



Town of Atherton General Plan Update

Community Workshop
February 13, 2019

Introductions

- Lisa Costa Sanders, Town Planner
- Neal Martin, Planner
- Nestor Delgado, Assistant Planner

What is a General Plan?

- A General Plan is the Town's overarching land use document. Guiding document for future development in Town.
- California Law requires all jurisdictions to have an adopted General Plan with certain required Elements.
- It must be comprehensive, internally consistent and long-term.
- The General Plan consists of text and diagrams describing land uses, circulation patterns and other topics proscribed by State law.
- Zoning Code contains development standards and is required to be consistent with the General Plan.

Atherton General Plan - Overview

- **Contains the required Elements (Chapters):**
 - Land Use
 - Circulation and Scenic Highways
 - Housing (updated in 2014, not part of this update)
 - Open Space and Conservation
 - Community Safety
 - Noise

Philosophy

Includes Atherton Community Vision:

- Commitment to retain Town's rural environment
- Limit local streets to two lanes maximum
- Preservation of trees, particularly heritage oaks
- Retention of large setbacks, respect for trees and landscaping
- Support for public and private schools in Town
- Retention of the current Town character with no changes in land uses
- Prohibition of commercial businesses
- Provision of a high level of public services to Town residents

Why Update the General Plan?

- Current Atherton General Plan adopted in 2002
- City Council Approved General Plan Update Process:
 - Conform to State Law
 - Stormwater
 - Green Infrastructure
 - Complete Streets
 - Consistency with Town Adopted Plans
 - Parks Master Plan
 - Climate Action Plan
 - Bike and Pedestrian Master Plan

*Direction from Council that Elements be updated to meet minimum for State Compliance and internal Town consistency, **not an entire revamping** of entire document.*

General Plan Update Process

- **Planning Commission:** reviewed and commented in public study sessions on administrative drafts of each Element. Staff responded to Commission comments and changes incorporated into updated drafts.
- **Community Workshop:** Provides the public with the opportunity to review and comment on the administrative draft elements.

Land Use Element

- Basic Land Uses, their location and intensity, are **unchanged** from the existing General Plan.
- The General Plan identifies three different Land Use designations in the Town:
 - Single Family, Low Density Residential
 - Parks and Open Space
 - Public Facilities and School

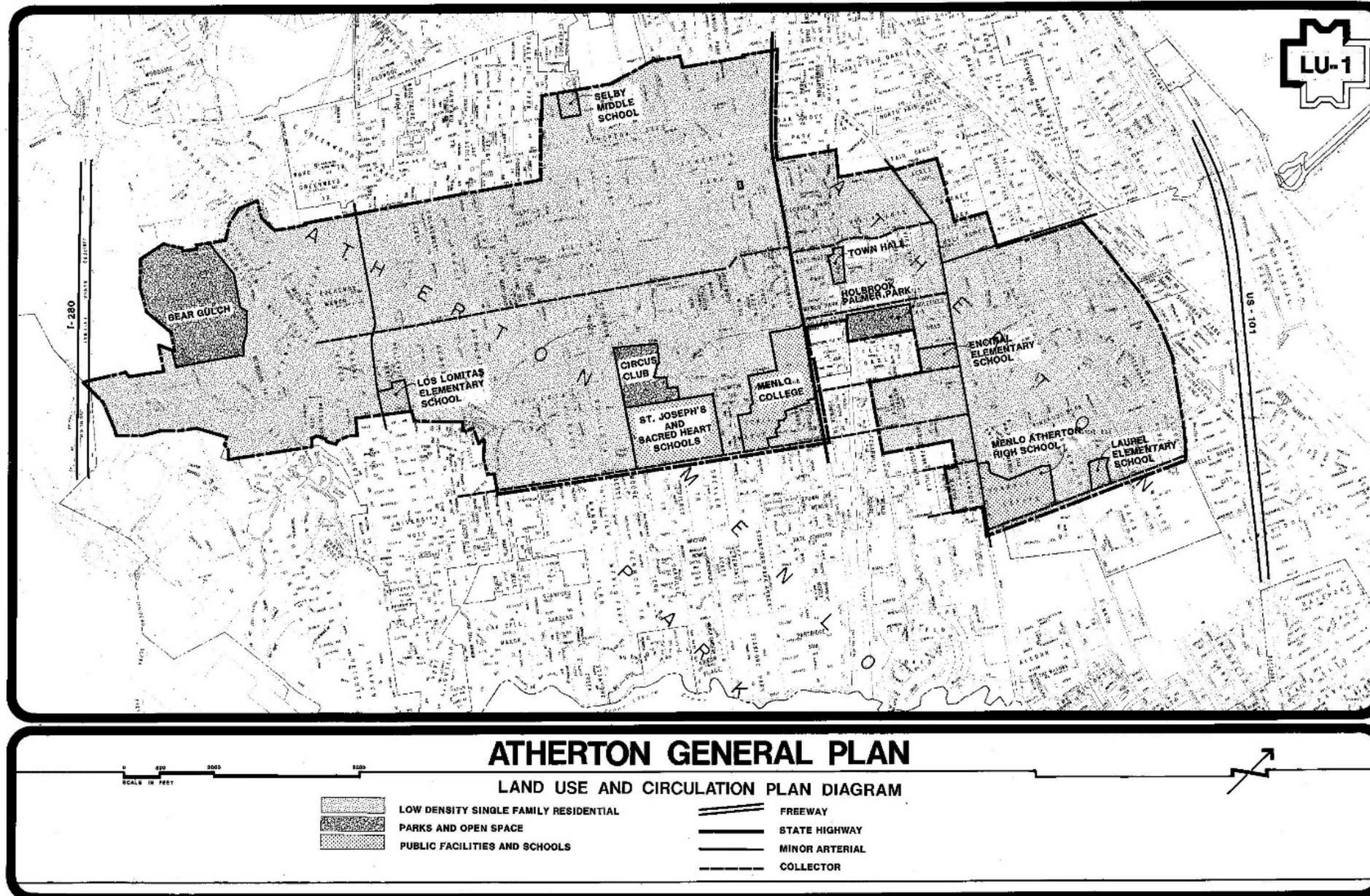
Land Use Element - Update

- **Greenways:** From the Bike and Pedestrian Master Plan. All within public right-of way and includes; pedestrians, bicycle, nonmotorized vehicle transportation, and recreational travel corridors.
 - Grand Boulevard Greenway: consider bicycle and pedestrian improvements along El Camino Real.
 - Bay-to-Ridge Greenway: includes bicycle and pathway improvements along Marsh Road/Middlefield Road/Watkins Ave, and linkages along or adjacent to the Atherton Channel across El Camino Real to Alameda de las Pulgas.

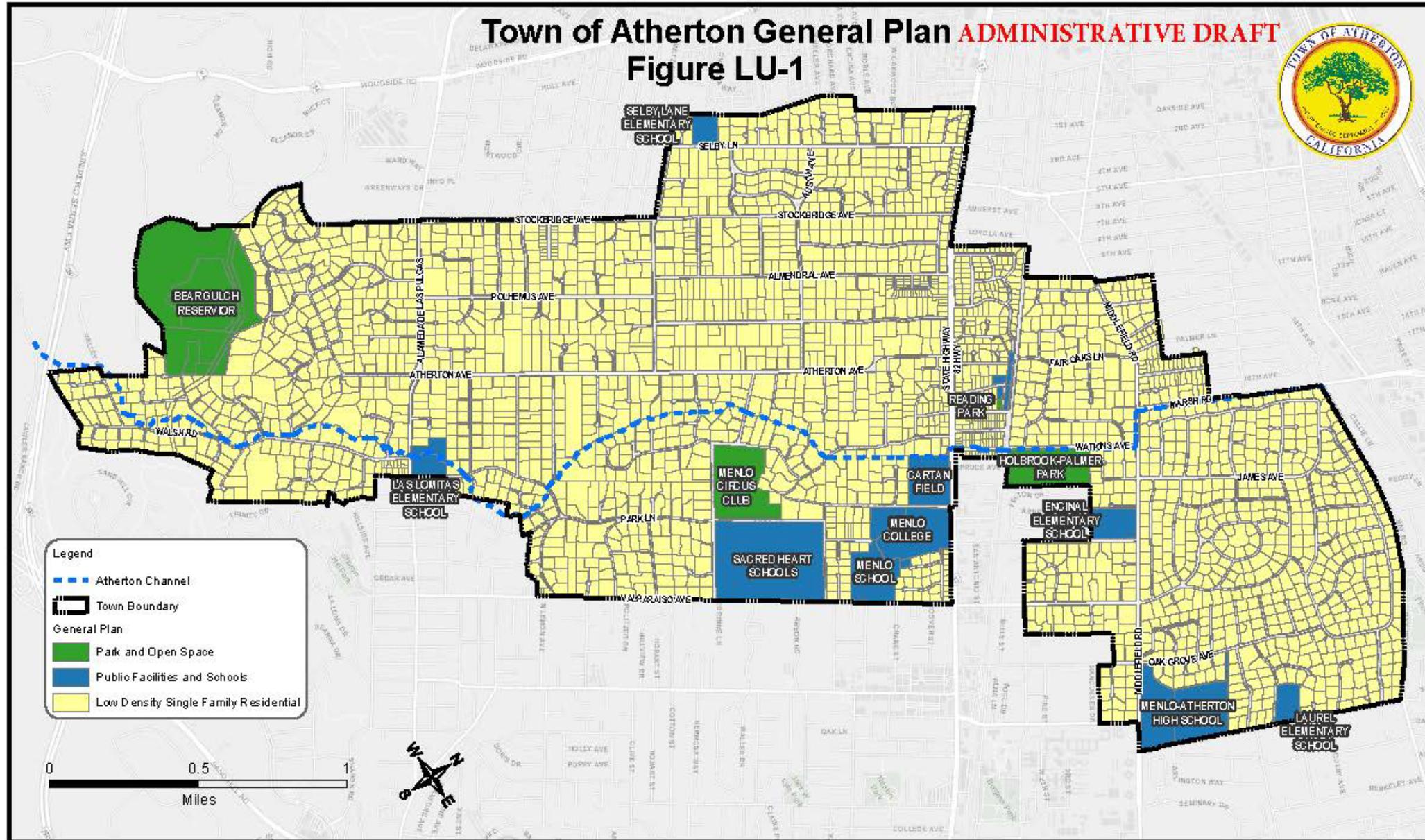
Land Use Element - Update

- **Climate Action Plan (Town adopted Oct. 2016):**
 - A guiding document that identifies methods the Town and community can implement to significantly reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions.
 - New General Plan goals and policies to achieve target of reducing emissions to 15% below 2005 levels by 2020. (Mostly targeted at reducing vehicle trips)

Land Use Map - Current



Land Use Map - Update



Circulation Element

- A Transportation Plan and strategy for movement of people and goods throughout the Town.
- Includes a plan of roadways and pedestrian, bicycle and rail transportation.
- Calls for a balanced, multimodal transportation network that meets the needs of all users of streets, roads, highways and rail for safe and convenient travel in a manner that is consistent with the character of the Town.
- Seeks to preserve all streets and highways as scenic routes

Circulation Element

- Street Classifications:

- **Freeways & Highways:** No Freeways in Atherton. One Highway, El Camino Real (Grand Boulevard) provides for through traffic.
- **Minor Arterials:** Streets with traffic signals that primarily serve through traffic and provide access to abutting properties as a secondary function (e.g. Middlefield Rd.).
- **Collectors:** Provide both land access and traffic circulation service within residential areas (e.g. Atherton Ave.).
- **Local Streets:** Provide access to abutting property, locations for easements, open space for light and air and a fire break between buildings.

All Atherton streets, except El Camino Real are limited to two lanes.

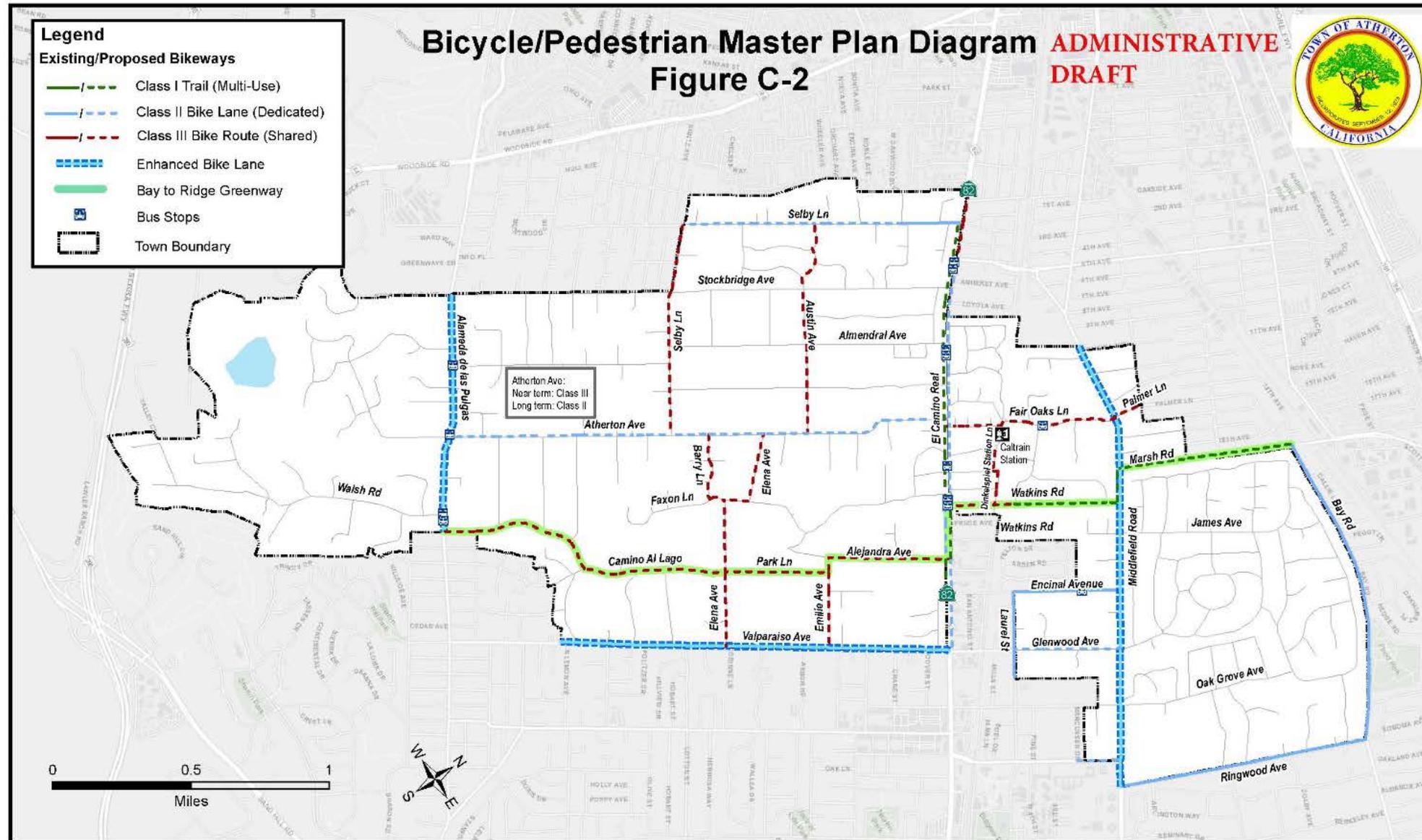
Circulation Element - Update

- **Grand Boulevard Initiative**
 - A regional collaboration of 19 government agencies to evaluate improvement of the performance, safety and aesthetics of El Camino Real.
- **Complete Streets (Town adopted Nov. 2012):**
 - Plan to provide a balanced, multimodal transportation network that meets the needs of all users of streets, roads, and highways for safe and convenient travel.
- **Green Streets/Green Infrastructure:**
 - Involves a stormwater management approach that incorporates vegetation, soil, and engineered systems to slow, filter, and cleanse stormwater runoff from impervious surfaces (e.g., streets, sidewalks).
- **Transportation Demand Management:**
 - Programs that encourage use of carpools, vanpools, buses, public transportation and alternative transportation modes (bikes, walking) as a means of reducing single occupant vehicle trips.

Circulation Element - Update

- **Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan (Town Adopted Plan July 2014):**
 - Includes recommendations for improving travel safety and encouraging greater use of active, low-impact travel modes. Recommendations include:
 - Grand Boulevard (El Camino Real) Greenway
 - New east-west Bay-to-Ridge Greenway
 - Safe Routes to School - increase the number of children who walk or bike to school by supporting projects that encourage those transportation modes.
 - Shared bikeway and pedestrian greenway improvements along the Countywide North/South Bicycle Boulevard (along Elena Ave and Austin Ave/Selby Lane).

Circulation Element - Update



Open Space & Conservation Element

- The purpose of the Open Space Element is to inventory and describe existing and proposed open space lands and uses and to identify goals and policies that support open spaces.
- The purpose of the Conservation Element is to describe the Town's natural and man-made resources; including land, water, ecosystems, cultural and living resources.
- The Element seeks to maintain the low density, residential character of the Town.

Open Space & Conservation - Update

- **Groundwater management and recharge**
- **Green Infrastructure** - an approach to managing wet weather impacts to restore some of the natural processes to the management of stormwater.
- **Coastal Oak Woodland** - preservation and protection of trees in general and heritage trees in particular.
- **Water Pollution Prevention** – Town participates in the San Mateo Countywide Water Pollution Prevention Program.
- **Stormwater Capture Facility** – a runoff diversion, storage and filtration system.
- **Cultural Resource Conservation** – Including certain historic structures and artifacts.

Community Safety Element

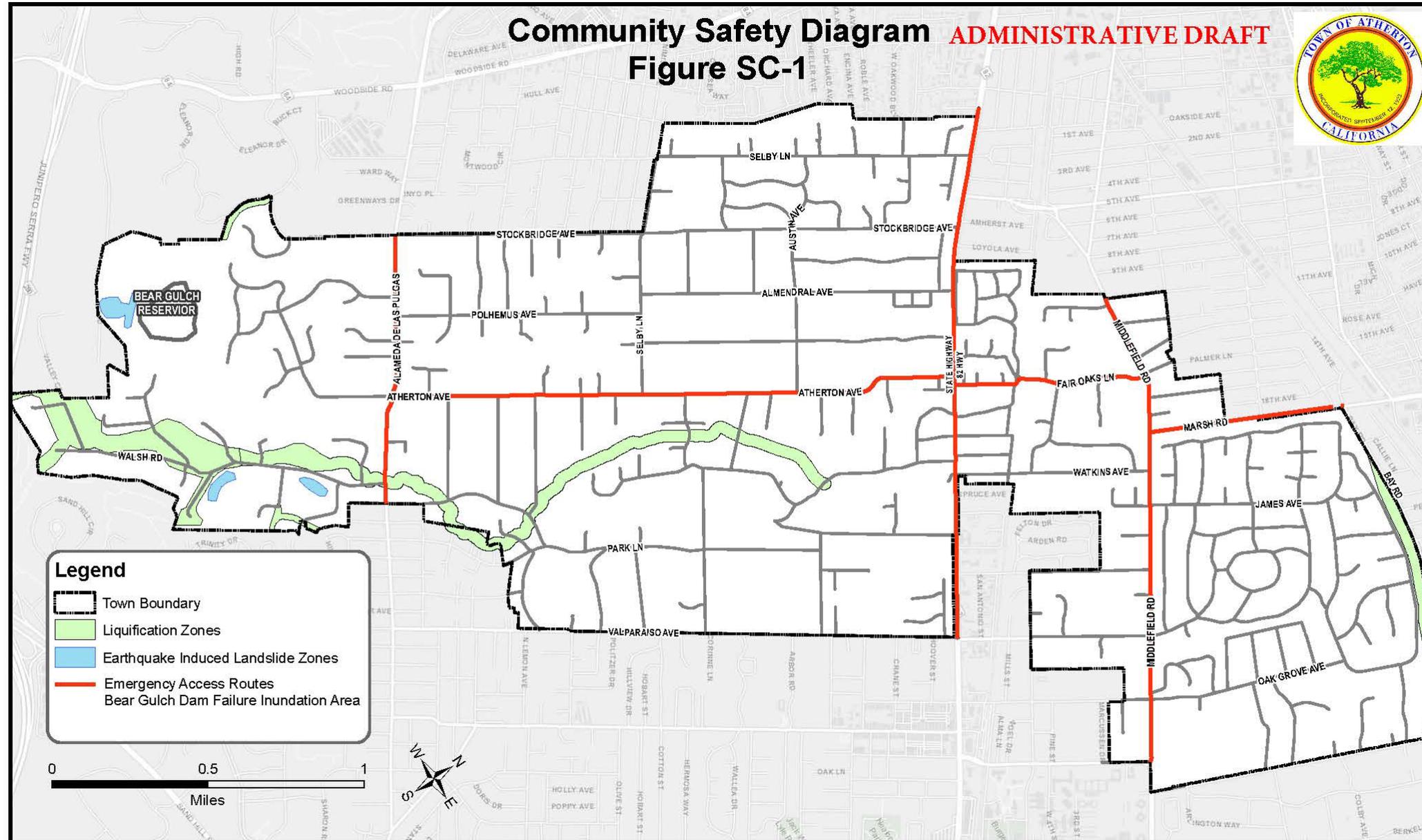
The purposes of the Community Safety Element are to:

- Describe natural and man-made disasters which may pose a hazard to the residents of Atherton.
- Set forth policies for responding to threats to public safety.
- Identify and provide solutions to reduce the potential risks resulting from fires, floods, droughts, earthquakes, landslides, climate change, and other hazards.

Community Safety Element - Update

- **Seismic hazards:** including earthquake fault zones, Seismically induced surface rupture, ground shaking, and ground failure, tsunami, seiches (sloshing), dam failure, slope instability, land subsidence, and liquefaction.
- **Flooding**
- **Urban and Wildland Fire**
- **Atherton Emergency Operations Plan (EOP) and Atherton Hazard Mitigation Strategies (HMS)**
 - ✓ Existing documents used by Police and Fire Depts. to manage and coordinate resources and personnel responding to emergency situations.

Community Safety Element - Update



Noise Element

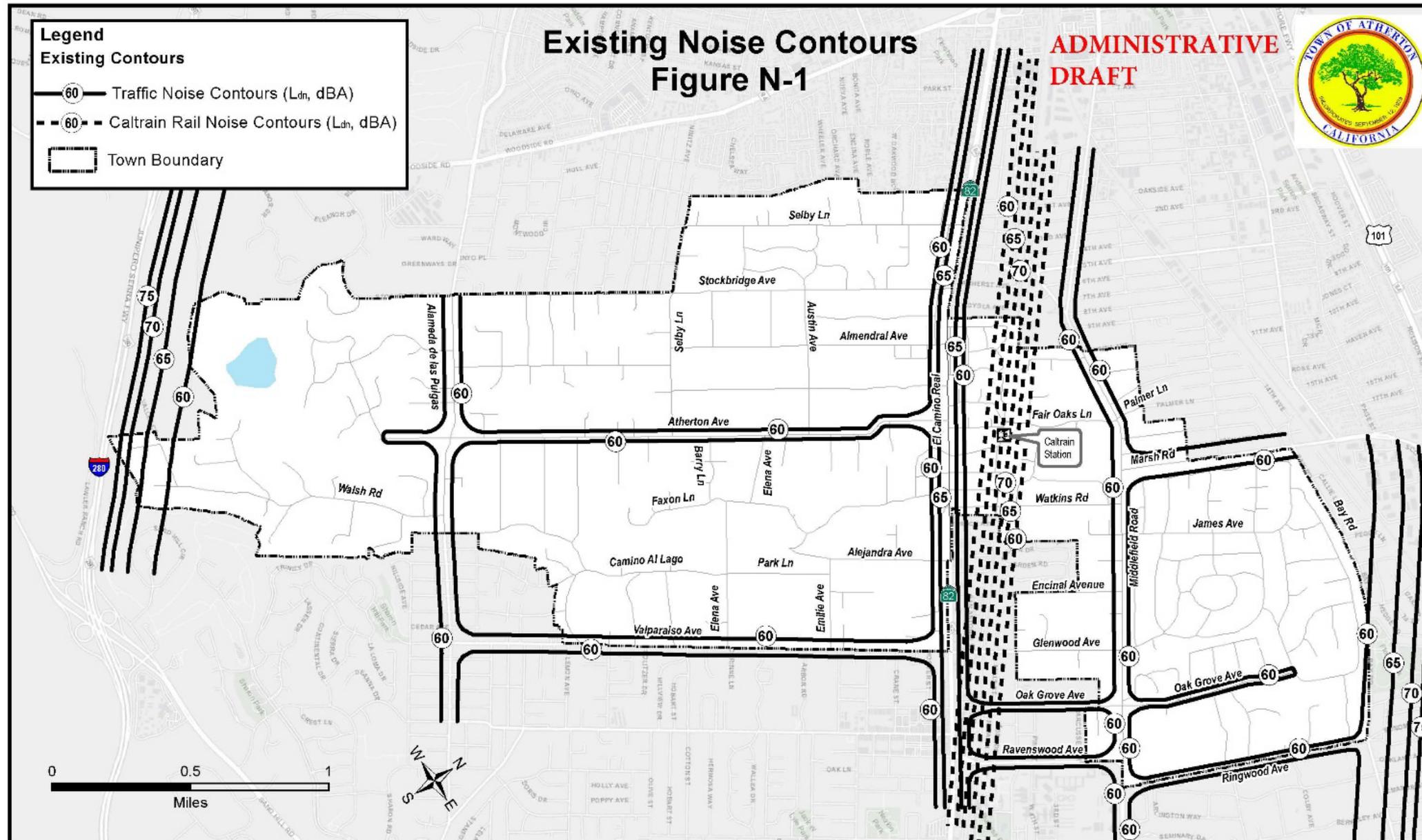
- The purpose of the Noise Element is to describe the present and future noise environment in Atherton in an effort to prevent intrusion by harmful and annoying sound levels.
- Noise is defined as “unwanted sound”.
- Noise levels are measured in terms of decibels (dB).

Noise Element - update

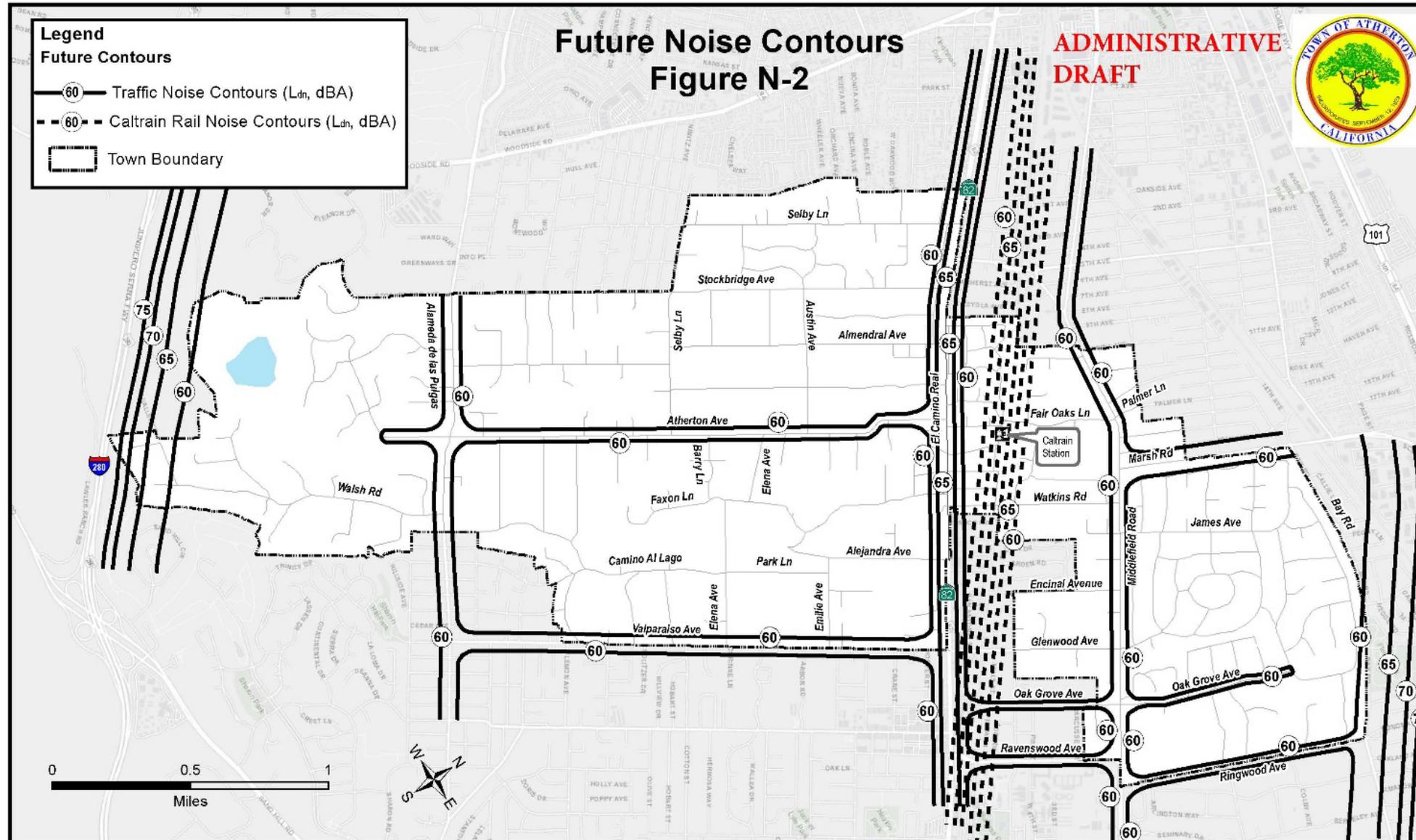
Updated noise study to determine:

- **Existing Noise Environment**
- **Future Noise Environment**
 - Comparison of the Existing and Future Noise Contours indicates relatively minor increases in noise levels in the Town of Atherton.

Noise Element – Existing Contours



Noise Element – Future Contours



Next Steps

- **Environmental Review Process:** Preparation of an Initial Study and Mitigated Negative Declaration (IS/MND) in compliance with CEQA
 - 30-day public review period
 - Public hearing on the IS/MND by the Planning Commission
- **Planning Commission Public Hearing:** Planning Commission makes recommendation to the City Council regarding the IS/MND and General Plan Update.
- **City Council Public Hearing:** Certify the IS/MND and Adopt the General Plan.

Questions/Comments

More Information:

<http://www.ci.atherton.ca.us/208/2019-GENERAL-PLAN-UPDATE>