

2 PLAN SUMMARY

2.1 PLAN BOUNDARIES

This section defines the boundaries of the Specific Plan as well as three subareas that are the geographic basis for a number of policies in the plan. The Specific Plan area boundary describes the limits within which Specific Plan policies are applicable. The subarea boundaries correspond to Assessor Parcel boundary lines and the Doherty Drive right-of-way from Magnolia Avenue to Lucky Drive.

Figure 2-1 defines the boundaries of the Central Larkspur Specific Plan area. Its total area is 27.58 acres. Excluding the Doherty Drive right-of-way, the planning area includes 22 acres available for redevelopment.

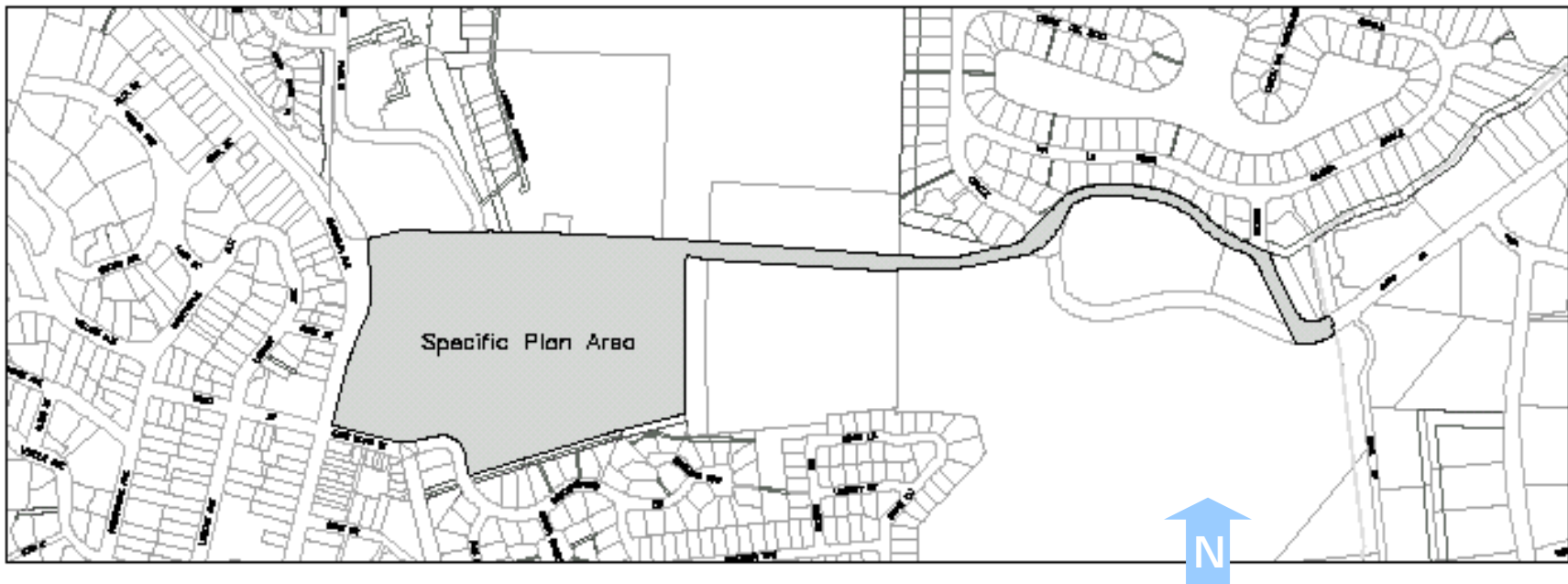


Figure 2-1 Central Larkspur Specific Plan Boundaries

Subarea boundaries

Subarea boundaries have been defined to focus Specific Plan policies, objectives and implementation programs. Subarea boundaries are shown in Figure 3-2. The numbers assigned to each subarea are used throughout the remainder of the Plan to identify the Plan area under discussion.

2.2 SUMMARY

The Central Larkspur Specific Plan is a set of comprehensive policies that direct the City's development review, public improvement and conservation efforts in the plan area. The Specific Plan is designed to facilitate the redevelopment of marginal commercial areas of Downtown and the adjacent Niven Nursery site into an integrated, cohesive neighborhood. This new neighborhood will preserve Downtown's historic development pattern and encourage residential growth consistent with the design principles of Larkspur's traditional neighborhoods reflecting Larkspur's small-town values. The Central Larkspur Specific Plan area will be a focal point for Downtown and a bridge to the surrounding neighborhoods.

Land use policies in the Specific Plan allow mixed-use housing and commercial development and a range of residential densities. Mixed-use development is encouraged to take advantage of nearby commercial services and transit opportunities and thereby reduce reliance on the automobile. The Plan calls for reductions in the amount of commercial development allowed by previous standards. The Plan requires a range of densities on the Niven Nursery site, with a target of 66 dwelling units within the Subarea 3 Mixed

Residential land use category; though, through the Preliminary and Precise Development Plan process, the Planning Commission and City Council may determine that additional units should be allowed, up to a maximum of five (5) dwelling units per acre, not exceeding 85 dwelling units for the entire Subarea. Requests for additional dwelling units shall be accompanied by a development proposal that provides extraordinary benefits to the community. (See subsections 4.2 and 7.5 of Chapters 4 and 7, respectively, for more details).

Specific Plan *transportation policies* are designed to create a coordinated system of automobile, pedestrian and bicycle routes to serve the Plan area, Downtown and the community as a whole. The proposed road pattern is designed to discourage through traffic on existing and planned residential streets. Roadway standards are provided to limit vehicle speeds and make streets compatible for shared use with pedestrians and bicycles. Planned improvements to Doherty Drive include a Class 1 bikeway on the south side, a bus stop at Hall Middle School, and upgraded intersections at Magnolia Avenue and Larkspur Plaza Drive. The Plan requires an integrated system of pedestrian and bicycle routes within the Plan area as well as links to Downtown, nearby neighborhoods and parks and the regional bicycle/pedestrian network. The Plan also proposes completion of gaps in the existing bike/pedestrian pathways, especially between the former Northwest Pacific railroad right-of-way and Magnolia Avenue.

The *utility policies* of the Plan establish requirements for sanitary sewers, water supply, storm drainage and private utilities. New utilities and utility upgrades will be financed by new development based on projected demand or discharge.

Design policies in the Specific Plan focus on maintaining the storefront pattern and small town character of Downtown, and promoting traditional neighborhood design. The key design concepts are

- ❖ Traditional downtown and residential neighborhood design, emphasizing “walkability” and human scale.
- ❖ Physical and visual connections to integrate the principle subareas of the new neighborhood.
- ❖ Creation of a focal point at the historic railroad buildings.
- ❖ View protection.
- ❖ A pedestrian and bicycle orientation.
- ❖ Traditional building design consistent with Larkspur’s architectural heritage.
- ❖ Creek protection and enhancement.

2.3 PLAN GOALS

The Central Larkspur Specific Plan has six goals, listed below. The goals define the overall purposes of the Specific Plan, and they provide direction for policies and objectives. Goals can also be used as one measure of the effectiveness of implementation programs.

Goal 1: Land Use. Develop the Specific Plan area as an integrated and cohesive mixed-use neighborhood, with maximum community benefit (e.g., minimize impacts on traffic and schools, incorporate a community facility into the design, enhance the creek resources, and provide a mix of housing types for all income levels and ages) that is a focal point and an activity center for Downtown and serves as a transition to the surrounding community. The majority of the land

area will be in low-density residential use compatible with the surrounding community. Provide sufficient open space and creative options contributing to the beneficial protection, preservation and enhancement of environmental resources and serve as a community amenity.

Goal 2: Transportation. Create a pedestrian friendly environment, minimize traffic impacts and promote alternative modes of transportation by balancing the density, intensity, and mix of land uses. Provide a system of traffic improvements, safe, direct and attractive bicycle and pedestrian routes, and adequate parking.

Goal 3: Housing. Within Subareas 1 and 2 develop residential units above retail and commercial uses, to the extent practicable. Develop Subarea 3 as a predominantly low-density residential neighborhood emphasizing a range and diversity of housing types, and perceived scales and density, in a manner that minimizes cumulative impacts on traffic, schools and the environment. Encourage a range of housing affordability, including housing affordable to very low-, low- and moderate-income households and senior citizens.

Goal 4: Community Design. Design the area and individual buildings to complement and respect Larkspur’s small town character and historic Downtown. In Subarea 3, the residential neighborhood should have its own identity, but be of a scale and design similar to that of the Heather Gardens and Baltimore Park neighborhoods. The design should emphasize a variety of building sizes, scales and architecture that create a sense of neighborhood. The design should be pedestrian friendly, and have a strong

landscape character. The design should integrate the three subareas of the Specific Plan area.

Goal 5: Utilities. Provide for the distribution, location, extent and intensity of public and private transportation, sewage, water, drainage, solid waste disposal, energy, and other essential facilities to support the land uses described in the Specific Plan. Private development shall pay for utility improvements required to serve new growth.

Goal 6: Planning. Provide a clear plan for implementing the community's goals for the Central Larkspur Specific Plan area. The implementation plan shall include regulations, programs, public works projects, and financing measures to achieve the distribution and location of land uses, including open space, described in the Specific Plan. The Specific Plan will also provide implementation measures for the land use, housing, transportation, community design, and utility goals of the plan.