

3 PROJECT DESCRIPTION

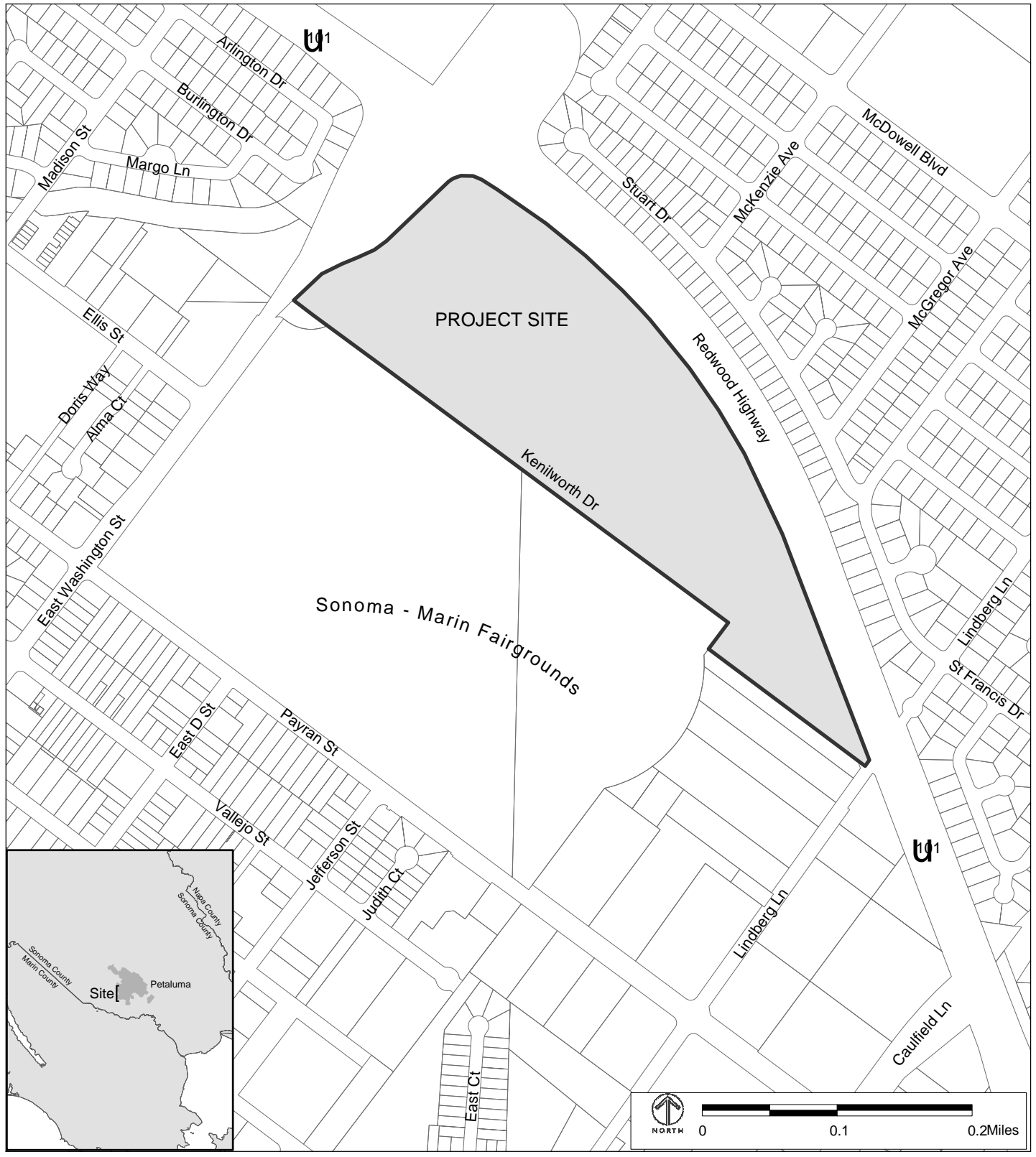
Regency Centers and Pulte Homes (“the applicant”) have proposed to build East Washington Place, a retail and residential project on approximately 37 acres adjacent to the southwest corner of Highway 101 and East Washington Street, adjacent to the Sonoma-Marin County Fairgrounds in the City of Petaluma. This project would be located on the former Kenilworth Junior High School and school bus facility property. Construction of the project would require the removal of the remaining structures on-site including the Petaluma Little League baseball facility (Carter Field) and the school bus facility.

For ease of understanding, the applicant described the East Washington Street direction of the site as the “north”, the Highway 101 side “east”, the Fairgrounds “west” and the portion nearing Lindberg Lane the “south” in their development application. DC&E has followed that protocol in the narrative of this Environmental Impact Report (EIR) for the sake of consistency, although all maps accurately reflect the cardinal directions.

A. Project Site Location and Characteristics

Figure 3-1 shows the regional location of the proposed East Washington Place site, which is located in the City of Petaluma in Sonoma County. As shown in Figure 3-2, the project site is located in the southwest corner of Petaluma, in the Petaluma Community Development Project Area, adjacent to Highway 101 and East Washington Street. The proposed East Washington Place project site consists of 37.28 acres of land.

The project site is subdivided into two primary sub-areas: one designated for commercial and one for residential development. The precise boundaries of these sub-areas are conceptual; the exact boundaries and description of each sub-area would be determined through the design and site development review procedure. However, the square footage of retail and number of residential units provided in this project description would not exceed the num-



Source: City of Petaluma. GIS Data. 2005.

FIGURE 3-2
PROJECT LOCATION

bers currently provided and would be located on the site similar to what is shown on the figures in this EIR.

The commercial sub-area is approximately 24.5 square acres located at the northeastern corner of the site where Highway 101 and East Washington Street meet. East Washington Street, a major arterial with ramps to Highway 101, provides the major access to the commercial sub-area of the site.

The residential sub-area is approximately 12.6 acres in the southern portion of the site. This sub-area is at the rear of the parcel, away from the proposed East Washington Place. The main point of access is proposed via Lindberg Lane.

An existing pedestrian over-crossing connects the project site with the residential neighborhoods to the east of Highway 101.

B. Surrounding Uses

The Sonoma-Marin Fairgrounds, including the Petaluma Speedway, are located adjacent to the site to the west. The City-owned swim center and skate park is also located to the west. Residential neighborhoods extend from the eastern side of the Highway 101 and the western side of the Fairgrounds. To the north, along East Washington Street, there are commercial uses, while to the southeast, along Lindberg Lane, there are a mixture of industrial uses.

C. Project Background

The opportunity for the East Washington Place project arose as a result of the replacement of the former Kenilworth Junior High School, which is the previous use of the project site, to another location at 800 Riesling Road in Petaluma. The applicant purchased the parcel in May 2004. Petaluma City Schools has constructed a replacement junior high school using the financial

proceeds of the sale. The environmental impacts of the school relocation were studied by the School District and a Negative Declaration was certified in July 2002. The replacement Kenilworth Junior High School opened for classes in September 2005. The applicant has begun the asbestos abatement and demolition of the existing school facilities on the project site. The bus facility will remain on site until the project is approved. At that time, the applicant will coordinate with the City for a demolition permit consistent with City regulations. Potential impacts related to the demolition of existing on-site facilities (e.g. release of asbestos) are analyzed in this EIR. The demolition of the bus facility and the Little League's Carter Field are analyzed in the air quality, biology, and hazardous materials sections of this analysis. However, demolition of these facilities is not analyzed in the other sections of the EIR because their demolition does not have the potential to result in impacts to the other issues analyzed.

As part of the agreement, the applicant also purchased the Petaluma School District facilities at the southern portion of the project site. These facilities will be relocated prior to construction of the proposed project. In preparation of this, a Negative Declaration was certified in October 2005 for the relocation of the facilities to 1240 North McDowell Boulevard in Petaluma.

Finally, since the existing baseball fields will need to be relocated as a result of the sale of the school site, a Mitigated Negative Declaration was prepared by the Petaluma City Schools District for relocation of a portion of the fields to Petaluma Junior High School, at 700 Bantam Way. The School District certified the Mitigated Negative Declaration in August 2006. The removal of Carter Field and other fields on the project site is further discussed in the Parks and Recreation sub-section of the Public Services chapter (4.12) of this EIR.

D. Project Overview and Specific Components

The basic concept for the proposed East Washington Place project is to build a combination of retail and residential uses with a small mixed-use component. Each of these components is described below. The site plan for the proposed project is shown in Figure 3-3. Table 3-1 summarizes the project building program.

1. Retail and Residential Development

The following provides details on what is proposed for each of the three land use types: retail, mixed-use residential and retail, and residential. Table 3-1 and Figure 3-3 demonstrate these uses. The proposed site plan depicts the expected square footage for the retail area based on the maximum expected Caltrans right-of-way takings for the Highway 101 on-ramp improvements; however, there is a possibility that Caltrans would not require as large of a right-of-way. In this event, the overall square footage of the major retail stores along Highway 101 may be increased by up to 12,940 square feet. This EIR has taken into consideration this potential variance in the project.

a. Retail

The major retail portion of the site, characterized by a major anchor tenant, would be located at the eastern edge of the site, oriented towards the future Kenilworth Drive. One retail free-standing pad building would be built where the mixed-use buildings meet Kenilworth Drive. Two additional free-standing retail/restaurant pad buildings would be built at the corner of East Washington and Kenilworth Drive.

At this time, the committed tenants include Target, slated to be the major anchor in the 123,800 square-foot space and adjoining garden center, Circuit City in the 33,862 square-foot space adjacent to Target, a major chain bookstore in a 21,000 square-foot space, and Cost Plus World Market, a specialty general merchandise store, in an 18,300 square-foot space. Two large anchor spaces of approximately 20,000 square feet have no reported tenant commitment.

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EAST WASHINGTON PLACE EIR
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Back of Figure 3-3

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TABLE 3-1 **BUILDING SUMMARY**

Retail Buildings				
Building Reference (Site Plan)	Use	Building Size (SF)	Parking Provided (Spaces)	Parking Ratio (Spaces/1,000 SF)
A1	Anchor	123,800*	557	4.5
GC	Garden Center	10,800*	0	0
M1	Major	33,862*	152	4.5
M2	Major	20,000*	86	4.3
M3	Major	20,060*	86	4.3
M4	Major	21,000*	90	4.3
M5	Major	18,300*	79	4.3
S1	Retail	7,500	42	5.6
S2	Retail	7,200	40	5.5
R1	Restaurant	6,000	60	10.0
C1	Commercial	4,144	16	3.9
C2	Commercial	4,144	16	3.9
C3	Commercial	4,144	16	3.9
C4	Commercial	4,144	16	3.9
TOTAL		285,098*	1,256	4.4

Residential Units

Unit Type	# of DU	Parking Provided (spaces)	Parking Ratio (spaces/DU)
Mixed-Use Condominiums	16	32	2
Townhomes	123	246	2
Rowhomes	88	179	2
Guest Parking Spaces	n/a	114	0.5
TOTAL	227	571	2.5

* There is the possibility that Caltrans may request a smaller amount of land for the Hwy-101 on-ramp improvements. If this occurs, then the total area for buildings A1, GC, M1, M2, M3, M4, and M5 may be increased by up to a maximum of 12,940 square feet, for a total square footage of 298,038 for the project as a whole. This maximum potential square footage was used for the analysis in this EIR.

DU= dwelling units

b. Mixed-Use Retail and Residential

At a right angle to the anchor store, at the southern edge of the retail portion of the site, four vertically mixed buildings have been planned to create a transition to the residential portion of the site. For each building, there would be two commercial spaces with a total of 4,144 square feet on the ground floor. These retail sites would be oriented to the retail parking area.

Each mixed-use building would also have four condominium residences with part of their living space above the retail for a total of 16 condominium units, with two floor plans. Residential entry stoops would be located between the retail businesses and at the ends of building clusters. Each unit would have a front terrace overlooking the retail district.

c. Residential

The non-mixed-use residential component of 211 residences comprised of 123 townhomes and 88 rowhouses, in addition to the 16 mixed-use residential units discussed above. All units would be sold as condominiums and the community would be managed and maintained by a Homeowners Association. There are six proposed floor plans for the units—three for townhomes and three for rowhouses. All buildings would be 2½ to 3 stories high. Mixed-use buildings would have ground level retail. All residences would include private, alley-loaded garages.

2. Circulation

The project includes a number of circulation improvements to the site, as well as accommodating the proposed Highway 101/East Washington Place interchange improvements, as described below. To support project generated traffic, there will also be the need for off-site circulation improvements.

a. Caltrans Road Improvements

Caltrans has had a long term plan to improve the southbound on-ramp onto Highway 101 off of East Washington Street. This road improvement plan has been contemplated for years and is independent of the applicant's proposed project. The Caltrans plans anticipate a "taking" of the applicant's land to

provide for future improvements to the southbound on-ramp onto Highway 101 in the northeast corner of the site. This proposed ramp change would smooth the transition onto the freeway to meet modern public safety standards. Caltrans has provided the preliminary geometrics of the proposed ramp to the applicant. Ramp improvements and the estimated land to be taken by Caltrans have been incorporated into the site plan with future detailed plans pending further analysis by Caltrans.

b. Automobile Access

Primary access to the project from East Washington Street would circulate around the existing pool and skate park parcel. The proposed off-site Johnson Drive would go around these facilities utilizing a small portion from the perimeter of the parcel for access and to provide for retail signage. The property on which the pool and the swim center are located is owned by the City in fee, however, the fairgrounds controls the overlaying lease. The area that would be used for access would need to be removed from the fairgrounds' lease and dedicated for public use as a street.¹ Additional access would be provided via Lindberg Lane.

The project includes proposed road improvements to accommodate changing traffic patterns expected to occur as a result of replacing the existing school with retail and residential uses. These improvements include:

- ◆ **Washington Street.** The project would provide the following improvements along East Washington Street fronting the City swim center and Sonoma-Marin Fairgrounds access entrance (the new Johnson Drive), at the Highway 101 southbound on-ramp and on Kenilworth Drive:
 1. Improve the separation between pedestrians and vehicles in the vicinity of the skate park by providing continuous sidewalks on all sides of the City swim center and skate park.

¹ Craig Spaulding, City of Petaluma Public Works Department. E-mail communication with Betsi Lewitter (contract Planner), October, 24, 2006.

2. Clarify the poorly defined, confusing vehicle circulation and parking layout around the swim center and (former) Kenilworth School site.
3. Provide an improved Kenilworth Drive with curbs, gutters, and bike lanes along the western project frontage.
4. Provide an eastbound bicycle lane along the project's East Washington Street frontage, consistent with the City's Bicycle Plan.
5. Provide a second left turn lane on the East Washington Street approach to the westbound Johnson Drive/Ellis Street intersection.
6. Provide the right-of-way for an improved Highway 101 southbound on-ramp at East Washington Street, in order that Caltrans may implement its long-term plans for this on-ramp. According to Caltrans, the change to the on-ramp would better conform to current safety standards.
7. Create an intersection in the middle of a 90-degree curve which would serve the swim center/skate park (on the inside of the curve) and the Fairgrounds (on the outside of the curve).

◆ **Kenilworth Drive.** Kenilworth Drive would be realigned to provide right in/right out access to East Washington Street closer to Highway 101, between the project site and the existing public swim center, and run along the boundary with the Fairgrounds. The road would connect East Washington Street to Lindberg Lane and allow traffic to pass through the site as well as accommodate internal trips between the retail and residential areas of the project.

Traffic circulation for the retail area would be provided by four driveways on Kenilworth Drive, with dedicated left turn pockets accessing the anchor retail project. These access points would connect to the main aisles leading to parking and circulation for the retail project.

Kenilworth Drive would be the only through street in the residential area and would include traffic calming measures such as narrowed street width, parallel parking, buildings closer to the street and textured cross walks.

Kenilworth Drive is designed to accommodate potential future development should the Fairgrounds area be redeveloped in the future.

- ◆ **Johnson Drive.** Johnson Drive would be constructed at the existing intersection of Ellis Street/Kenilworth Drive and East Washington Street. Johnson Drive would curve along the perimeter of the existing swim center/skate-park property to connect with the realigned Kenilworth Drive.
- ◆ **Lindberg Lane.** Lindberg Lane would provide access to the residential portion of the project, as well as access to the retail area from points south, including Payran Street, Caulfield Lane and Lakeville Highway, and connections to nearby Highway 101.
- ◆ **Residential Roads.** The residential portion of the site would also have smaller, local access roads and alleyways to provide access to the housing units and garage parking.

c. Truck Access

Trucks servicing the retail portion of the project would be routed to the rear of the retail center, along the frontage with Highway 101. The truck circulation system is designed to keep trucks separate from automobile, bicycle and pedestrian areas by providing entry and exit points at the most northerly access point of the retail project.

d. Transit Access

There is no transit access proposed on the project site. However, Sonoma County Transit Bus Route 44 passes the site along East Washington Street.

e. Pedestrian Access

Pedestrian walkways within the project site would include crosswalks and ADA accessible ramps. Pedestrian connections to adjacent streets would be provided by four-foot wide sidewalks, with landscaping along Kenilworth and Johnson Drives. The sidewalk on Johnson Drive would be limited to the north side of the roadway. Along Kenilworth Drive there would be sidewalks on both sides for the portions of the roadway between East Washington Street and Johnson Drive and from the north of Crenshaw Court to

Lindberg Lane. The portion of East Washington Street between Johnson Drive and Crenshaw Court would only have sidewalks on the east side of the roadway. The existing pedestrian Highway 101 overpass would remain; however, the public access easement that crosses the site between the western side of the overpass and Kenilworth Drive would be removed.

Pedestrian access to the residential project off of the new Kenilworth Drive would be via multiple access points. Primarily pedestrian access between the retail center and the residential uses to the south would be provided by three greenways/paseos that pass through the four mixed-use buildings at the center of the project. The 13.5-foot-wide paseos would lead to the front entrances of the townhomes and rowhouses. The width of these paseos is in addition to an average 8-foot front porch depth provided for every residence. All paseos include a central path surrounded by grass and other landscaping. All residences in the internal neighborhood would be served by paseos. East Washington Place has also been designed to incorporate a 15-foot-wide central paseo, or greenway, which originates in the central open space of the residential district and connects to the retail district.

f. Bicycle Access

Bicycle lanes would be added along the widened East Washington Street where the applicant makes improvements, as well as along the entire portions of Kenilworth and Johnson Drives within the project site. Bicyclists would connect to the project site via bike paths on East Washington Street. The bicycle lanes along Kenilworth and Johnson Drives would be five feet wide. The project does not propose to install bicycle lanes along Lindberg Lane or Payran Street.

3. Parking

Retail parking spaces would be 9 feet wide for standard stalls. The landscaping along end stalls would be designed to provide adequate parking and landscape areas. Compact stalls would be 8 feet wide. The overall parking ratio would be approximately 4.4 spaces per 1,000 square feet of retail space.

There are 457 in-garage parking spaces and 114 guest spaces for the residential portion of the project, for a total of 2.5 spaces for each dwelling unit. Some of the residential units would have a “tandem” parking configuration for the two garage parking spaces. On-street parking is distributed around the overall residential area, along with on-street parallel spaces on Kenilworth Drive within the residential portion of the project site.

4. Open Space

The residential portion of East Washington Place would include four main open space areas, as demonstrated in Figure 3-3. The 12,000-square-foot central recreation area for community residents would be located in the center of the residential area. The area would include a lawn area, a children’s play area and a picnic area with benches and barbeque facilities. A central paseo would connect the park to the mixed-use area.

A second open space area would be located at the southern end of the site near Lindberg Lane. This 9,200 square feet grass area would serve as the neighborhood entry and would include an open-lawn, landscaping and site furnishings.

The third open space area would be located across Kenilworth Drive from the second area. At 4,000 square feet, this would be the smallest of the four open space areas. This area would include open lawn and benches.

The fourth open space area would be in the northeast portion of the residential area at the border between the residential and retail areas, to the east of the mixed-use buildings. This space would provide a transition between the residential and retail districts and may be used by both residents and retail patrons. The area would contain a total of approximately 17,000 square feet, of which 4,500 square feet would be within the residential area and 12,500 square feet within the retail area. Plans for this area include a large open green space lined by trees and concrete pathways, a fenced children’s play area and other furnishings.

On-site open space for the residential community would be approximately 29,700 square feet, or 130 square feet per unit. This number excludes the common area provided by the paseos as well as the open space area located on the retail portion of the project. Approximately 20,000 square feet of the open space would be exposed to a noise level of 60 Ldn or more.

5. Landscaping

In the retail component, landscaping would be used to break up the parking areas, provide shade and identify primary circulation pathways. In the residential area, landscaping would be used to identify the various sub-areas such as the central greenway, the park areas and paseos. All paseos would have groups (“groves”) of accent trees to provide shade and create a defined pathway. All open space and play areas would be landscaped. Trees located along Kenilworth Drive would accentuate the transition from retail to residential. As noted earlier, this, coupled with the narrowing of the street in the transition area, is intended as a traffic-calming feature.

6. Grading and Utilities

The project site is generally flat, between 0 to 5 degrees of slope, and has been graded in the past for existing development and use. While the site would be re-graded to support drainage for the proposed project, there would not be major changes in topography.

There are existing connections to utilities, which would be utilized to support the proposed project; however, no off-site improvements to water, wastewater or flood control facilities are proposed. Water would be provided from an existing connection to the water main along East Washington Street, as well as a new connection to the water main within Lindberg Lane. The on-site water distribution system would be designed to provide minimum fire flows, as follows:

- ◆ Provide commercial fire flow of 2,500 gallons per minute (gpm) at 20 pounds per square inch (psi) in the retail portion of the project.
- ◆ Provide residential fire flow of 1,500 gpm at 20 psi in the residential portion of the project.

- ◆ Maintain pipe velocity at below 10 feet per second (fps) in new pipes.

The project would be connected to sewer using the existing on-site sewer line connection to the sewer main in Lindberg Lane. A portion of the retail portion of the project would also connect to the existing sewer line located at the swim center and skate park property from Ellis Street.

On-site drainage would utilize existing historic drainage patterns; however, the two drainage areas that comprise the southern portion of the existing school site and the bus depot would be combined into one drainage area. On-site storage of stormwater would be provided by underground, oversized infrastructure. Details on the utilities system are provided in Section 4.14: Utilities and Section 4.8: Hydrology and Water Quality.

7. Planned Development Zone and Signage Requirements

The project site would be developed under a Planned Unit Development (PUD). The property's General Plan and Zoning designations would be amended to allow for the property to be developed under a PUD. The applicant must submit General Development Standards (GDS) describing the proposed project and detailing the guidelines that would apply to the design and construction of the site. The GDS for East Washington Place describes a mixed-use development, split into two sub areas; one for retail and mixed uses and one for residential development. The GDS also specifies conditionally permitted uses, development standards, such as building setbacks, parking ratios, floor area ratios and density specifications, landscaping and screening requirements, and performance standards for potential impacts resulting from development, such as noise, solid waste production, heat and glare emissions or air pollution. The design and site development of each phase within the PUD are subject to the standards established in these GDS.

Additionally, the applicant has developed a signage program to ensure a consistent approach to signage for East Washington Place. Sign area size regulations for the proposed project would vary from city code, as identified in the plans and design guidelines.

E. Project Objectives

The project proponent has the following project objectives for the East Washington Place project:

- ◆ Facilitate the stated goal of the City and school district to relocate and replace the outdated Kenilworth Junior High School by Fall of 2005.
- ◆ Develop a high quality mixed use project, with up to approximately 298,038 square feet of retail space and 227 for-sale residential units.
- ◆ Provide an economically feasible, integrated redevelopment that includes timely construction of improvements.
- ◆ Realize sufficient economic returns on the property to make mixed use an economically feasible, integrated alternative to developing the property per the currently zoned (R-6500) housing designation.
- ◆ Increase the number of locally available jobs and retail opportunities to address the city's identified goal to alleviate retail leakage from the community at this preferred location as identified in the city's retail leakage study.
- ◆ Provide local retail opportunities and thus help alleviate excess traffic on Highway 101 that results from Petaluma residents traveling to other communities, such as Novato, Rohnert Park, and Santa Rosa, to shop.
- ◆ Provide dense infill housing to alleviate growth pressure on the city boundaries.
- ◆ Locate the project on an urban infill site with convenient freeway, and roadway access that is also in proximity to public transit.
- ◆ Provide major retail tenant signage requirements and parking requirements of 4.4 spaces per 1,000 square feet of retail.
- ◆ Incorporate Caltrans ramp improvements without significant adverse impacts on the project size or economics.

F. Project Phasing

Kenilworth Junior High School, previously located on the project site, has been vacated and fully demolished. Portions of the site not occupied by debris from the school's demolition are currently being graded in preparation for project construction. On-site and off-site improvements would be constructed concurrently. The retail and residential areas would be under construction at the same time. The retail component would be completed within 12 months of construction commencement. The first phase of the residential component would be completed at the same time, with later residential phases occurring over a somewhat longer construction schedule. Full absorption of the retail will take about 6 to 9 months following the opening of the major tenants. New homeowners would take occupancy over the course of 2008-2010 as the individual residences are completed and sold. Construction of the project should begin in July 2007 with the opening of the project scheduled for July 2008.

G. Required Project Approvals

Permits and approvals required from the City of Petaluma include:

- ◆ General Plan Amendment to change the land use designation for the entire site from “Existing School District Lands” and “Industrial” to “Mixed Use.”
- ◆ Rezone the entire site from “R-1-6,500” and “Light Industrial” to “Planned Unit District” (PUD).
- ◆ Approval of a Vesting Tentative Map.
- ◆ Development Agreement.

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In addition, the project would require the following approvals from other agencies:

- ◆ Caltrans
- ◆ California Department of Food and Agriculture
- ◆ San Francisco Bay Regional Water Quality Control Board
- ◆ Army Corps of Engineers
- ◆ Sonoma County Water Quality Board
- ◆ Sonoma County Water Agency
- ◆ City of Petaluma Site Plan and Architectural Review Committee