

III. PROJECT DESCRIPTION

This chapter describes the *Lower Arsenal Mixed Use Specific Plan* (Draft Specific Plan)¹ that is evaluated in this Environmental Impact Report (EIR). An overview of the City of Benicia's regional and planning context and a description of the Draft Specific Plan as a regulatory tool are also provided. The remainder of the chapter provides a summary of the planning process, objectives, and improvements associated with implementation of the Draft Specific Plan. Please refer to the Draft Specific Plan for additional detail.

A. DRAFT SPECIFIC PLAN AREA

This section describes the project site location and site characteristics, including the regional and local context, history, and existing conditions of the project site.

1. Location

The Draft Specific Plan area (Plan Area) is located within the City of Benicia, in Solano County. The Plan Area is located east of the Downtown and is a portion of Benicia's former Arsenal, known as the Lower Arsenal. Figure III-1 depicts the Plan Area's regional and local context. Regional access is provided by the East Fifth Street via Military East, with secondary access provided from Interstate 680 (I-680) via the Park/Industrial/Bayshore Road split interchange, which is less than 1.5 miles from the Plan Area. Local access is provided by Military East. Secondary local access is provided by Park Road.

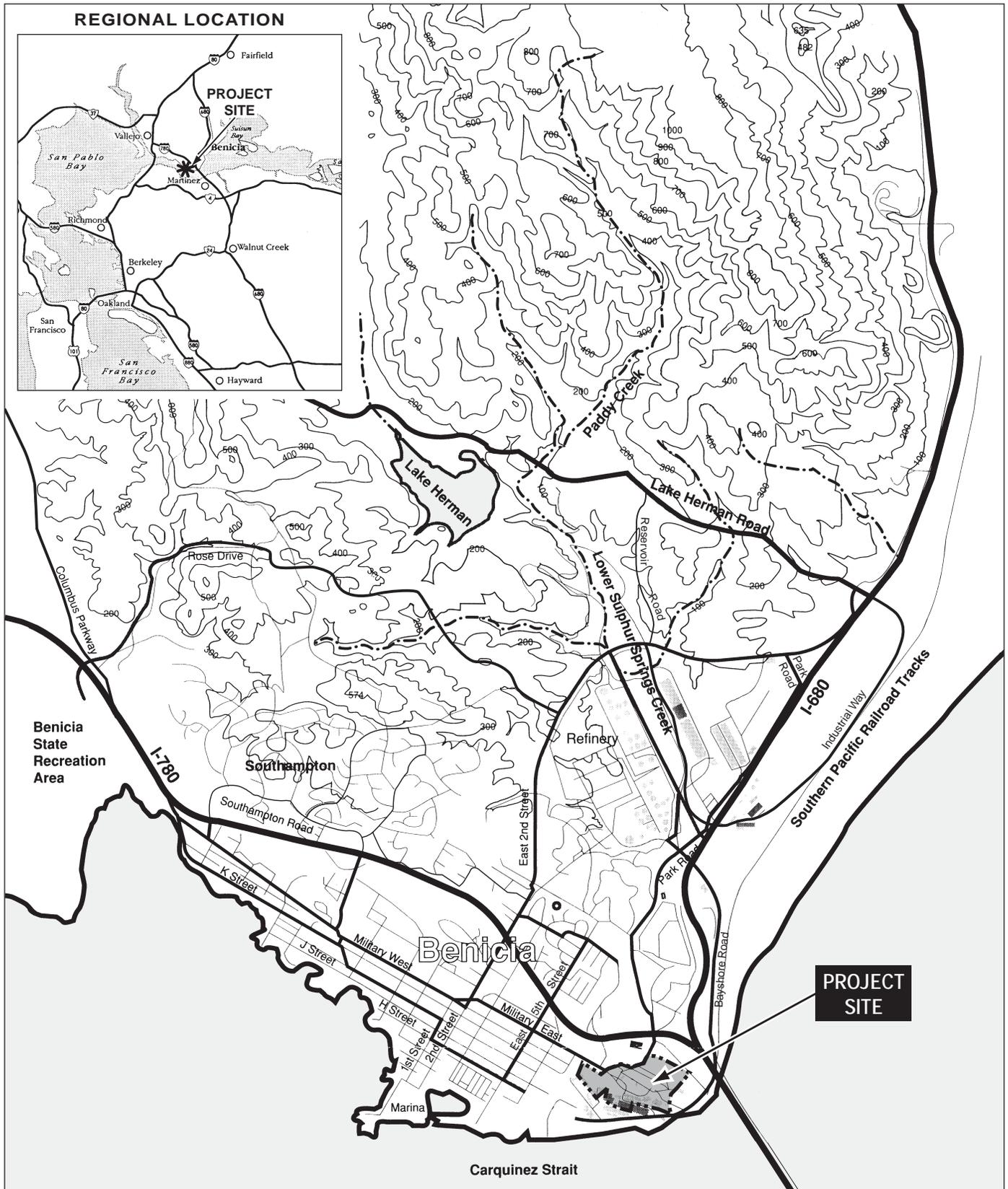
The Plan Area comprises approximately 50 acres and is generally bounded by lands adjoining I-780 on the north, lands adjoining I-680 on the east, Port of Benicia land and the Carquinez Strait on the south, and residential neighborhoods extending into Downtown Benicia on the west.

2. Plan Area Characteristics

The Draft Specific Plan provides a detailed description of the existing characteristics of the Plan Area. The following provides a brief description of the regional and local context and an overview of existing development in the Plan Area.

a. Regional and Local Context. The City of Benicia is located on a peninsula of land in southern Solano County that consists primarily of rolling hills rising to an elevation of 1,160 feet. To the northwest, Sulphur Springs Mountain creates a natural boundary, while the Union Pacific Railroad and Suisun Marsh border the eastern edge of the City. The remaining edges of the City are created by the Carquinez Strait. The Carquinez Strait is a crucial Northern California waterway that connects San Pablo Bay and San Francisco Bay with the San Joaquin river delta. Benicia is accessed from the south via the Benicia Bridge (I-680) and can also be accessed from the west by I-780.

¹ Opticos Design, Inc., 2007. *Lower Arsenal Mixed Use Specific Plan*. Draft for Environmental Review. March 30.



LSA

FIGURE III-1



LEGEND
 PLAN AREA

Lower Arsenal Mixed Use Specific Plan EIR
 Regional Vicinity and
 Project Location Map

SOURCE: LSA ASSOCIATES, INC., 2007.

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Downtown Benicia is located less than 1 mile west of the Plan Area and is centered on First Street. Settlement in the Downtown area began soon after the town was platted in 1847. Growth intensified when the State Capitol was briefly located in Benicia from 1853 to 1854. Today the Downtown is recognized as a historic district and is characterized by a mix of residential, retail, and public/quasi-public uses. Public/quasi-public uses include City administration facilities, City Hall, the police station, and several churches.

b. Plan Area. The following presents an overview of the history of the Benicia Arsenal and existing conditions in the Plan Area. Figure III-2 is an aerial photograph of the Plan Area and surrounding land uses.²

(1) Benicia Arsenal History. The Benicia Arsenal once encompassed over 2,000 acres within the southeastern portion of the City of Benicia. Originally, the Benicia Arsenal generally stretched from the Carquinez Strait north to existing industrial lands north of I-680 and from existing residential uses adjacent to Case Grande Street and East 7th Street east to Suisun Bay.

Land at the Benicia Arsenal site was initially acquired between 1847 and 1849 by the federal government. The Arsenal once functioned as one of America's key military installations and was the first such facility on the Pacific Coast. The Arsenal was constructed between 1852 and 1911; additional buildings were added during World War II. The Arsenal was in service for over 100 years and played a major role in the development of Benicia. Primary development occurring throughout the Arsenal's lifespan consisted of three military installations. These installations included the Benicia Barracks (1849-1924), the Quartermaster's Depot (1849-1858), and the Arsenal (1850-1964). By the late 1870's, the railroad was introduced to the Arsenal, and by 1884 the area developed further, albeit slowly, in an informal manner. The Benicia Arsenal was decommissioned in 1963 and the land was transferred to a public agency, the Surplus Property Authority of Benicia.

Between the time the Arsenal was decommissioned and 1975, little development occurred within the Lower Arsenal. However, in 1975, Benicia Industries obtained the land from the City and began making plans for development. As an agreement with the City, it was determined that several of the historic structures on the site would remain in public ownership to ensure their preservation. Also at that time, four districts within the Arsenal were listed on the National Register of Historic Places, including 20 architecturally and historically significant structures. Districts A and B are located in the northern and western portions of the Arsenal, while Districts C and D are located within the Lower Arsenal.

(2) Existing Conditions. Since the Arsenal's decommissioning and further development of the industrial port, the area has continued to undergo significant changes. The presence of I-680 and I-780 have diminished the significance of the railroad as primary access to the site, and much of the built fabric of the former Arsenal that related directly to military-industrial activities has either been demolished or converted to a mix of uses. As previously noted, the Arsenal area includes four distinct historic districts listed on the National Register of Historic Places. Some of the Arsenal buildings have been converted to residential, commercial, and industrial uses, including live-work studios.

² The area shown in Figure III-2 covers the Plan Area boundary, which is evaluated as the proposed project site in this EIR. This area covers additional area not shown within the study area boundaries depicted on subsequent Draft Specific Plan figures.

The Plan Area currently consists of approximately 526,815 square feet of mixed uses and can be divided into four distinct zones including the Jefferson Ridge/Officers' Row Zone, the Adams Street Zone, the Grant Street Zone, and the South of Grant Zone. These zones are depicted in Figure III-3. Figure III-3 also shows the Draft Specific Plan's proposed form-based Regulating Plan, which is discussed later in this chapter. Existing land use within each of these zones is further described below.

Jefferson Ridge/Officers' Row Zone. This zone includes a large portion of National Register District C as it was originally listed in 1975. This zone is characterized by the orderly row of historic mansions along Jefferson Street, including the Duplex Officers' Quarters, the Lieutenant's Quarters (known as the Jefferson Street Mansion) and the Commanding Officers' Quarters. Together with the row of other homes along Jefferson Street to the west, the original Arsenal Storehouse (known today as the Clocktower) to the east, and the Arsenal Ridge open space to the south, this zone represents a unified collection of high-quality, 19th century architecture. Currently, a proposed 80-unit housing project is under consideration for development within this zone.

Adams Street Zone. Adams Street extends from the Administration Building at the intersection of Park Road and Polk Street eastward to the intersection of Adams and Grant Streets. It is currently characterized by the 1942 Administration Building, a series of light industrial properties along Adams Street, and the 1872 Guard House.

Grant Street Zone. The Grant Street area encompasses properties along both sides of Grant Street between the 1942 Administration Building to the west and the 1870 Office Building to the east. The area is currently composed of an eclectic mix of buildings and uses oriented on a variety of lot sizes and shapes, and includes several buildings of historic significance, including the Administration Building, the Barracks, and the Office Building. Currently, a proposed 22-unit housing development project is under consideration for development within this zone.

South of Grant Zone. The area south of Grant Street includes the area immediately to the north of the Port. This area includes an eclectic mix of industrial and artisan-related uses that occupy a series of buildings with large footprints. Jackson and Tyler Streets follow the alignments of old rail beds and thus many of the buildings are set on high plinths that facilitated loading and unloading onto rail cars. Buildings in this area have generally been designed to maximize flexibility, with simple, utilitarian forms, large single-span open spaces, and clerestory lighting. This zone includes a few historic structures, including the 1876 Blacksmith's Shop and the 1919 Storehouse, which currently houses the Arts Benicia facility.

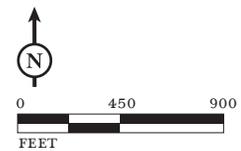
(3) Land Use Designations. The majority of the Plan Area is designated Lower Arsenal Mixed Use in the Benicia General Plan. This designation allows residential, live/work, office, retail, public, quasi-public and limited industrial uses. The intent of this designation is to: continue to encourage a mix of compatible uses in areas of the Lower Arsenal; to promote the upgrading of existing facilities; to promote the preservation and adaptive reuse of historic buildings; and to allow new, compatible buildings to house mixed uses. The residential areas along the western half of Jefferson Street are designated Low Density Residential and the Commanding Officer's Quarters and Clocktower area north of Washington Street is designated Public/Quasi-Public.



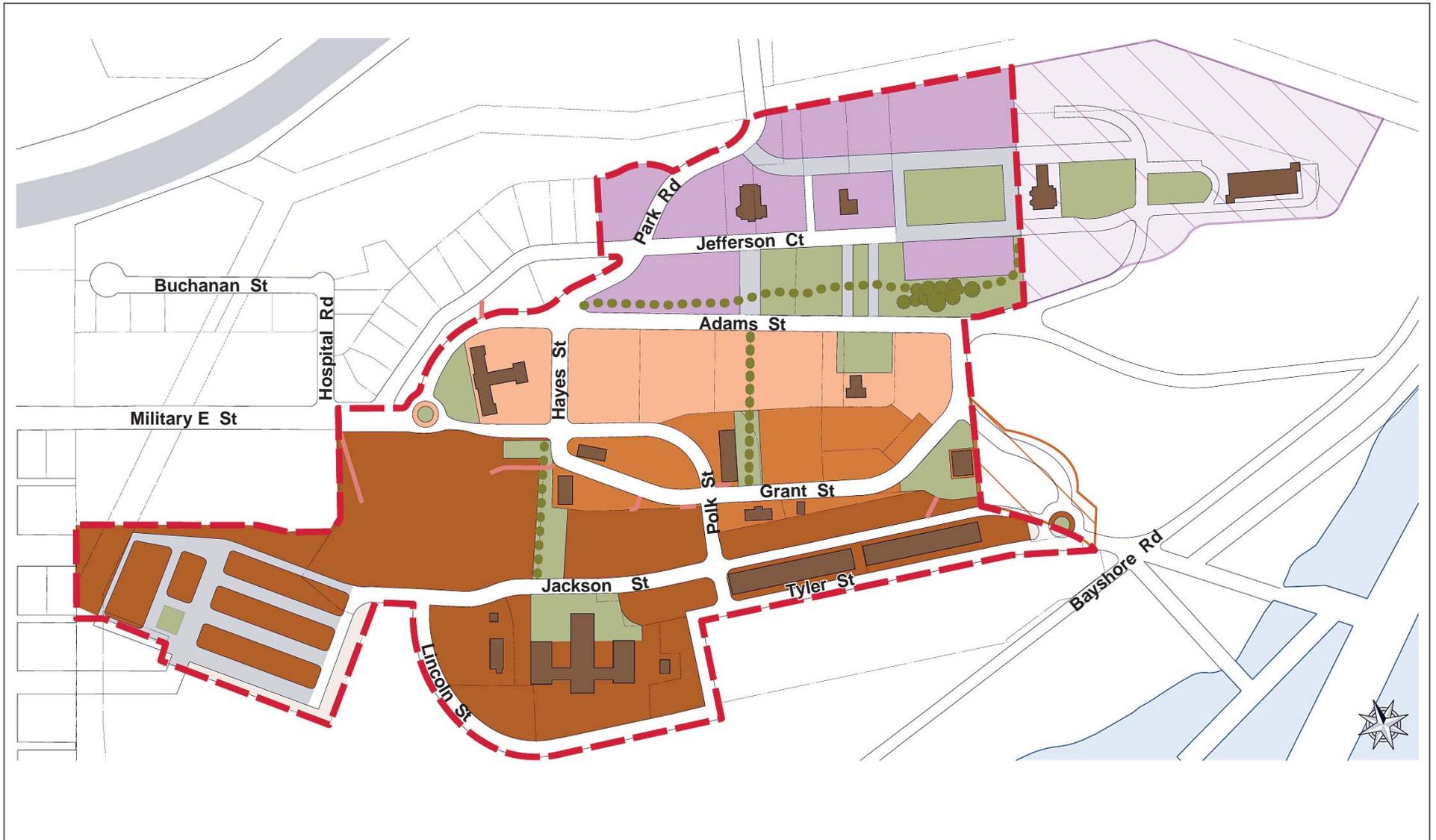
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FIGURE III-2

Lower Arsenal Mixed Use Specific Plan EIR
Aerial Photograph



 PLAN AREA



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- | | | | |
|---|------------------------|---|--|
|  | Study Area |  | Buildings of Historical Significance |
|  | Jefferson Ridge Zone |  | Required Open Space |
|  | Adams St. Zone |  | Required New Street |
|  | Grant St. Zone |  | Required Off-Street Pedestrian Connections |
|  | South of Grant Zone | | |
|  | Additional Study Areas | | |

FIGURE III-3

Lower Arsenal Mixed Use Specific Plan EIR
 Regulating Plan and
 Land Use Zones

SOURCE: OPTICOS DESIGN, INC., 2007

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The Plan Area has a variety of zoning designations, including: General Industrial (IG), Planned Development (PD), General Commercial (CG), Single Family Residential (RS), Office Commercial (CO), and Public and Semi-Public (PS). The Plan Area is also included within the Historic Overlay District. Chapter IV.A, Land Use and Planning Policy, provides additional discussion of existing Plan Area uses, applicable land use regulations, and consistency of the Draft Specific Plan with adopted planning policies.

B. REGULATORY CONTEXT

The regulatory context which governs the use of the Specific Plan, including applicable State and local laws, is described below.

1. California Law

A Specific Plan is a planning and regulatory tool available to local governments in the State of California. Under State law (Government Code Section 65450 et. seq.), cities and counties may use a Specific Plan as a method to implement the Municipal General Plan in a particular geographic area. Government Code Section 65451 requires Specific Plans to include text and diagrams covering: distribution, location, and extent of land uses within the Plan area; proposed distribution, location, extent, and intensity of infrastructural facilities proposed for the Plan area; standards and criteria by which development will proceed; an implementation program for the Draft Specific Plan; and a discussion outlining the relationship of the Draft Specific Plan to the General Plan.

2. Relationship to Benicia Plans and Ordinances

Under the legal authorization set by Article 8 of the State of California Government Code (Sections 65450 - 65457), the Draft Specific Plan, upon adoption, shall become the primary means of regulating and directing land use planning and development within the Plan Area. To ensure consistency between the Draft Specific Plan and the Benicia General Plan, the General Plan would be amended prior to the adoption of the Draft Specific Plan to include a Specific Plan land use designation to replace the land use designation for the Plan Area. This designation would refer users to the standards and guidelines contained within the Specific Plan. To ensure consistency between the Specific Plan and the City of Benicia Zoning Ordinance, the applicable zoning standards would be amended prior to the adoption of the Specific Plan to reflect the Specific Plan zones.

Any aspects of new development or redevelopment not covered in the Specific Plan would be subject to the regulations of the Benicia Municipal Code, including the zoning regulations. Additionally, in those instances where conflicts between existing regulations and the Specific Plan arise, the Specific Plan regulations and policies would prevail. When the Specific Plan does not provide policy guidance, the goals, policies and objectives of the Benicia General Plan would apply.

In addition, once adopted, the Draft Specific Plan would also replace the requirements of the Arsenal Historic Conservation Plan, as applicable to the Plan Area. Where the Draft Specific Plan does not provide policies and guidelines that pertain to specific historic resources issues, those detailed in the Conservation Plan would continue to govern.

C. DRAFT SPECIFIC PLAN OVERVIEW

The primary purpose of the Draft Specific Plan is to guide public and private investment to ensure that future development projects help to realize the community's goals and visions for the Plan Area. The Draft Specific Plan is intended to enhance the distinct and historic characteristics of the Lower Arsenal and to create a finely integrated mixed-use district with a cluster of high-quality, interconnected, and compatible uses. The following discussion describes the planning process for development of the Draft Specific Plan, Draft Specific Plan objectives, and the organization of the Draft Specific Plan.

1. Draft Specific Plan Planning Process

The Draft Specific Plan is a product of intensive public input and extensive data collection. The evolution of the Draft Specific Plan is the result of several site visits, document review, interviews, meetings, a design charrette, and community cooperation and input. The public planning process for development of the Draft Specific Plan included discovery interviews and a visioning workshop and a community design workshop.

Initial public input was gathered over a two-day period (August 22 and 23, 2006) through a series of nearly 90 interviews with property owners, business owners, residents, and representatives of organizations. At the Visioning Workshop on the second day, members of the public were separated into smaller groups to discuss topics such as housing and appropriate land uses, and to identify particular areas in need of preservation and attention. This information was used to guide the design process and to define a series of overriding principles.

The Community Design Workshop occurred over a five-day period during the week of September 18, 2006. This workshop allowed for interaction between the Draft Specific Plan consultant team and the community, and feedback on preliminary design ideas. Interaction occurred through organized presentations, informal evening pinups, group discussions, and facilitation of stakeholder meetings. Physical improvements, infill building types, and implementation strategies, among other topics, were discussed and illustrated. During the workshop, the appropriate strategy for development of a Form-Based Code was also explored.

2. Draft Specific Plan Objectives

The Draft Specific Plan contains a set of goals, policies, programs, and development standards that describe the desired development form for the Plan Area. The overarching objectives for implementation of the Draft Specific Plan include:

- Preservation, enhancement, and promotion of the Arsenal Historic District;
- Restoration of the project area into a unified ensemble of high-quality, 19th and 20th-century architecture through major restoration and rehabilitation of existing historic buildings and sites, and the careful placement and integration of new structures;
- Integration of arts, culture, and historic identity into future development plans for the project area, including enhancement of opportunities for the arts community, development of a destination campus, establishment of heritage tourism, and renovation of period architecture;

- Establishment of an integrated system of scenic trails, paths, and circulation routes connecting key destinations within the project area, the Arsenal Historic District, and throughout the City; and
- A framework to ensure that public services keep pace with new development and that development pays its fair share of infrastructure costs.

3. Draft Specific Plan Organization

The Draft Specific Plan is organized into the chapters that are listed and briefly described below:

- *Chapter 1: Introduction.* The introduction describes the vision and purpose of the plan and sets its context within the City. This chapter also establishes ways in which the Draft Specific Plan supports the goals and objectives of the Benicia General Plan and Arsenal Historic Conservation Plan.³
- *Chapter 2: Land Use Vision.* The land use chapter contains the vision for the future of the Arsenal and introduces the Form-Based Code. This chapter also discusses the primary opportunities and key challenges posed by historic patterns of development. The focal point of this chapter is a detailed description of the proposed design for each of the development zones.
- *Chapter 3: Form-Based Code.* This chapter describes the physical design of Specific Plan development, including the layout and design of streets, the location and extent of the land uses planned for the area, and the development standards that would shape new structures. This chapter is divided into four sections: Building Form Standards, Architectural Standards, Open Space Standards, and Street and Circulation Standards.
- *Chapter 4: Infrastructure and Public Services.* This chapter provides a summary of infrastructure systems and public services necessary to support development associated with the Specific Plan. This chapter describes water supply and distribution, wastewater collection and treatment systems, storm drainage systems, solid waste disposal, energy, and emergency services for the area.
- *Chapter 5: Financing and Implementation.* This chapter describes the steps leading to implementation and financing of the Specific Plan, including identification of the capital improvements required, financing strategies and other implementation measures to protect the artist community and to preserve and enhance historic resources.

D. DRAFT SPECIFIC PLAN DEVELOPMENT ASSUMPTIONS

Residential, office, and artist-related uses are replacing the civilian industrial uses that developed within the Lower Arsenal since its decommissioning. Many of the historic landmarks, including the Commanding Officers' Quarters, the Duplex Officers' Quarters, and the Barracks (also known as the Bachelor Officers' Quarters), are in urgent need of restoration and investment. The opportunities for new investment and revitalization are decreasing due to limited connectivity, poor visibility, and degraded infrastructure within the area.

At the same time, the Plan Area presents a unique opportunity for improvement, with an eclectic mix of vibrant uses, a beautiful setting along the Carquinez Strait, and a collection of 19th and 20th

³ Benicia, City Of, 1993. *Arsenal Historic Conservation Plan*. November.

century historic buildings of national significance. The Draft Specific Plan is based on the fundamental premise that a detailed refinement of the concept of “Mixed Use,” as it is defined in the Benicia General Plan, can result in a strategy for healthy revitalization that protects and enhances the historic resources in the area. The following describes both the “vision” of the Draft Specific Plan and the proposed regulatory framework for which development assumptions are made.

1. Vision Plan

The Draft Specific Plan proposes to redevelop the existing 526,815 square feet of mixed uses currently occupying the Plan Area with approximately 741,865 square feet of new and redeveloped mixed uses, 22 residential units, and 6.39 acres of open space. Table III-1 shows total land uses by type that would be located within each zone. To acknowledge that existing uses may be used more efficiently during and after buildout of the Draft Specific Plan, the analysis in this Draft EIR is based on the assumption that the 526,815 square feet of redeveloped mixed uses could intensify by approximately 20 percent, resulting in an *effective* net increase of 105,363 square feet of mixed uses. The 105,363 square feet of redeveloped uses would not represent actual physical development on the site; instead, this number would represent an intensification of existing uses. Therefore, *for purposes of the environmental review in this Draft EIR, net* change in development on the site would include 215,050 square feet of new mixed uses, 105,363 square feet of redeveloped uses, 22 residential units, and 6.39 acres of open space. The 215,050 square feet of mixed uses would include a mixture of work/live units, retail and office space, and light industrial uses. Please refer to the Draft Specific Plan for a detailed description of the proposed vision. Figure III-4 depicts the illustrative vision for the Plan Area. As the plan is visionary in nature, the Vision Plan also depicts areas outside the immediate Plan Area that will have a key role in the revitalization of the Lower Arsenal (e.g., the Clocktower area). For purposes of environmental review, this entire area is considered as the Plan Area and is included in the analysis provided in this EIR.

Table III-1: Total Uses after Buildout of Specific Plan

Land Use Type	Land Use by Zone (square feet)				Total
	Jefferson Ridge	Adams Street	Grant Street	South of Grant Street	
Recreation, Education, Public Assembly	103,759	8,004	4,916	52,899	169,578
Business, Financial, Professional Services	73,784	70,035	2,622	41,762	188,203
General Services	34,586	18,009	4,916	19,489	77,000
Retail	18,446	26,013	7,538	97,445	85,407
Industry, Manufacturing, Processing	---	64,032	2,622	33,410	164,099
Residential ^a	---	8,004	10,160	---	51,574
Transportation, Communication, Infrastructure	---	6,003	---	---	6,003
<i>Total^b</i>	230,575	200,100	32,775	278,415	741,865

^a Residential uses in the Adams Street Zone are all work/live; in the Grant Street Zone, they are half work/live and half condo/apartment; in the South of Grant Zone they are half work/live and half home-occupation/condo/apartment.

^b Land use totals may vary from noted square footage due to rounding.

Note: This table shows the total square footage of each use within the Plan Area after full implementation of the Draft Specific Plan. This includes existing, new, and redeveloped uses within the Plan Area.

Source: City of Benicia, 2007.

a. Development Zones. In order to respond to the diverse needs of the Plan Area and further define “mixed use,” the Draft Specific Plan includes design proposals for four distinct districts, or “zones,” that recognize the unique characteristics of each. Proposed development in each zone is described below.



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FIGURE III-4

LEGEND

- HISTORIC BUILDINGS
- NEW OR REMODELED BUILDINGS



NOT TO SCALE

Lower Arsenal Mixed Use Specific Plan EIR
Illustrative Vision Plan

(1) **Jefferson Ridge/Officers' Row Zone.** The Draft Specific Plan considers two options for development within this zone. Option 1 envisions the rehabilitation of the zone's historic structures and landscapes and does not attempt to incorporate any new buildings into the area. Option 2 also envisions the rehabilitation of historic structures, but includes a series of new buildings within the area. Approximately 2.99 acres of open space and 184,575 square feet of new mixed uses and 46,000 square feet of redeveloped mixed uses, including institutional, office, commercial, and limited residential uses would be located within this zone under Option 2. Option 2, which would result in more development (and the potential for more environmental impacts) than Option 1, is the option analyzed as part of the "project" in this Draft EIR. However, Option 1 is analyzed as a project alternative in Chapter V.

Preserving open space on Jefferson Ridge as part of Option 2 (which is part of the proposed project) or Option 1 (a project alternative) would likely be achieved through outright purchase by the City or a land conservation organization of portions of the Ridge. However, another option for preserving open space on Jefferson Ridge would be to develop a Transfer of Development Rights (TDR) program in the Lower Arsenal. TDR programs are typically intended to protect open space by allowing property owners to transfer their development rights from a "sending parcel" (i.e., an area designated for open space) to a "receiving parcel" (i.e., an area designated for more intense development). Most of the time, the "receiving parcel" will be owned by a different landowner; thus the owner of the "sending parcel" will be compensated through the sale of development rights to another landowner. TDR programs offer an alternative to the outright purchase of development rights by local and State governments.

On Jefferson Ridge, a TDR program would work as follows: First, Jefferson Ridge itself would be designated as open space or another low-development land use in the Zoning Ordinance, and a TDR program would be established. Second, the City would grant existing Jefferson Ridge landowners in the TDR zone permission to transfer their development rights to another nearby parcel (likely a location elsewhere in the Lower Arsenal, or another location in Benicia that could accommodate increased densities). In this way, the historic integrity and open space qualities of Jefferson Ridge would be preserved and property rights would be protected.

(2) **Adams Street Zone.** The Draft Specific Plan envisions that Adams Street would continue to support a mix of industrial and industrial-compatible uses that can effectively "showcase" the area's historic buildings. Approximately 1.30 acres of open space and 200,100 square feet of redeveloped mixed uses, including office, commercial, light industrial, work/live, and limited residential uses would be located within this zone after full implementation of the Draft Specific Plan.

(3) **Grant Street Zone.** The Draft Specific Plan envisions that Grant Street would develop as an enclave that can support a mix of uses, with an emphasis on residential uses. Artist/live work space at the western terminus of Grant Street would be considered in order to minimize conflicts with surrounding uses. Approximately 0.92 acres of open space and 18,975 square feet of new and 13,800 square feet of redeveloped and mixed uses, including office, commercial, light industrial and work/live uses would be located within this zone after full implementation of the Draft Specific Plan.

(4) **South of Grant Zone.** The Draft Specific Plan envisions that this zone would continue to provide an appropriate environment for industrial and artisan-related uses. Although physical infrastructure improvements could connect and orient this zone to the rest of the Plan Area, the area would

continue to be informal and flexible in nature. Approximately 1.19 acres of open space and 11,500 square feet of new and 266,915 square feet of redeveloped mixed uses, including office, commercial, light industrial, and work/live uses would be located within this zone after full implementation of the Draft Specific Plan. No new residential uses, including live/work uses would be permitted on Jackson Street, west of Polk and south of Grant Streets.

b. Open Space. The Draft Specific Plan designates the primary required improvements to existing open spaces and their required size, allowable uses, and amenities, as well as standards for new open spaces and pedestrian paths that would be provided by future development in the Plan Area. In keeping with the historic significance of the area, parks would be designed to provide passive, rather than active, recreational opportunities, and a series of expansive lawns intended to respond flexibly to community needs. Parks would also provide an interconnected network of sidewalks and multi-use paths for walking and bicycling. Proposed open space areas, including potential uses, within each of the four zones are discussed below.

The Draft Specific Plan contains lighting and landscaping standards for the open space areas. Lighting along streets and within open space areas would be carefully selected for the appropriate context. Please see the Draft Specific Plan for a list of trees and plants suitable for planting within the Plan Area.

(1) Jefferson Ridge/Officers' Row Zone. This zone includes two prominent open spaces: the Officer's Square and the Cork Oak Ridge. Due to the historic significance of this area, landscape treatments would be carefully selected to ensure compatibility with existing historic structures and heritage trees. These open spaces are discussed below.

Officers' Square. The Officers' Square open space area would comprise 0.90 acres and would be a publicly accessible park. The park would be characterized by a formal open lawn framed by the former Lieutenant's Quarters to the west, the Commanding Officers' Quarters to the east, an extended Jefferson Street to the south, and a new building to the north. Park uses would include formal gardens and passive open spaces. Specific features within the park may include a central pavilion and/or monumental flagpole, pedestrian and bicycle paths, and seating areas.

Cork Oak Ridge Park. The Cork Oak Ridge park would comprise 2.09 acres and would be a publicly accessible park. The park would be characterized by an expansive lawn and pedestrian pathways located south and west of the Officer's Square open space area. The park would provide a setting for the historic cork oaks along the Jefferson Ridge and include formal gardens, passive open space, and a publicly accessible terrace.

(2) Adams Street Zone. The Adams Street Zone includes two open space areas: the Administration Building Circle and the Guard House Square. These two spaces are intended to provide formal landscaped areas within the industrial and mixed-use area. These open space areas are discussed below.

Administration Building Circle. The 0.84-acre Administration Building Circle would establish a formal entry into the Plan Area, provide a unified landscape experience with a new traffic roundabout at the intersection of Military East, Adams and Polk Streets, and a renovated and

improved green in front of the historic Administration Building. A prominent central feature such as a fountain or a statue may also be developed.

Guard House Square. The 0.64-acre Guard House Square would be located in front of the existing Guard House and would be maintained as private open space. Existing parking in this area would be relocated.

(3) **Grant Street Zone.** The Grant Street Zone includes two open space areas: the Barracks Square and the Command Post Green. These open space areas are discussed below.

Barracks Square. The 0.25-acre Barracks Square would provide an urban plaza adjacent to the historic former barracks to the west. The plaza would be characterized by a formal, terraced hardscape, with pedestrian-scaled lighting and spaces for outdoor seating.

Command Post Green. The Command Post Green would comprise 0.56 acres and would be characterized by an open, institutional lawn and meandering pedestrian paths.

(4) **South of Grant Street Zone.** The South of Grant Street Zone includes four open space areas: the Blacksmith's Shop Walk, the Blacksmith's Shop Square, the Tyler Street Circle, and the Railroad Street Square. These open space areas are discussed below.

Blacksmith's Shop Walk. The 0.40-acre Blacksmith's Shop Walk would provide pedestrians with a direct connection from the intersection of Grant and Polk Streets south to Jackson Street. The publicly accessible plaza would include a small public open space at the north end, a linear pedestrian walk and stairway, and a hardscaped plaza at its southern end. Uses may include outdoor seating and an art installation/exhibition space. Features would include decorative pavers and pedestrian-scaled lighting.

Blacksmith's Shop Square. The 0.63-acre area in front of the former Blacksmith's shop would be improved to provide a hardscaped, publicly accessible plaza. Uses may include outdoor seating and an art installation/exhibition space. Features would include decorative pavers and pedestrian-scaled lighting.

Tyler Street Circle. The 0.15-acre roundabout at the intersection of Tyler and Grant Streets would provide a visual terminus for Tyler Street and secondary access into the lower portion of the Plan Area.

Railroad Street Square. The 0.12-acre Railroad Street Square would provide a small open space to benefit the potential new mix of uses that would redevelop in this area. Uses may include formal gardens and passive open space.

c. **Circulation.** Modest changes to the existing transportation network within the Plan Area are recommended in the Draft Specific Plan. These changes are intended to support historic resources while improving safety, navigation (wayfinding) within the Plan Area, and overall access. Where feasible, pedestrian and bike connections would also be developed between the Plan Area and historic Arsenal locations to the north of the Plan Area (e.g., Camel Barns). The Draft Specific Plan designates standards for the improvement of existing streets, pedestrian paths, and stairs, as well as

standards for new streets and pedestrian paths that would be provided by future development within the Plan Area. New streets and circulation improvements are depicted in Figure III-5. The development of certain paths on private property may require acquisition of easements or property.

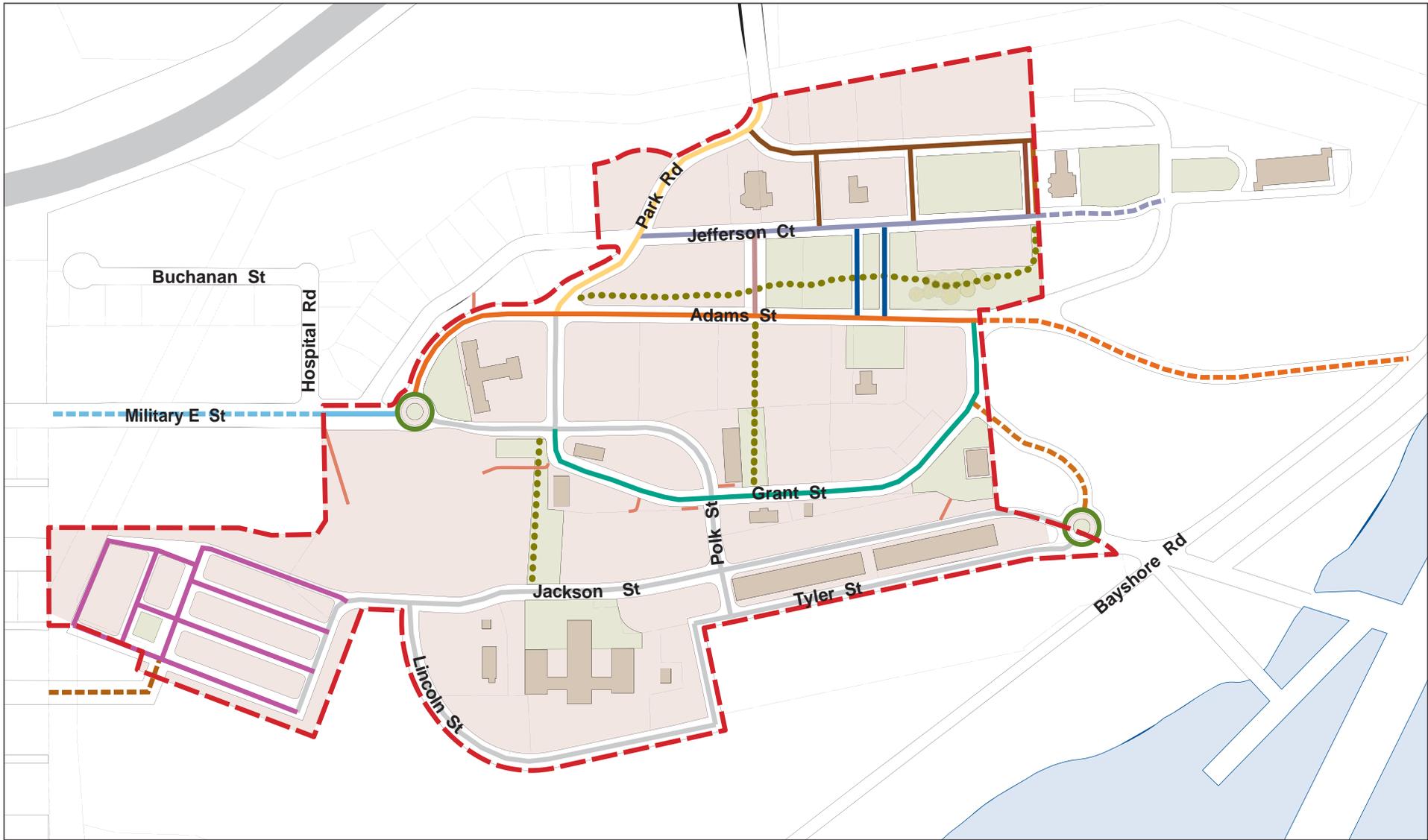
(1) Roadway Network. The roadway network within the Plan Area includes existing and proposed new streets along with other circulation improvements. Improvements to the roadway network are generally discussed below.

Existing Streets. Improvements may be made to Military East, Jefferson Street, Park Road, Adams Street, and Grant Street within the Plan Area. The Draft Specific Plan contains guidelines for planned improvements, including travel lane, bicycle lane, and sidewalk width, and on-street parking. Guidelines for street trees and lighting are also included.

New Streets. New streets are proposed within the Plan Area to fill in an incomplete grid and to distribute vehicle, bike, and pedestrian trips. New streets are shown on Figure III-5 and include the following:

- *Neighborhood Street 1.* One east-west running street would be located north of Jefferson Street with two additional north-south neighborhood streets connecting to Jefferson Street. This street type is characterized by two travel lanes and street parking on one side. In most cases the on-street parking would be located on the south side of the street due to the site's typical primary access from the west. Street trees would be planted at a regular interval but would be of a different species than street trees along Jefferson Street.
- *Neighborhood Street 2.* This north-south street would be located south of Jefferson Street and would connect to Adams Street. This street type is characterized by two travel lanes with street parking on both sides. Street trees would be planted at a regular interval but would be of a different species than the street trees along the Jefferson Street ridge.
- *Neighborhood Avenue.* This north-south street would provide access from Jefferson Street to the north to Adams Street to the south. This street type would be used to preserve the historic sight lines on the Jefferson Ridge. It would be characterized by a 30 foot wide central greenway flanked by two 12 foot wide travel lanes. Rolled curbs at the edge of the greenway and stabilized grass would be used to allow for emergency vehicle access. Street trees would be eliminated and low growing plants would be used in the planting strips to prevent obstruction of historic sight lines.
- *Railroad Street.* This street type would include a network of several new streets within the western portion of the South of Grant Street zone. These new streets seek to imitate the street section of the existing "Railroad" Streets, such as Jackson and Tyler Streets. These streets would have an informal character and would be paved from building face to building face. The informal character would be used to reduce traffic speeds and allow for bicycles and pedestrians to feel comfortable within the street.

Roundabouts. Two roundabouts are recommended within the Plan Area: one at the intersection of Military East, Jefferson, Adams, and Polk Streets and one at the intersection of Tyler Street, Jackson Street, and a future extension of Grant Street. To ensure vehicle safety, roundabouts would meet the



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Legend

- | | | |
|------------------|-----------------------|--|
| Study Area | Neighborhood Street 1 | Required Stair Renovations |
| Military East | Neighborhood Street 2 | Required Off-Street Pedestrian Connections |
| Jefferson Street | Neighborhood Avenue | Existing Streets (Unchanged) |
| Adams Street | Railroad Street | |
| Park Street | Roundabouts | |
| Grant Street | | |

FIGURE III-5

Lower Arsenal Mixed Use Specific Plan EIR
Street and Circulation Improvements

“Urban Compact” or “Urban Single Lane” design parameters as defined by the U.S. Department of Transportation, and would be designed to accommodate trucks and industrial vehicles.

(2) **Pedestrian Paths.** Many of the pedestrian facilities within the Plan Area are either degraded or incomplete. Missing sidewalk segments would be completed along the following existing streets as part of the Draft Specific Plan:

- Grant Street and Adams Street near the flagpole at the end of Military East;
- Park Road from Grant Street to Benicia Bridge path;
- Grant and Polk Streets east of Park Road;
- Adams Street at Cleveland Street;
- Polk Street southeast of Park Road; and
- South and east sides of Grant Street, between Polk and Adams Street (as development progresses).

Additional off-street pedestrian connections would be implemented as listed below. Proposed paths across private property would require acquisition of public easements.

- From Adams Street and Park Road northeast through Jefferson Ridge open space to Jefferson Street south of Commanding Officers’ Quarters, providing access to the Clocktower;
- From Adams Street south to Grant Street on axis with the Duplex Officers’ Quarters and Storehouse; and
- From Grant Street and Polk Street south to Blacksmith’s Shop.

(3) **Bicycle Connections.** With the impending completion of the Benicia Bridge bike path, the City would benefit from increased regional bike access. To connect the Plan Area to existing and proposed regional bike trails, the Draft Specific Plan recommends prioritization of specific bicycle improvements along the following streets/paths:

- Park Road from Benicia Bridge path to Military East;
- Military East;
- H Street to Arsenal;
- West Edge Path (a bike path connecting H Street and Jackson Street along the western edge of the Arsenal);
- Adams Street to Bayshore Road; and
- Bayshore Trail.

Any proposed bicycle paths crossing private property would require acquisition of public easements.

(4) **Transit.** The Draft Specific Plan recommends that Benicia Breeze establish a Plan Area Transportation Management Association (TMA) to work with the Benicia Breeze to establish more frequent special event shuttles between Downtown and the Plan Area. In the long run, frequent, all-day service connecting the ferry terminal, Downtown, and the Plan Area would be explored.

(5) **Wayfinding.** During the Draft Specific Plan preparation process, wayfinding was identified as a key concern. The Draft Specific Plan recommends the following measures to assist with wayfinding:

- Create identifiable districts so that people know where they are in the Plan Area;
- Create secondary routes to provide more ways to travel through the Plan Area;
- Develop a signage plan to enable people to find the optimum route through the Plan Area.

(6) **Parking.** The Draft Specific Plan would encourage the development of shared, managed parking solutions within the Plan Area and cooperation among existing stakeholders to explore a variety of transportation programs for the Plan Area, including:

- Shared parking arrangements;
- Special event management;
- Shuttle programs;
- Bicycle and pedestrian improvements; and
- Promotion of alternative transportation programs.

These recommendations may be handled by the City's existing Traffic, Bicycle, and Pedestrian Safety Committee. However, in the future, a Transportation Management Association (TMA) may be created to handle the complex transportation issues within the Plan Area. A TMA is a public-private partnership formed to oversee common transportation programs.

2. Form-Based Code

The Draft Specific Plan proposes to implement a form-based code for the Plan Area. Unlike conventional land-use based zoning, the form-based code that is part of the Draft Specific Plan focuses primarily on physical form and character of development, with a secondary focus on specific land uses. Form-based codes generally address the relationship between building facades and the public realm, the form and mass of buildings in relation to one another, and the scale and types of streets and blocks. Regulations and standards presented in form-based codes are tied to a regulating plan that designates the appropriate form and scale of development, rather than land use types.

The form-based code detailed in the Draft Specific Plan seeks to provide a regulatory framework for the implementation of the vision plan previously described. The form-based code provides requirements for development and land uses appropriate and specific to the Plan Area and would be the primary body of standards considered by the City in the review and approval of new development. The form-based code would supersede and replace the City Zoning Ordinance provisions regarding zoning districts, allowable land uses, permit requirements for allowable land uses, and site development standards for the Plan Area. Building form and architectural standards outlined in the form-based code are discussed below.

a. Building Form Standards. This section of the form-based code designates Plan Area zones and their corresponding land uses, buildable area, required frontage conditions, and allowed building types. This information is shown and organized on two primary regulating plans: the Regulatory

Zones Plan (see Figure III-3) and the Historic Guidelines Overlay Plan (see Figure III-6). The Draft Specific Plan details specific building standards for each zone, including: building placement with setbacks and encroachment standards; building form; parking placement with setbacks and required number of spaces; and site frontage including building heights and porch depths etc. The intent of the form-based code within each zone is described below.

(1) Jefferson Ridge/Officers' Row Zone. The Jefferson Ridge Zone is depicted in Figure III-7. Form-based standards for this zone are intended to provide a unique, high-quality, publicly accessible environment while facilitating the restoration, enhancement, and preservation of the historic buildings and landscapes within the zone. The zone is divided into three distinct areas, each with specific regulations to ensure that new development would meet the specific goals of the zone. The intent of each sub-area is described below:

Areas A-C. The intent of Areas A-C is to provide a high-quality environment along the Jefferson Ridge. Due to the sensitivity that is required with building in the historic district, the zone is subdivided into three areas. Regulations for each zone require each building's massing to relate to the scale of the historic officer's quarters in the area and to reflect the formal character of institutional military architecture.

Specifically, Area A intends to provide a building that defines and activates the northern edge of the proposed Officers' Square. Area B is intended to provide buildings that define and activate the southern edge of the proposed Officers' Square, preserve the cork oak trees, and enhance the view corridor to the south by providing a large landscaped terrace. Area C is intended to provide a building that defines and activates the western edge of the preserved Jefferson Ridge open space, provides a formal front along Jefferson Street and Adams Street, and defines an appropriate entry at the corner of Jefferson Street and Park Road.

Area D. The intent of Area D is to provide a series of buildings that complement and enhance the formal setting of buildings along Jefferson Street.

Area E. The intent of Area E is to provide buildings that provide formal addresses along the proposed street.

(2) Adams Street Zone. Form-based standards for this zone are intended to promote compatible building forms that can contribute to the continued, diverse combination of office, retail, light industrial, and work/live uses in the area. This main objective of the standards for this zone is that Adams Street continue to provide primary access to the Port for trucks and function as a "buffer zone" between the northern and southern districts of the Plan Area. The standards also seek to maximize the internalization of potentially conflicting land uses through the regulation of internal courtyards, and encourage the development of consistent background buildings that enhance the Plan Area's historic buildings, which include the Guard House and the Arsenal Administration Building.

(3) Grant Street Zone. The Grant Street Zone is depicted in Figure III-8. The form-based code standards for this zone are intended to promote a building form that can assist in the continued, diverse combination of office, retail, light industrial, work/live, artisan, and residential uses in the area. Improvements in this zone are intended to minimize potential conflicts with neighboring industrial uses, resulting in a walkable, pedestrian-oriented, vertically-oriented, mixed-use district that can evolve over time.

This zone is divided into two principal areas in order to recognize the physical conditions created by the historic Barracks. The intent of Area A is to provide a compact, urban node that supports a pedestrian-oriented, mixed-use environment. The intent of Area B is to encourage urban buildings along Grant and Polk Streets that are compatible with the goals of the zone and with the existing historic buildings in the area, including the Storehouse and the Garage.

(4) South Grant Street Zone. The form-based code standards for this zone are intended to promote and preserve a suitable environment for the diverse combination of heavy industrial, light industrial/warehouse, artisan, and work/live uses in the area that will continue to provide a suitable and compatible neighbor with the Port. This zone intends to encourage the preservation of existing large-footprint buildings with flexible floor plans, and the new development of such structures where opportunities arise.

b. Architectural Standards. This section of the form-based code designates allowable building types for each Plan Area zone and provides regulations for the design of their massing, composition, exterior elements, building grounds, and materials and colors. Building types consist of two principal types: “Ridge” types and “Lower Arsenal” types. Architectural standards for each building type are summarized below.

(1) Ridge Building Types. Ridge types are intended for use along the Jefferson Ridge and are characterized by the military/institutional aesthetic established in historic areas such as the Benicia Arsenal, the Mare Island Shipyard, and the Presidio in San Francisco. The Jefferson Street Mansion, located within the Jefferson Ridge Zone and depicted in Photo III-1, is an example of a Ridge building type. Building types for the Ridge would be composed of primary massing elements including the main body (Mansion type), bar/linear connectors and wings, and the application of detail elements such as porches, bay windows, and chimneys. Building forms would be a composition of simple, rectilinear masses. Building types include Mansion, Institutional Courtyard, and Institutional Bar design.



Photo III-1: Jefferson Street Mansion

Walls and roofs would be flat or simple hipped forms and of relatively low slope, with classically proportioned overhangs. Complex or Mansard roof forms would not be permitted. In Courtyard and Bar building types, Gable-ended roof forms would be allowed on primary massing elements. Facades would be divided into uniformly formed bays. Windows and doors would be of high quality wood, simulated wood, or metal frame construction. The Draft Specific Plan also includes design standards for special elements such as chimneys, porches, bay windows, roof dormers, cornices, and eaves. The Draft Specific Plan also provides detailed regulations for all materials and colors used.



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FIGURE III-6



Legend

- Study Area
- - - Sight Lines (Conservation Plan)
- - - Sight Lines (New)
- View Corridors(Conservation Plan)
- Open Space
- Historic Structures

Lower Arsenal Mixed Use Specific Plan EIR
Historic Guidelines Overlay Plan



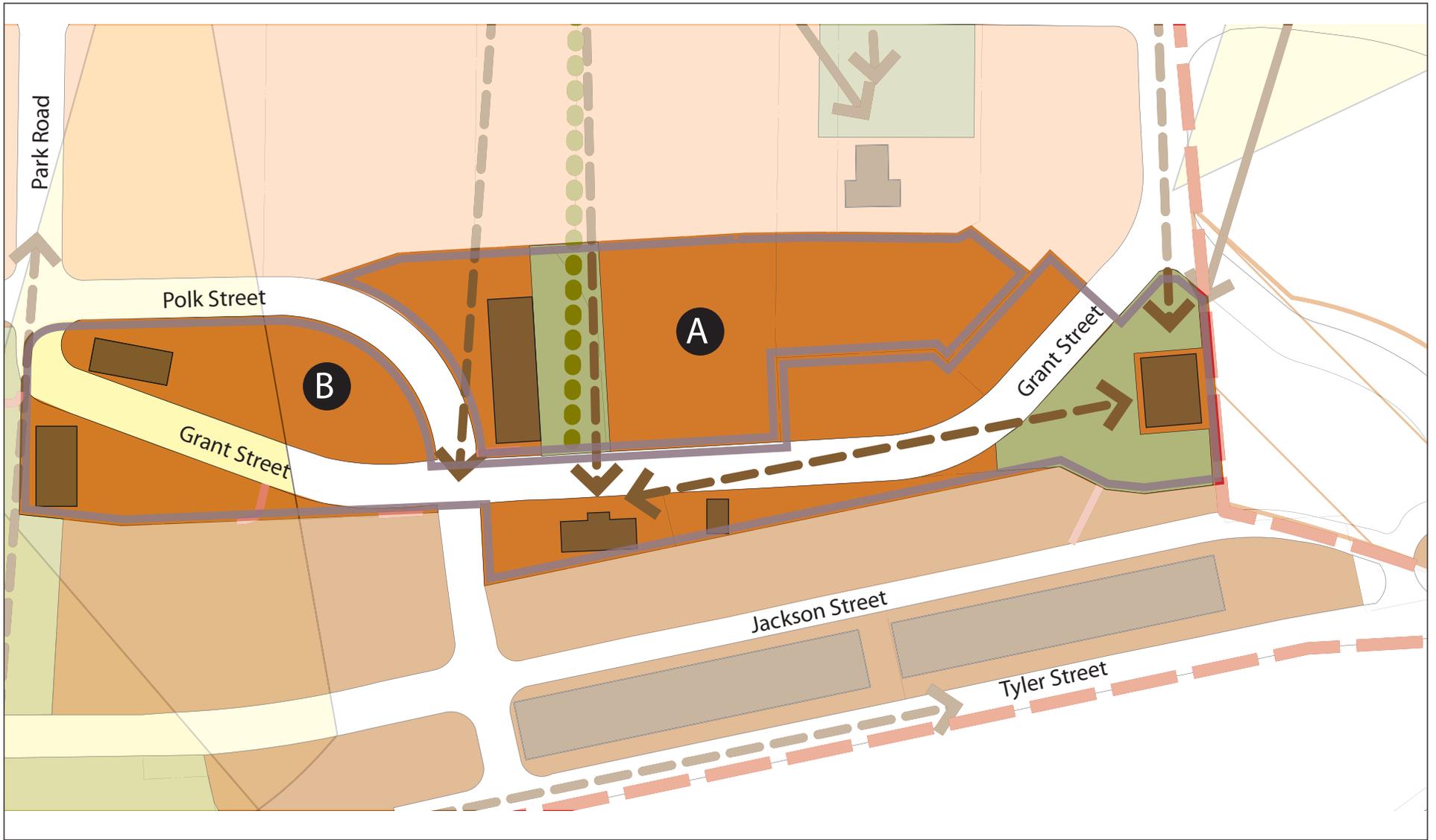
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- LEGEND**
- SITE AREA
 - JEFFERSON RIDGE ZONE
 - BUILDINGS OF HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE
 - REQUIRED OPEN SPACE
 - REQUIRED NEW STREET
 - REQUIRED OFF-STREET PEDESTRIAN CONNECTIONS

FIGURE III-7

Lower Arsenal Mixed Use Specific Plan EIR
 Jefferson Ridge Zone



LSA



NOT TO SCALE

LEGEND

- SITE AREA
- GRANT STREET ZONE
- BUILDINGS OF HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE
- REQUIRED OPEN SPACE
- REQUIRED NEW STREET
- REQUIRED OFF-STREET PEDESTRIAN CONNECTIONS

FIGURE III-8

Lower Arsenal Mixed Use Specific Plan EIR
Grant Street Zone

(2) Lower Arsenal Building Types. The Lower Arsenal types are intended for use south of Adams Street and are characterized by the industrial aesthetic of mid-century industrial buildings as well as new architectural interpretations of an industrial aesthetic found throughout the Bay Area. The J.R. Schneider building, located within the South of Grant Street Zone and depicted in Photo III-2, is an example of a Lower-Arsenal building type. Lower Arsenal building types are characterized by Mixed-Use and Industrial building types. These building types would have an industrial character intended to be compatible with the historic buildings of the Lower Arsenal. Building types are characterized by simple forms that are built from sturdy materials that give an air of permanence. The building types for the Lower Arsenal Mixed Use and Industrial areas are composed of three simple forms that already exist within these areas: the linear bar type, the small simple rectilinear box type, and a large rectilinear box type. Building types include Mixed-Use Bar, Mixed-Use Courtyard, and Industrial.



Photo III-2: J.R. Schneider building

Walls and roofs would be flat, simple gable-end, hipped, or single-sloped forms with a relatively low slope. The Lower Arsenal Industrial type roofs may be in a saw-toothed form with relatively low slope. Facades would be rationally composed and divided into uniformly spaced bays. Windows and doors may be vertically or horizontally proportioned with true or simulated divided lights that are square or vertical in proportion. The Draft Specific Plan also includes design standards for special elements such as porches and galleries, lighting, awnings, chimney and ventilation stacks, service courtyards, and walls and gates. The Draft Specific Plan also provides detailed regulations for all materials and colors used.

3. Infrastructure and Services

The Draft Specific Plan details the “backbone” utility infrastructure needed to support the proposed level of development. New water lines would generally be constructed beneath portions of Jefferson Street and Jackson Street. New wastewater facilities would be constructed beneath a portion of Adams Street and between the planned Madison Street and Jefferson Street (in the vicinity of the Commanding Officers’ Quarters). New storm drainage facilities would include new storm drains beneath Jefferson Street and new stormwater detention basins in both the Jefferson Ridge and South of Grant Street zones. Existing infrastructure and anticipated water, wastewater, and storm drainage infrastructure improvements are discussed in greater detail in Section IV.L, Utilities of this EIR.

Public service providers within Benicia include the Benicia Fire Department, the Benicia Police Department, the Benicia Unified School District, the Benicia Public Library, and the City’s Parks and Community Services Department. Pacific Gas and Electric (PG&E) provides electricity and gas services and AT&T provides internet and telephone services. Services from these providers are currently available to the Plan Area. These services are described in greater detail in Section IV.K, Public Services of this EIR.

E. IMPLEMENTATION AND FINANCING

The Draft Specific Plan notes that, to finance development and infrastructure improvements in the Plan Area, the “City of Benicia will need to reach out to its private partners, foundations, and nonprofit agencies for fundraising, philanthropy, and nonprofit development.” The financing-related findings and recommendations in the Draft Specific Plan are oriented towards long-term programs and implementation strategies intended to protect the unique characteristics of the Plan Area, rather than stimulating reinvestment that invites development with highest and best economic use. This strategy could limit the potential for revenue generation to fund capital improvement projects and may slow the pace of development.

Potential financing options for implementation of the Draft Specific Plan include:

- **Direct City Financing** which may include financing from the City General Fund, establishment of a Redevelopment Agency, or housing set-aside;
- **Other Government Sources** which may include financing from Transportation for Livable Communities Programs, Community Development Block Grants, State historic restoration incentives, or historic preservation tax credits;
- **Private Involvement** which would include in-lieu development fees; and/or
- **Assessment Districts** which may include business improvement districts, property and business improvement districts, a lighting and landscape assessment district, a maintenance assessment district, or a parking assessment district.

The Draft Specific Plan includes a number of implementation goals, policies, and actions for the Plan Area. These are intended to fulfill the standards and requirements set forth in the form-based code. Please refer to the Draft Specific Plan for detailed implementation goals, policies, and actions.

F. USES OF THE EIR

As noted above, this EIR has been prepared as a Program EIR. This Program EIR will be used to provide decision-makers and the general public with relevant environmental information to use in considering the following actions:

- Adoption of Lower Arsenal Mixed Use Specific Plan.
- An adoption of the form-based code for the Plan Area to replace the City’s zoning ordinance.
- Amendments to the General Plan and Zoning Ordinance to reflect adoption of the Specific Plan.