

# **DOWNTOWN STATION AREA SPECIFIC PLAN UPDATE: JOINT STUDY SESSION**

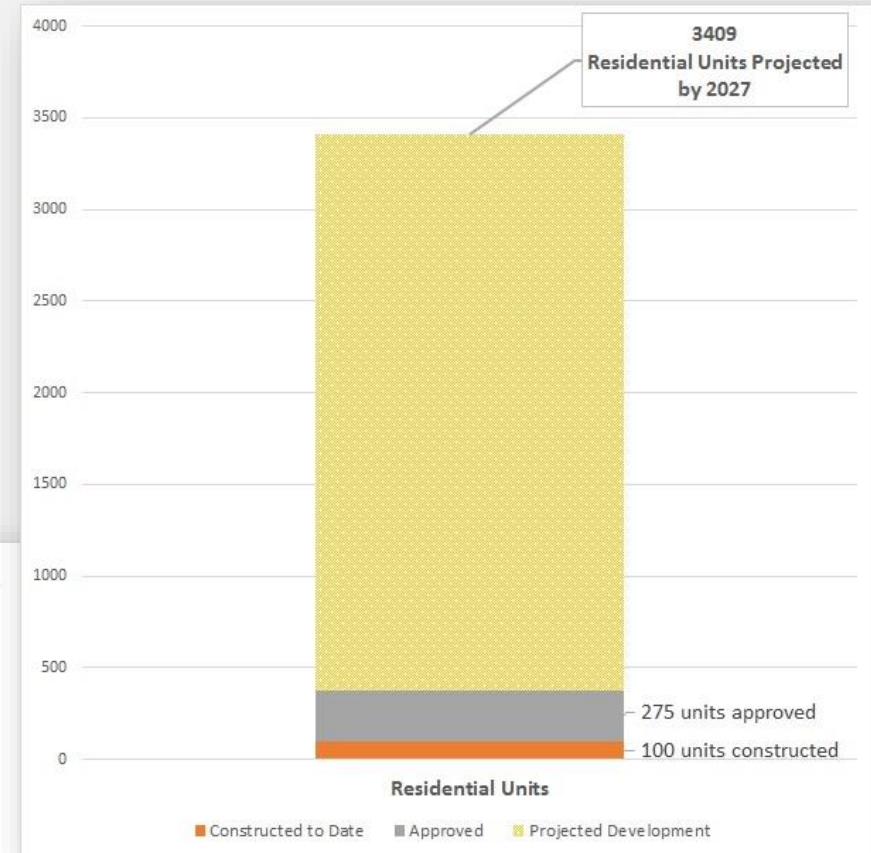
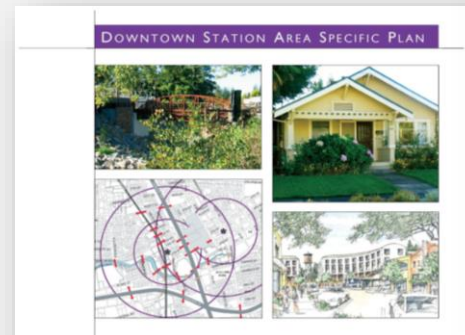
**CITY COUNCIL – PLANNING COMMISSION  
JULY 16, 2019**



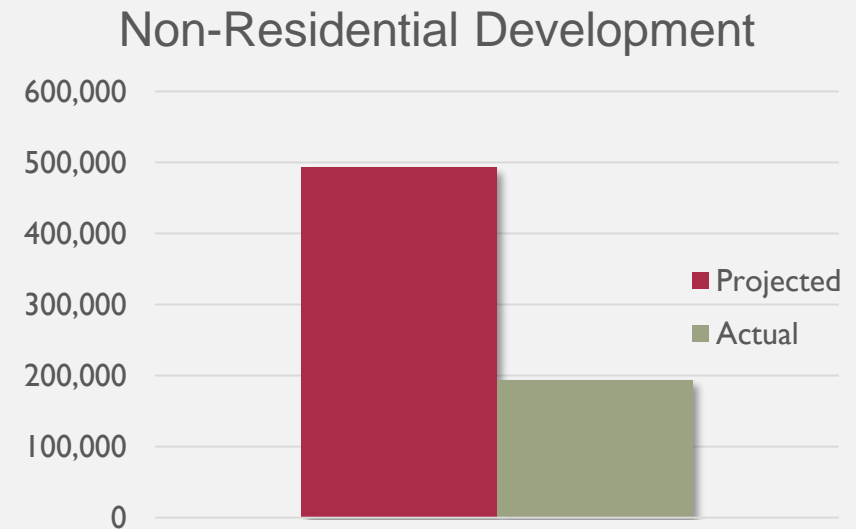
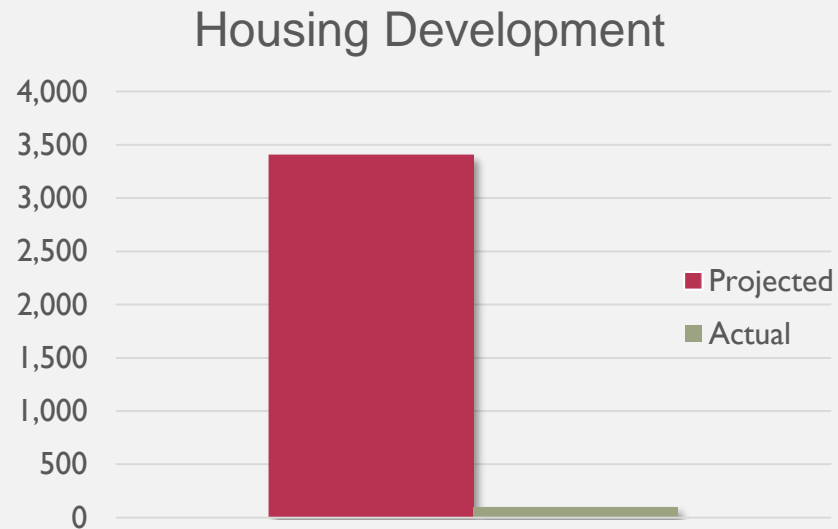
Jessica Jones, Supervising Planner  
Planning and Economic Development

# BACKGROUND

- In 2007 Council adopts DSASP with a vision of increasing number of residents and employees around the future SMART station
- 20-year plan period
- 3,409 new residential units;  
493,500 sf new non-residential floor area



# DEVELOPMENT PROJECTIONS VS ACTUAL (2007 – 2019)



*Halfway through the planning period, only 100 housing units have been developed*

# DOWNTOWN STATION AREA SPECIFIC PLAN

- In February 13, 2018, Council adopts new set of priorities
- PED applies for and is awarded planning grant through Metropolitan Transportation Commission
- Outreach & engagement is key to a successful plan

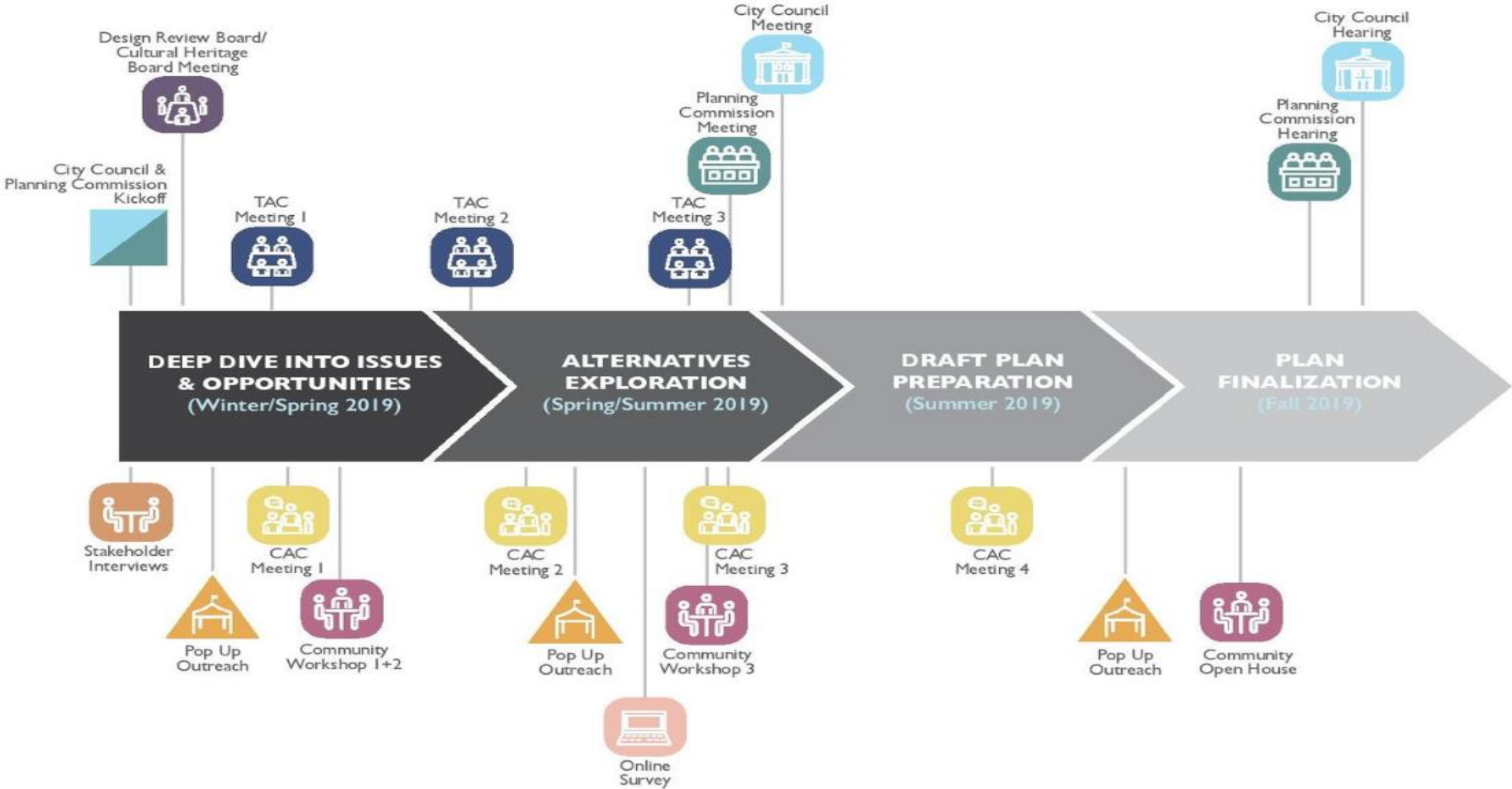




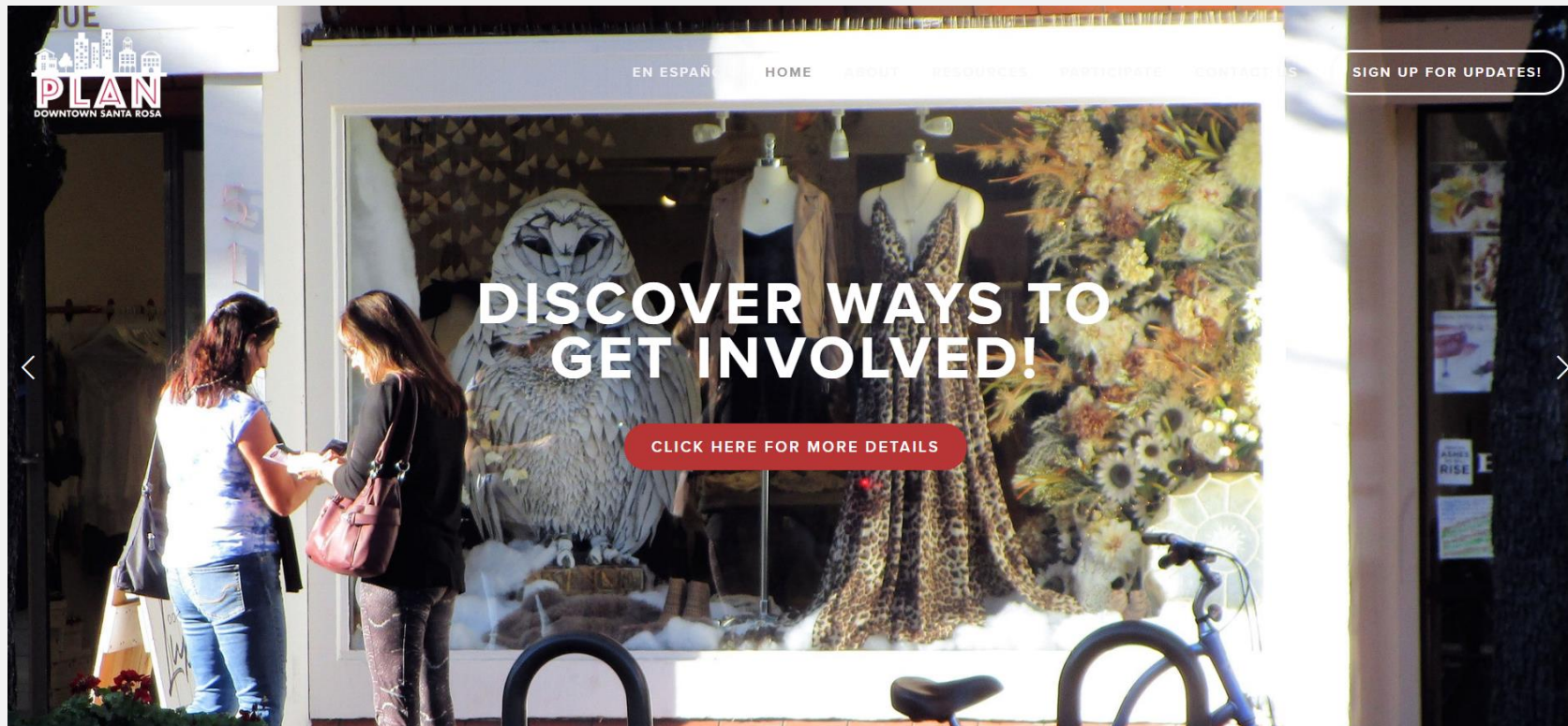
# DOWNTOWN STATION AREA



**Santa Rosa Downtown Station Area Plan  
Community Engagement Process**







## OUTREACH & PLAN DEVELOPMENT

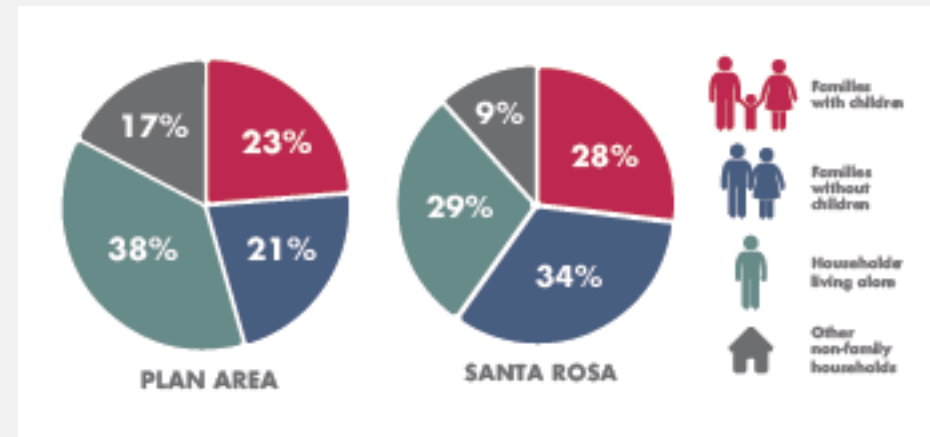
- Website up and running
- CAC and TAC established
- Community Workshops 1 & 2 ~ May 1<sup>st</sup> & May 4<sup>th</sup>
- Assessing alternatives for Preferred Plan ~ TAC May 30<sup>th</sup>

# Issues and Opportunities Review



# DEMOGRAPHICS

- Today, about 5,500 Santa Rosa residents (3%) live downtown
- Downtown residents tend to be younger and living alone or with roommates
- Less likely to own a car

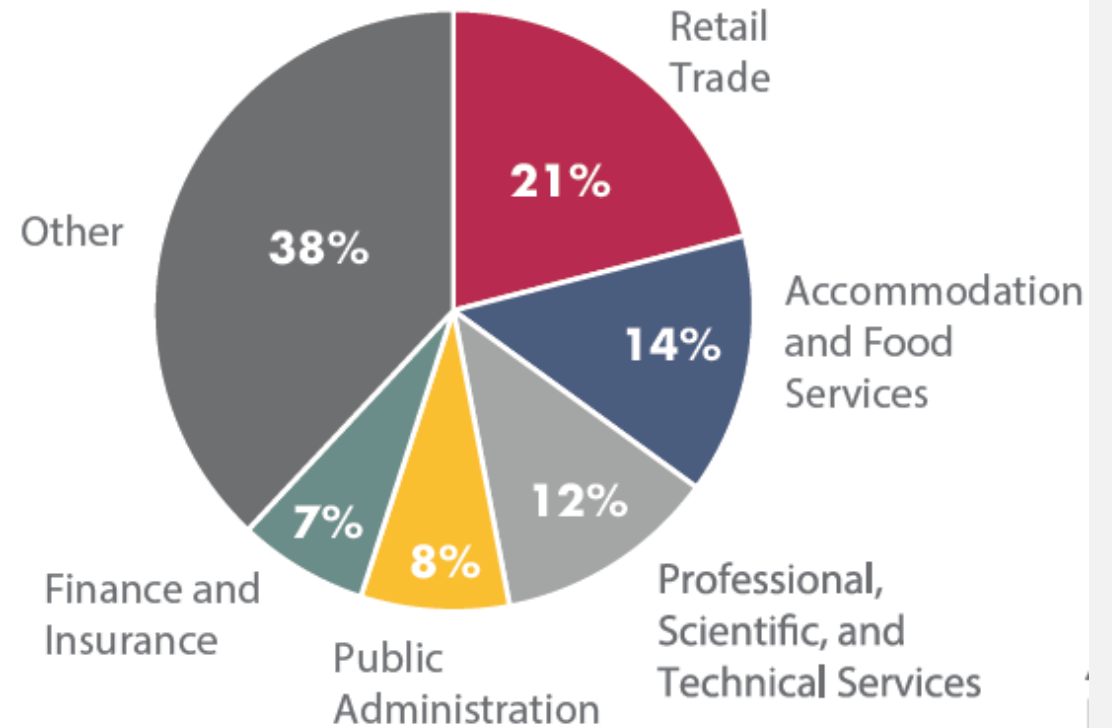


**78%**

of downtown residents have a car, compared to 94% of Santa Rosans

# EMPLOYMENT

- Today, Downtown Santa Rosa has 8,432 jobs
- Primarily in the retail, hospitality, and professional services sectors
- Less than 2% of people who work downtown live downtown
- 63% commute from outside the city



# HOUSING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

- Santa Rosa needs to add 1,000 housing units per year
- Downtown has large vacant and underutilized sites for housing
- Challenge: market for multi-family unproven in Santa Rosa and city has lower average rents





# HOUSING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

- Attract developers by reducing development costs and timelines
- Public-private partnership for a demonstration project to “prove the market”
- Promote and enhance downtown amenities that attract residents
- Create and attract jobs in higher wage industries to stimulate demand for market rate housing
- Increase “rooftops” to build demand for retail and restaurants

## BUILDING HEIGHTS



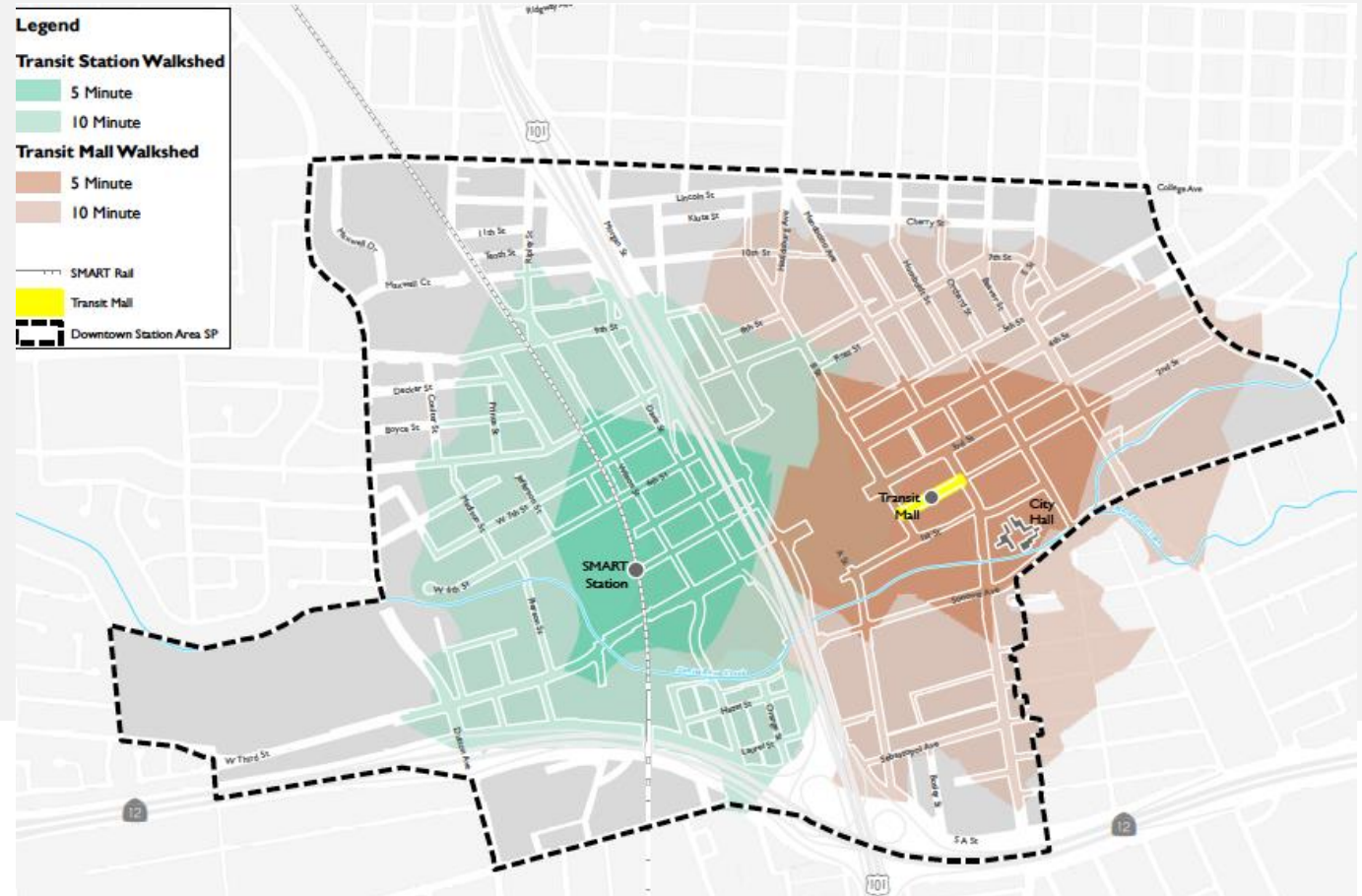
## HEIGHT VS DENSITY

- In stakeholder interviews with developers, different opinions emerged
- Some felt substantial up-zoning would incentivize turn over of properties and redevelopment
- Others noted that downtown has significant capacity for new housing and height is not needed to achieve high density



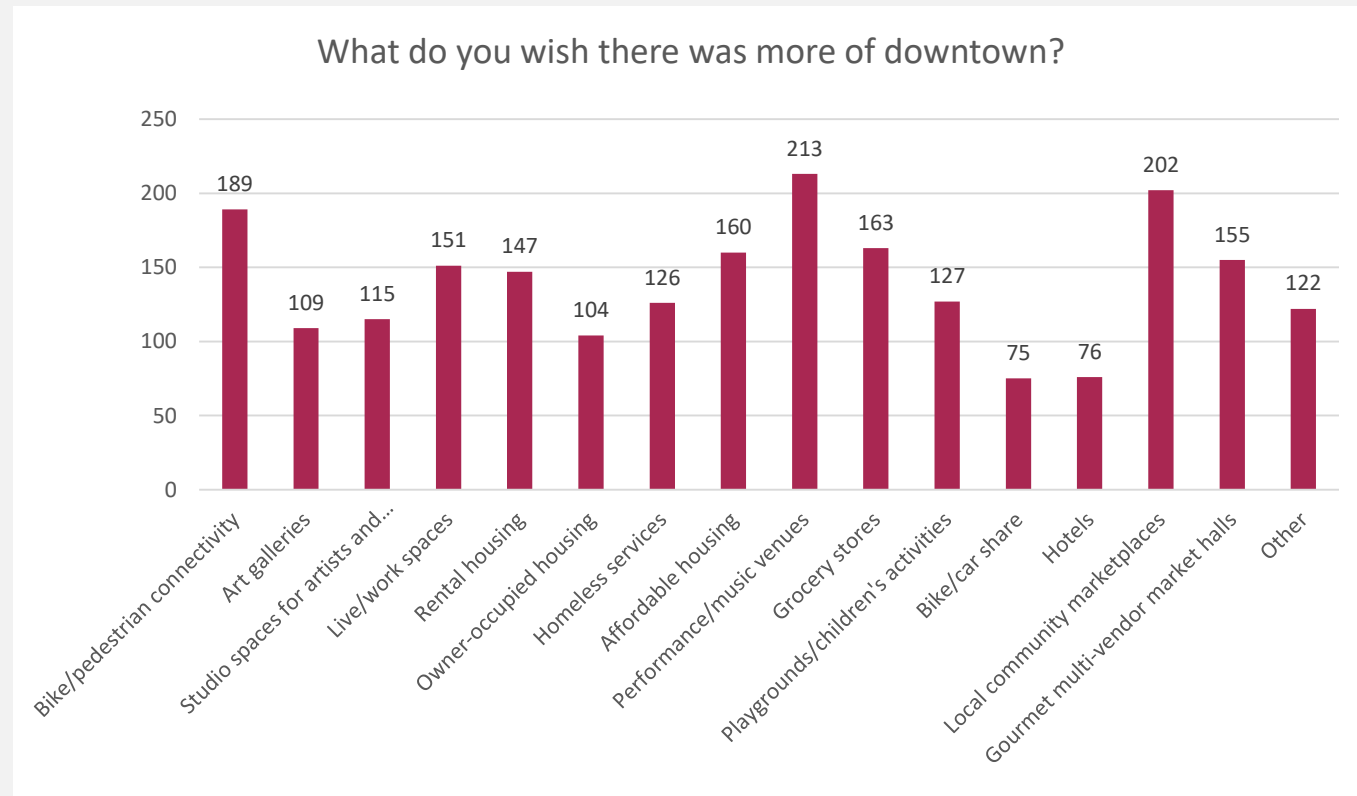
# CONNECTIVITY

- Flat topography, but large area bisected by freeways
- US 101 and Santa Rosa Plaza are major barriers
- Community suggestions: shuttle services and activated underpasses
- Road diet opportunities on Mendocino, Santa Rosa Ave, E Street



# ENTERTAINMENT AND VISITOR-ORIENTED USES

- Shared vision of downtown as a cultural and entertainment hub
- No. 1 attraction desired for downtown was performance and music venues, followed by food-oriented retail, and restaurants
- Leisure and hospitality sectors projected to grow 21 percent over the next 5 years



# **Project Alternatives**



# PURPOSE OF ALTERNATIVES

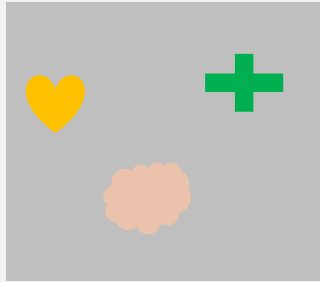
- Represent **distinctly different** visions and approaches
- Vehicle for **testing** options and strategies
- Highlight **benefits** and **trade offs**
- Inform creation of a hybrid preferred alternative



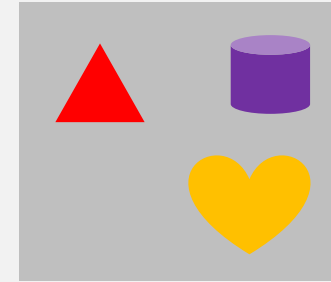
# ALTERNATIVES EXPLORATION

- Outreach activities present alternatives and trade offs
- Community members weigh pros/cons
- Work to identify best features to combine in a preferred alternative

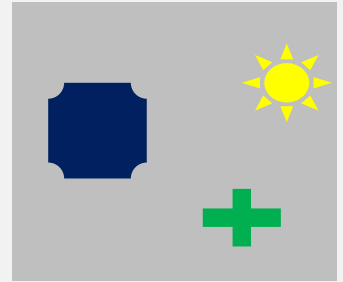
Alternative 1



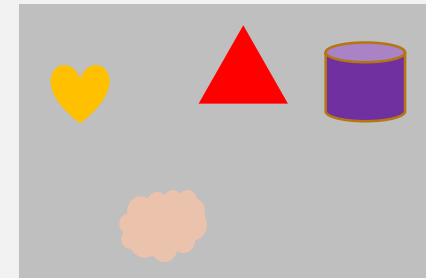
Alternative 2



Alternative 3



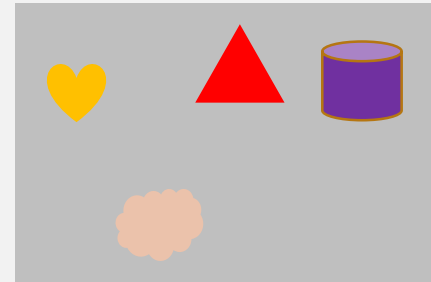
Preferred Alternative



# ALTERNATIVES EXPLORATION

- The preferred alternative will go through additional outreach, feasibility review, and environmental review before adoption.
- All three alternatives assume **7000 new residential units** in downtown (previous plan assumed 3400)
- Where they are located and effect on other topics like jobs created or public services vary between alternatives
- Parking is a major issue – we are looking for feedback from the PC/Council on topics such as parking minimums or maximums, new parking facilities, flexibility in satisfying parking requirements, and into which alternative package these provisions should be categorized.

Preferred Alternative



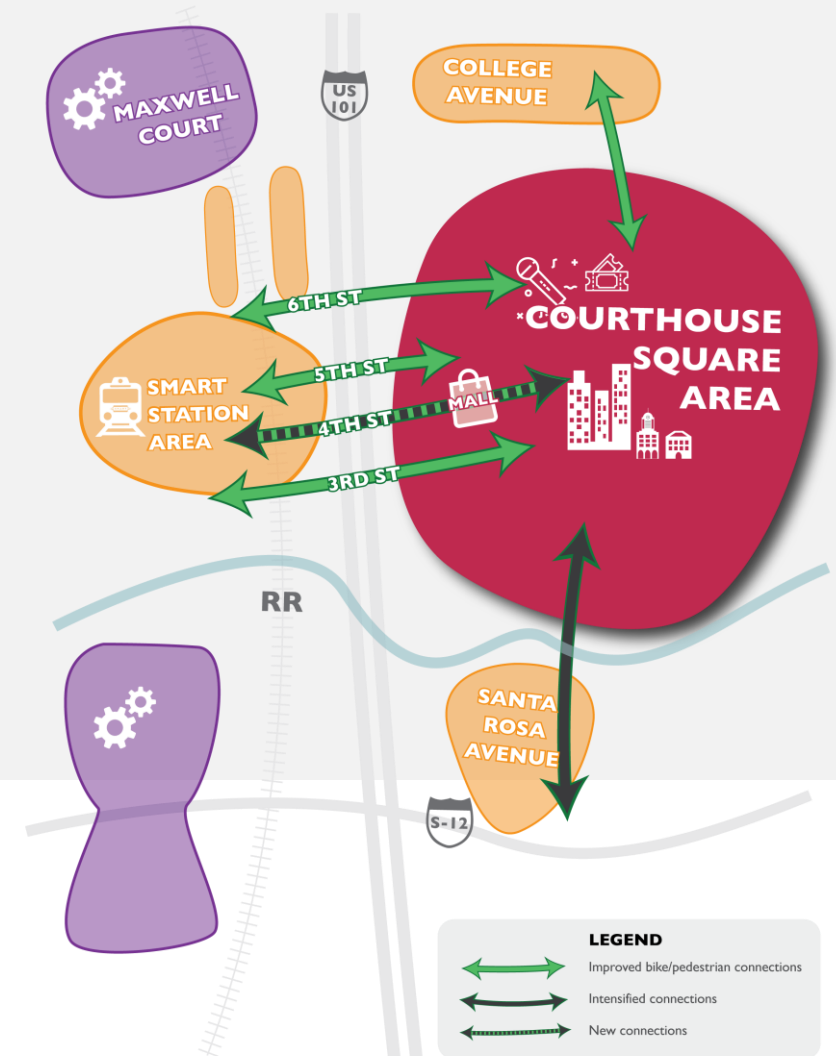
Draft Plan



# ALTERNATIVE I: VIBRANT CORE

*Create a vibrant, big city downtown core around Courthouse Square and to strengthen connections between that location and other parts of the planning area*

- Bulk of new housing units in greater Courthouse Square area. Concentration of high density housing provides critical mass to support shuttle, grocery store, other amenities
- No height limits for new buildings on Third Street (between E and Morgan) and City-owned catalyst sites
- Redevelopment of Sears site in Santa Rosa Plaza
- New regional entertainment venue like performing arts center
- Retain space for light industrial uses and foster maker-oriented businesses



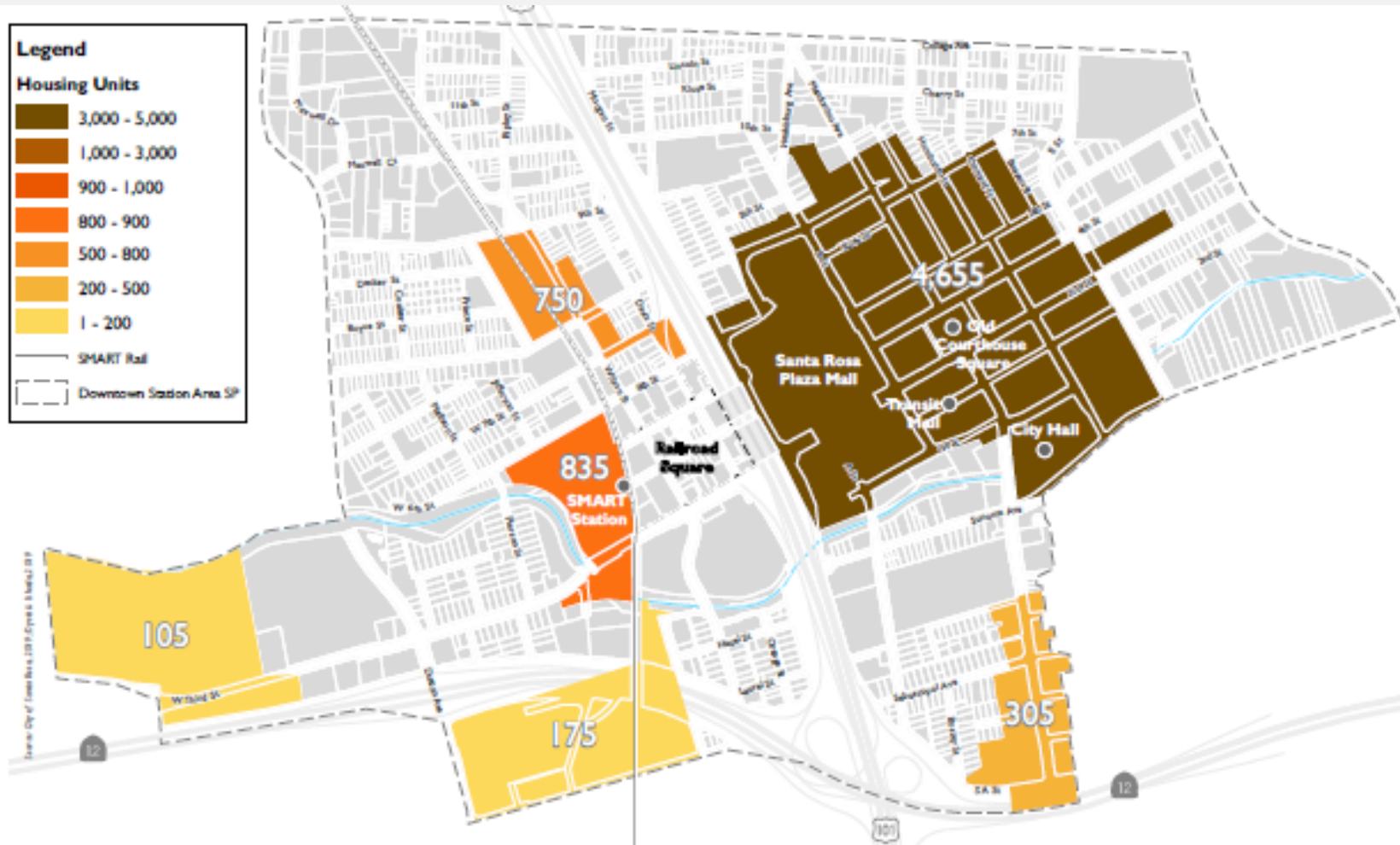
# ALTERNATIVE I: VIBRANT CORE

## Key connectivity improvements:

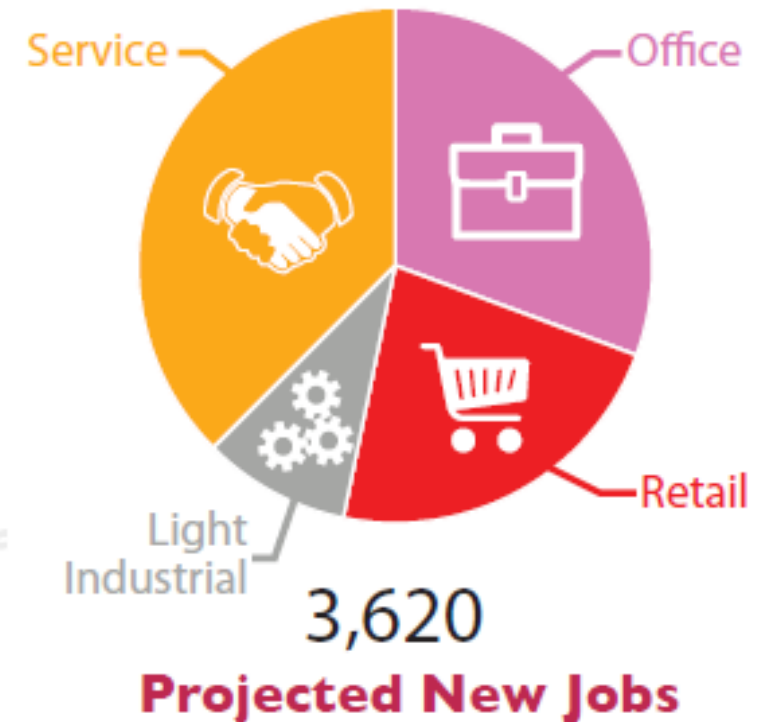
- Reconnect Fourth Street as a multi-modal roadway through Santa Rosa Plaza
- Activate underpasses with pop up retail, food sales, performances, skate park
- Bike/ped improvements on A Street
- “Fare-free” downtown zone with shuttle service between Railroad Square and Courthouse Square



# ALTERNATIVE I: VIBRANT CORE



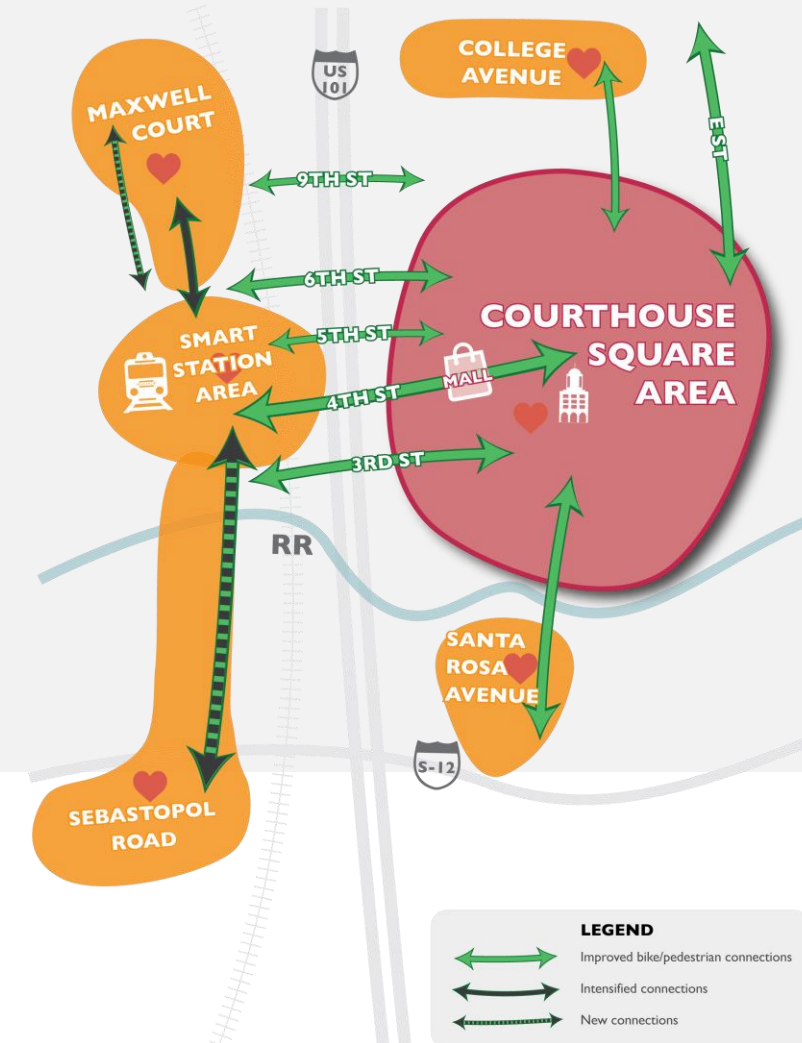
This alternative is projected to result in approximately 7,000 new housing units and 3,620 new jobs in the planning area by 2040.



## ALTERNATIVE 2: VILLAGE CENTERS

*Create a network of interconnected mixed use village centers, each with its own distinct character, and oriented around a community focal point, such a park or public square*

- High density housing units distributed among centers to foster activity centers:
  - Courthouse Square Area
  - SMART Station Village
  - Maxwell Court Village
  - Sebastopol corridor
  - Santa Rosa Avenue corridor
- Building heights no taller than 6 stories at any location
- Explore density without same level of height





# ALTERNATIVE 2: VILLAGE CENTERS

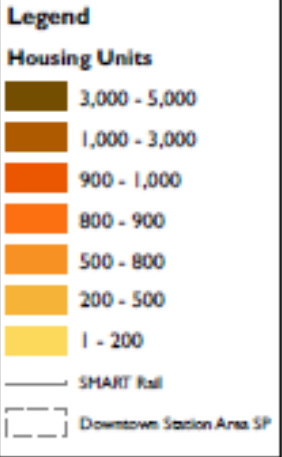
## Key connectivity improvements:

- Reconnection of Fourth Street as a pedestrian paseo
- Extension of Roberts Avenue and Donahue Street as a multi-modal roadway
- Road diets on Mendocino Ave, Santa Rosa Ave, E Street to remove a vehicle lane and add bicycle lanes, wider sidewalks, other public realm improvements

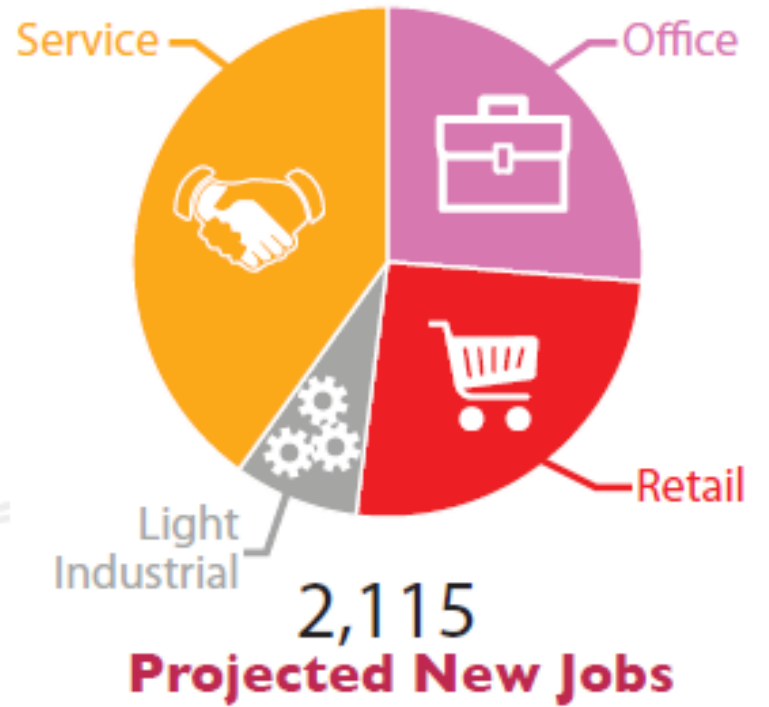




# ALTERNATIVE 2: VILLAGE CENTERS



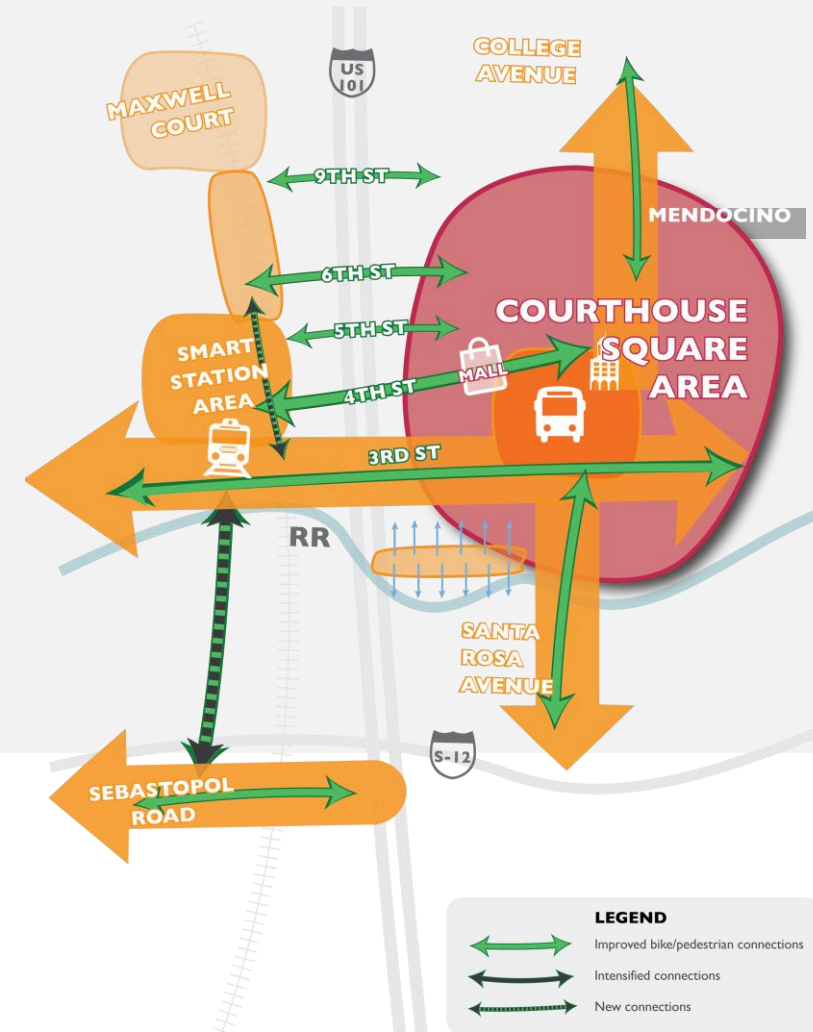
This alternative is projected to result in approximately 7,000 new housing units and 2,115 new jobs in the planning area by 2040.



# ALTERNATIVE 3: TRANSIT FORWARD

*Create high-density mixed-use corridors along high-frequency transit routes that connect downtown and promote an engaging, bike- and pedestrian-friendly public realm.*

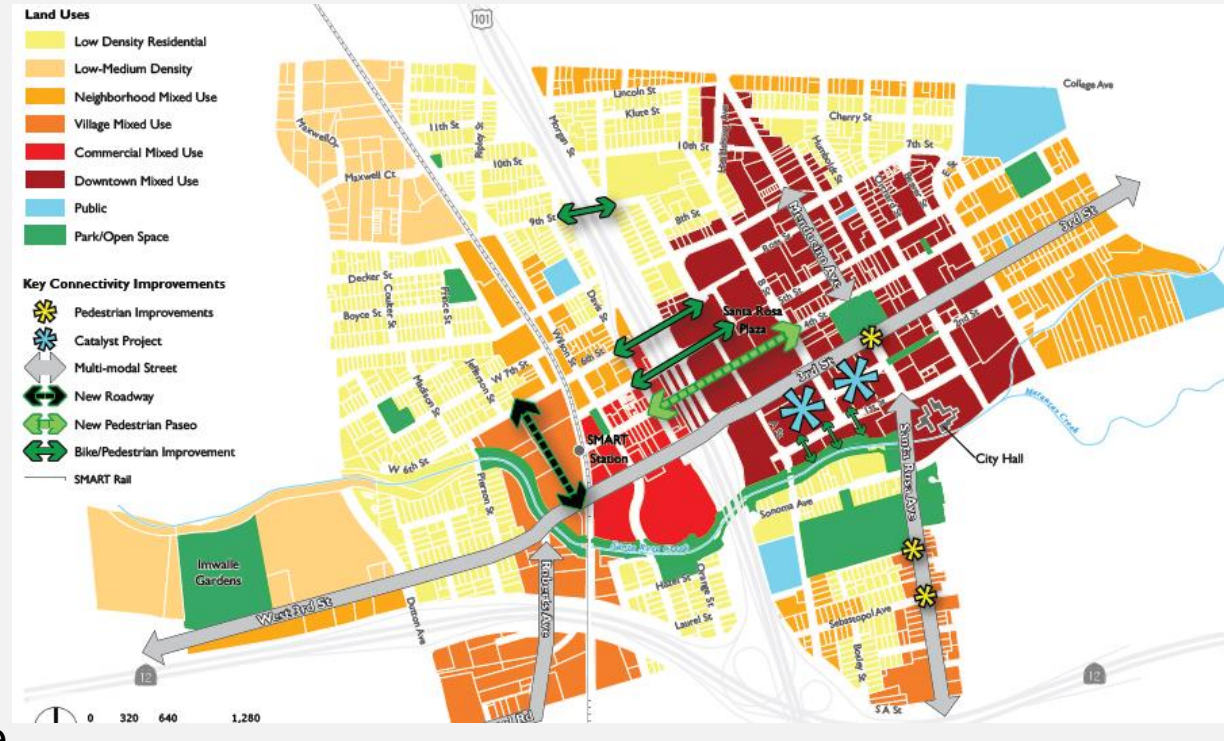
- High-density development along high-frequency transit corridors:
  - Mendocino between College and Courthouse Square
  - Santa Rosa Avenue between Maple and Courthouse Square
  - West Third Street from Davis to Dutton
  - Sebastopol Road between Olive and Dutton
- Redevelopment of Transit Mall site with mixed use/residential project and expanded transit center
- Redevelopment of Sears site and SMART with mixed use/residential projects



# ALTERNATIVE 3: TRANSIT FORWARD

## Key connectivity improvements:

- Reconfigure high-frequency transit corridors as multi-modal transit-priority roadways featuring bike and pedestrian improvements, activated public realm
- Reconnection of Fourth Street as a pedestrian paseo through the Mall
- Reconnect Roberts Ave as a multi-modal roadway
- New multi-modal connection through the SMART site joining Sixth Street and West Third
- “Fare-free” downtown transit zone with frequent shuttle service between Railroad Square and Courthouse Square
- Enhanced connections to Santa Rosa Creek
- Improve underpasses with public art and lighting





# ALTERNATIVE 3: TRANSIT FORWARD



This alternative is projected to result in approximately 7,000 new housing units and 2,965 new jobs in the planning area by 2040.



# SCHEDULE

- Develop buildout projections and evaluate alternatives June/July 2019
- DRB/CHB Study Session June 20, 3019
- CAC Meeting #2 June 24, 2019
- Community outreach: Alternatives exploration July 2019
- TAC Meeting #2: Preferred Alternative Consideration August 2019
- PC Recommendation on Preferred Alternative August 2019
- Council Selection of Preferred Alternative August 2019



## QUESTIONS/COMMENTS

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