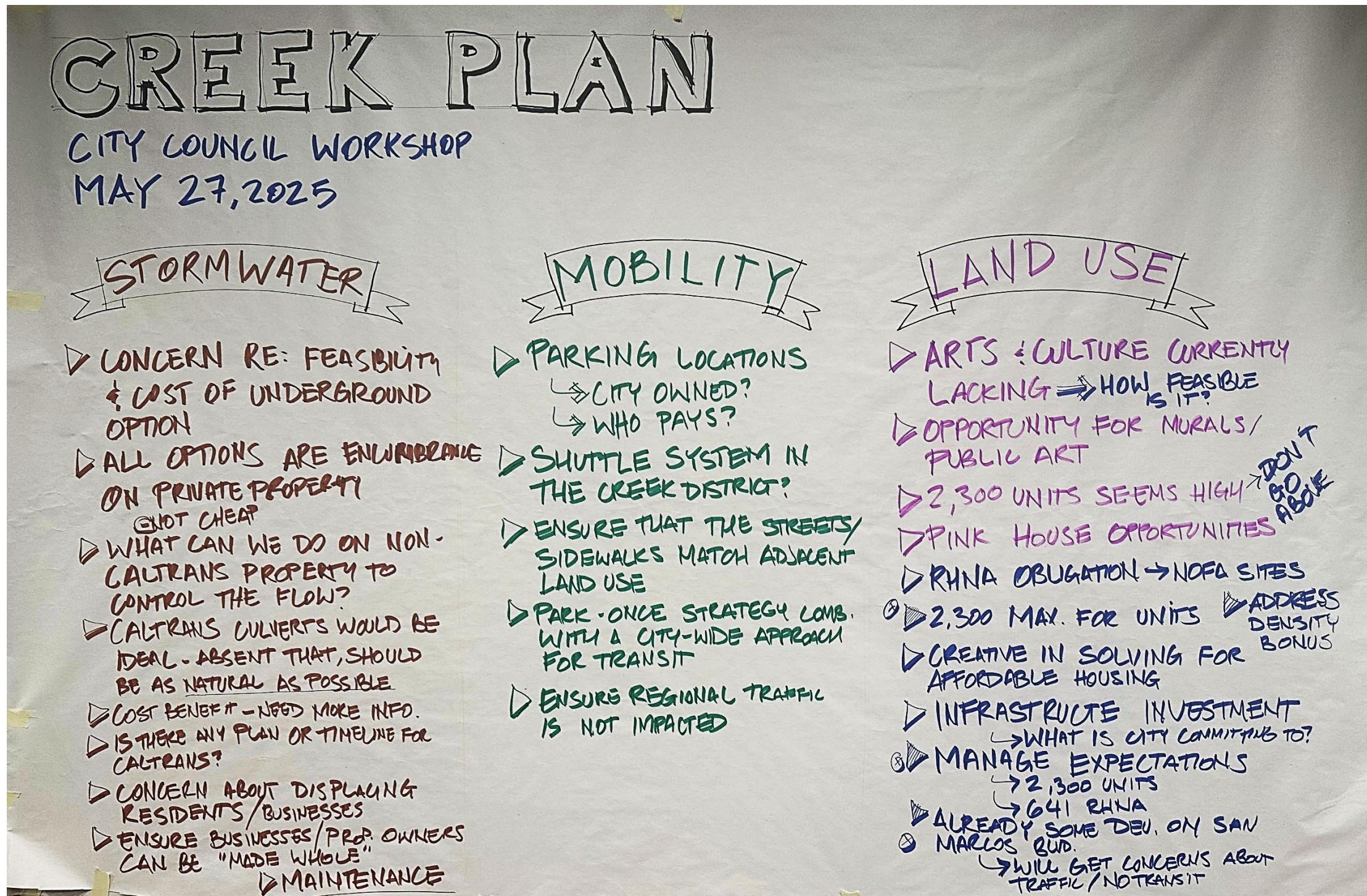


City Staff Alternatives Charrette (May 2025)



Emerging Plan endorsed by Planning Commission (May 19, 2025)

City Council Workshop (May 27, 2025)



Guiding Principles



World-class Design

As quality design is an attraction itself, implement best design practices in all areas from sustainability to architecture.



Safe Mobility for Everyone

Create a multimodal network that provides access to the district from surrounding areas to everyone and reduces traffic.



Create a Destination

Leverage the unique opportunity of the San Marcos Creek with new arts, culture, and entertainment land uses to create a unique district.



Merge Nature and City

Establish a model of sustainability that integrates new urban development with a network of open spaces that improves the Creek natural environment.



Housing Variety

Promote a wide-range of housing design, cost, and density types to create a traditional, walkable neighborhood.



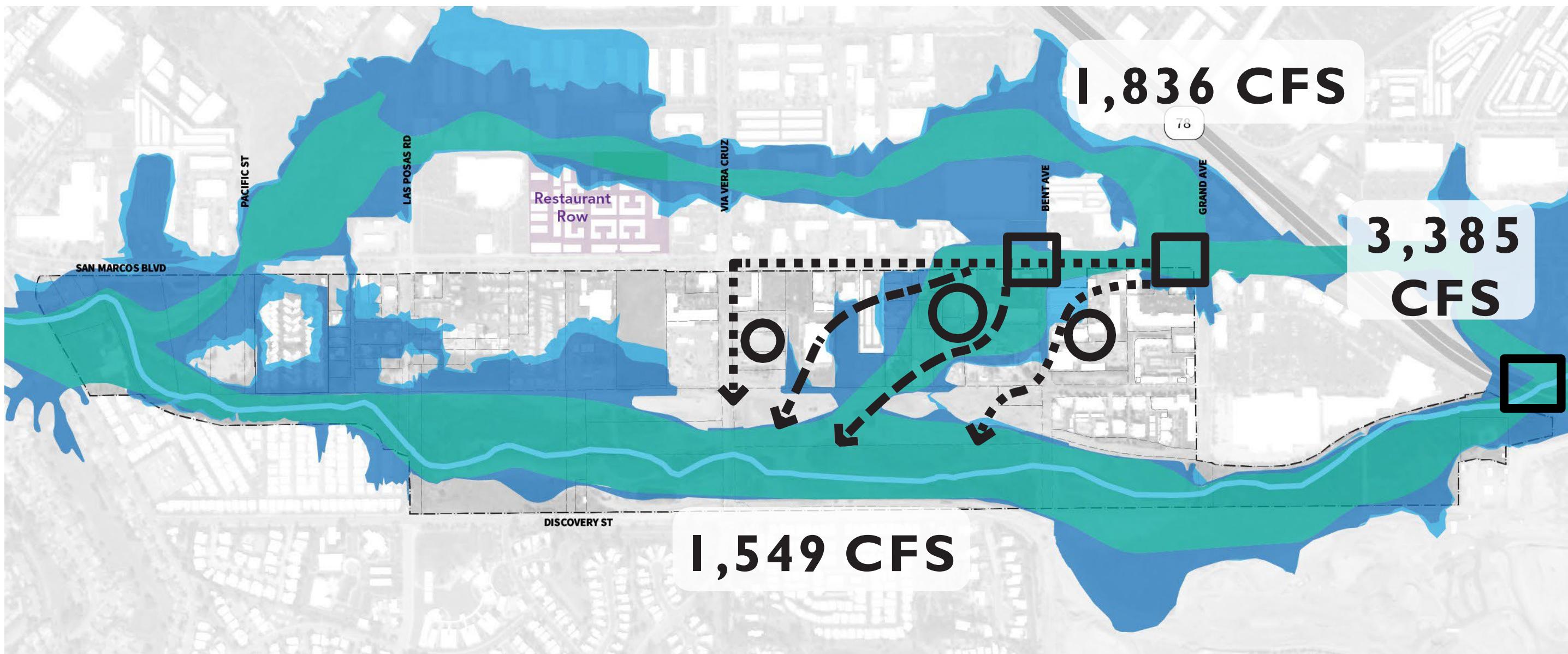
Streamline Requirements

Simplify regulations and processes for new private-development and partnerships required for infrastructure needs.

Stormwater Management Emerging Plan

Stormwater/Flooding

CFS = cubic feet per second

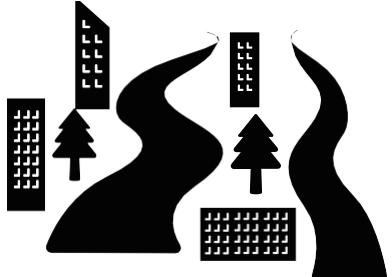


1. Two critical points along San Marcos Blvd. at Grand and Bent
2. Need to move water (1,549 CFS) from these points to the Creek

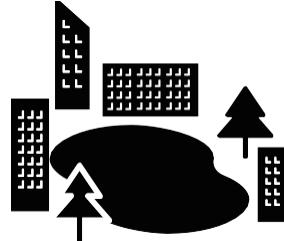
*Note: CFS based on FINAL LOCATION HYDRAULIC STUDY FOR VIA VERA CRUZ & BENT AVENUE BRIDGE CROSSINGS AT SAN MARCOS CREEK; Rick Engineering; November 2017

Stormwater/Flooding Options

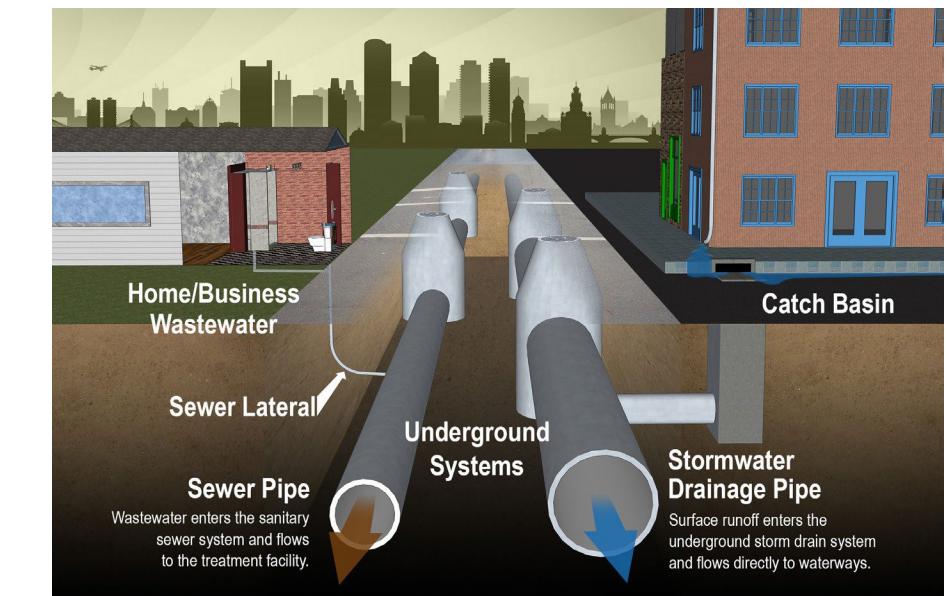
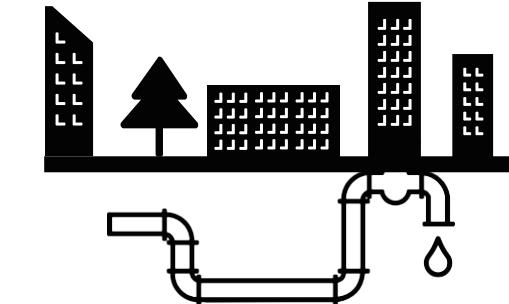
Open Flow Channel(s)



Catch Basin(s)



Underground System



Pros

- Habitat & environment corridors/connections
- Green Infrastructure/nature-based
- Permeability
- Creates multiple co-benefits

Cons

- How relates to feasibility for individual development projects/parcels?

Pros

- Can be used for multiple purposes
- Can be a focal point of a development

Cons

- Too large of area required to adequately address water capture during storm events
- Only complementary to open flow channel

Pros

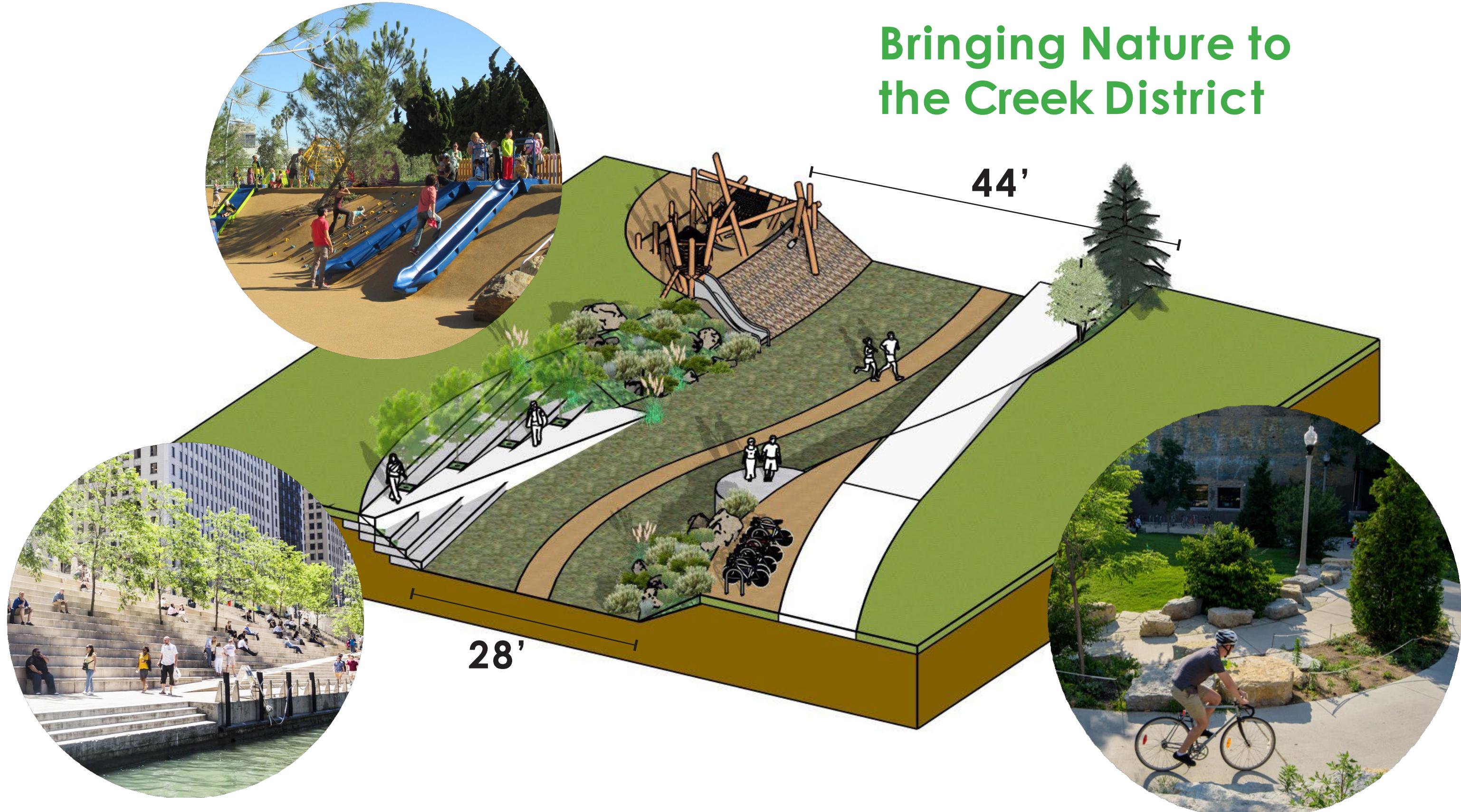
- Efficient use of land/space
- Most understood approach by developers

Cons

- Lowest cost/benefit trade-off
- Highest requirement for grey infrastructure
- Potential issues to access
- Least sustainable

Stormwater/Flooding Emerging Plan

Bringing Nature to
the Creek District



Stormwater/Flooding Emerging Plan



----- Plan Area Boundary

----- Creek

----- Potential Open Channel

Floodway 100 years

Floodplain 100 years

Floodplain 500 years

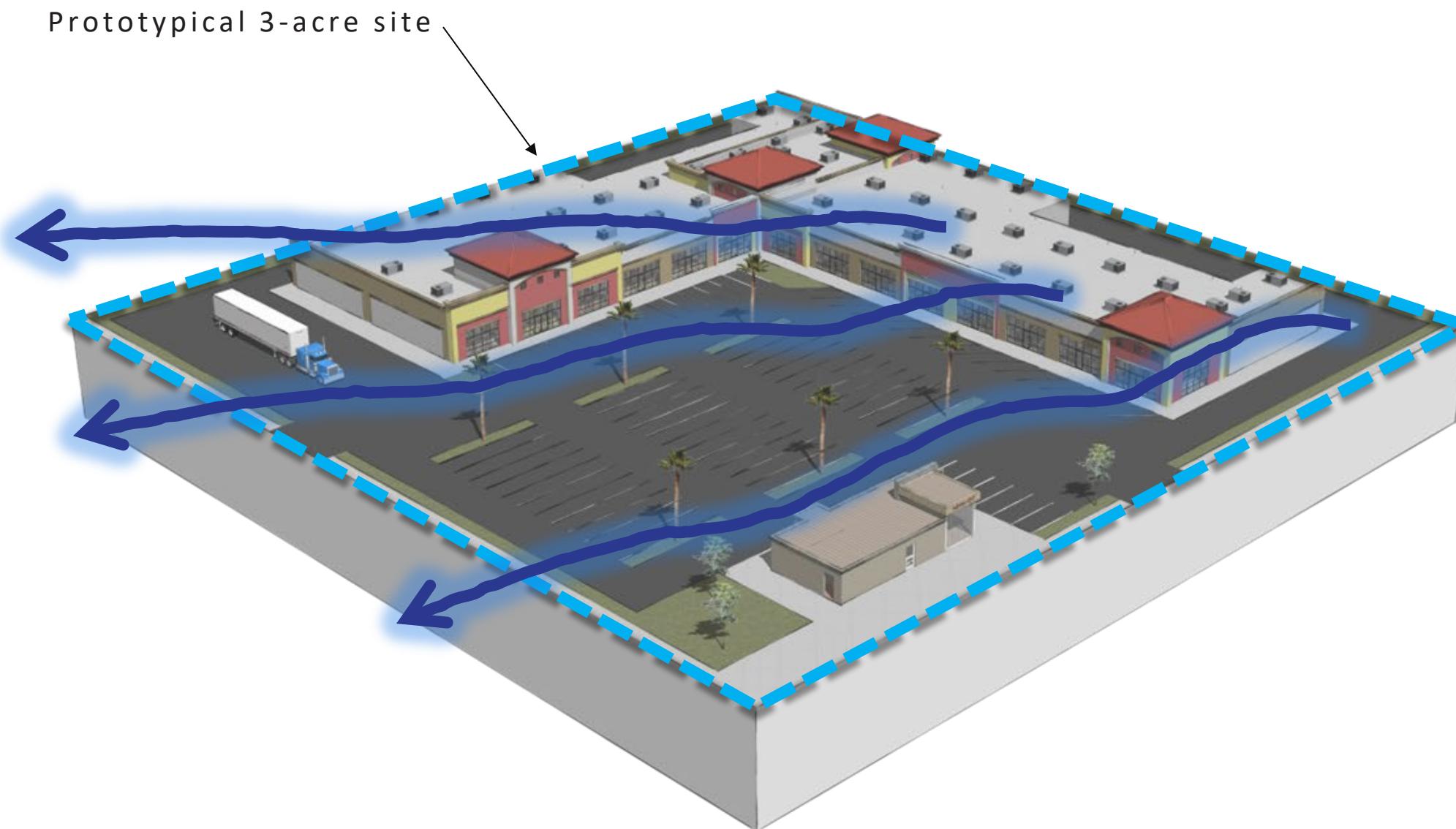
0 300 600 Feet

Stormwater Approaches

Existing Condition

Site Area in Floodplain = 100%

Developable area without
remediation = **NONE**

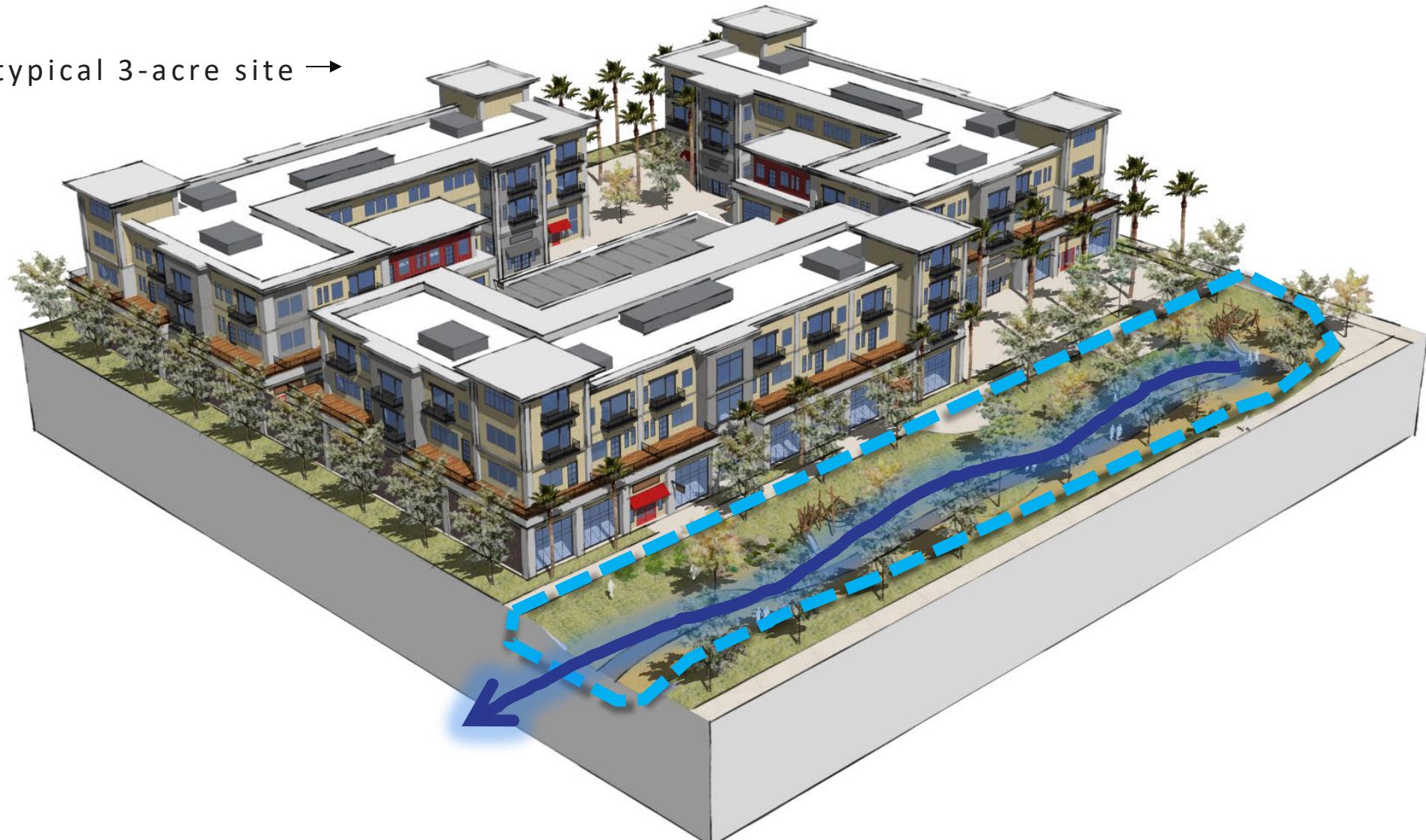


Stormwater Approaches

On-Site Solution

Site Area in Floodplain* = 12%
Developable area = 88%

Prototypical 3-acre site →



*Policy options:
Transfer of density,
special conditions
for open space,
phasing patterns,
menu of options*

**based on required size for open channel to move approx. 1,550
CFS of stormwater to San Marcos Creek*

Stormwater Approaches

On-Site Solution

Prototypical 3-acre site →



Site Area in Floodplain = 12%

Developable area = 88%

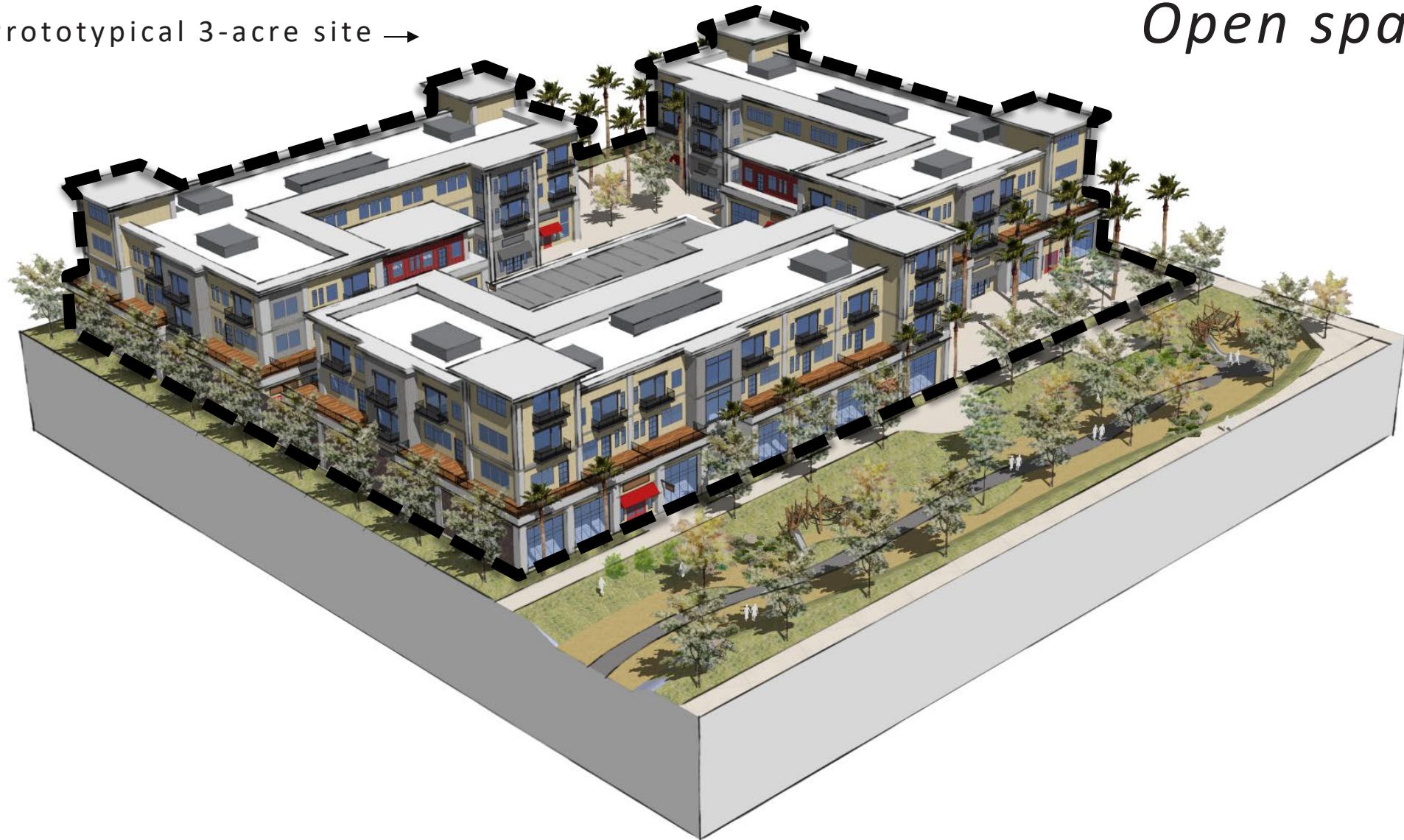
Total housing units = 200

Open space requirements = 10%

Stormwater Approaches

On-Site Solution

Prototypical 3-acre site →



Site Area in Floodplain = 12%

Developable area = 88%

Total housing units = 200

Open space requirements = 10%

Stormwater/Flooding

- **Unlock redevelopment potential for impacted properties**
- **Property owners are not required to do this if they do not want to redevelop**
- **Flexibility and options will be available for individual property owners**



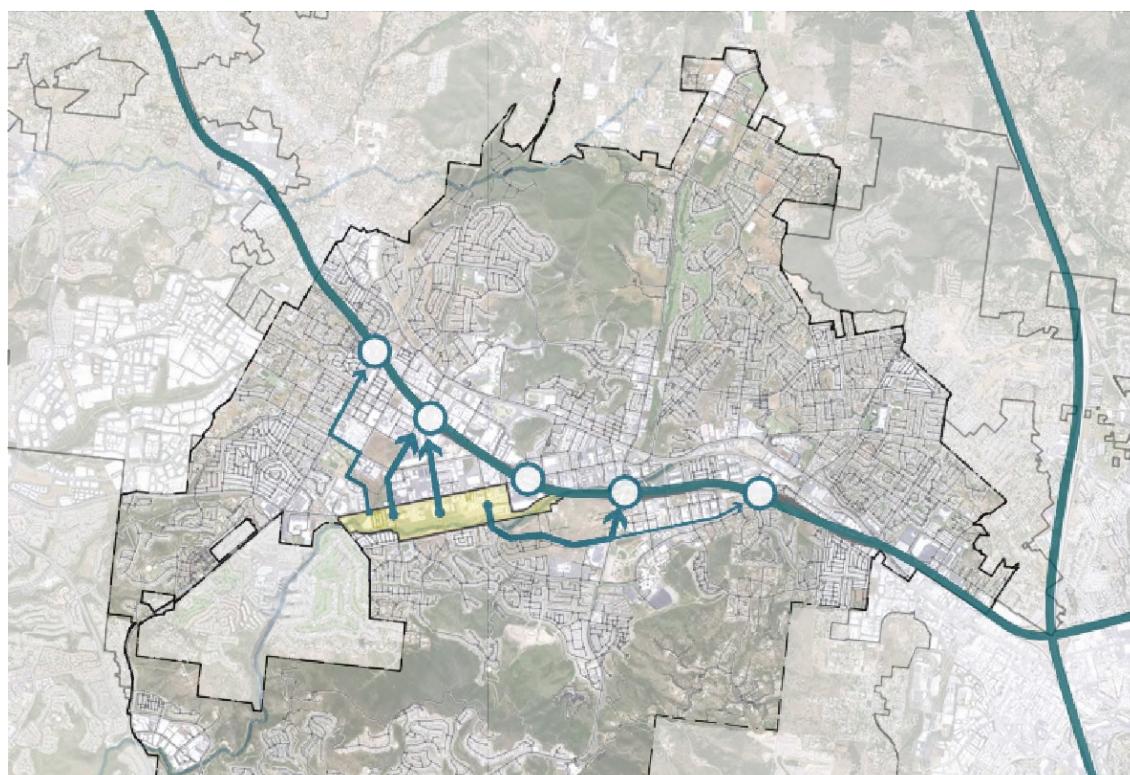


Questions (10 minutes)

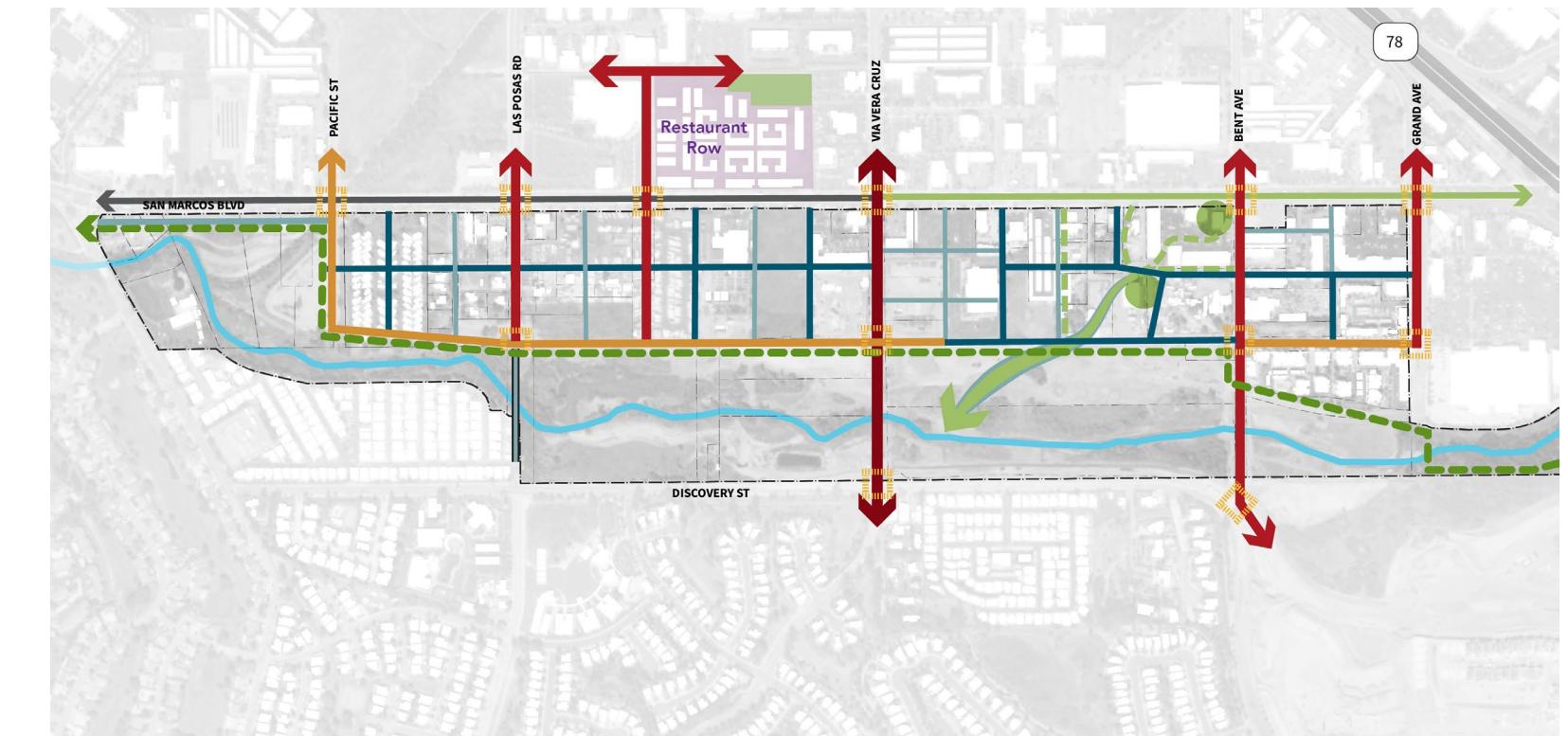
Mobility Emerging Plan

Mobility

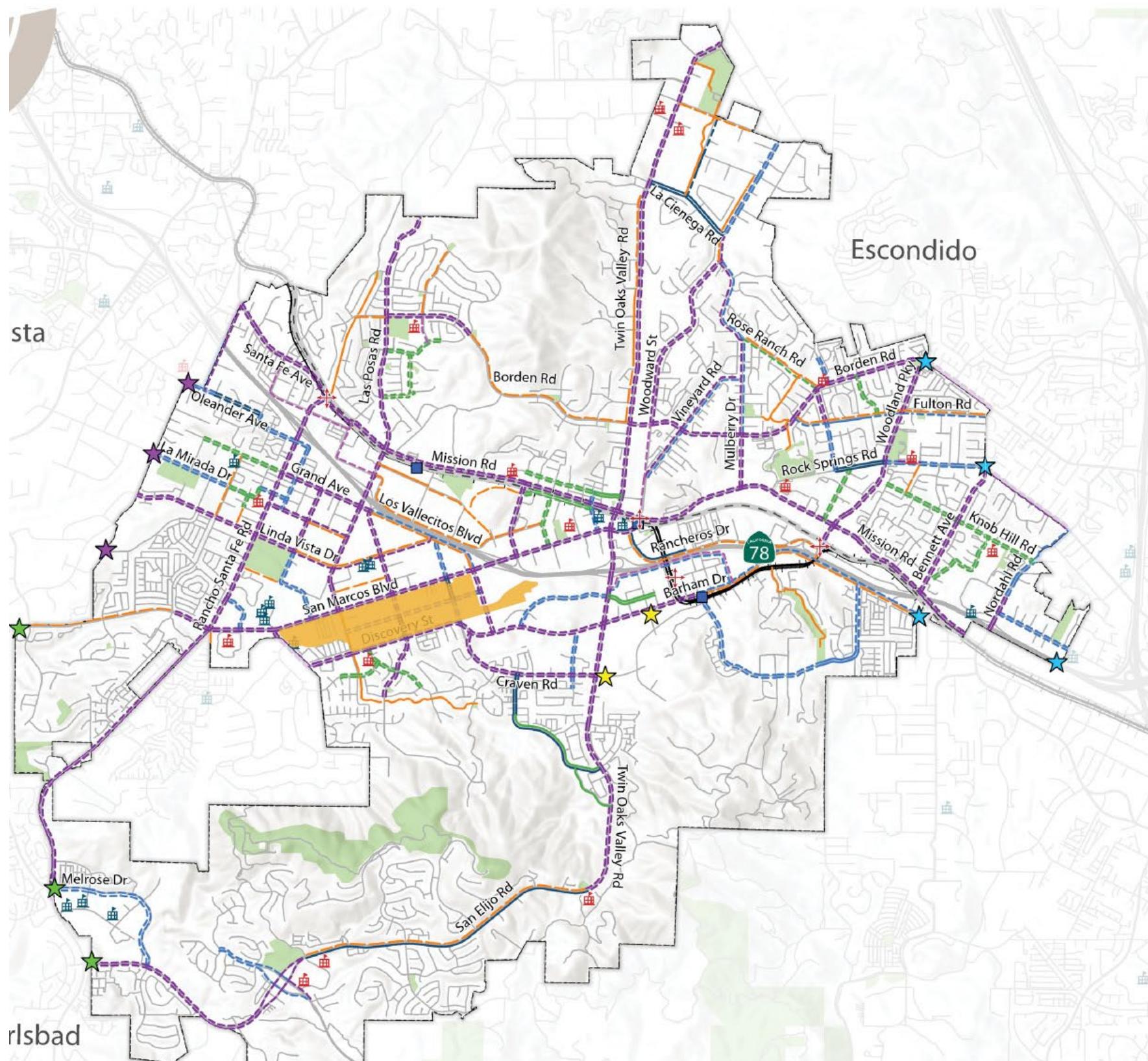
City Networks



Internal Network



City of San Marcos Active Transportation Plan



Legend

- San Marcos
- San Marcos Unified School District
- Schools
- SPRINTER Stations
- SPRINTER
- Inland Rail Trail (IRT)
- Key Trails
- Existing Class I Multi-Use Path
- Critical Barrier for Bike/Ped Access

Key Jurisdiction Connections

- ★ CSUSM
- ★ City of Carlsbad
- ★ City of Escondido
- ★ City of Vista

Existing Bicycle Facilities

- Class I Multi-Use Path
- Class II Buffered Bike Lane
- Class II Bike Lane
- Class III Bike Route

Ultimate Bicycle Facilities

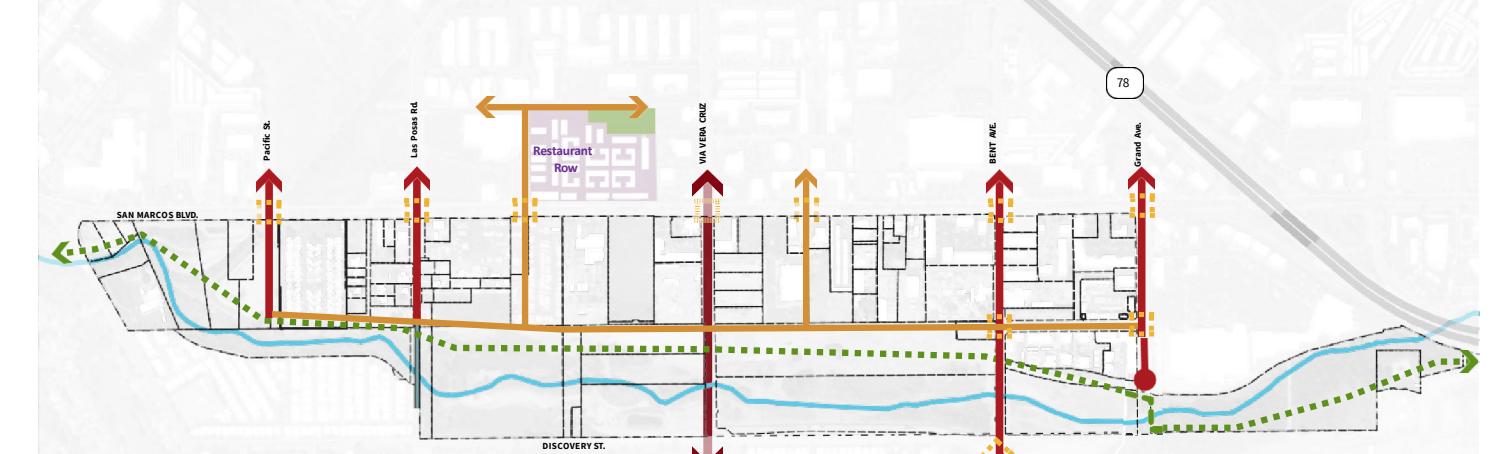
- Class I Multi-Use Path
- Class II Bike Lane
- Class II Buffered Bike Lane
- Class III Bike Route
- Class IV Bikeway (One-Way)
- Class IV Bikeway (Two-Way)

Internal Network: SM Crossings and District Access

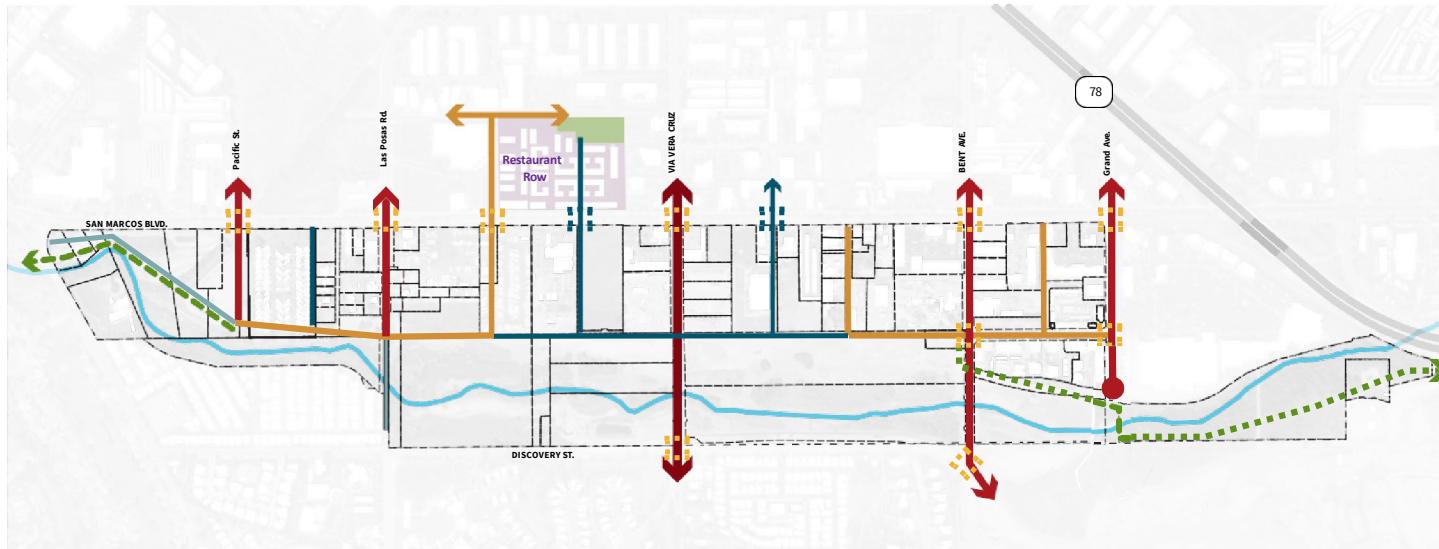
Minimal SM Blvd. Crossings



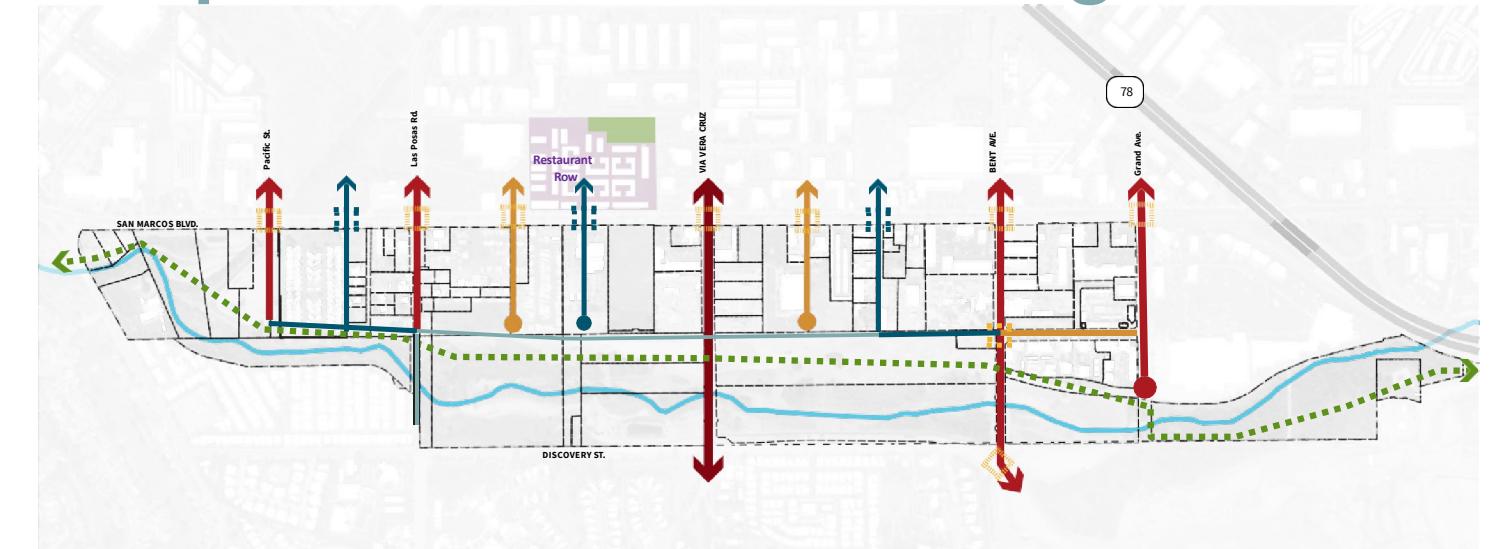
Creek Front Shared Street



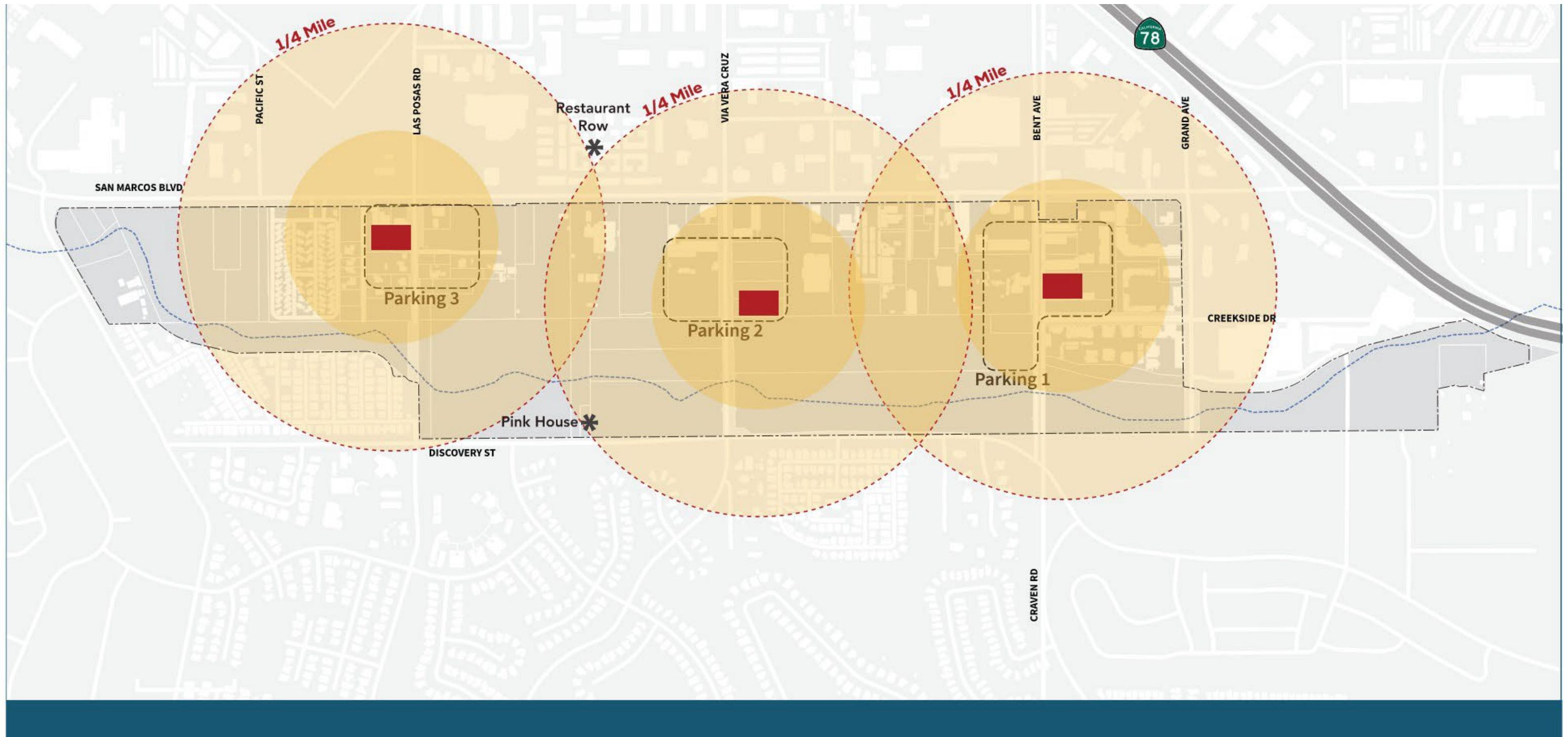
Creek Pedestrian Promenade



Frequent SM Blvd. Crossings



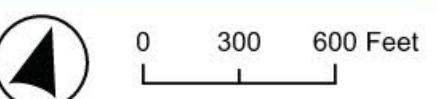
Parking: Preferred Public Park-Once Areas



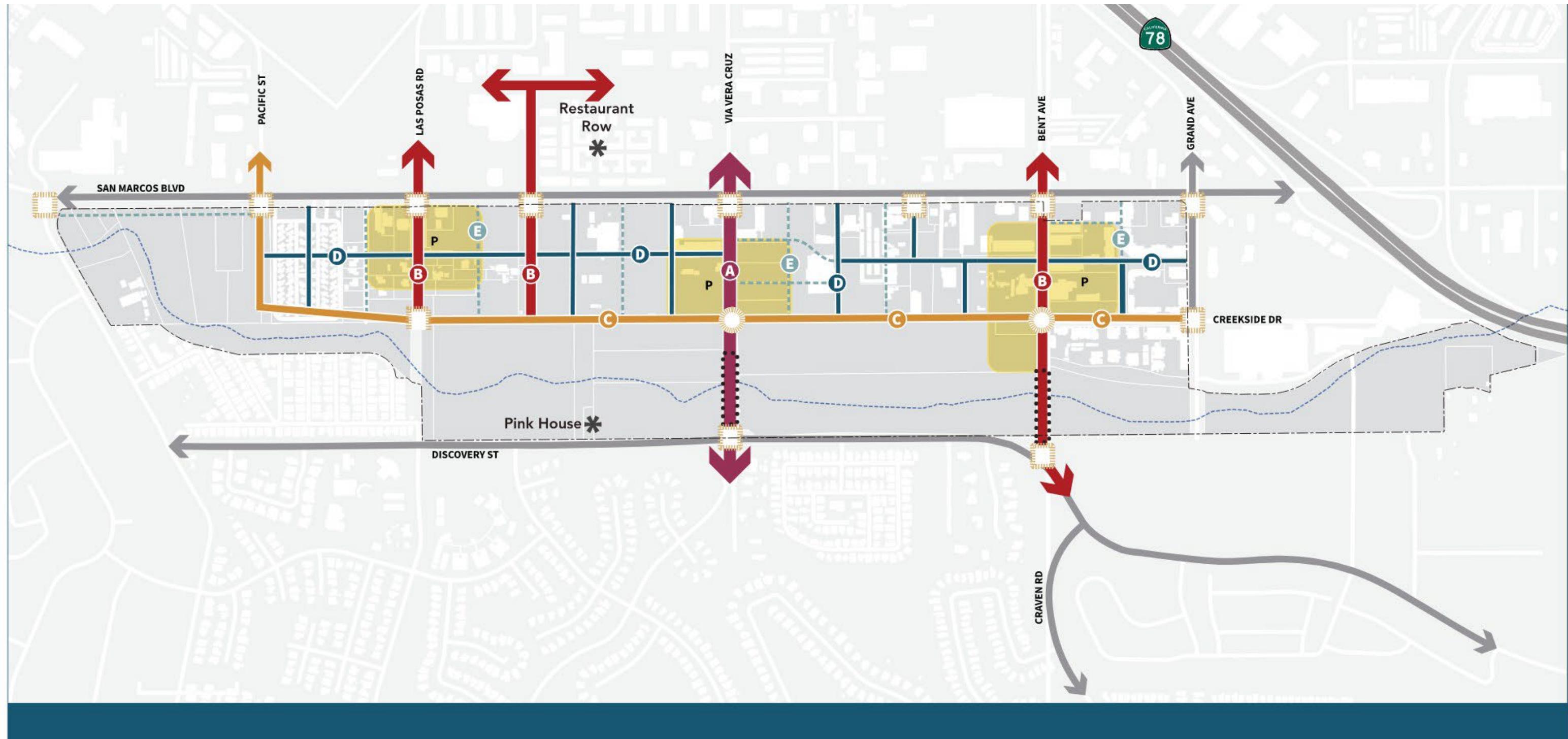
----- Plan Area Boundary

----- Creek

████ Potential Public Parking Areas



Mobility Road Network: Emerging Plan



----- Plan Area Boundary

----- Creek

----- Roadway Outside Specific Plan Area

(A) 4 travel lanes, bike lanes, center/on-street parking (90')

(B) 2 travel lanes, P bike lanes, center/on-street parking (80')

(C) 2 travel lanes, on-street parking (70')

(D) Curbless/Rolled Curb Pedestrian Street (55')

(E) Pedestrian Paseo/Promenade w/ Emergency Access (40')

||||| Crosswalk (vehicle signal/crossing)

○ Potential Roundabout

▀▀▀▀▀ Via Vera Cruz Bridge & Bent Avenue Bridge*

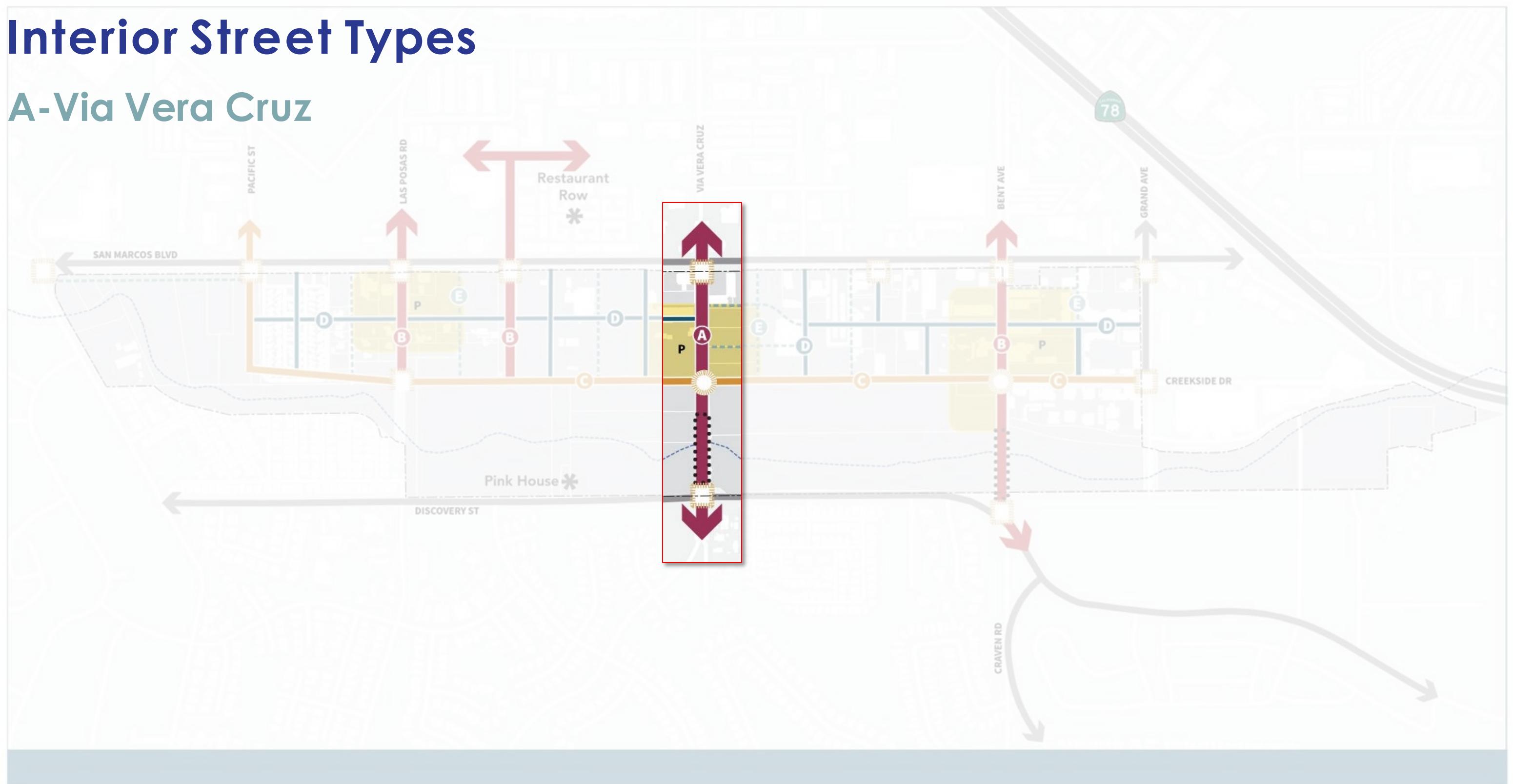
P Potential Public Parking Areas



0 300 600 Feet

Interior Street Types

A-Via Vera Cruz



Plan Area Boundary

Creek

Roadway Outside Specific Plan Area

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Potential Roundabout

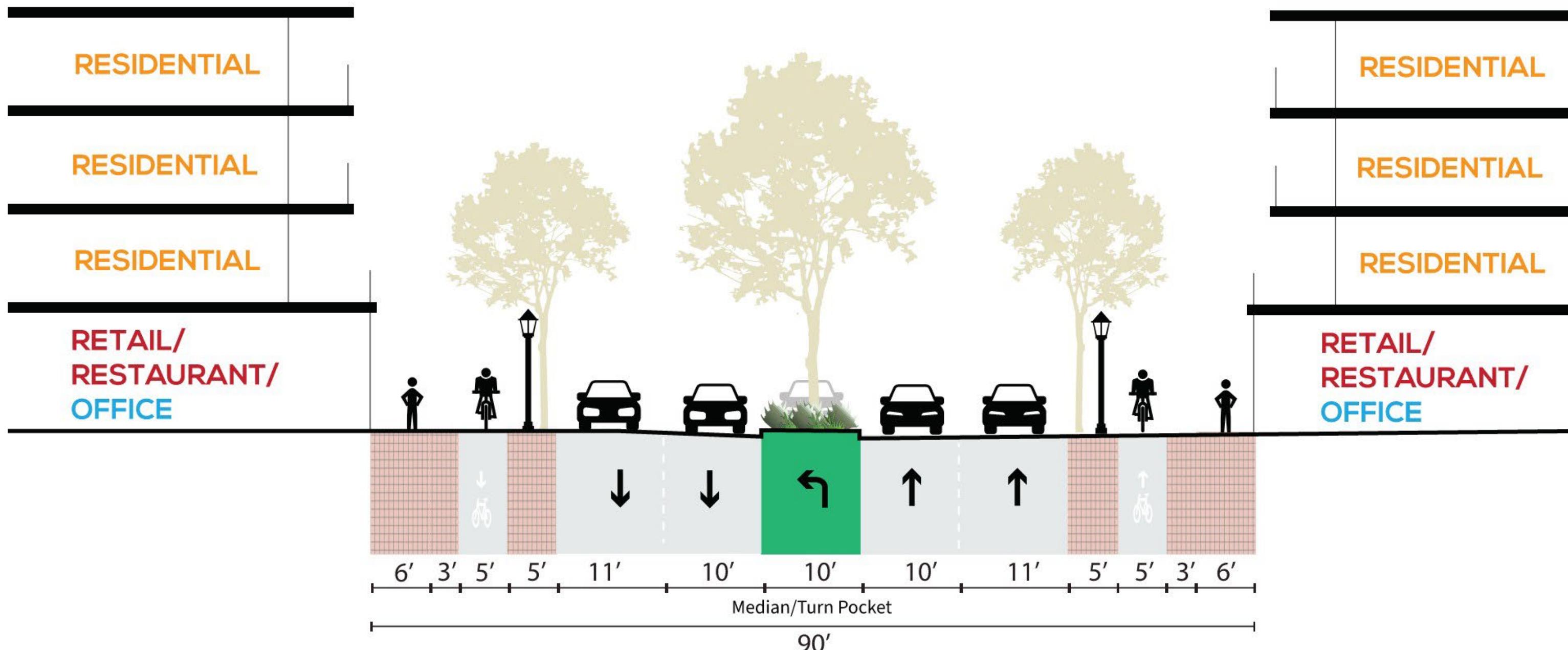
Via Vera Cruz Bridge & Bent Avenue Bridge*

Potential Public Parking Areas

0 300 600 Feet

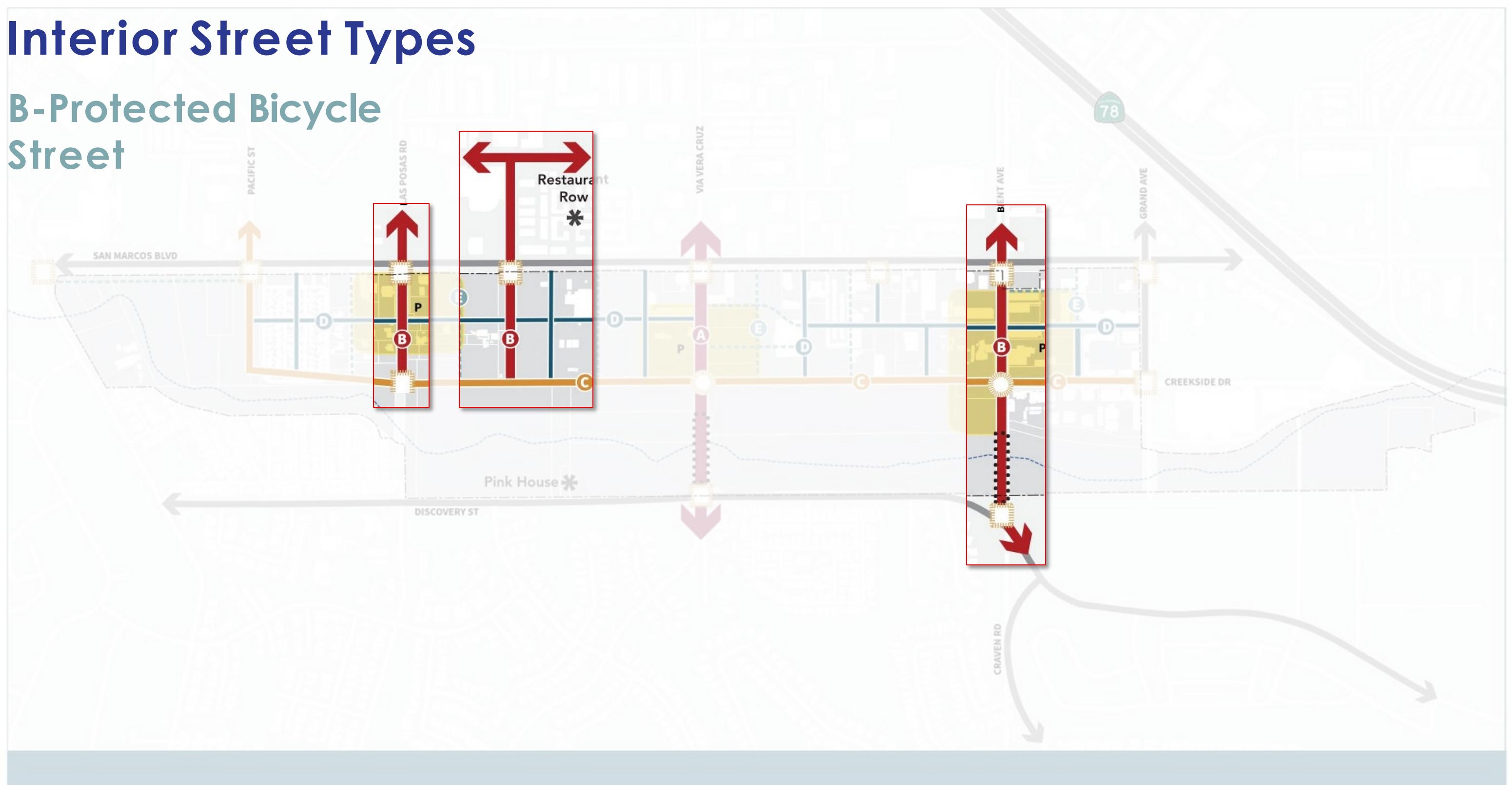
Interior Street Types

A-Via Vera Cruz



Interior Street Types

B-Protected Bicycle Street



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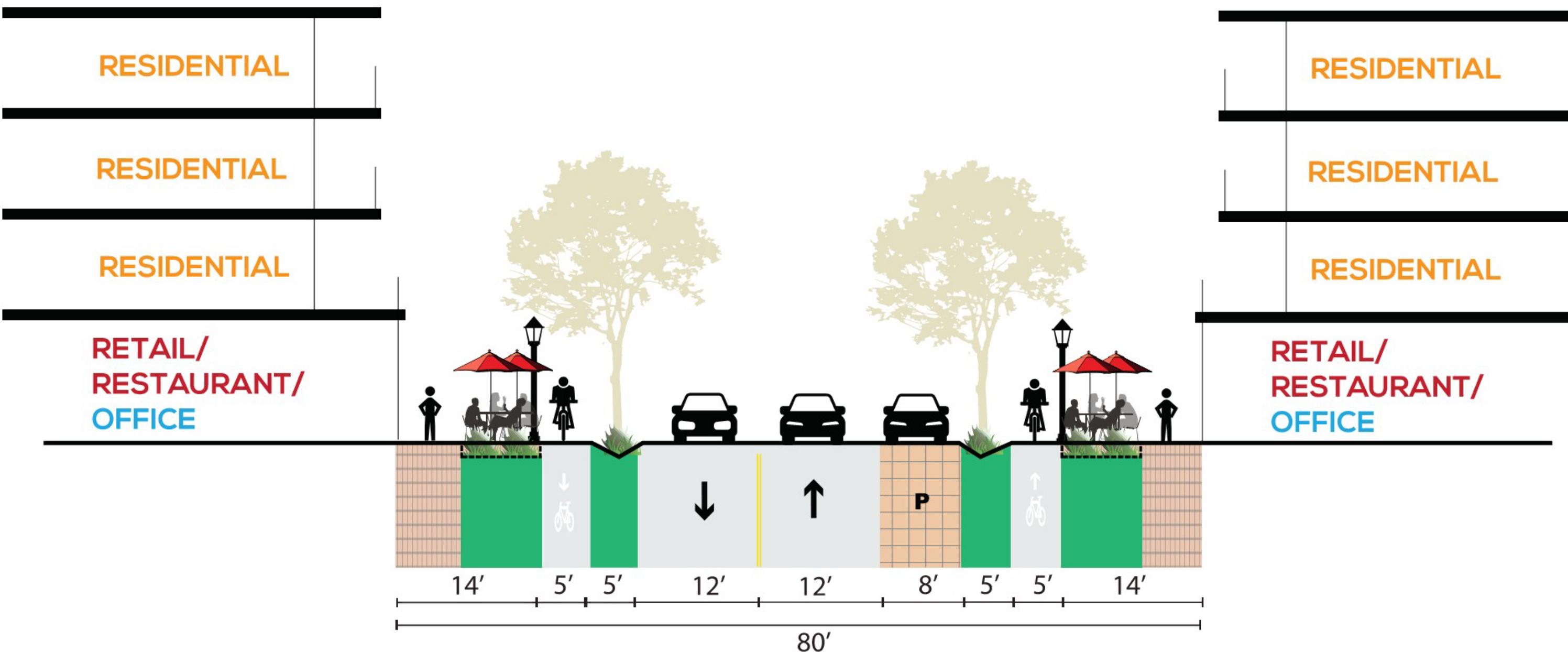
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P Potential Public Parking Areas

0 300 600 Feet

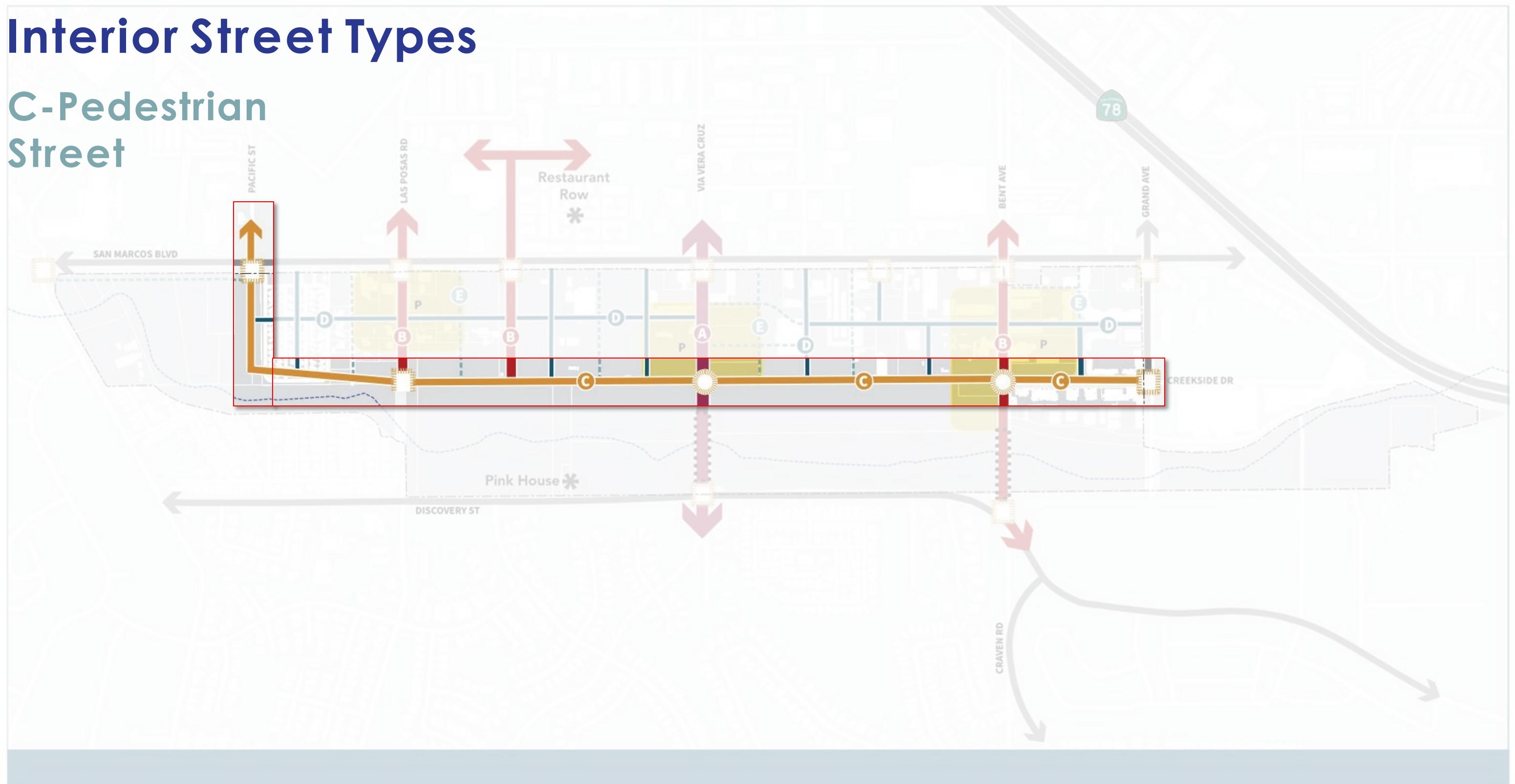
Interior Street Types

B-Protected Bicycle Street



Interior Street Types

C-Pedestrian Street



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----- Creek

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○ Potential Roundabout

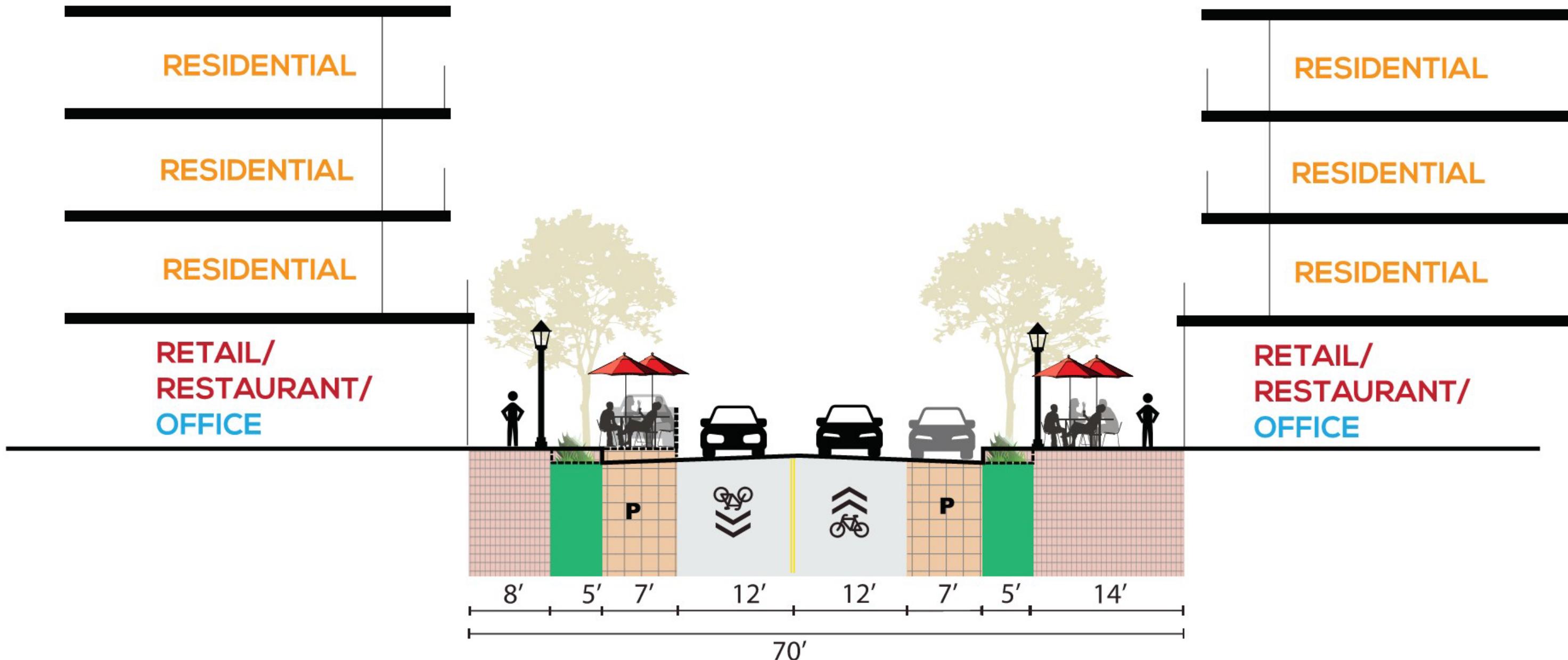
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0 300 600 Feet

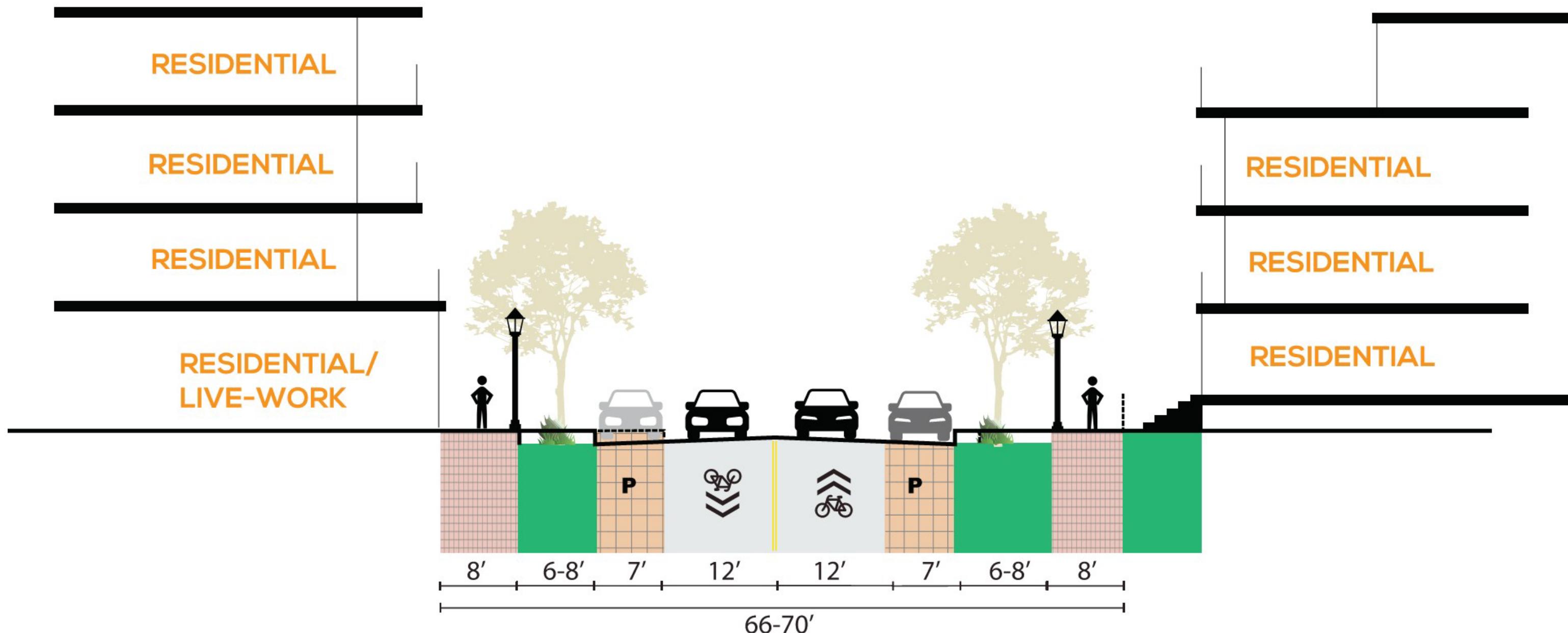
Interior Street Types

C-Pedestrian Street Commercial



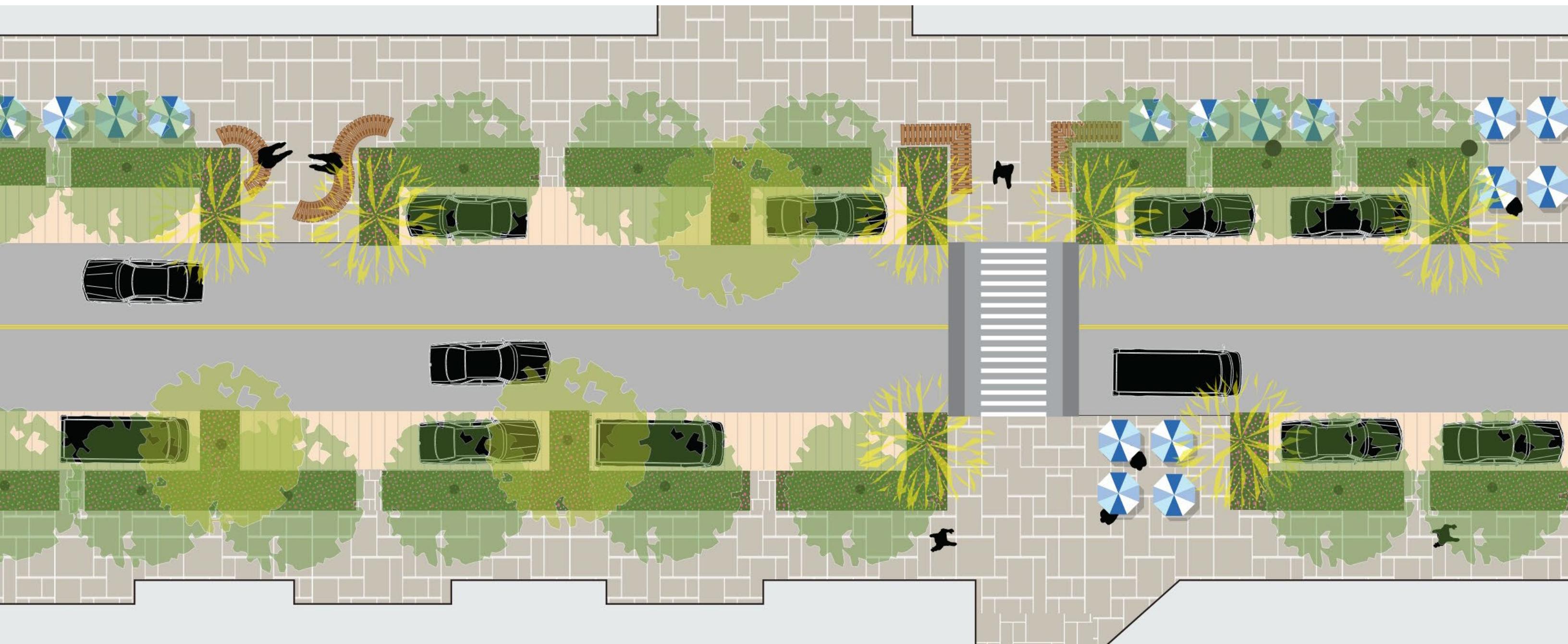
Interior Street Types

C-Pedestrian Street Residential



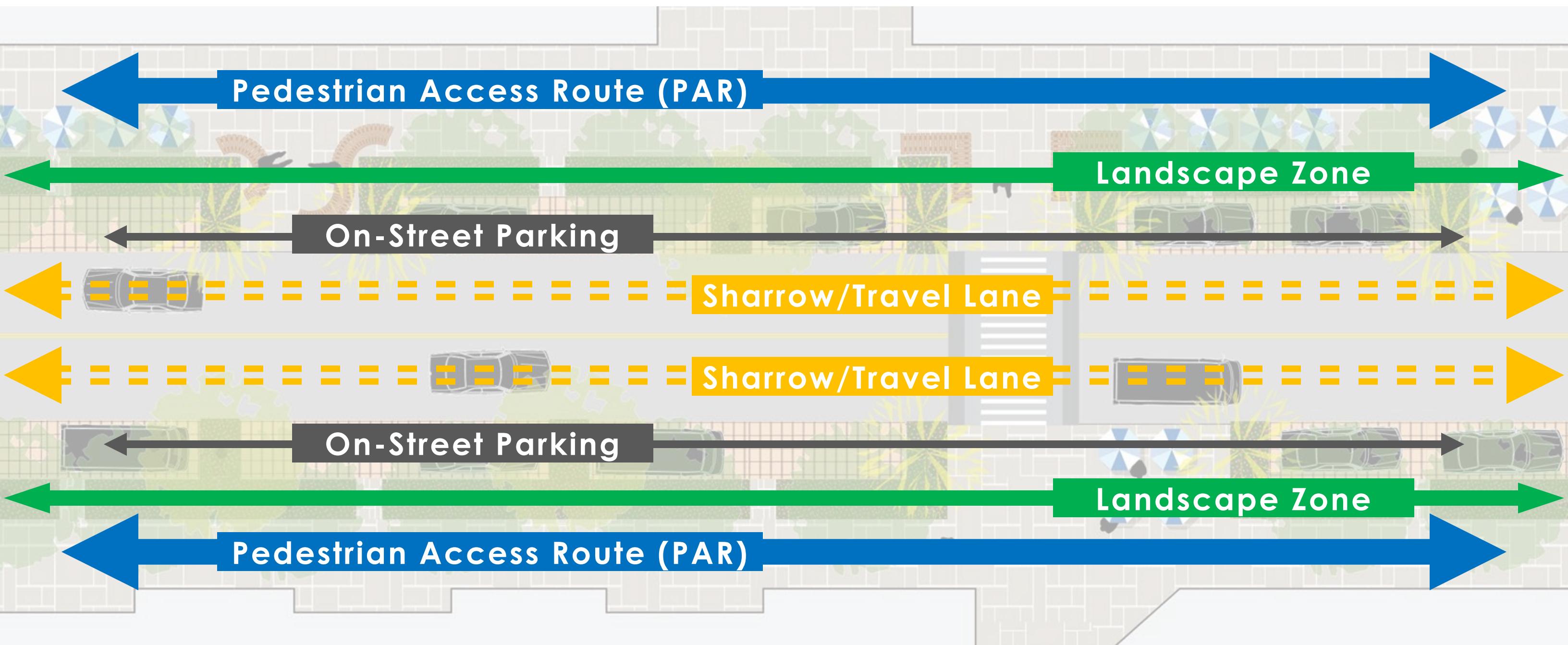
Interior Street Types

C-Pedestrian Street



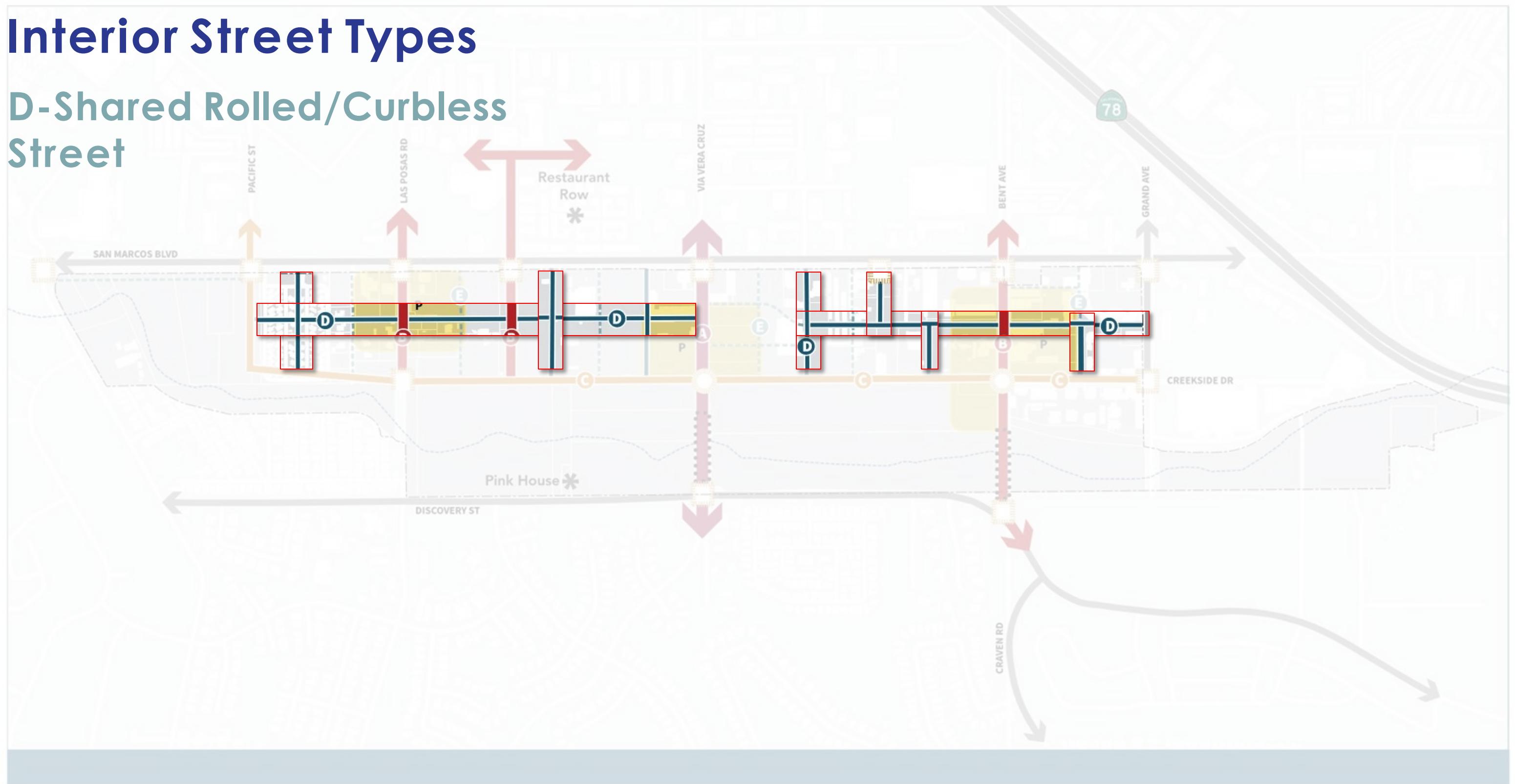
Interior Street Types

C-Pedestrian Street



Interior Street Types

D-Shared Rolled/Curbless Street



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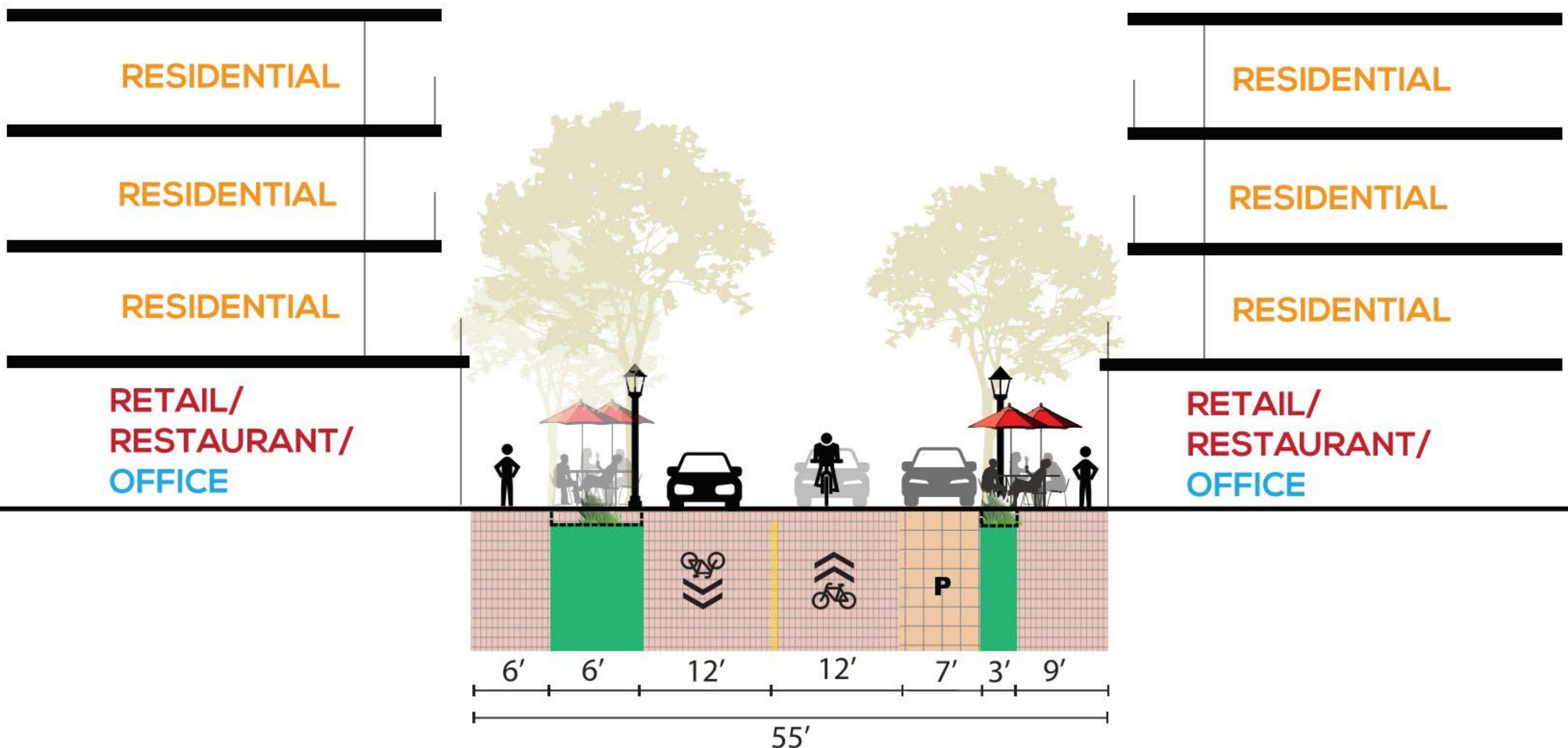
▀▀▀▀▀ Via Vera Cruz Bridge & Bent Avenue Bridge*

P Potential Public Parking Areas

0 300 600 Feet

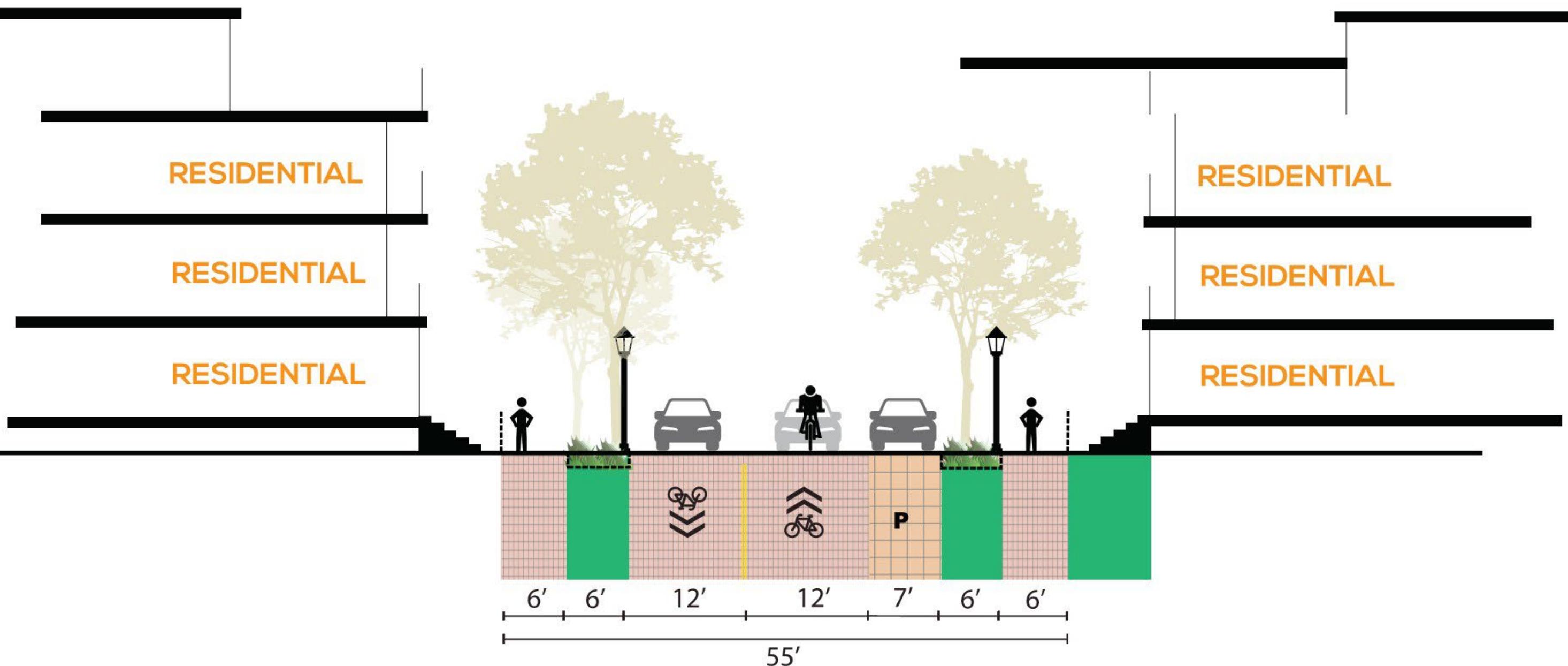
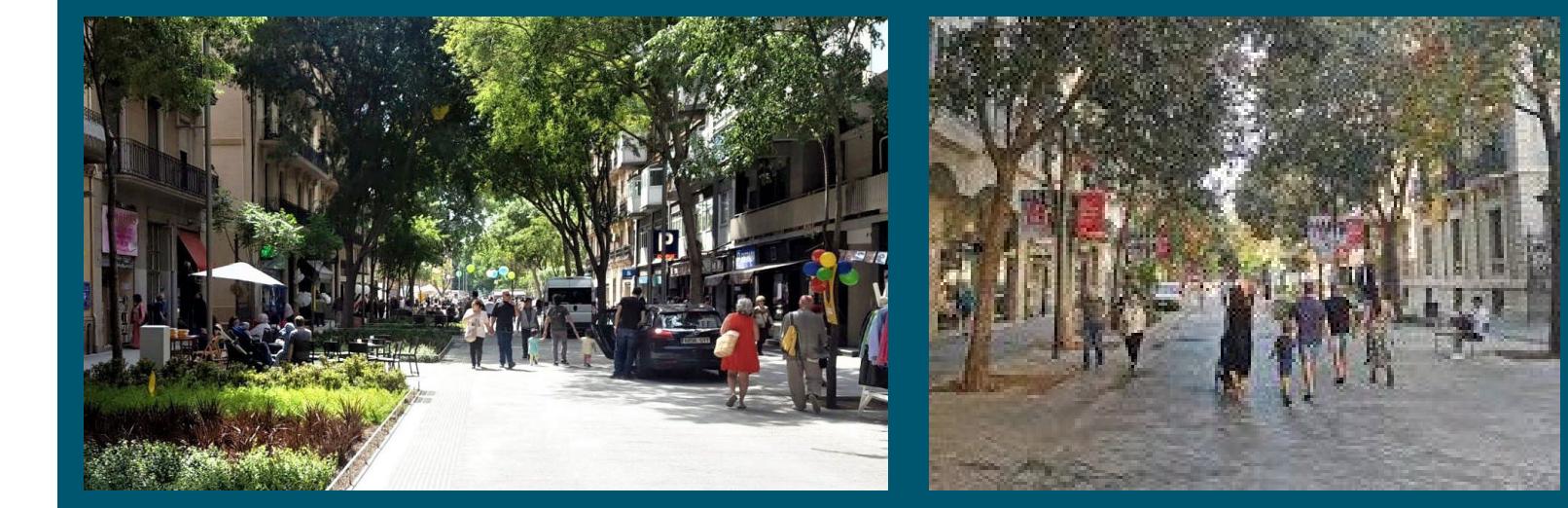
Interior Street Types

D-Shared Rolled/Curbless Street Commercial



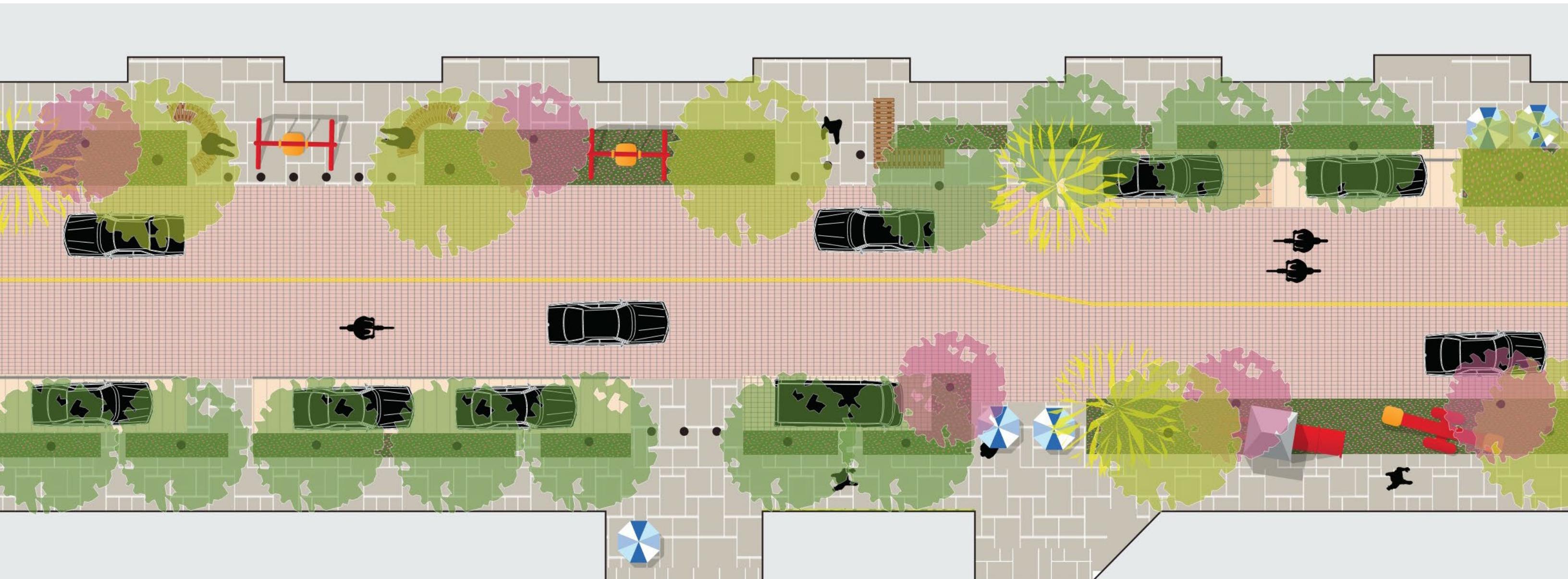
Interior Street Types

D-Shared Rolled/Curbless Street Residential



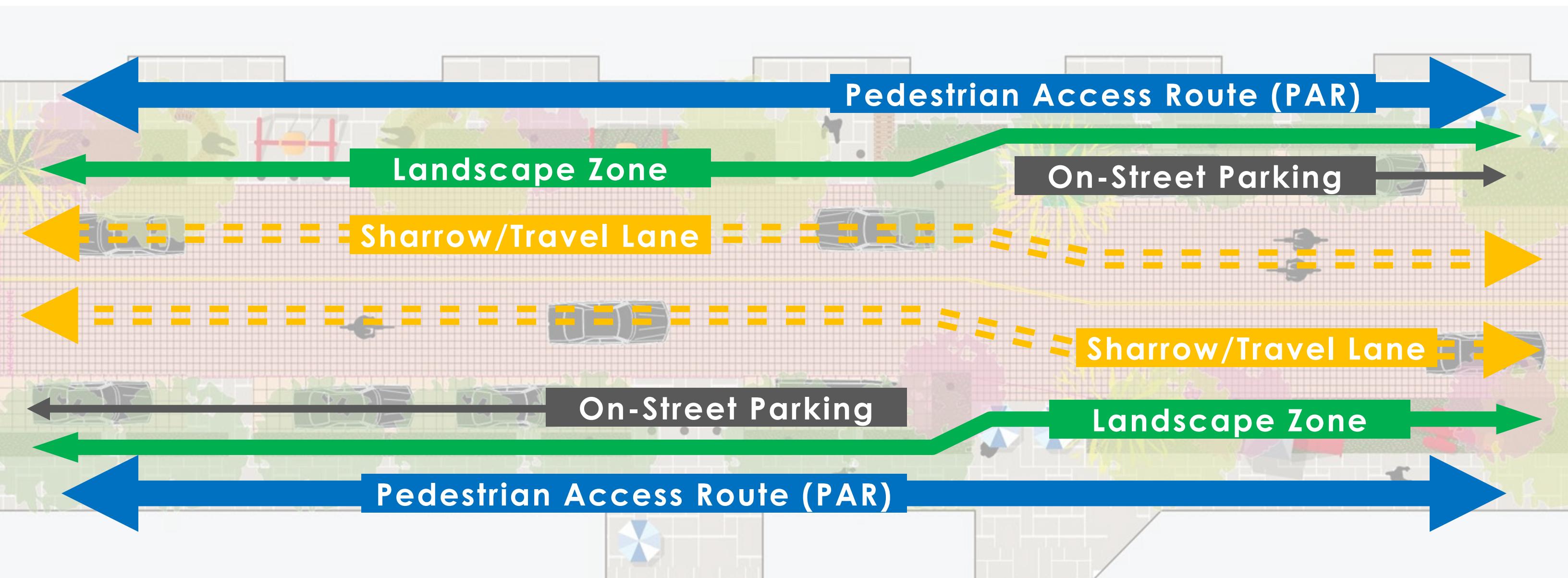
Interior Street Types

D-Shared Rolled/Curbless Street



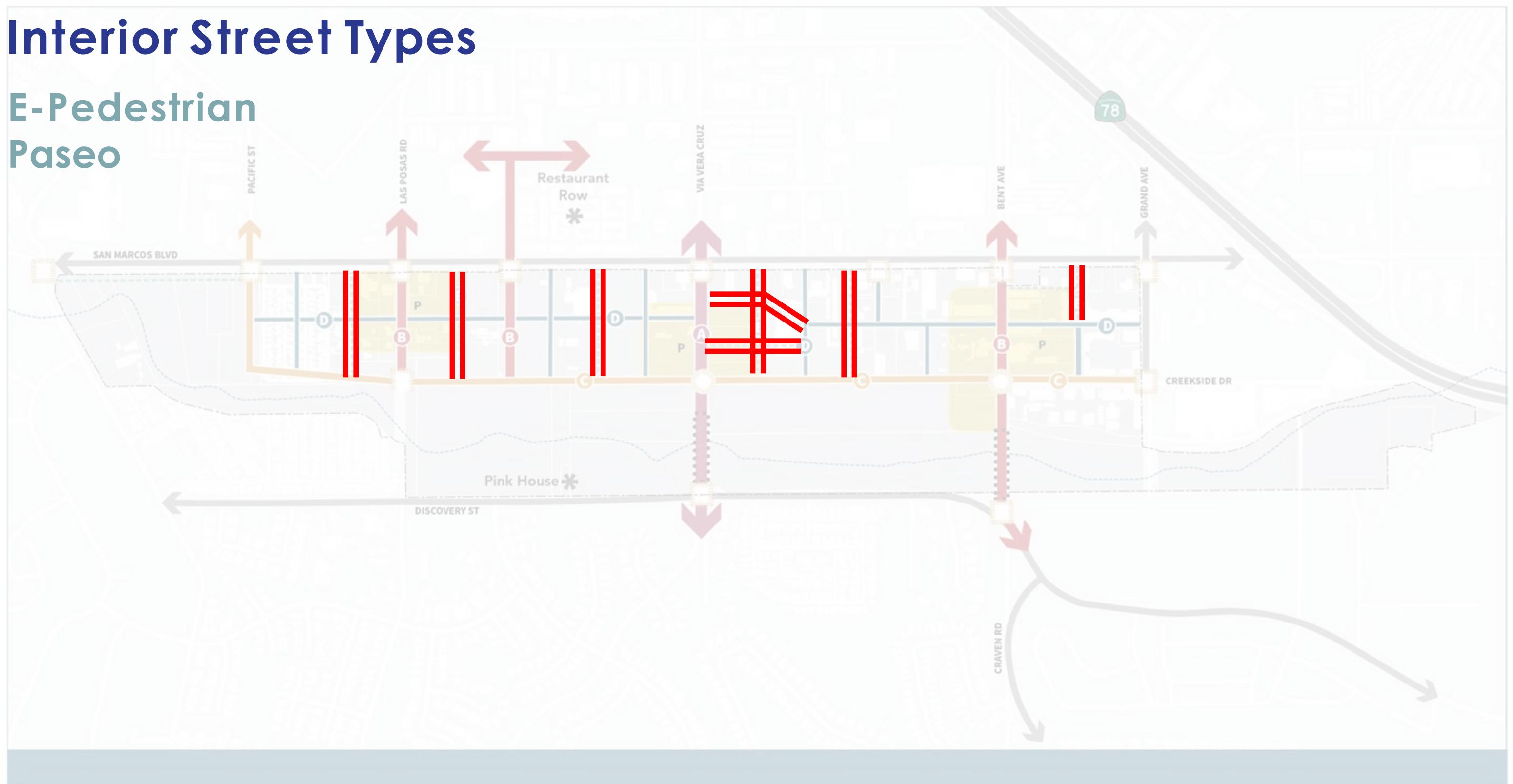
Interior Street Types

D-Shared
Rollo/Curbless
Street



Interior Street Types

E-Pedestrian Paseo



----- Plan Area Boundary

----- Creek

— Roadway Outside
Specific Plan Area

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○ Potential Roundabout

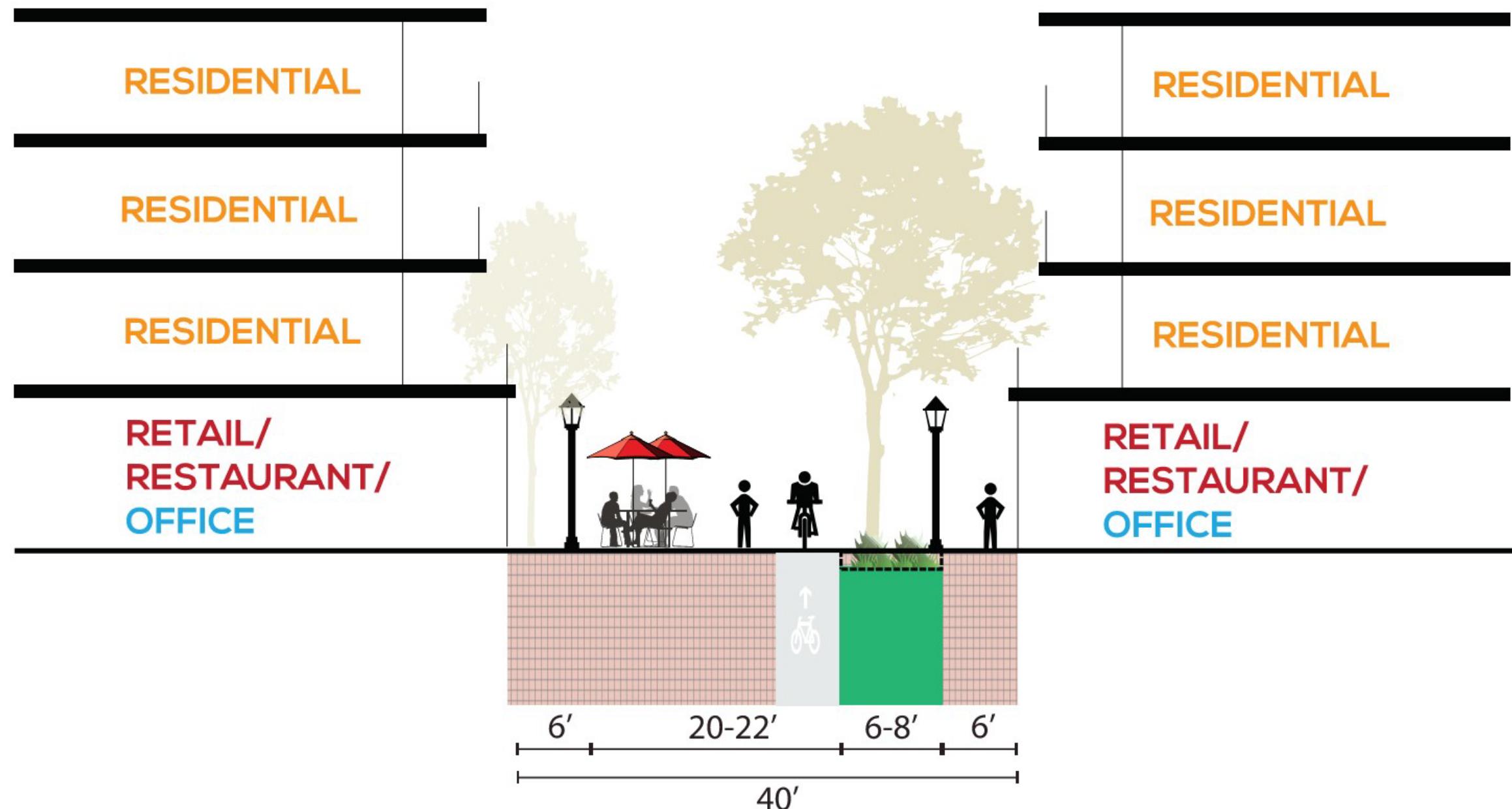
□ Via Vera Cruz Bridge & Bent Avenue Bridge*

P Potential Public Parking Areas

0 300 600 Feet

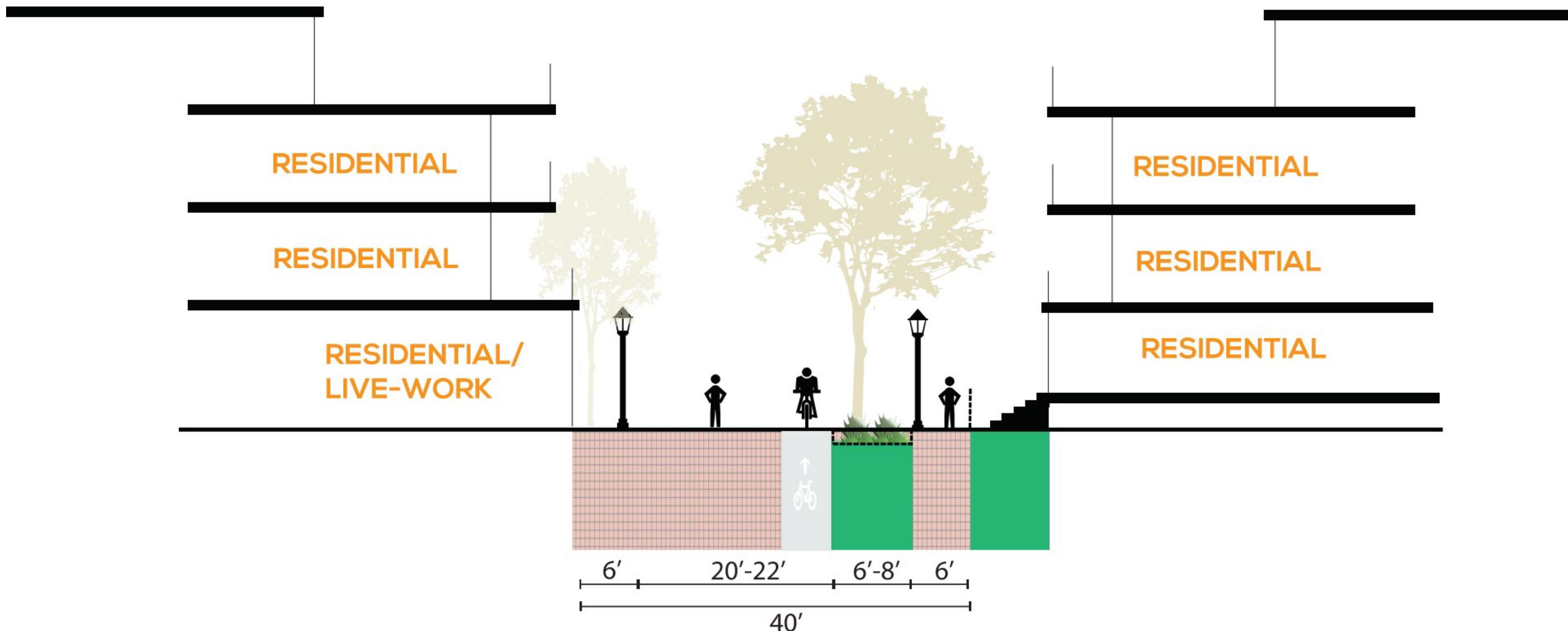
Interior Street Types

E-Pedestrian
Paseo
Commercial

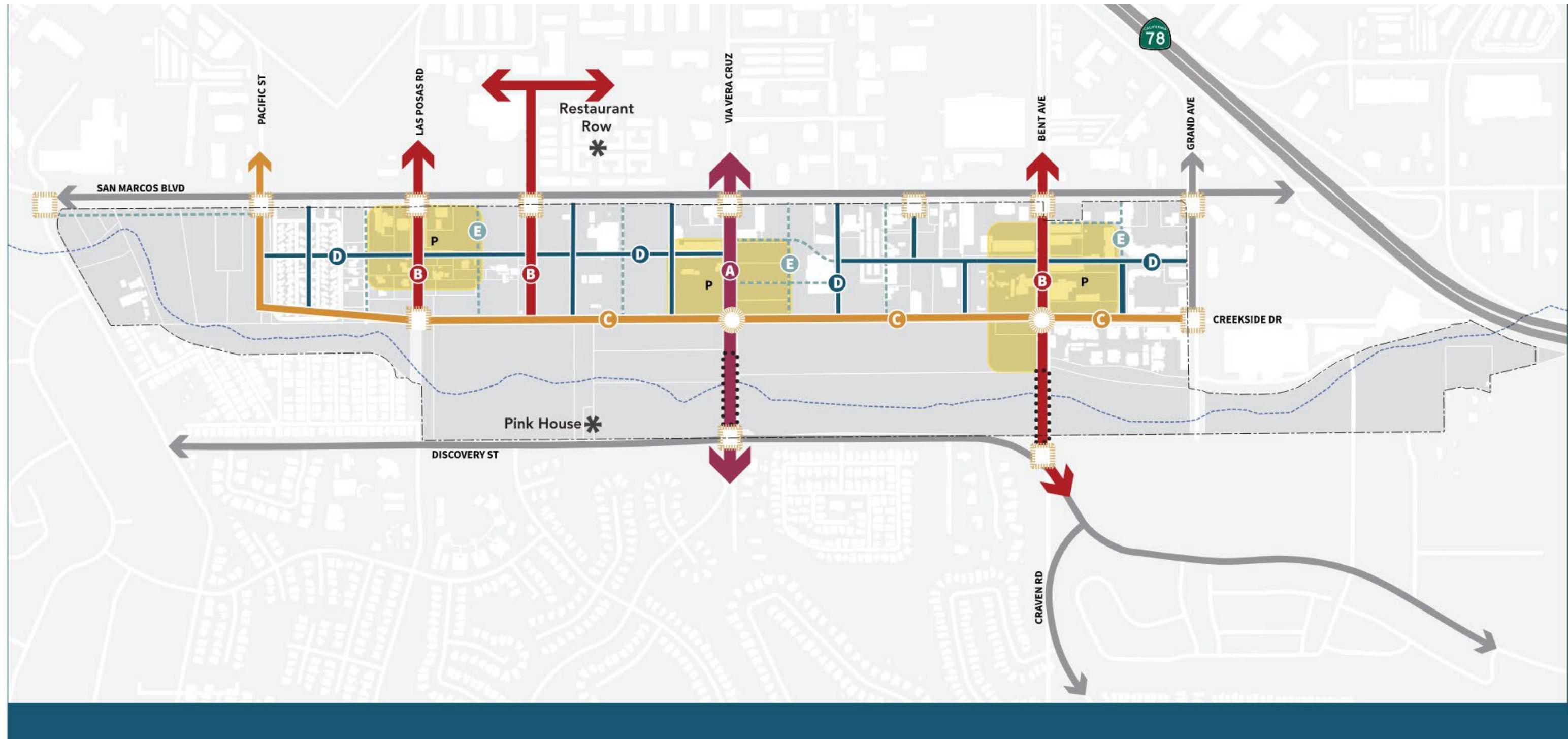


Interior Street Types

E-Pedestrian Paseo Residential



Mobility Road Network: Emerging Plan



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----- Creek

----- Roadway Outside Specific Plan Area

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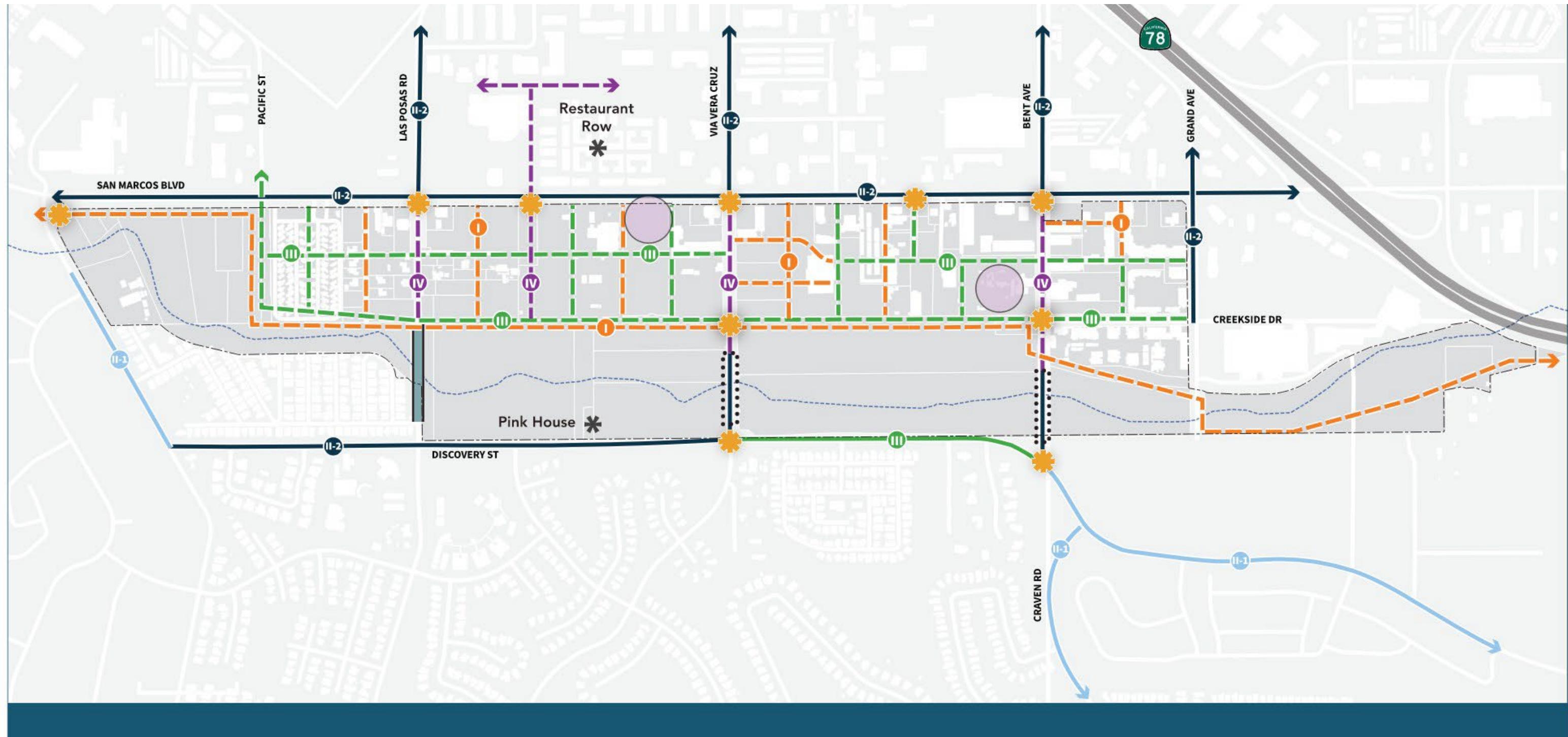
▀▀▀▀▀ Via Vera Cruz Bridge & Bent Avenue Bridge*

P Potential Public Parking Areas

0 300 600 Feet



Mobility Bike Facilities: Emerging Plan



----- Plan Area Boundary

----- Creek

Existing Buffered Bike Lane

Existing Bike Lane

Existing Bike Route

Proposed Multi-Use Path

Proposed Bike Route

Proposed Bikeway

Via Vera Cruz Bridge & Bent Avenue Bridge

Potential Ped/Bike Bridge

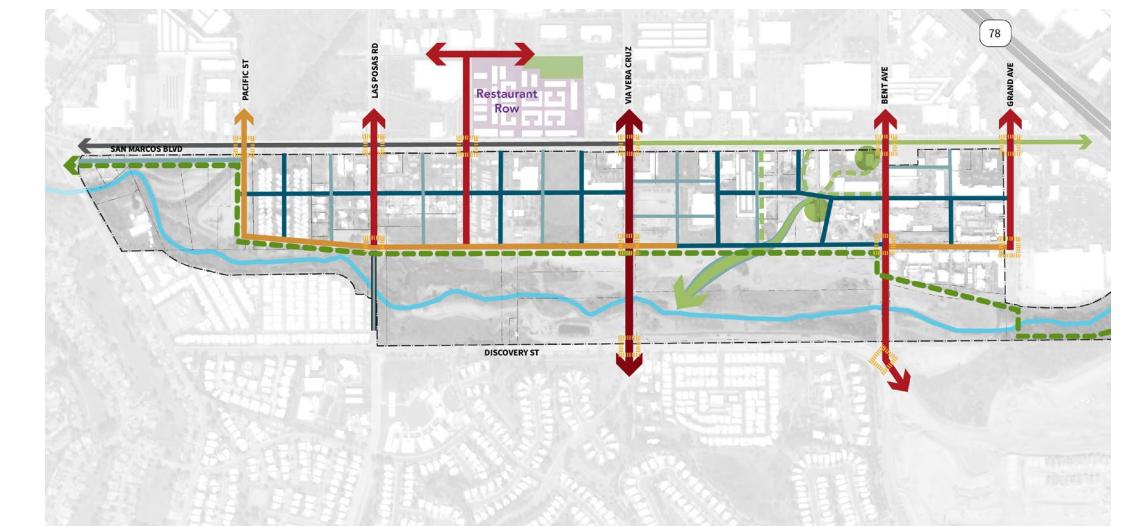
Potential Bike Parking Areas from City of San Marcos ATP

Potential Bike Crossings

0 300 600 Feet

Mobility

- Follows the concepts laid out in the 2007 plan of **walkability and bikeability** and the Active Transportation Plan
- Street network would be **constructed over time** as properties redevelop
- **Minimizes impacts** to adjacent streets and facilitate **regional connectivity**



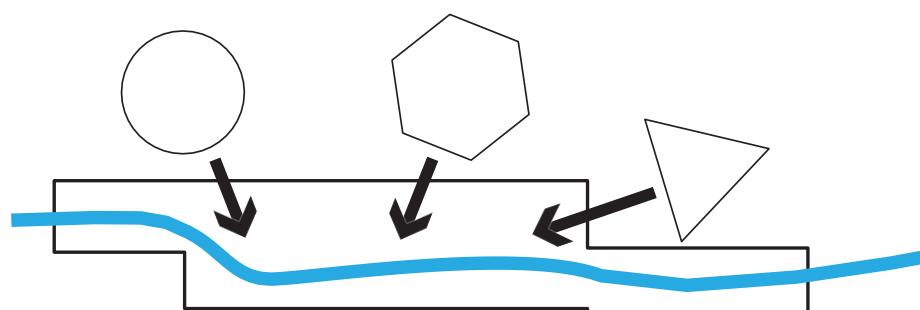


Questions (10 minutes)

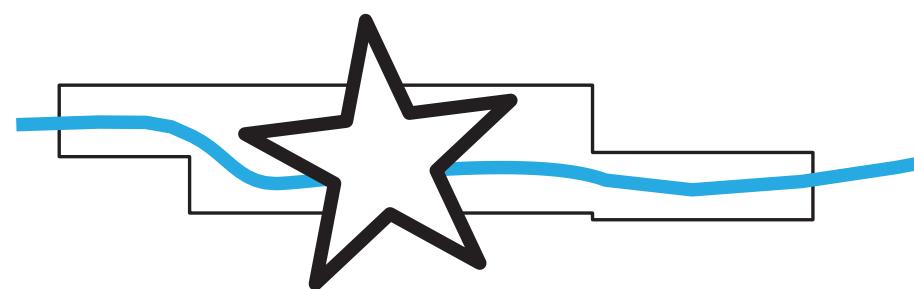
Land Use Emerging Plan

Land Use

Respond to Existing Uses



New Arts and Culture District



Stormwater Management



Market Assessment

Key Tasks

- Compiled relevant demographic factors and residential trends
- Identified opportunities and constraints affecting development of residential and mixed-use development
- Assessed market demand for different residential development types



Takeaways

- San Marcos is among the highest-valued housing markets in North County due to strong employment sectors and lifestyle amenities.
- The retail market has become saturated and needs to be reimagined to serve the needs of future residents.
- Strong near-term demand exists for lower-density, for-sale, and rental housing.
- Opportunities for higher-density, for-sale, and rental housing are anticipated in the mid- to long-term.

Place Types

Housing 1

includes mix of uses



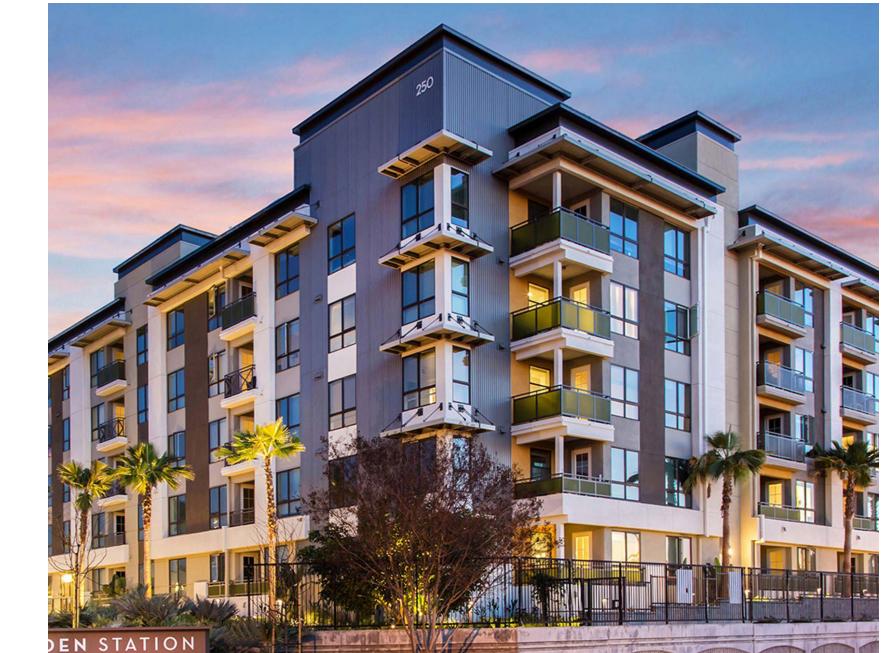
Housing 2

includes mix of uses



Housing 3

includes mix of uses



Commercial



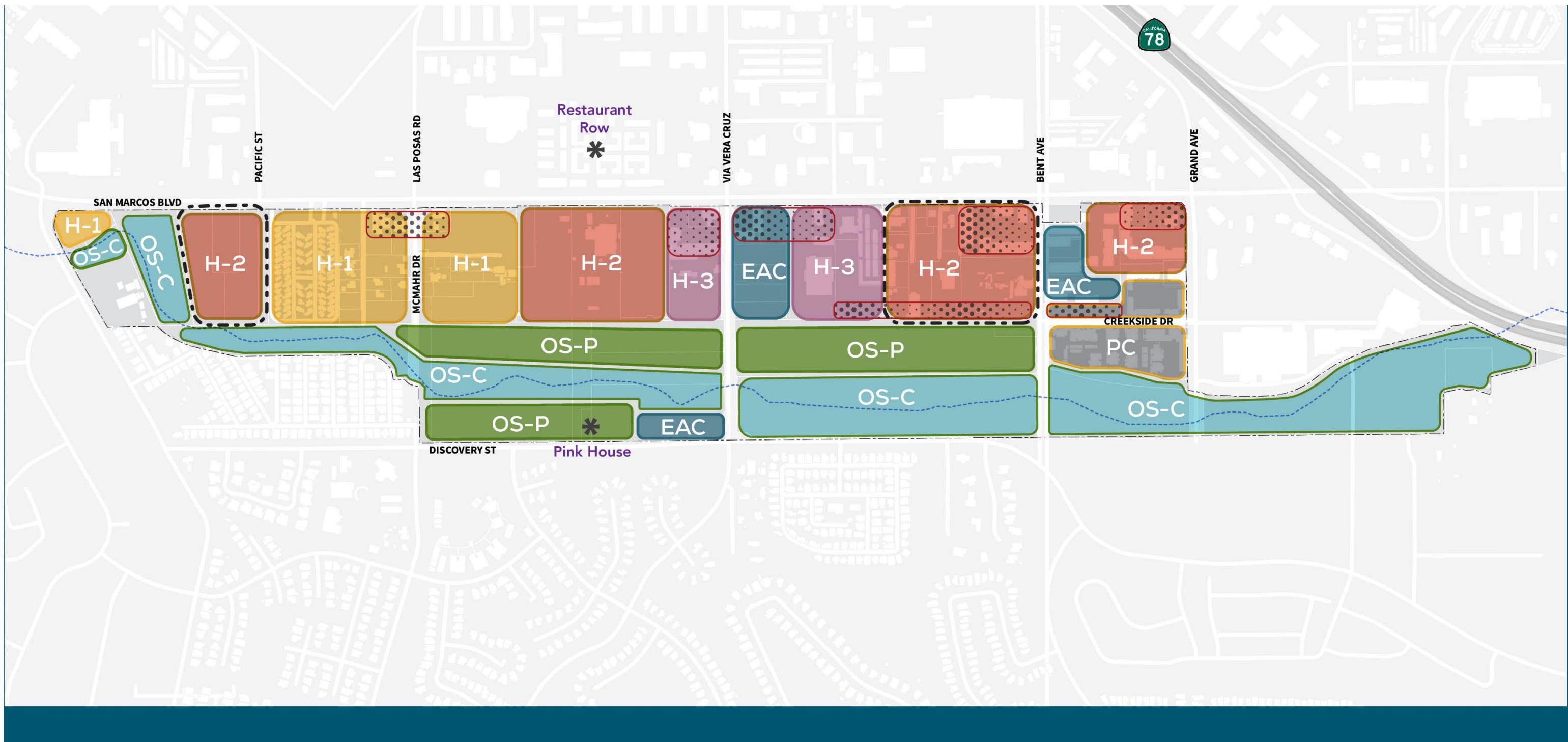
Arts and Culture



Open Space



Land Use: Emerging Plan



----- Plan Area Boundary

----- Creek

H-1: Townhome

H-2: Garden, Stacked Flats, Wrap

H-3: Podium

PC: Promenade at Creekside

EAC: Entertainment, Arts and Culture

OS-P: Open Space (Public)

OS-C: Open Space (Creek)

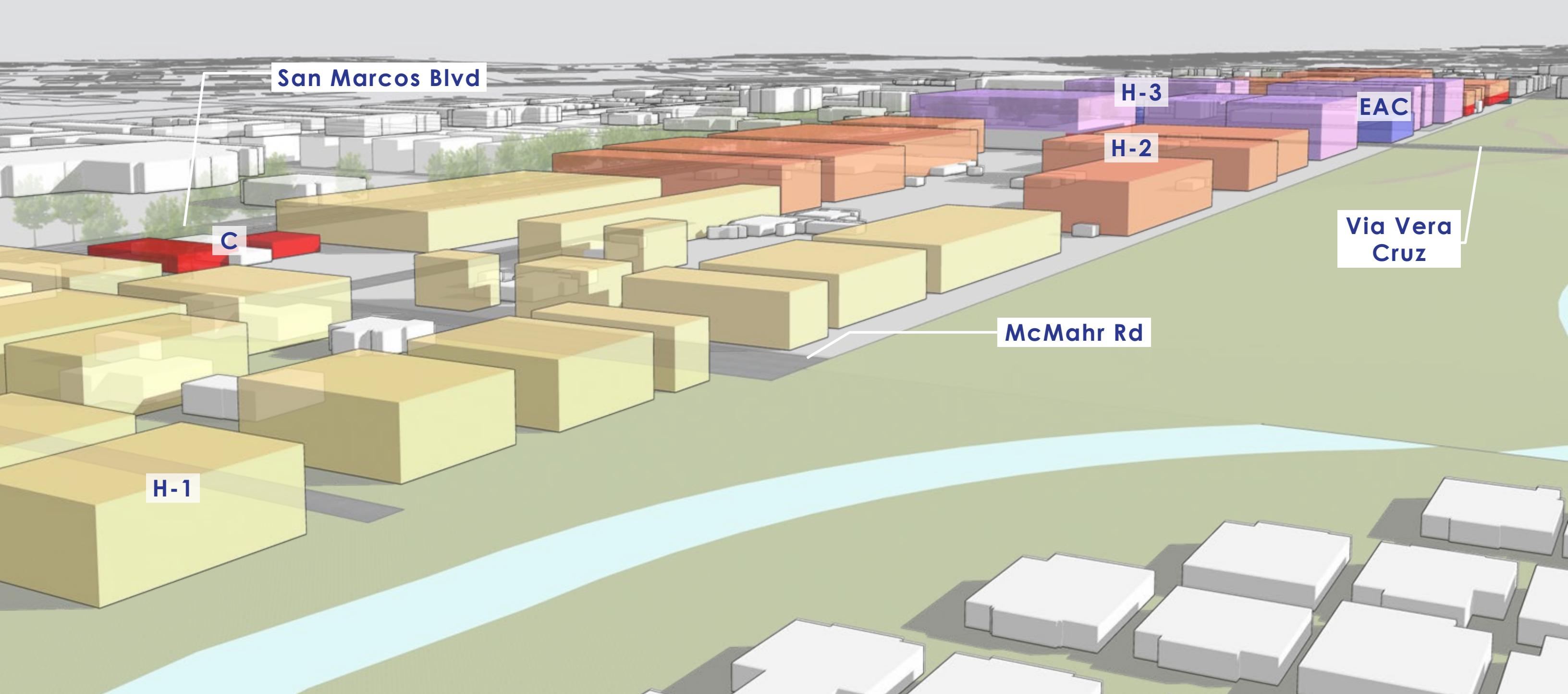
■■■■■ Commercial Overlay

Stormwater Remediation Overlay



0 300 600 Feet

Land Use: Emerging Plan

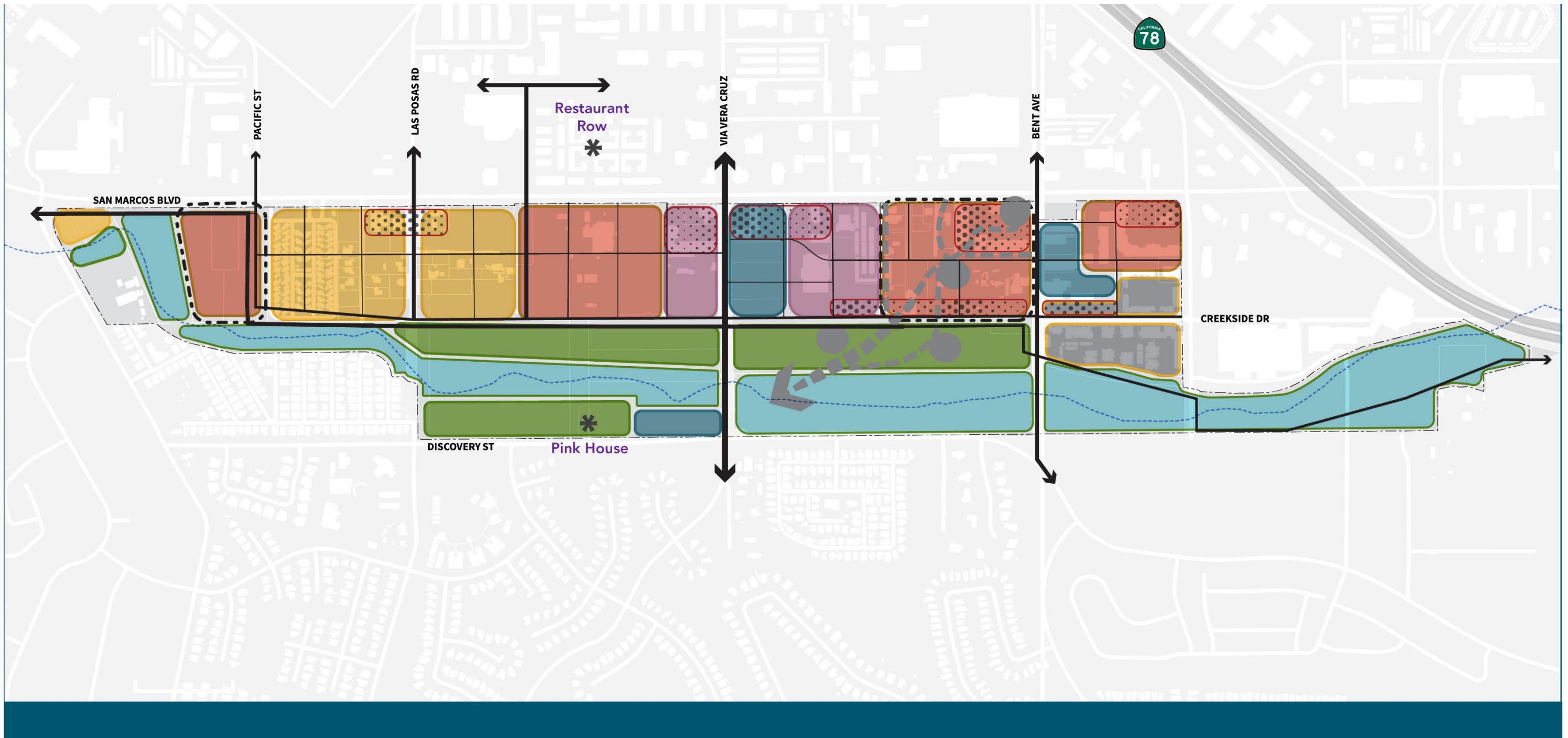


Land Use

- **Flexibility** over time to respond to market conditions
- Responding to desires for more **community-focused** land uses
- Accommodating **housing** to meet regional demand and satisfy the City's housing obligations under State law



Combined: Emerging Plan



----- Plan Area Boundary

----- Creek

----- Stormwater Open Channel

----- Mobility Network

H-1: Townhome

H-2: Garden, Stacked Flats, Wrap

H-3: Podium

PC: Promenade at Creekside

EAC: Entertainment, Arts and Culture

OS-P: Open Space (Public)

OS-C: Open Space (Creek)

Commercial Overlay

Stormwater Remediation Overlay



0 300 600 Feet

Facilitated Discussion

Next Steps

- Environmental Documentation
- Begin drafting the Specific Plan document
- Online StoryMap

Stormwater

- Develop options for approaches property owners/developers can use, allowing flexibility and choice

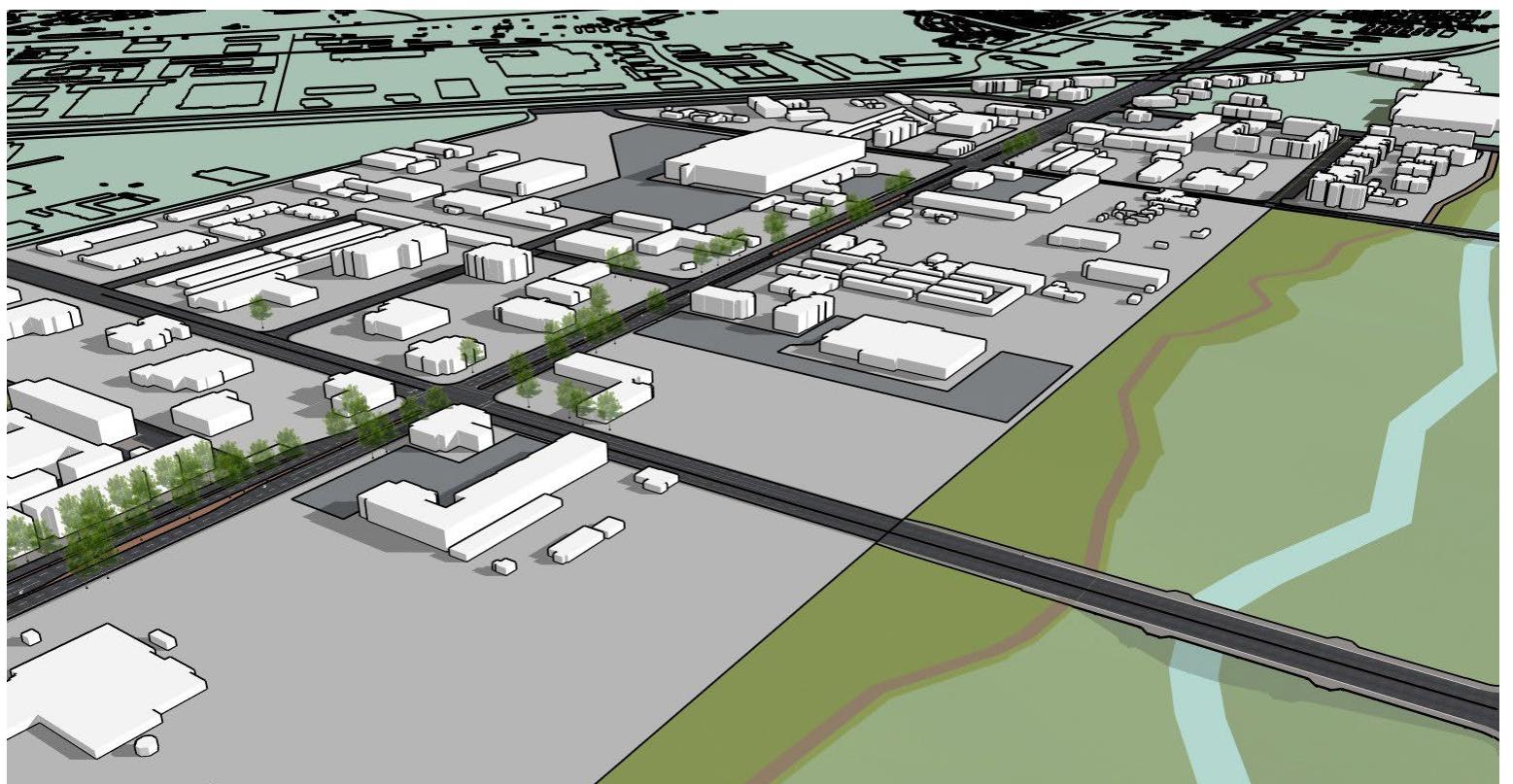
Mobility

- Test the Emerging Plan and complete more detailed analysis
- Develop roadway design standards

Land Use

- Conceptual land use massing and buildout diagramming
- Market feasibility testing

San Marcos Creek Existing Conditions



Mixed-Use Development Example in San Diego County



Thank you for participating!

Scan the QR Code
to access the
Project Website

