



# Notice of Scoping Meeting and Preparation of Draft Environmental Impact Report for The Airport Area Specific Plan

**Date:** May 7, 2019

**To:** State Clearinghouse, Agencies, Organizations and Interested Parties

**Subject:** Notice of Scoping Meeting and Preparation of an Environmental Impact Report for the Airport Area Specific Plan

**Scoping Meeting:** **May 22, 2019, 5:30 PM**  
**Sonoma County Office of Education**  
**5340 Skylane Blvd**

**Comment Period:** **May 7, 2019 to June 6, 2019 at 5:00 p.m.**

The County of Sonoma (County) will serve as Lead Agency in the preparation of a programmatic Environmental Impact Report (EIR) for the Airport Area Specific Plan (also referred to as 'Specific Plan'). This programmatic EIR will address the environmental impacts associated with the adoption and implementation of the Airport Area Specific Plan. Information regarding the project description, project location, and topics to be addressed in the Draft EIR is attached. Additional project documents and information are available at Permit Sonoma, 2550 Ventura Ave, Santa Rosa, and on-line at: [Sonomacounty.Ca.Gov/AirportSpecificPlan](http://Sonomacounty.Ca.Gov/AirportSpecificPlan).

## Scoping Meeting

The County will hold a scoping meeting to provide an opportunity for agency staff and interested members of the public to submit written or oral comments on the scope of the environmental issues to be addressed in the EIR.

The scoping meeting will be held on **Wednesday, May 22nd, from 5:30 p.m. to 7:00 p.m.** at the Sonoma County Office of Education, 5340 Skylane Blvd, Santa Rosa.

For questions regarding this notice, please contact Cecily Condon at (707) 565-1958.

All comments must be received prior to 5:00 p.m. on June 6, 2019.



As the Lead Agency of the above project under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), the County of Sonoma will prepare a Program Environmental Impact Report (EIR) to address the environmental impacts associated with the adoption and implementation of the Airport Area Specific Plan. The proposed Airport Area Specific Plan Update (Specific Plan) proposes to update the existing 1984 Sonoma County Airport Industrial Area Specific Plan, as amended. The Specific Plan boundary does not include the Charles M. Schulz Sonoma County Airport—development and the operations at the airport are governed separately by the Airport Master Plan. The County is seeking public input regarding the scope and content of the environmental information to be addressed in the EIR. The project description, location, and a brief summary of potential environmental effects are attached. Additional information, including background documents are available at: [Sonomacounty.Ca.Gov/AirportSpecificPlan](http://Sonomacounty.Ca.Gov/AirportSpecificPlan)

The proposed Specific Plan aims to reflect current market conditions and community needs, support continued economic development and employment opportunities within an existing urbanized area of the County.

**On May 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2019, the County of Sonoma will hold a public meeting to review the proposed scope and content of the Draft EIR. This meeting will provide individuals, public agencies, and interest groups an opportunity to comment on what they feel the scope and content of the Draft EIR should include. The meeting will be held in the Sonoma County Office of Education located at 5340 Skylane Boulevard, Santa Rosa, CA.**

Per State law, the deadline for your response is 30 days after receipt of this notice. If it is not possible for you to attend the meeting, the County will accept written comments until June 6<sup>th</sup>, 2019, at 5:00 p.m.

If you intend to provide written comments, please identify a contact person in the comments and send them to:

Cecily Condon Planner III  
Permit and Resource Management Department, County of Sonoma  
2550 Ventura Avenue  
Santa Rosa, CA 95403  
[Cecily.Condon@sonoma-county.org](mailto:Cecily.Condon@sonoma-county.org)

Should you have any questions concerning the project or the EIR scoping meeting, please feel free to contact Cecily Condon at (707) 565-1958.

### ***Introduction***

The purpose of a Programmatic Environmental Impact Report (EIR) is to inform decision-makers and the general public of the environmental effects of the Specific Plan update. The EIR process is intended to provide sufficient information to evaluate a project, in this case a Specific Plan, and its

potential for significant impacts on the environment, to examine methods of reducing adverse impacts, and to consider alternatives to the project.

The EIR for the proposed project will be prepared and processed in accordance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) of 1970, as amended. In accordance with the requirements of CEQA, the EIR will include the following:

- A summary of the project;
- A project description;
- A description of the existing environmental setting, environmental impacts, and mitigation measures for the project;
- Alternatives to the project as proposed; and
- Environmental consequences, including (a) any significant environmental effects which cannot be avoided if the project is implemented; (b) any significant irreversible and irretrievable commitments of resources; (c) the growth inducing impacts of the proposed project; and (d) cumulative impacts.

### ***Project Location***

The approximately 810-acre Specific Plan area (Plan Area) is located in an area of Sonoma County with a variety of commercial, industrial, residential and agricultural uses. The Plan Area is bordered by the Town of Windsor to the north, Highway 101 to the east, Mark West Creek to the south, and North Laughlin Road and Sonoma County Airport to the west. The Plan Area is comprised of undeveloped parcels, industrial uses, retail uses, and residential uses (see Figures 1.1-1 and 1.1-2).

### ***Project Description***

The Specific Plan will include a comprehensive set of goals, objectives, policies, and implementation measures including an infrastructure funding plan. To reflect changes in the availability of transit in the Plan Area, many of the changes in the Specific Plan are within a ½-mile of the new SMART station, including the Airport/Aviation Boulevard intersection. With the inclusion of the workforce housing district overlay, the project will streamline opportunities for housing on select parcels including limited industrial and commercial parcels east of the train tracks and approximately 40 acres of limited industrial land north of Airport Boulevard between Brickway and Skylane Boulevards. Land use designations in the area surrounding the SMART station will be amended to recognize existing commercial uses and achieve a mixed-use development pattern with a tighter street grid east of the railroad tracks.

The Specific Plan will retain the industrial land use designations and zoning that currently apply with the exception of parcels being designated to match existing uses and parcels being partially converted to a limited industrial use. In total, approximately 16 acres of land is proposed for conversion from General Industrial (GI) to Limited Industrial (LI).

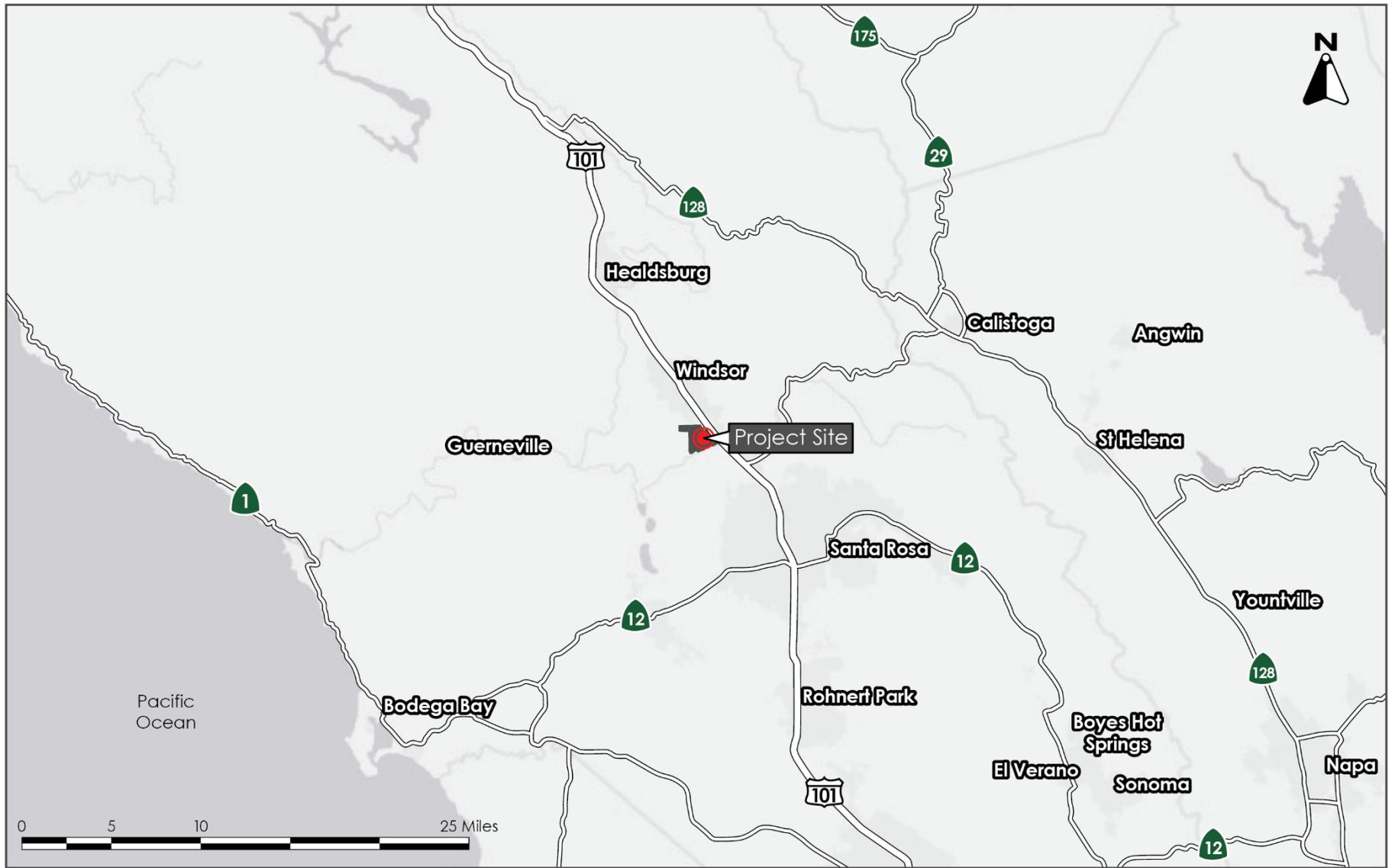
The Specific Plan expands and consolidates commercial areas into a single General Commercial (GC) designation to allow more flexibility for commercial activity and to recognize commercial, service, and retail activities already occurring in the area. The proposed General Commercial area spans slightly over 15 acres and overlaps with 11 acres of opportunity sites identified in the Market Study for the Plan Area.

The Specific Plan proposes to adjust the southeastern boundary of the Urban Service Area (USA) along Mark West Creek to include additional parcels, which will help provide water, wastewater, and other services to the existing mobile home residences (Stonegate Mobile Home Park) and support potential residential development on an undeveloped parcel located west of the mobile home park.

The proposed Specific Plan identifies suitable sites where the Affordable Housing (AH) and Workforce Housing (WH) Combining Districts are appropriate and feasible. The Affordable Housing and Workforce Housing Districts provide the flexibility to develop housing without otherwise changing allowed uses or modifying the base zoning district of the site. The 8.4-acre undeveloped Land Intensive Agriculture (LIA) lot adjacent to Stonegate Mobile Home Park in the southeast of the planning area is proposed to be adjusted to the Urban Residential (UR) General Plan land use designation (and R3 zoning designation). The Urban Residential (UR) designation would enable high-density housing on the parcel consistent with other nearby residential uses and densities including the Mobile Home Park and Vineyard Creek Apartments. The base Urban Residential (UR) designation would allow a residential density of up to 22 units per acre, however, future development may utilize the Affordable Housing (AH) Combining District on this site to achieve a density of up to 24 units per acre. See Tables 1.1-1, below, for an overview of the Specific Plan Buildout. The different land uses are depicted in Figure 1.1-3, below.

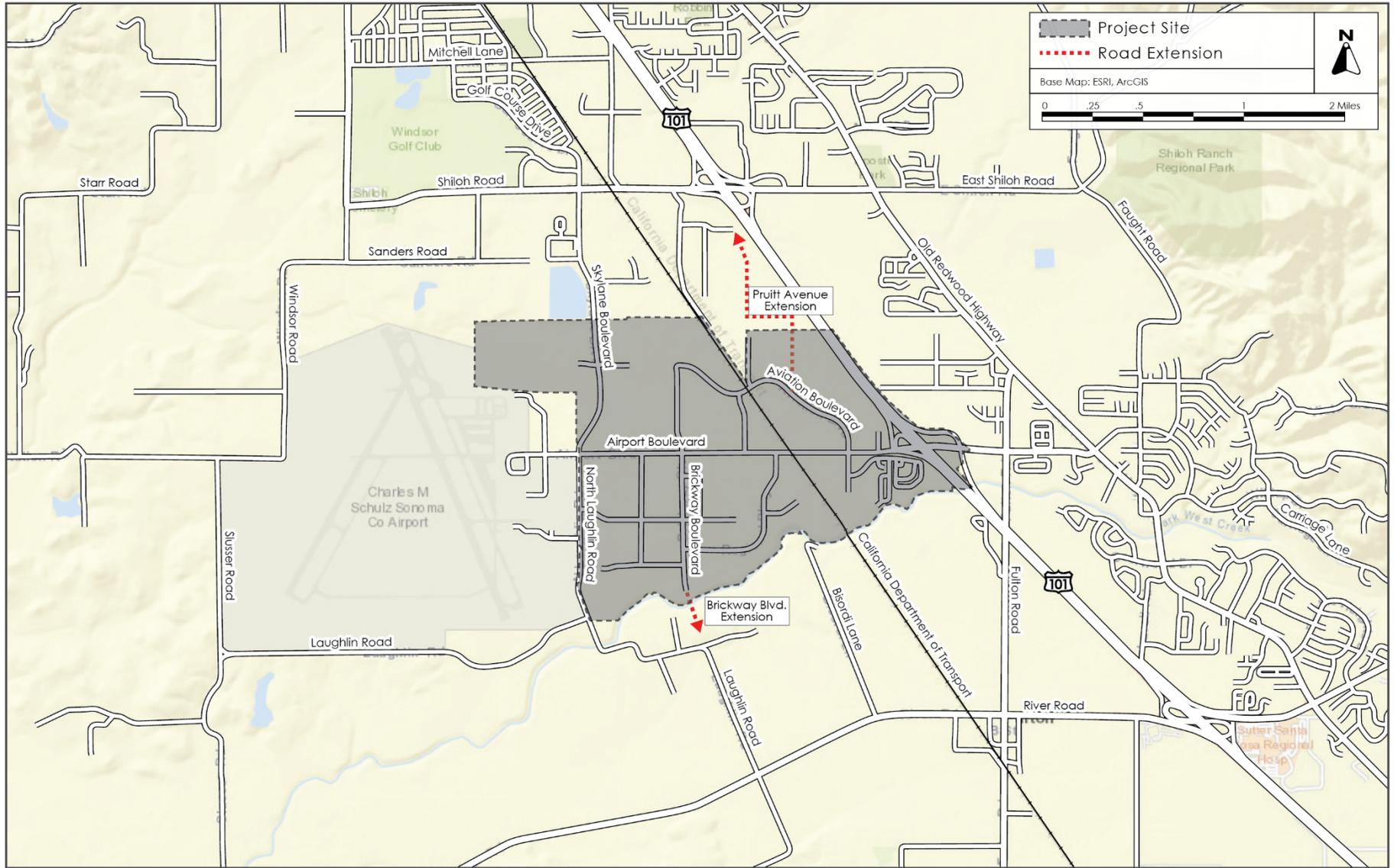
**Table 1.1-1 Specific Plan Buildout Overview**

Land Use Category	Plan Acres	Potential New Development	
Residential (du)	82.9	896 du	
Light Industrial (sf)	244	1,032,355 sf	
Heavy Industrial (sf)	120	554,602 sf	
Retail (sf)	3.4	15,202 sf	
Office (sf)	87.5	282,939 sf	
Lodging Accommodations	8	200 rooms	
Institutional (sf)	66	0	
Agricultural/Conservation	41	--	
Open Space	17	--	
ROWs, Parking, Creeks	140.2	--	
Total	810 acres	896 du	1,586,957 sf industrial
		282,939 sf commercial	200 rooms
Notes: du = dwelling units, sf = square feet			



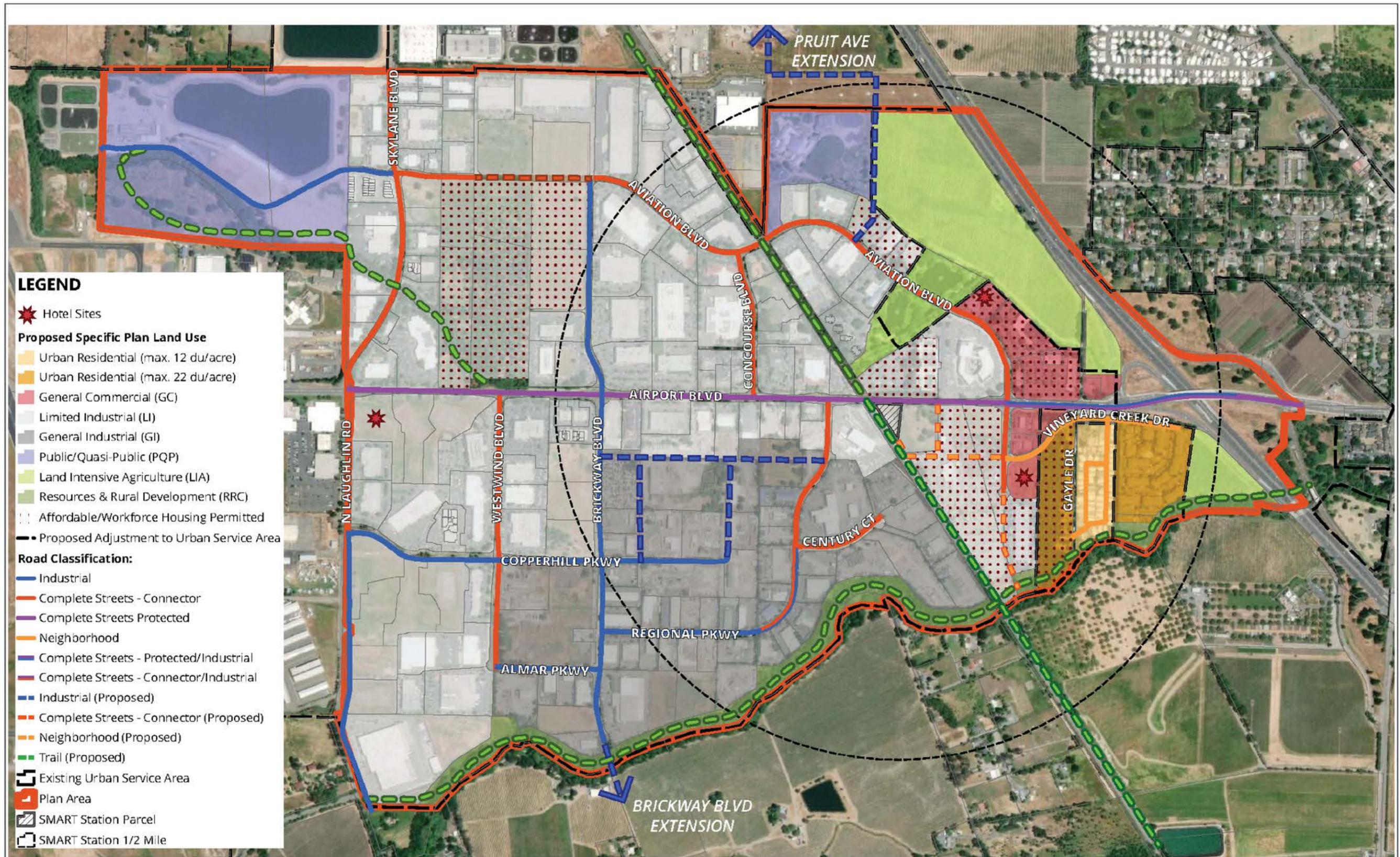
REGIONAL MAP

FIGURE 1.1-1



VICINITY MAP

FIGURE I.1-2



SONOMA COUNTY AIRPORT AREA SPECIFIC PLAN LAND USE DESIGNATIONS

FIGURE 1.1-3

The proposed Specific Plan identifies various roadway and trail connections to improve circulation within the Plan Area. The Specific Plan also includes planned extensions of Brickway Boulevard to the south and Pruitt Avenue to the Town of Windsor. Circulation improvements would include sidewalks, shared bike routes, bike lanes, and shared use pathways.

### ***Potential Environmental Impacts of the Project***

The EIR will identify the significant environmental effects anticipated to result from construction of the proposed Specific Plan. The EIR will include the following specific environmental categories as related to the proposed project:

#### ***1. Aesthetics***

Visual issues resulting from implementation of the proposed project, including design standards, would include any significant adverse impacts resulting from building mass, height, lighting, and possible glare to adjacent land uses. The EIR will also evaluate the project's visual compatibility with adjacent properties, including existing and approved development, and effects on views from designated scenic routes. Mitigation measures will be identified, as appropriate, according to applicable landscaping, architecture, and design review standards of the County of Sonoma. The significance of project aesthetic impacts will also be analyzed for their conformance to Public Resources Code 21099.

#### ***2. Air Quality***

The EIR will address the regional air quality conditions in the Bay Area and discuss the proposed project's impacts to local and regional air quality during the operational and construction phases of the project. Temporary construction related impacts such as construction vehicle exhaust and airborne particulates (i.e., dust) will also be discussed. Primary air quality issues involve the consistency of the Plan with the 2017 Clean Air Plan and the effects of air pollutant sources upon sensitive receptors. Mitigation measures will be identified for significant impacts, as warranted.

#### ***3. Biological Resources***

The biological resources analysis will describe existing biological conditions and any sensitive biological resources, such as potentially regulated habitats (e.g., wetlands) and special-status species, which may occur in the Plan Area. The EIR will also describe the impacts of the project on biological resources, including resource agency permitting requirements, and mitigation measures that would be necessary to reduce significant impacts to less-than-significant levels.

#### ***4. Cultural Resources***

The EIR will discuss potential impacts to cultural resource that could result from the Specific Plan. The potential for implementation of the Specific Plan to impact archaeological resources and tribal

cultural resources, in accordance with AB 52, will be identified. Appropriate mitigation measures will be identified and implemented, in the event cultural resources, including subsurface resources, are encountered during project construction.

#### *5. Energy*

The EIR will discuss the amount of energy (i.e., electricity, natural gas, and gasoline use) the planned development would consume. The EIR will describe any measures included in the Specific Plan to conserve energy, such as electric vehicle charging station or solar panels, etc. The EIR will evaluate the project's conformance with the California Green Building Code and the Sonoma County Regional Climate Action Plan (Climate Action 2020). Mitigation measures for significant energy impacts will be identified, as appropriate.

#### *6. Geology and Soils*

The existing geologic and soil conditions in the Plan Area will be described in the EIR based on the County's General Plan. The EIR will describe the impacts to persons or property likely to result from implementation of the proposed Specific Plan and the existing geologic (including seismic) conditions in the area. Mitigation measures for significant impacts will be identified, as appropriate.

#### *7. Greenhouse Gas Emissions*

The EIR will evaluate the project's greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions, in conformance with the methodology of the Bay Area Air Quality Management District and the Climate Action 2020. GHG emissions for the project will be evaluated relative to Assembly Bill (AB32) and Senate Bill 32 standards. Project design measures to reduce energy use and GHG emissions will be discussed. Mitigation measures will be identified for significant impacts, as warranted.

#### *8. Hazards and Hazardous Materials*

The EIR will evaluate the potential for hazardous materials contamination within and near the Plan Area. The EIR will identify past or present activities that may have, or could, cause significant contamination. Mitigation measures for significant impacts will be identified, as appropriate.

#### *9. Hydrology and Water Quality*

The project area has FEMA mapped floodplains and floodways for Mark West Creek and Redwood Creek. The EIR will describe potential impacts to Mark West Creek, Redwood Creek, and the surrounding properties from any fill or roadway alignments on the existing floodplains/floodways as mapped on the currently effective (December 2, 2008) Digital Flood Insurance Rate Map (DFIRM) for Sonoma County. The EIR will identify program mitigation measures and requirements to meet FEMA and local floodplain requirements.

The EIR will also discuss water quality impacts of redevelopment activities within the Plan Area. The information will include existing and future (with project) areas of pervious and impervious surfaces and proposed stormwater control measures consistent with Low Impact Development requirements of the Regional Water Quality Control Board Municipal Regional Stormwater Permit. The EIR will discuss the preliminary stormwater management plan for the Plan Area. Mitigation measures for significant impacts will be identified, as appropriate.

#### *10. Land Use and Planning*

The proposed project will update the existing Airport Industrial Area Specific Plan with modified land use designations, policies, and guidelines for future development in the Plan Area. The Specific Plan boundary does not include the Charles M. Schulz Sonoma County Airport—development and the operations at the airport are governed separately by the Airport Master Plan. The new Airport Area Specific Plan will account for commuter rail serving the Plan Area. The EIR will analyze the proposed changes resulting from implementation of the Specific Plan and the plans conformance to existing County goals, policies, and objectives for the Plan Area. This discussion will evaluate any effects from the project on agricultural resources. The EIR will evaluate the Specific Plan’s effects on population and housing based upon the assumptions made in the General Plan for population growth and identify appropriate mitigation measures. The EIR will also describe land use conflicts that may result from implementation of the Specific Plan and identify mitigation measures to reduce impacts to a less than significant level.

#### *11. Noise and Vibration*

The predominant sources of noise within and around the Plan Area are vehicular traffic along US Highway 101, Airport Boulevard, and other local roadways, intermittent railroad trains including SMART operations, and aircraft associated with Charles M. Schulz Sonoma County Airport. Future noise levels affecting the planning area will be calculated based on future traffic volumes along adjacent roadways, future SMART/railroad projections for the proposed extension to Windsor contained in the SMART EIR, and aircraft noise projections contained in the Charles M. Schulz Sonoma County Airport Master Plan Implementation Project EIR. Noise generated by the construction activities and project-generated traffic will be calculated at nearby sensitive land uses. The noise and land use compatibility of sensitive uses affected by the plan will be assessed based on adjustments to existing noise data and future projections. The EIR will identify areas of potential noise conflicts with existing or proposed sensitive uses in the vicinity and identify noise impacts resulting from implementation of the Specific Plan project a temporary and/or permanent basis. Noise impacts will be assessed with respect to applicable County policies and appropriate CEQA significance criteria. Mitigation measures will be identified to reduce noise levels to acceptable levels. Mitigation will be presented to also reduce potentially significant noise impacts resulting from the construction and operation of the project and establish design standards to mitigate noise impacts resulting from future projects in the Plan Area.

## *12. Public Facilities and Services*

The existing public facilities serving the proposed Plan Area will be discussed in the EIR. The capacity of the service providers to serve the Specific Plan development and the potential need for new facilities needed to meet County of Sonoma service level goals will be addressed. Mitigation measures will be identified to reduce significant impacts to a less than significant level.

## *13. Transportation*

The proposed project intends to provide a circulation network within the Plan Area that connects to surrounding neighborhoods, relieves existing congestion points, and adequately accommodates all transportation modes. Based on the County of Sonoma and Caltrans requirements, the Transportation Impact Analysis (TIA) will focus on the operations of key intersections and freeway segments in the vicinity of the Plan Area. The study will include an analysis of AM and PM peak hour traffic conditions relative to local plans and policies addressing traffic congestion. The project's impact on pedestrian, bicycle, and transit services and the potential for the project to reduce vehicles miles travelled (VMT) will also be discussed in the EIR. Mitigation measures for significant impacts will be identified, as appropriate.

## *14. Utilities and Service Systems*

The EIR will analyze utilities and service systems impacts based on the infrastructure needs analysis and implementation plan developed for the Specific Plan. The EIR will address impacts to these services, specifically as they relate to infrastructure requirements, facilities, and capacity improvements with the potential to result in significant environmental impacts. The EIR will also include an analysis of any potential associated impacts outside of the Plan Area. The EIR will also include a water supply assessment per California State Senate Bill 610. Mitigation measures for significant impacts will be identified, as appropriate.

## *15. Alternatives*

The EIR will evaluate possible alternatives to the proposed project, including the No Project Alternative. The alternative discussion will focus on those alternatives that could feasibly accomplish most of the basic goals of the Specific Plan while also avoiding or substantially lessening one or more of the significant effects.

## *16. Significant Unavoidable Impacts*

The EIR will identify those significant impacts that cannot be avoided, if the project is implemented as proposed.

### *17. Cumulative Impacts*

The potential for the proposed project, when considered with other past, present, and probable projects in the area, to result in a significant cumulative impact will be evaluated in the EIR.

### *18. Other Required Sections*

In conformance with the CEQA Guidelines, the EIR will also include the following sections: 1) consistency with local and regional plans and policies, 2) growth inducing impacts, 3) significant irreversible environmental changes, 4) references and organizations/persons consulted, and 5) EIR authors.