# CENTRAL CITY COMMUNITY PLAN

### CENTRAL CITY ..... 11-CC-1

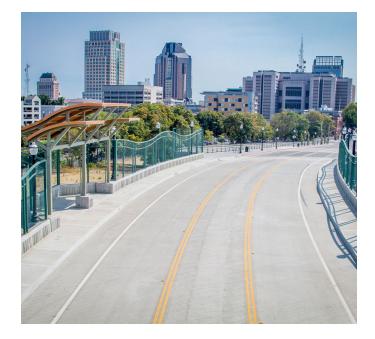
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### **COMMUNITY LOCATION**

The Central City Community Plan Area encompasses about seven square miles at the core of the City of Sacramento, and includes Downtown, Midtown, Old Sacramento Waterfront, the Railyards, and River District. As shown on **Map CP-CC-1**, the area is bounded by the American River to the north, the Sacramento River to the west, Alhambra Boulevard to the east, and Broadway to the south. Interstate 5 (I-5) extends north-south by the western boundary of the community and Highway 50 extends eastwest by the southern boundary. The Central City is a destination for tourists, rich with cultural and recreational attractions, and is the regional hub for

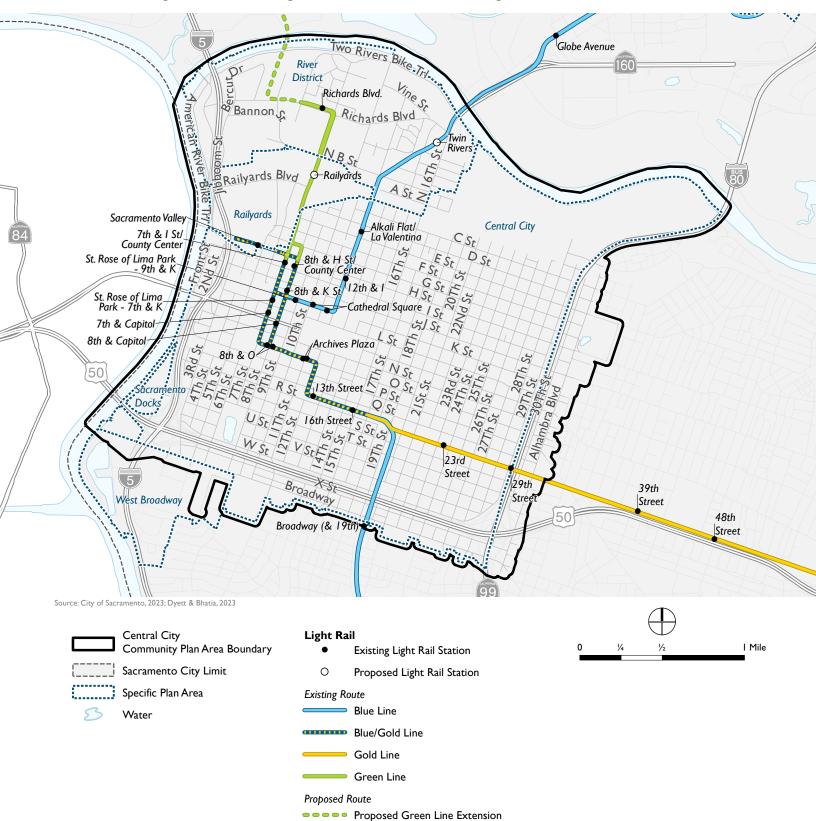


economic and government institutions. Central City boasts important landmarks such as Old Sacramento Waterfront, K Street, Crocker Art Museum, the State Capitol, Downtown Commons (DOCO) and the Golden 1 Center, the Convention Center, Memorial Auditorium, the SAFE Credit Union Performing Arts Center, Midtown, Sutter's Landing Regional Park, and Sutter's Fort.

## DEVELOPMENT AND PLANNING HISTORY

The Central City is home to the earliest settled area of modern Sacramento – Sutter's Fort, which was established in 1840 by John Augustus Sutter. Sutter's settlement became an important trading port along

## Map CP-CC-I Central City Community Plan Area Boundary



the Sacramento River, and following the discovery of gold in 1849, Sutter laid out a grid of streets extending from the bustling riverfront embarcadero and named the new town Sacramento. In 1879. Sacramento was established as the State Capitol, and a series of major floods and rebuilding processes as well as the introduction of a streetcar line in the 1870s spurred rapid growth within and beyond the Central City through the late nineteenth and first half of the twentieth century. Following WWII, physical and economic decline in Downtown as well as a loss in tax revenue due to booming suburban development in Sacramento's further neighborhoods led the City to undertake redevelopment and urban renewal efforts in the Central City. Urban renewal projects such as the construction of Interstate 80 (I-80), I-5, and the K Street Mall, as well the corresponding demolition of the West End neighborhood and displacement of its residents (this history is described in more detail in the Environmental Justice Element, and the accompanying report, "Race and Place in Sacramento"), resulted in major changes to the Central City's physical and social character. By the early 2000s, major zoning and land use regulations had transformed the Central City into the bustling urban downtown familiar to residents today.

Today, as a major regional employment center, the Central City is home to approximately 35,500 residents and over 117,000 jobs, the majority of which are in government, professional and business services. As the State capital and urban core of Sacramento, the Central City has the highest concentration of office space and government jobs, as well as the most multi-family housing of any community plan area in the city. The Central City houses 30 historic districts, including Old Sacramento Waterfront, which is a designated National Historic Landmark District. Residents enjoy access to a robust transit network, including the SacRT Blue, Gold, and Green Lines, several bus routes, and the Sacramento Valley Station, as well as pedestrian-oriented retail and commercial areas, and tree-lined streets and alleys built atop a historic grid. Small plazas, city parks, and waterfront areas such as Tiscornia Park and Sutter's Landing Park provide residents with a range of open space and recreation opportunities.

In 2018, the City adopted the Central City Specific Plan (CCSP), a policy document with a planning

horizon of twenty years that implements the General Plan, providing an overarching vision, as well as strategies and actions for catalyzing the development of a modern, inclusive, interconnected and mature urban center in the Central City with 10,000 new housing units. Other Specific Plans within the Community Plan Area include the River District Specific Plan, the Railyards Specific Plan, and the West Broadway Specific Plan.

### **MAJOR TRANSPORTATION ROUTES**

Regional access to and from the Central City is provided by I-5, I-80, Highway 160, and Highway 99. The Central City street network is laid out in a grid pattern with numbered streets running north/ south and lettered streets running east/west. Major streets that connect the Central City with outlying areas include 15th Street and 19th Street running south; 16th Street and 21st Street running north (to C Street); J Street running east; I Street running west; and Capitol Avenue running east/west. In addition to these major streets, the I Street Bridge and Tower Bridge connect Sacramento with the City of West Sacramento. The Central City is also the convergence of the Blue and Gold Line light rail tracks that connect Downtown with northeastern, eastern, and southern Sacramento.



#### **COMMUNITY VISION**

IN 2040, the Central City is the vibrant urban core of Sacramento, one of the most livable cities in the United States. With tree-lined streets, thriving businesses, and a dynamic mix of historic and contemporary architecture, the Central City is a wonderful place to live and work. An array of housing choices in both Downtown and Midtown cater to residents of all backgrounds and income levels and allow people to stay in the community their whole lives. Historic single-unit homes, duplexes, and triplexes co-exist with row houses, condos, apartment buildings, supportive housing, and senior housing, fostering a thriving, diverse community. New and infill developments built around transit link the amenities and bustle of Downtown with the beauty of the Sacramento and American Rivers. Old Sacramento Waterfront continues to be a regional draw and offers both tourist-oriented and community-centric shops and entertainment.

As the seat of government for California, the thousands of State employees who commute in to work from all over the region can arrive comfortably on the light rail or the extensive bus network; many people employed in the Central City also call the community home. Slower driver speeds; car-free areas; and a variety of connected, convenient and frequent transit options-buses on dedicated lanes, light rail and commuter rail; protected bikeways; separated sidewalks; and well-managed car/ bike/scooter-sharing-are available to lessen driving dependency and support the sustainability-forward, active lifestyle of the Central City residents. Music venues, theaters, art studios, and prominent murals showcase Central City's culture. Fresh, local foods are available from farmers' markets, community gardens, and local restaurants and cafés. The Central City's abundant housing, tree-lined streets, walking paths, and clean, vibrant public parks combine to create unsurpassed urban living, a welcoming blend of Sacramento's rich history and its dynamic future.



# **Community Issues and Opportunities**

The following local planning issues and opportunities are synthesized from community input gathered over the course of the planning process, which included an in-person Community Plan Area meeting in August 2019, a virtual open house conducted in October 2020, community-led "meetings in a box," and ongoing correspondence from individuals and neighborhood organizations as well as citywide outreach activities. The colored dots next to each paragraph and shown in the legend below indicate where readers can find policies and information related to each community issue and opportunity.

- Addressed in this Community Plan
- See Element 3: Land Use and Placemaking
- See Element 4: Historic and Cultural Resources
- See Element 5: Economic Development
- See Element 6: Environmental Resources and Constraints
- See Element 7: Environmental Justice
- See Element 8: Mobility
- See Element 9: Public Facilities and Safety
- See Element 10: Youth, Parks, Community, and Recreation
- See the Housing Element

• Transit-Oriented Development - The Central City boasts the best levels of transit service in the city of Sacramento, presenting important opportunities for further transit-oriented development that will help the City achieve communitywide goals for sustainability, climate action, and economic resilience. Relatively high land values make high density/intensity infill development more financially feasible; many community members would like to see more development intensity in Midtown, on the T Street corridor, on the east side of 12th Street, and near transit stations.

● Preservation and Reuse - The Central City has an array of beautiful historic districts and landmarks that make an important contribution to sense of place. Many residents are eager to maintain and preserve historic buildings and sites and are interested in adaptive reuse of historic buildings in instances when the building's original use becomes impractical or infeasible. Reuse of older buildings could provide cost-effective sites for important amenities and services in a manner that enhances the existing built environment and celebrates the city's heritage. Some community members would also like to see new development be designed to be compatible with existing historic resources. Old Sacramento is seen as an important asset for the city, and many locals would like to see the district, which now caters mainly to tourists and visitors, have more community-centric attractions and amenities.

• Housing - The Central City has the highest percentage of multi-unit housing out of any community plan area, but is experiencing ongoing gentrification, with many low-income residents either already or in the process of becoming priced out of the area, a top concern for Central City residents. Special attention should be made to ensure that residents can comfortably age in place and that persons of all backgrounds can thrive in a healthy environment without worrying about being priced out of the area. A wider range of affordable housing options and tenant protections can help prevent displacement.

• Active Transportation and Connectivity -The Central City has a robust mix of land uses, and a variety of mobility options that make it relatively easy to live and get around without a car. Many community members would like to build on these successes to further improve car-free options and multi-modal connections to reduce the number of cars in the Central City; expand bicycling, walking and transit infrastructure, including bike parking, street lighting, shade trees, transit signage, and increased transit frequency; and increase bike- and scooter-share options. Many residents expressed a vision for being "tailpipe free" in 2040.



• Curbside Management - New mobility platforms, and shared mobility services are quickly arriving to Sacramento. As mobility, transportation, and delivery services develop and come online, the curb will be impacted differently and competing interests regarding use of the curb is expected. Although emerging services including, Transportation Network Company (TNC) rideshare companies, carshare, and rideable services help people with getting around the dense urban core of Sacramento, community members have expressed concerns with safe loading and unloading, and appropriate use of bike lanes and sidewalks would improve safety and comfort, particularly in heavily trafficked areas within the Central City.

• • • Transportation Safety - With so many people walking, scooting, and bicycling in the Central City, transportation safety is a high priority for residents. 12th Street is one of Sacramento's top 10 corridors in the city involving the highest numbers of fatal and serious crashes involving people walking, bicycling, or driving.

Arts and Neighborhood Beautification - The Central City's rich arts and cultural scene is a point of pride for the community. It includes the historic R Street District, home to the Warehouse Artist Lofts as well as an array of theater companies including Celebration Arts, Capital Stage, Sacramento Theater Company and B Street Theatre. A burgeoning contemporary dance scene and many live music venues present local and national talent, while murals by local, national, and international artists adorn walls throughout the area. Museums and cultural treasures, like the Latino Center of Art and Culture and Brazilian Center for Cultural Exchange, contribute to the area's cultural vitality. The City's Art in Public Places program boasts iconic sculptures throughout the area. Implementation of the strategies and policies identified in the Creative Edge Plan will expand opportunities to integrate Sacramento's public art program into the planning, funding, and design of capital improvement projects, cementing the Central City's identity as a regional cultural destination. Community members would also like to see improved maintenance of public facilities such as parks, community gardens, restrooms, tree canopies, and wayfinding signage to ensure that streetscapes

are vibrant and attractive, and that neighborhoods will continue to be pleasant to both look at and live in. It is becoming increasingly difficult for artists to find affordable creative space in the Central City.

• Affordable and Attractive Retail - Central City residents value their neighborhood shops, cafes, and restaurants, particularly from local businesses that cater primarily to residents. There is also a desire for more dense, walkable neighborhoods with mixed-use office and retail spaces like those along J Street bordering the Boulevard Park and Midtown neighborhoods. New goods and services located within neighborhoods that cater to healthy and active life-styles, such as affordable retail, grocery, and restaurant options, are desirable to many community members.



Park Access and Amenities - Parks are critical to sense of place and a connection with nature in the Central City. Because the Central City is an urban environment, available land is constrained; therefore, creating new parks is difficult. Despite this, there are creative opportunities for residents to experience park space in privately owned public spaces, such as rooftop patios and gardens, outdoor dining converted from on-street parking spaces, and activating alleys into small public places. Features like these could ensure that even residents who are not within easy walking distance of a park, such as in the Newton Booth and Richmond Grove neighborhoods, would have access to park spaces and recreation areas. Residents would also like to see more consistent maintenance of existing parks, as well as more litter receptacles and safe and clean public restrooms in parks.

• Public Services and Facilities - Residents emphasized the need for more support services for mental health, substance abuse, and employment, coupled with increased housing options for people experiencing homelessness, and asked for increased enforcement of unpermitted camping and loitering throughout the Central City.

• Environmental Justice and Hazardous Site Remediation - Disadvantaged communities—areas in California that most suffer from a combination of economic, health, and environmental burdens including poverty, high unemployment, air and water pollution, presence of hazardous wastes, and high incidence of asthma and heart disease—are located throughout a large portion of the Central City. Additional housing resources, transit options, and accessibility considerations are of critical concern for these communities, as well as for seniors and people with disabilities. Former industrial uses in the Railyards district and other locations within the Central City has left soil and water pollution that must be cleaned up before development can occur so that no residents or tenants faces unhealthy living conditions. The Railyards Specific Plan outlines goals and policies to ensure that public health, safety, and the environment are protected in that area.



## **Contextual Topic Areas**

### LAND USE AND PLACEMAKING

In Part 2 of the General Plan, the Land Use and Placemaking Element includes a land use diagram as well as maps that show maximum floor area ratio (FAR), minimum FAR, and minimum density standards across the city. Together, these maps provide direction for land use and development intensities citywide. Development in the Central City area is subject to these citywide development standards, and closeups of these land use designations and development intensities for the Central City Community Plan Area are provided in **Maps CP-CC-2** through **CP-CC-5** for ease of reference.

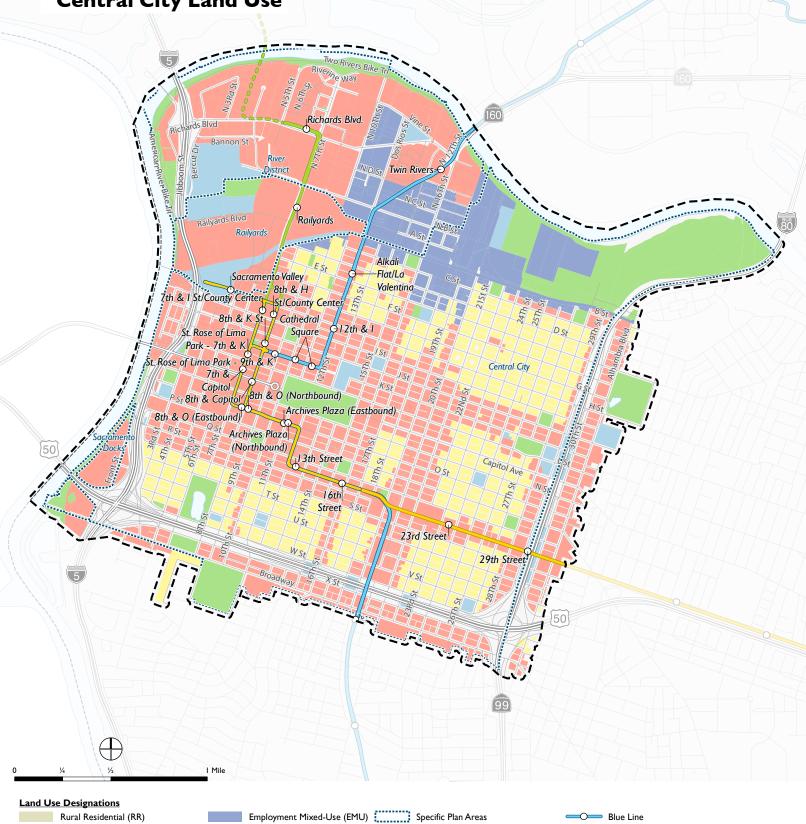
Land use designations and development intensities, as well as land use and urban design policies in the CCSP and this General Plan, are regulatory tools that are meant to encourage the type of mixed-use development patterns that community members would like to see, as well as to stimulate housing production near high-frequency transit, along commercial corridors, and near Downtown; foster walkable environments; and facilitate the production of a wider variety of housing at different price points, including affordable housing. Maximum allowed development intensities, shown as a FAR allowed on each parcel, control the size and bulk of development but allow wider ranges of housing types to be built throughout the Central City. Higher intensity development is permitted throughout most of the Community Plan Area, while maintaining lower intensities that are in character with historic districts farther from transit. Work by the local Property and Business Improvement Districts (PBIDs) finance maintenance, improvements, and programs that help to promote local businesses and foster vibrant parks and mixeduse places.

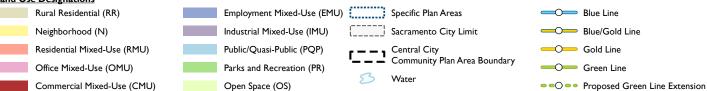
Land Use policies in this Community Plan complement citywide policies in the Land Use and Placemaking Element and in the Housing Element meant to promote availability of a wider range of housing types, improve housing affordability, and build in anti-displacement measures. The Central City, Railyards, River District, and West Broadway specific plans, plus the Sacramento Valley Station Area Plan, are implementation tools of the Central City Community Plan in addressing specific land use, placemaking, and economic development priorities. Collectively, these plans articulate a vision of the Central City—echoed in this community plan—as the urban core of Sacramento that balances a revitalized riverfront; ample employment uses; cultural, historical, and tourist destinations; major sporting events; diverse and walkable neighborhoods with a variety of housing options available to a wide range of income levels and preferences; and an efficient, convenient, and climate-friendly transportation system connects riders to a mix of uses.

For a detailed explanation of land use designations, refer to the Land Use and Placemaking Element of the General Plan. For additional policies related to housing affordability, homelessness, and gentrification, see the Housing Element. For specific plan policies and actions related to housing production and variety, as well as neighborhood-specific anti-displacement measures, see the CCSP.

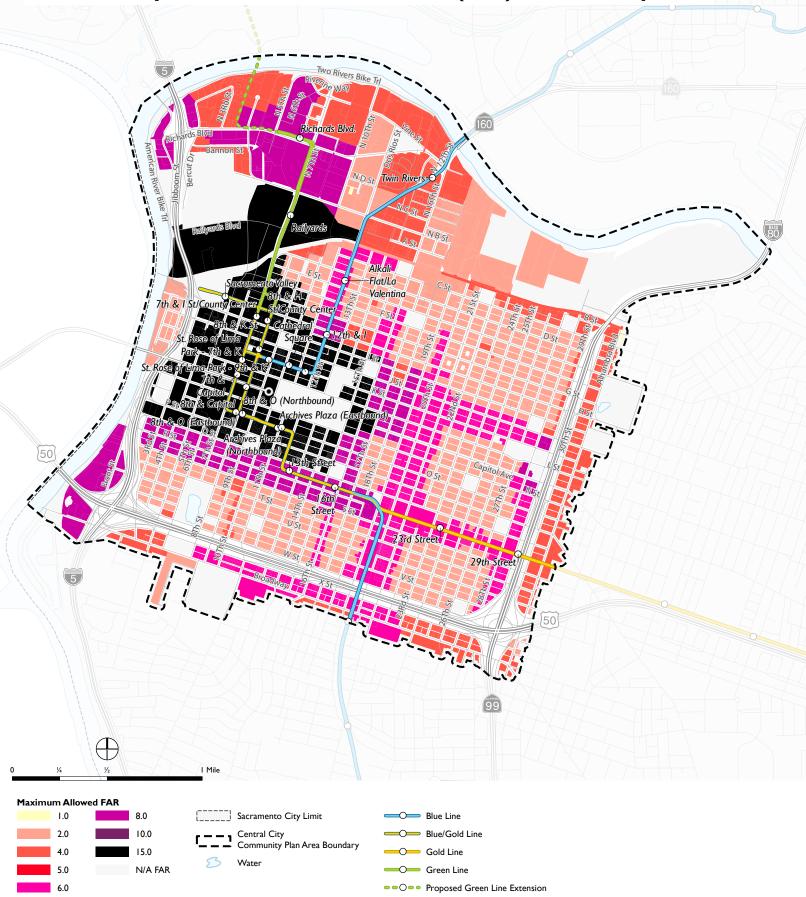


## Map CP-CC-2 Central City Land Use



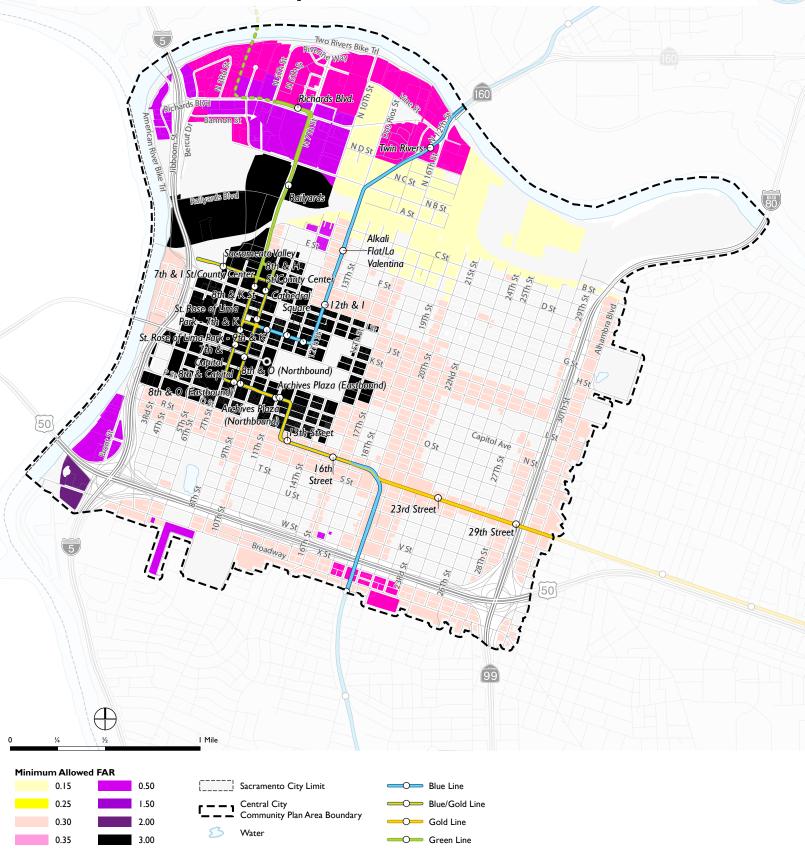


Map CP-CC-3 Central City Maximum Floor Area Ratio (FAR) - All Development



## Мар СР-СС-4

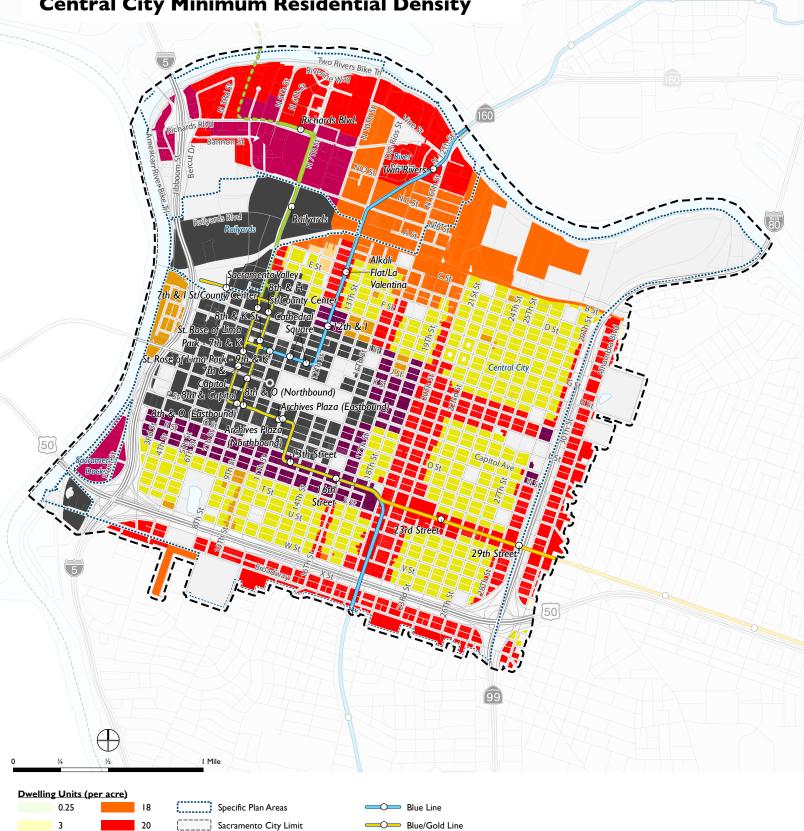
Central City Minimum Floor Area Ratio (FAR) – Mixed-Use and Non-Residential Development



N/A FAR

0.40

## Мар СР-СС-5 **Central City Minimum Residential Density**





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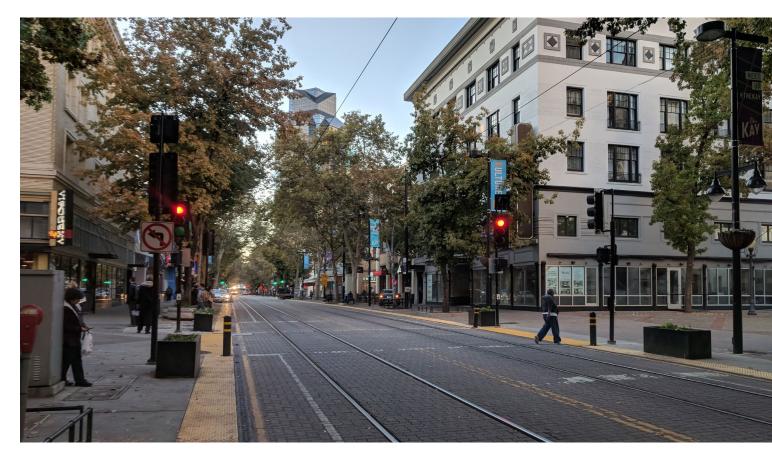
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#### MOBILITY

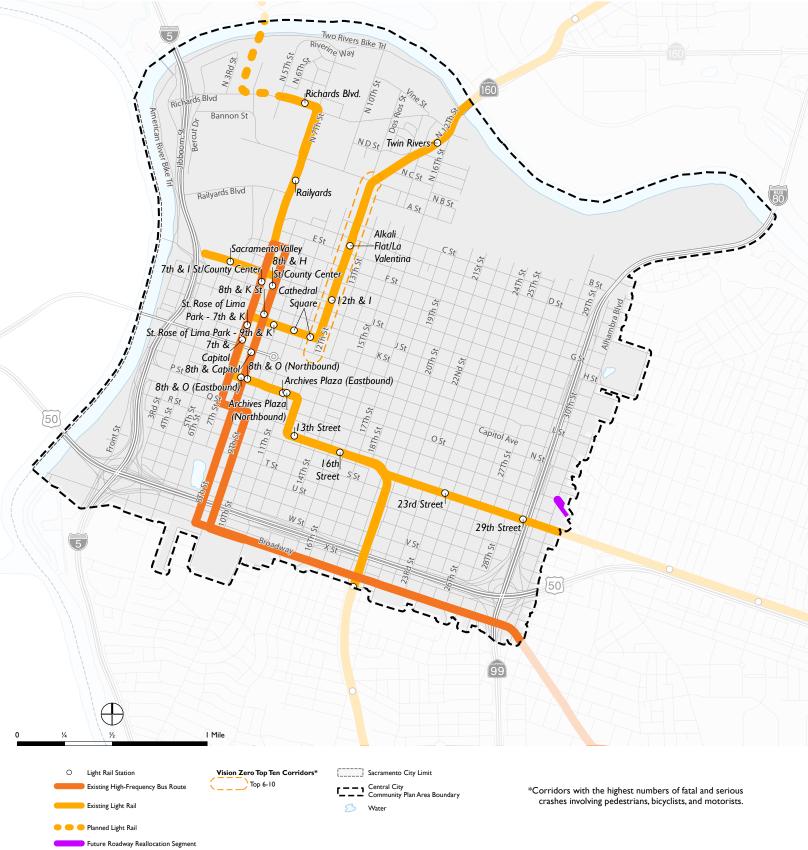
Several roadway changes were already approved in the CCSP, including the Broadway Complete Streets project and the North 12th Street Complete Streets project. **Map CP-CC-6** shows the additional planned roadway reallocations for the Central City Community Plan Area, which are street segments throughout the city that have been identified as places where excessive roadway capacity—in other words, too many vehicle travel lanes—that could be repurposed as spaces to prioritize walking, bicycling, and transit use. These could take the form of improvements such as wider sidewalks, protected bike lanes, bulb-out transit stops, and bus-only lanes, and will require further community outreach, study, and roadway design.

Improvements and interventions identified in the Mobility Element, CCSP, Pedestrian Master Plan, Bicycle Master Plan, and the Transportation Priorities Plan will help to address gaps in walking and bicycling networks, including connections to transit and use of emerging technologies such as scooters, e-bikes, and other technologies. In particular, the CCSP contains a number of policies relating to connecting gaps in the bicycling network with separated bikeways, improving traffic signage, and connecting gaps in the sidewalk network while enhancing pedestrian infrastructure. Additionally, the CCSP mobility chapter outlines policies for promoting transit as the preferred mode of transportation within the Central City. Additional policies around electric vehicle charging, transportation safety, transit frequency and reliability, curbside management, and pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure can be found in the Mobility Element.

Enacting these policies present opportunities to enhance safety, support public health and mobility, and create attractive ways to travel that are healthy, lower cost, and climate friendly.



## Map CP-CC-6 Central City Roadway Reallocations



Source: Sacramento Regional Transit District, 2023; City of Sacramento, 2023; Dyett & Bhatia, 2023

#### **PARKS ACCESS**

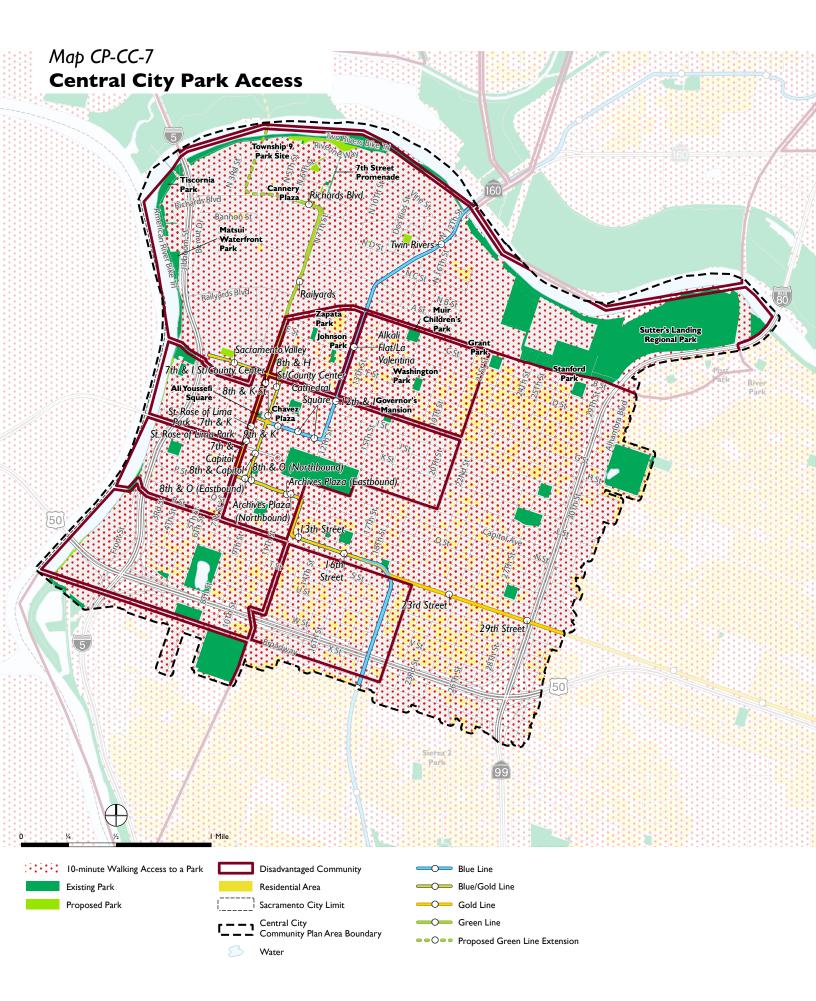
The Central City has 12 community parks, 11 neighborhood parks, three regional parks, and the Sacramento River Parkway, for a total of 310 acres of parks and open space. However, when it comes to neighborhood serving parks there is still a need and there are gaps in service provision in the southeast corner of the Plan Area. Given the more intensive, urban nature of the Central City, future parks in the Plan Area may be smaller, more compact, and more urban in character than parks in suburban portions of the city. Several of the Central City's most beloved parks and open spaces are managed by the State of California, including Capitol Park, Old Sacramento Historic Park, and Sutter's Fort State Historic Park; these resources contribute to parks access for Central City residents.

Residents in some neighborhoods, particularly the Newton Booth and Richmond Grove neighborhoods, lack park access within a 10-minute walk, as shown in **Map CP-CC-7**. The CCSP identifies creative strategies to increase park access, despite the Central City's limited land availability, which include creating small community gathering spaces such as tot lots, parklets, and community gardens; and exploring joint use agreements and partnerships with schools, businesses, and institutions in the Central City.

Policies in this Community Plan complement citywide policies and actions in the Youth, Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Element, which includes policies to support equitable, accessible parks, and maintenance, including within the Central City.







# **Community Policies**

The policies below address issues specific to the Central City and supplement citywide policies; many of the issues and opportunities of the Central City are common to many areas of Sacramento and are addressed at the citywide level.

### Land Use and Placemaking

- CC-LUP-1 Central Business District. The City shall strengthen the role of the Central City as the regional center of the greater Sacramento area for living, commerce, culture, and government.
- CC-LUP-2 Local Retail. The City shall support efforts by the Downtown Sacramento Partnership, the Midtown Association, the River District, the R Street Partnership, the Handle District and other community organizations to conserve and promote locally-owned, community-oriented retail and commercial uses within the Central City by facilitating the use and activation of open space and the public right-of-way for uses such as pop-up markets and sidewalk sales, expanded outdoor dining, food trucks and other types of pop-up food sales, and closed street events and festivals.
- CC-LUP-3 Old Sacramento Waterfront Community Uses. The City shall collaborate with the Downtown Sacramento Partnership to promote opportunities for communityoriented uses in Old Sacramento Waterfront, such as museum nights, arts and craft fairs, farm-to-table restaurants, outdoor concerts and year-round jazz events, science fairs and exhibits, expanded community theater, public talks and workshops, and youth-oriented play spaces.

- CC-LUP-4 Old Sacramento Retail Visioning. The City shall collaborate with the Downtown Sacramento Partnership to conduct a retail visioning process for Old Sacramento, particularly looking at enhancing opportunities for artists, antique dealers, and the creative community to locate in Old Sacramento and help to shape its future.
- CC-LUP-5 Old Sacramento Access and Views. The City shall collaborate with the State of California, SacRT, and the Downtown Sacramento Partnership to improve arrival experiences into Old Sacramento, particularly considering wayfinding and arrival experience for those arriving by foot, bike, or transit, such as through clear signage and direct access routes.
- CC-LUP-6 Old Sacramento River Views. The City should continue to collaborate with the State to improve open access and views to the Sacramento River and the Embarcadero from Old Sacramento, including by promoting uses along the waterfront that connect residents and visitors to the water.
- CC-LUP-7 Old Sacramento Cultural Arts District. The City should explore media and marketing partnerships with the Old Sacramento Waterfront, Golden 1 Center, the Crocker Art Museum, the California Auto Museum, and the Museum of Science and Curiosity (MOSAC) to form a downtown cultural arts district.
- CC-LUP-8 Temporary Alley Closures. The City shall discourage temporary alley closures for private use in an effort to develop an active and cohesive alley system that better integrates pedestrian, bicycle, and vehicular access.

#### **Historic and Cultural Resources**

CC-HCR-1 Old Sacramento Waterfront. The City shall continue to promote the development and improvement of historic "Old Sacramento Waterfront" as a major tourist, entertainment, and cultural area in the region, promoting a variety of uses that contribute to a dynamic and active district that engages tourists, families, and business and convention travelers.

#### **Economic Development**

There are no economic development policies specific to the Central City that supplement the citywide General Plan policies. Please see the Economic Development Element in Part 2 of the General Plan.

#### **Environmental Resources and Constraints**

There are no environmental resources and constraints policies specific to the Central City that supplement the citywide General Plan policies. Please see the Environmental Resources and Constraints Element in Part 2 of the General Plan.

#### **Environmental Justice**

There are no environmental justice policies specific to the Central City that supplement the citywide General Plan policies. Please see the Environmental Justice Element in Part 2 of the General Plan.

### Mobility

CC-M-1 Employee Parking. The City shall continue to work with large employers to reduce parking within the Central City by promoting use of mobility services to transport employees to parking lots on the periphery of the Central City.

- CC-M-2 Curbside Management. The City shall assist in the development and deployment of technologies that collects data on realworld use of the curb by identifying a pilot project. The pilot along with the data will help to develop new curbside management guidelines to optimize the use of curb space in Central City, including the identification and proper management of competing interests.
- CC-M-3 Traffic Calming. When making street improvements, the City shall recognize that speed is the greatest factor in collisions and that this community seeks to slow driver speeds on the streets in their Community Plan Area. Staff should apply speed reduction measures as funding allows.

#### **Public Facilities and Safety**

There are no public facilities and safety policies specific to the Central City that supplement the citywide General Plan policies. Please see the Public Facilities and Safety Element in Part 2 of the General Plan.

#### Youth, Parks, Recreation, and Open Space

CC-YPRO-1 New Park Site. The City shall work with the community to identify a site for a new neighborhood serving park in the underserved Newton Booth/Richmond Grove neighborhood.



#### SACRAMENTO 2040 GENERAL PLAN

#### **CC-YPRO-2** Active and Nature Oriented Existing

**Parks.** The City shall continue developing the Sutter's Landing Regional Park with recreation uses and nature oriented uses, as well as enhancing existing neighborhood parks serving the R Street Corridor (Southside, Roosevelt, Fremont, Winn) with recreation amenities and facilities to serve future residents.

CC-YPRO-3 Sacramento River Waterfront Recreation and Access. The City shall continue to collaborate with State agencies, private landowners, business districts, civic institutions, and other stakeholders to manage, preserve, improve, and enhance recreation and access along the Sacramento River waterfront from Tiscornia Park to Frederick Miller Regional Park.

CC-YPRO-4 Park Amenities. When planning new parks or substantial renovations to existing parks the City shall design park amenities to be family-friendly and, include changing stations in public restrooms, drinking fountains with lower spigots for children, and ADA compliant features to help bolster the Central City's status as a cultural and family-friendly destination.

CC-YPRO-5 Organized Sports and Recreational Facilities. The City shall develop and maintain quality facilities (including multi-use sports courts and fields) for a variety of organized sports to ensure active recreation opportunities are met for the growing community needs in the Central City.

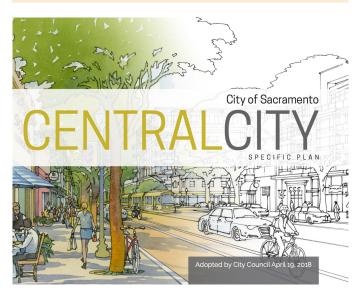




### **RELEVANT PLANS AND STUDIES**

The following section lists relevant plans and studies that have been prepared or adopted by local agencies and are directly pertinent to the Central City Community Plan:

- Sacramento Historic District Plans (2019)
- Central City Specific Plan (2018)
- Central City Urban Design Guidelines (2018 update)
- Broadway Complete Streets Plan (2016)
- Railyards Design Guidelines (2016)
- Railyards Specific Plan (2016)
- River District Specific Plan (2011)
- River District Design Guidelines (2011)
- Downtown/ Riverfront Streetcar Draft EIR (2008)
- Central City Parking Master Plan (2006)
- Alkali Flat/Mansion Flats Strategic Neighborhood Action Plan (2005)



#### Community Plans: Central City | 11-CC-19

