

This chapter establishes the legal basis for General Plan Amendment and Specific Plan implementation and identifies the location of elements essential to meeting the 101 RANCH goal of providing a sustainable family-oriented community emphasizing education, recreation, and healthy living.

I. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

The 101 RANCH Specific Plan was made feasible with the adoption of a General Plan Amendment, processed concurrently with this Specific Plan, modifying the Land Use Designation for the site from Agriculture to “Specific Plan Area (SPA).” This Specific Plan consists of approximately 1,894.7 acres and is located in the central portion of Imperial County between the cities of Brawley and Imperial, as illustrated on Figure 1.1, *Regional Map*. The 101 RANCH is more specifically located, as can be seen on Figure 1.2, *Vicinity Map*, between Lavender Road (formerly “Schartz Road”) to the north and Carey Road to the south, State Route (SR) 86 on the west, and Harvey Road on the east. Harvey Road and the project’s eastern boundary are located one-half mile west of SR 111. The site’s location in relation to SR 86 and 111, between the cities of Brawley and Imperial, and adjacent to the anticipated industrial uses of the Mesquite Lake Specific Plan, create an ideal situation for the location of a new, sustainable “Smart Growth” community.

A. DOCUMENT ORGANIZATION

This Chapter provides a general overview of the community and the legal foundation and authority under which this Specific Plan has been prepared. Chapter II, PROJECT SETTING, describes the site’s relationship with the region and vicinity, and the various existing land uses, resources, and facilities that were considered in creating the proposed land uses. The land uses and infrastructure that are accommodated and implemented by this Specific Plan are detailed in Chapter III, SPECIFIC LAND USE PLAN, and specific zoning regulations and development standards are set forth in Chapter IV, DEVELOPMENT STANDARDS AND REGULATIONS. Chapter V, DESIGN GUIDELINES, provides descriptions, policies, and recommendations for project landscape elements, and Chapter VI, IMPLEMENTATION, describes how the development process is implemented, how the construction and infrastructure is phased, and how public infrastructure costs may be financed. As required by state law, Chapter VII, PROJECT CONSISTENCY ANALYSIS, provides an in-depth analysis of how this Specific Plan conforms to the County General Plan and other applicable regional plans. To facilitate review of this document and assist in implementation, commonly used acronyms are defined in Chapter VIII, ACRONYMS.

B. AUTHORITY, PURPOSE, AND SCOPE

The 101 RANCH Specific Plan has been prepared pursuant to the provisions of California Government Code Section 65450, *et seq.*, which grants counties and cities the authority to prepare specific plans of development for any area covered by a General Plan for the purpose of establishing systematic methods of implementation of the agency's General Plan. A General Plan, unlike a Specific Plan, does not show local streets, individual parcels, or specific land uses. A Specific Plan is designed to address site-specific issues, such as building setbacks and visual appearance, as well as project-wide infrastructure, such as circulation, utilities, and public

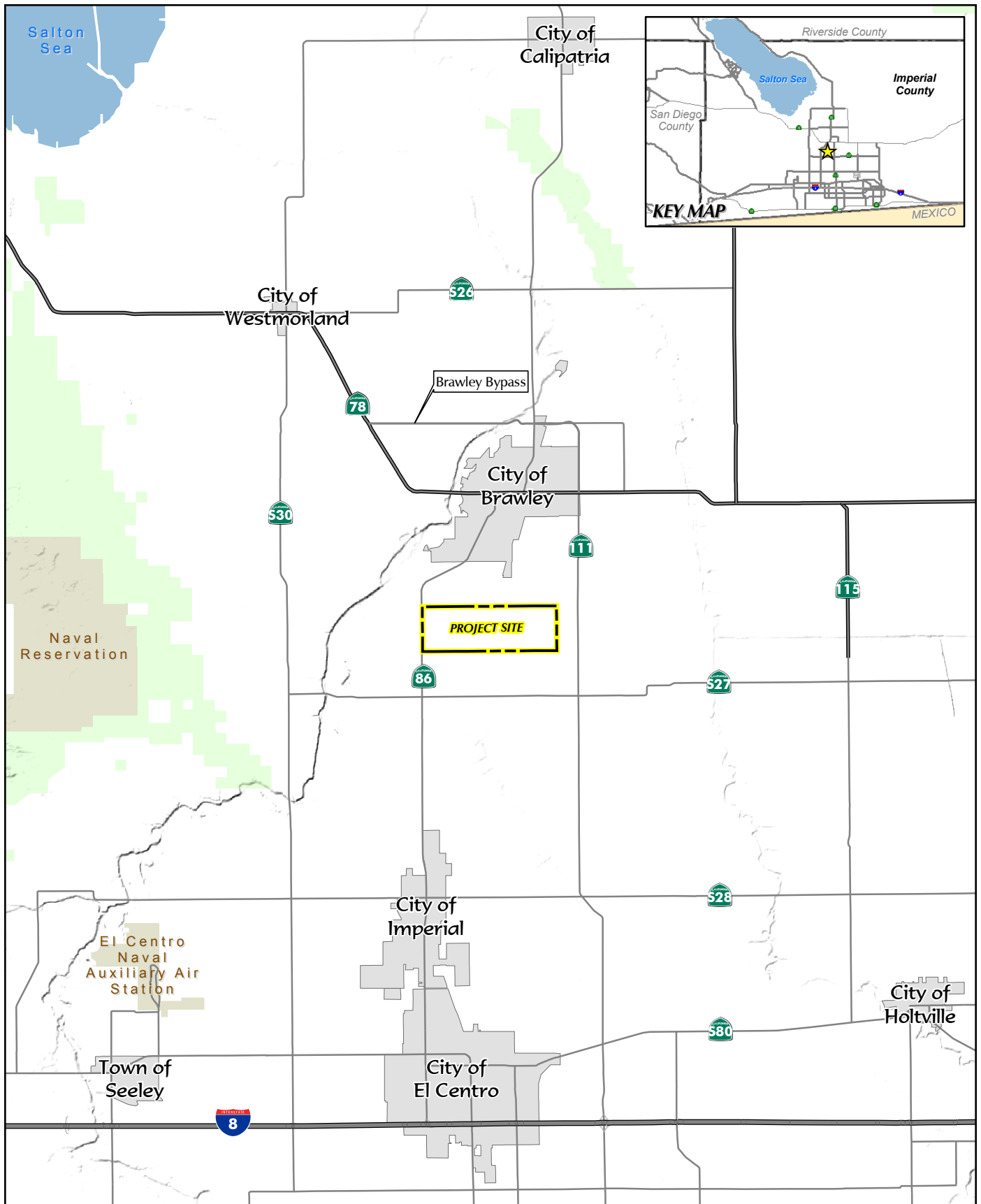


FIGURE 1.1

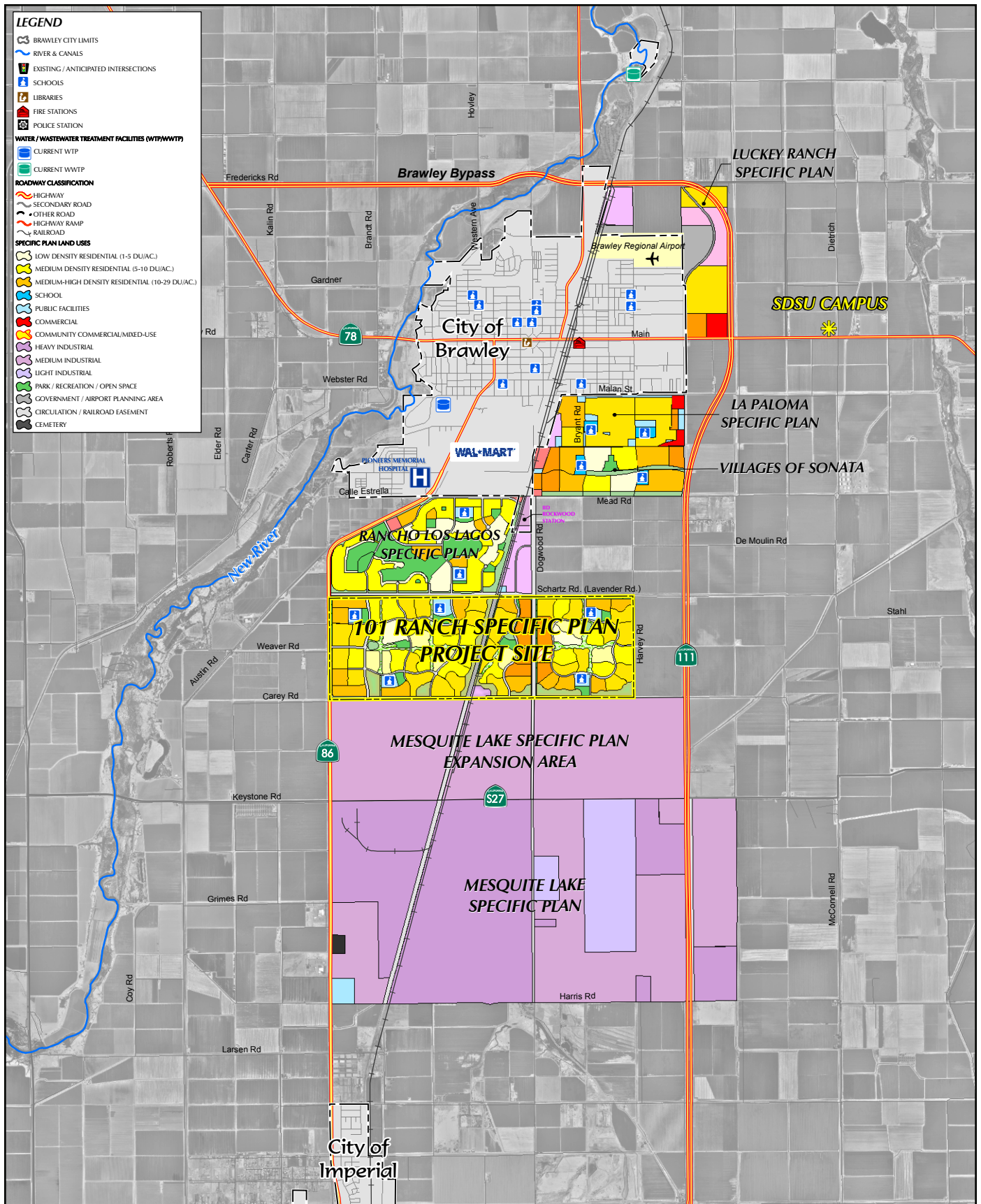


FIGURE 1.2

services. While a General Plan examines an entire city or county, a Specific Plan concentrates on the individual development issues of a sub-area within a General Plan boundary.

1. REQUIRED ELEMENTS

California Government Code Sections 65450 through 65454 establish the authority to adopt a Specific Plan, identifies the required contents of a Specific Plan, and mandates consistency with the General Plan. According to Section 65451, a Specific Plan shall include text and a diagram or diagrams that specify all of the following detail:

- A. The distribution, location, and extent of the uses of land, including open space, within the area covered by the plan.
- B. The proposed distribution, location, extent, and intensity of major components of public and private transportation, sewage, water, drainage, solid waste disposal, energy, and other essential facilities proposed to be located within the area covered by the plan and needed to support the land uses described in the plan.
- C. Standards and criteria by which development will proceed, and standards for the conservation, development, and utilization of natural resources, where applicable.
- D. A program of implementation tools including regulations, public works projects, and financing measures necessary to carry out paragraphs A, B, and C (above).

In addition, the California Government Code states that a “specific plan shall include a statement of the relationship of the specific plan to the general plan,” and further, that it “may not be adopted or amended unless found to be consistent with the general plan.”

In response to statutory requirements, this Specific Plan has been prepared to provide the essential link between the policies of the Imperial County General Plan and actual development in the project area. By functioning as a regulatory document, the 101 RANCH Specific Plan provides a means of implementing and detailing the County’s General Plan. In this regard, all future development plans and entitlement permits shall be consistent with regulations set forth in this document and with all applicable County regulations.

2. STANDARDS AND CRITERIA FOR APPROVAL

The County of Imperial requires that a Specific Plan address *Standards and Criteria for Approval* as identified in the Land Use Element, Section D., *Specific Plans*, of the County of Imperial General Plan. This Specific Plan identifies these standards and criteria below and discusses how the Plan facilitates these goals:

A. Will the Specific Plan have a positive fiscal impact for the County of Imperial?

The 101 RANCH Specific Plan will develop 6,986 new dwelling units intended for a diverse range of incomes and family needs and create a community commercial center, a mixed-use neighborhood, or additional housing alone. Recurring property tax from the development and sales tax from retail businesses will generate a continuous stream of revenue for the County. Additionally, the Master Developer, in accordance with Chapter 6 of this Specific Plan, will construct or cause to be constructed all on-site roads and, as appropriate, pay impact fees as its fair share of off-site roadway segments and/or traffic

improvements and any off-site and/or on-site utilities or utility improvements including water, sewer, and wastewater reclamation, as necessary to serve the project. Maintenance responsibilities have been delineated in Table 6-1, *Maintenance Plan*, of this Specific Plan, which identifies Private Party, Master Homeowner's Association, a Lighting and Maintenance District, and the Mesquite Lake County Service Area (MLCSA) for maintaining most of the on-site amenities and improvements. An independent fiscal impact analysis, prepared under separate cover, has concluded that the project would have a positive fiscal impact.

B. Will the Specific Plan create new and permanent jobs not to the detriment of existing jobs? New permanent employment created by the Specific Plan would be generated by the proposed community-serving retail and office uses and by the need to employ more teachers and school administrators. These jobs would not be detrimental to existing jobs, because in each case they reflect an expansion of opportunity rather than a diminishment of or deduction from the current work force in similar employment positions. Thus, job growth will be compatible with existing employment and will not result in a hyper-competitive market. More importantly, it should be noted that 101 RANCH will complement industrial uses located in the nearby Mesquite Lake Industrial Park employment center by supplying needed housing for the officers, executives, and employees generated within the adjacent industrial-based specific plan, thereby improving the region's job-housing balance.

C. Will the Specific Plan minimize or mitigate adverse environmental impacts and be compatible with existing or planned land uses of nearby cities or communities? In addition to this 101 RANCH Specific Plan, an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) was prepared and certified under the authority of Imperial County and in compliance with California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) guidelines. Direct, indirect, and cumulative impacts have been identified and mitigated where feasible. Additionally, the 101 RANCH Specific Plan is centrally situated in a planned growth corridor between the existing urban cities of Brawley and Imperial/El Centro, which will enable the County to accommodate changing needs and direct new residential growth adjacent to planned employment centers, while sustaining a viable agricultural industry within designated regions outside of the Highway 86/Highway 111 corridor.

D. Will the Specific Plan offer diverse or unique opportunities to the County and its citizens? The communities of 101 RANCH have been planned with a focus on sustainable living and encourage the development of pedestrian-friendly neighborhoods. This Specific Plan includes a carefully planned local school system to be built as needed by the Brawley Elementary School District, as well as a comprehensive recreational system of bicycle paths and paseos, and various active and passive parks. In addition, realizing the propensity for extreme climate conditions within Imperial County, careful planning has gone into the design and functionality of the 101 RANCH recreation system in dry, hot weather by including shade shelters and water fountains for hot weather activities and lighting for night use when it is cooler. Overall, the focus on a sustainable, family-oriented community, serving the residential needs of the industrial use-oriented Mesquite Lake Specific Plan and surrounding employment centers, provides a needed component in harmony with nearby and adjacent industry-oriented land uses. By planning

residential development near centers of employment, alternative modes of transportation, such as mass transit, bicycling, or walking, become viable and result in the reduced reliance on automobiles. 101 RANCH also situates higher density uses and a community commercial center in locations that will have ready access to a future rapid transit corridor planned along Dogwood Road.

E. Will the Specific Plan result in the achievement of significant progress toward accomplishing an unmet goal of the County of Imperial? As mentioned in the above responses, the communities of 101 RANCH will provide a diverse range of residential living choices for a variety of income levels, offer a wide array of passive and active recreational opportunities, and allow for neighborhood serving retail and office needs. The following Specific Plan objectives articulate the planning focus of the 101 RANCH communities:

- 1) To establish a sense of place and a community identity with an extensive multi-faceted, active and passive recreational system;
- 2) To create a backbone-circulation system that places importance on pedestrian and bicyclist mobility, while providing safe, efficient vehicular mobility;
- 3) To provide community-serving uses such as educational facilities, retail opportunities, public services, and public facilities to create a complete, family oriented community;
- 4) To construct a wide variety of housing types in sizes, styles, and affordability that provide varied options for residents' tastes, preferences, and needs while cognizant of the need to provide "move-up" and "down-sizing" housing choices to allow residents to remain in their community through life's cycles and the resulting changes in living needs; and
- 5) To provide residential opportunities for officers, executives, and employees of industrial uses and businesses in the Mesquite Lake Specific Plan Area and within a planned growth corridor between the existing urban cities of Brawley and Imperial/El Centro.

Together, this Specific Plan, as well as the General Plan Amendment, Development Agreement, and Tentative Subdivision Map processed concurrently with this document, and the EIR, provide a detailed roadmap for the development of 101 RANCH, while taking into account all local goals, objectives and environmental considerations. Additional pre-implementation requirements to be obtained subsequent to adoption of this document will further refine this roadmap.

C. PROJECT SUMMARY

Because every vibrant community develops in accordance with changing needs and desirable trends, the 101 RANCH Specific Plan accommodates flexibility and diversity through the provision of alternative and optional uses. The primary development plan for 101 RANCH, as depicted on Figure 1.3A, *Land Use Plan - West*, Figure 1.3B, *Land Use Plan - Central & East*, and detailed in Table 1-1, *Land Use Summary*, establishes a professionally-designed, recreational-themed, master-planned community that provides for 6,986 homes and various support uses and facilities. Should 101 RANCH develop in accordance with all of the residential options set forth in

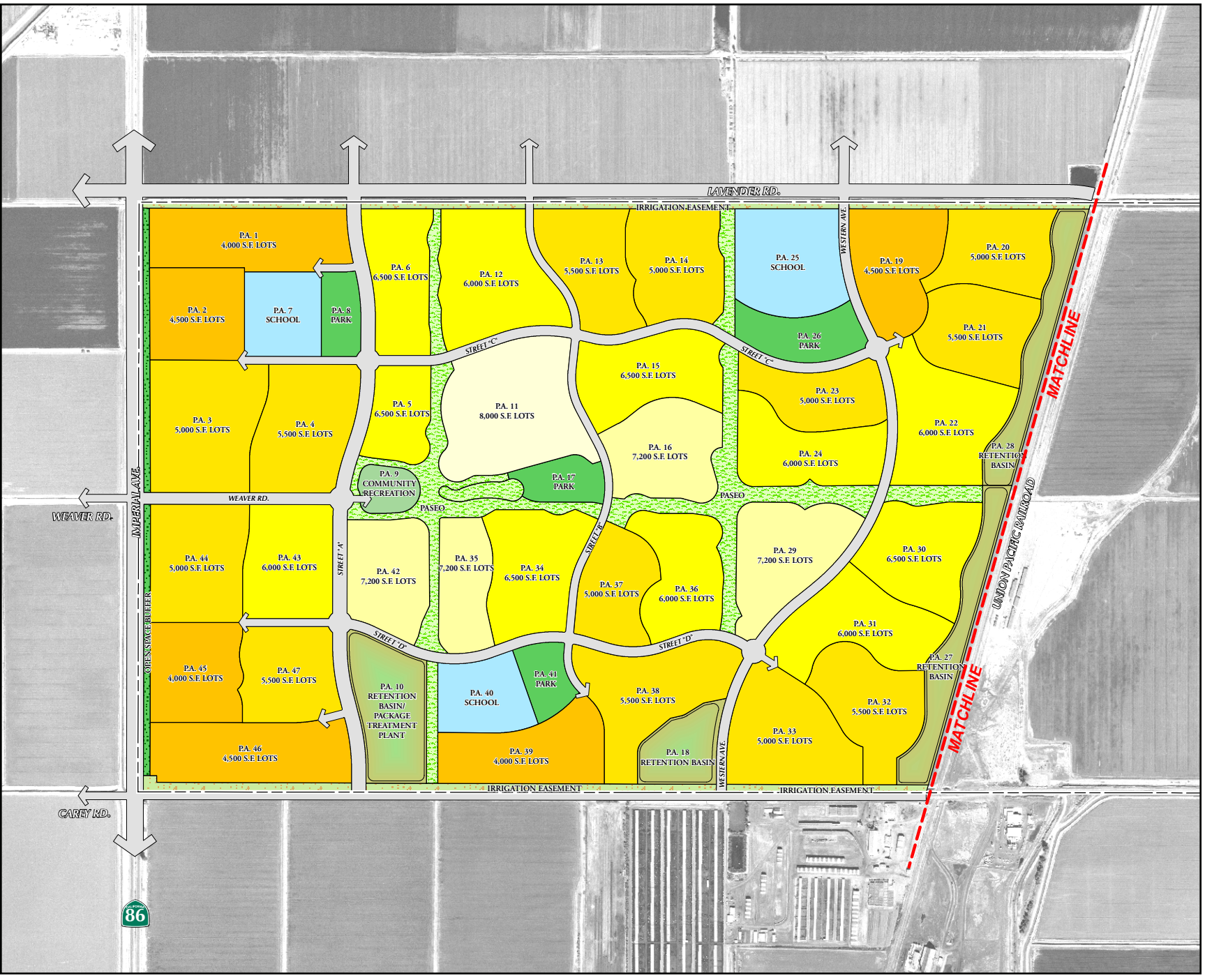


FIGURE 1.3A



FIGURE 1.3B



TRP PLANNING CONSULTANTS
 17524 LEBLANC DRIVE SUITE 300
 PLEASANTON, CA 94566
 P: 925.305.0000 F: 925.305.0030
 www.trppc.com

Table 1-1 LAND USE SUMMARY

LAND USE	ACRES	DENSITY (DU/AC)	HOMES
Residential			
8,000 S.F. Min. Lots	52.0	3.6	189
7,200 S.F. Min. Lots	124.4	3.9	479
6,500 S.F. Min. Lots	122.0	4.1	501
6,000 S.F. Min. Lots	195.0	4.6	893
5,500 S.F. Min. Lots	224.5	4.8	1,082
5,000 S.F. Min. Lots	255.6	5.4	1,392
4,500 S.F. Min. Lots	119.5	5.9	704
4,000 S.F. Min. Lots	98.3	6.7	656
Condominiums	87.4	9.1	794
Town Homes	24.6	12.0	296
Residential Totals	1,303.3	5.4	6,986
Non-Residential			
Community Commercial/Mixed-Use	13.1	(150,000 s.f.)	--
RV Storage	11.9	--	--
Junior High/Elementary Schools	68.0	--	--
Parks	49.7	--	--
Paseo	81.4	--	--
Community Recreation	12.9	--	--
Retention Basin	93.3	--	--
Retention Basin/Package Treatment	17.7	--	--
Open Space Buffer	39.5	--	--
Irrigation Easement	44.8	--	--
Circulation	159.1	--	--
Non-Residential Totals	591.4¹	(150,000 s.f.)	--
PROJECT TOTALS	1,894.7	3.7	6,986

this Specific Plan a total of 7,481 homes could be developed; residential development greater than 7,481 homes will require an amendment to this Specific Plan. All potential impacts associated with these options were addressed in the project's Program EIR.

In its primary form, the community's land use plan offers a myriad of housing opportunities, ranging from entry-level 4,000 square foot lots, garden courtyard, paired, and town homes to 8,000 square foot lots that offer move-up housing opportunities. 101 RANCH provides extensive recreational opportunities through a series of public parks, paseos, trails, open space, and three private recreation centers. The community's students may attend one of four elementary schools and a junior high school within the Specific Plan site. 101 RANCH also accommodates within and adjacent to its boundaries necessary new or expanded infrastructure. Water and sewage treatment facilities for 101 RANCH are provided through connections to a new off-site reservoir/water treatment plant and sewage treatment plant, and provisions are included for on-site facilities. A 13.1-acre Community Commercial/Mixed-Use center, situated adjacent to the

¹ Acreage excludes 26.8 acres owned by the Union Pacific Railroad.

eastern edge of Dogwood Road, provides up to 150,000 s.f. of community-level shopping opportunities.

Community development flexibility, ensuring continuing vitality and the ability to accommodate resident and visitor needs, is addressed through a series of options and alternatives, as summarized below:

- The 13.1-acre Community Commercial/Mixed-Use site (Planning Area 96) may develop entirely as a commercial center or a residential neighborhood. Should development under this option result in a Planning Area devoted entirely to homes, a maximum of 118 residences at a density of approximately nine du/ac is permitted.
- The Community Commercial/Mixed-Use site also may develop with a combination of retail uses, at a lesser scale than a community shopping center, and residential uses. This combination of uses would not exceed the maximum intensity anticipated by the project's land use plan.
- Public facilities and services, such as fire, police, emergency response, and libraries, may be developed at the Community Commercial/Mixed-Use site. The accommodation of these facilities would provide residents with readily accessible facilities that would serve the needs of the community and would be consistent with sound regional and "smart-growth" planning practices.
- Should the Brawley Elementary School District choose not to develop school uses on the junior high school site or any of the elementary school parcels, this Specific Plan provides for the development of single-family detached homes at the site(s) instead.
- The construction of regional water treatment and sewage treatment plants may not occur in a time frame to accommodate a growing community's needs. To ensure that such public utility infrastructure will be available as required, this Specific Plan sets forth additional options for water and sewage treatment.