

Appendix B - Existing Conditions

The purpose of this Appendix is to present the existing conditions in Downtown Martinez. This Appendix is organized as follows:

B Existing Conditions

- B.1 Regional and City Context
- B.2 Historical Context
- B.3 Cultural Resources
- B.4 Existing Development and Land Use
- B.5 General Plan Categories and Zoning Designations
- B.6 Economic and Demographic Context
- B.7 Parking - Existing Conditions and Policies

B.1 REGIONAL AND CITY CONTEXT

Martinez is one of the oldest towns in the Bay Area and has played a key political role in the life of Contra Costa County since California's statehood in 1850. The city's economic influence has waned as the county's economic center of gravity has shifted away from the water, but as the seat of County government, Downtown Martinez continues to play host to many of the county's offices and courts.

Downtown Martinez has a unique geographic setting. To the north, between Downtown and the Carquinez Strait, lie 344 acres of passive and active open space in the Martinez Regional Shoreline and the City's Waterfront Park. The Shoreline provides hiking trails, bird watching, and other nature activities, and the Waterfront Park provide active recreation opportunities, including baseball and soccer fields, a horse arena and a popular bocce ball complex that reflects the city's Italian heritage. Ridgelines to the east and west of the study area define the narrow canyon of Alhambra Creek, about a mile wide. The Franklin Hills to the west include protected open space as well as private rural land; the Shell Martinez Refinery lies immediately to the east of the study area but is largely hidden from Downtown by the ridgeline. Figure B-1 shows key environmental features in the study area and vicinity, including floodplains, steep slopes, wetlands and riparian corridors. See the Draft Environmental Impact Report for documentation of these and other environmental baseline conditions.

Figure B-2 shows Downtown Martinez in the regional context of Central Contra Costa County. Alhambra and Berrellesa Streets provide access from Downtown to Highway 4, and Pacheco Boulevard and Marina Vista St. connect Downtown to Solano County and Central Contra Costa via I-680. The nearest BART station, North Concord/Martinez, is 6 miles east of Downtown.

Within the City of Martinez, Downtown has also become more peripheral as growth spread away from the historic core, but mainly in one direction: south. This means that for many Martinez residents, especially those who live south of Highway 4, Downtown is an infrequent destination, one that requires a special trip since it is not on the way to

anywhere else. Attractions such as the Martinez Regional Shoreline and Waterfront Park, as well as special events such as farmers' markets, help to attract visitors and residents Downtown, but many Downtown businesses are closed in the evenings and on weekends when these events take place.

B.2 HISTORICAL CONTEXT

The following sections briefly trace the history of Martinez, showing how the city's Downtown has been shaped by key factors such as water transportation, the railroads, industry, and politics. Census data are presented for recent years, but the emphasis is on providing a qualitative understanding of the history of the city and the role of the Downtown within the city. This understanding will prove valuable for identifying Downtown Martinez's assets and opportunities within the city and the region as a whole.

B.2.1 Early History

In its early days, Martinez was inextricably linked to the water. A ferry service across the Carquinez Strait, begun in 1847, stimulated the creation of a trading post at the southern terminus where passengers waited to board. The number of passengers and the amount of trade grew quickly, and in 1848 Colonel William Smith, who had married into the Martinez family, was given permission to lay out a town on part of the family's rancho.

Smith and his associate sold 50x100 foot lots in the town, and the population grew quickly. Acreage from the neighboring ranch was also surveyed and competitors began to sell lots there. The town grew in area as well as population.

When California became a state in 1850, Contra Costa was one of 27 original counties, and Martinez served as the county seat. However, residents of the southwestern areas of the county found the journey to Martinez to conduct official business onerous, and some began to lobby for a separate county to be created. Alameda County was incorporated in 1853 from the southern half of Contra Costa County.

Although Martinez would no longer serve as county seat for the whole East Bay, it still flourished as a center of trade and government. Judges, lawyers, county administrative offices, and related businesses all located in Downtown Martinez. Businesses such as the Bank of Martinez were founded, and neighborhoods such as Island Hill became home to wealthy residents. Other residents farmed the area's rich soil.

Martinez incorporated in 1876 during a period of rapid growth, and in the same year the railroad was completed through the city, connecting it to Sacramento and Oakland. The rail line undoubtedly enhanced the city's connections, but Martinez remained oriented very much towards the water. It was a major port with a lucrative trade based on shipping grain to global destinations; passenger ferries continued to be a significant presence; and there was an active commercial fishing fleet and related industries, such as a fish cannery.

B.2.2 Industrial Expansion

In the late 19th Century and the early 20th Century Martinez participated in the larger process of industrial expansion that was playing out at the state level. A number of industrial operations were attracted to the area by the shipping and rail services, among them Alhambra Water Company, Peyton Chemical Company, and the Mountain Copper Company. Associated Oil built a refinery east of Martinez in 1913 (the current Tosco site) and in 1914 Shell began construction on a refinery.

The industrialization of Martinez strained the city's housing stock. The Mountain Copper Company brought in roughly 100 new residents and built homes for many of them. The Shell project attracted 1,500 workers for the construction and created 600 permanent jobs.¹ The city was so overwhelmed that tent camps were set up to house the workers. The problem remained as the population grew rapidly in the teens and 1920s. While housing was built rapidly, the supply did not keep up with demand.

B.2.3 From Center to Periphery

The first signs of a challenge to Martinez's traditional role came in 1900, when a Concord landowner tried to have the county seat moved to that town, which was still unincorporated and essentially a farming village. Although the effort failed, the same landowner later helped to spearhead a movement to build an electric railway between Oakland and Sacramento. The Oakland, Antioch and Eastern Railway, which began running in 1913, passed through Concord but bypassed Martinez altogether.

These events symbolize the transition of Martinez from the center of the county to a city on the periphery, despite the continued presence of county administrative functions. Whereas in 1900 Martinez was called "the most central place in the county"² by those who opposed moving the county seat, just a few decades later such a claim would have been dubious. When water transportation of both people and goods was still important and the main railroad passed through Martinez, it benefited from excellent access. But with the slow decline in importance of water access and the proliferation of other modes of transportation, the city lost that advantage.

The opening of the electric railway in 1913 had vastly increased access to many parts of Contra Costa County, but it was the Caldecott Tunnel, opened in 1937, that did the most to open up the interior of the county. Although the Kennedy Tunnel had been finished through the Oakland hills in 1903, eliminating most of the treacherous climb and descent, it was only one lane wide and still quite high up. The Caldecott Tunnel was lower down and far more suited to the automobile, which was rapidly becoming the dominant form of transportation.

¹ Press reports cited in Nilda Rego, Days Gone By in Contra Costa County. Pleasant Hill: Contra Costa County Historical Society.

² Editor of the *Contra Costa Gazette*, as quoted in Nilda Rego.

The population of Contra Costa County boomed as a result, tripling between 1940 and 1950, the largest proportional increase of any county in California.³ Alameda County, in contrast, saw its population increase by only 50 percent. However, most of the growth was in areas that were closer to the tunnel than Martinez and that were more connected to Oakland and San Francisco. Of the county's 200,000 new residents, fewer than 1,000 settled in Martinez. The combined population growth in Martinez in the 1940s and 1950s was 30 percent, compared to over 300 percent in the county.

Today, from the perspective of transportation routes and job and population concentrations, Martinez is at the edge of the county, not its center. The city's location on the water has ceased to be an advantage with the decline of water transportation and the fishing, shipping, and maritime industries. The original railroads play a much smaller role in transportation, while BART serves other parts of the county. And most importantly, the major freeways are far from Downtown Martinez. Highway 4, the main road access to Martinez, has less capacity than the other freeways in the county and suffers from severe traffic congestion. Moreover, Downtown Martinez is located quite far from Highway 4 on local streets, impeding access from the rest of the region. Downtown Walnut Creek, with the convergence of two major freeways and a BART station, is in a much more central location by today's standards.

This change in the city's position, and that of its Downtown, relative to other parts of the county has significant implications for the ability of Downtown to attract jobs and people. This does not mean that there are no opportunities for Downtown Martinez—there are many—but rather that the city needs to be very thoughtful in identifying Downtown assets and developing strategies to build on them.

B.2.4 Recent Public and Private Investments

Several recent public projects have enhanced the Downtown. The Martinez Intermodal Station, which opened in 2001, provides an attractive new gateway to Martinez and a unified transit hub for Amtrak, Capitol Corridor rail service to Sacramento and Oakland, and several local and express transit operators. A 2002 marsh restoration project (a partnership between the East Bay Regional Park District, Caltrans and the City of Martinez) created valuable wildlife habitat and enhanced visitor access while alleviating rainy season flood conditions in the Downtown. Enhancements to Alhambra Creek included expansion of the creek banks, new bridges, a public square at the entrance to the Intermodal Station, and a new landscaped creekside plaza on Main Street.

Contra Costa County has also made important investments in Downtown Martinez in recent decades. The County's Martinez Detention Facility, completed in 1981, exemplifies the direct supervision/non-barrier approach to correctional facility design and is a regional resource center for the National Institute of Corrections (N.I.C.). The Justice A.F. Bray Courts Building at 1010 Ward Street was dedicated in 1988 to provide

³ The Economy of Contra Costa County and the Housing Market. Planning and Housing Research Association, 1950.

additional courtrooms to serve the growing county. The Peter L. Spinetta Family Law Center was completed in 2001, helping to retain an important County function Downtown.

Given the extent and age of the County facilities in Downtown Martinez, however, significant opportunities for reinvestment remain. The County Finance Building, a nationally-registered historic structure, needs seismic upgrading and rehabilitation. A charming two-story vintage building on Main Street, owned by the County, is used for document storage, while it could be rehabilitated and leased. In previous discussions with the City, Contra Costa County has expressed interest in building a shared parking structure and rehabilitating or replacing the County Administration Building, but these projects are not currently funded.

Private investments in Downtown buildings in recent years include the rehabilitation and seismic upgrading of several historic structures, now used as office and retail space; the ongoing construction of about 34 units of multifamily housing in five small development projects; and the rehabilitation and beautification of numerous residential buildings. Despite these efforts, there is community concern about the level of maintenance of some commercial and residential buildings Downtown. In the Downtown Specific Plan survey from July 2003, building maintenance ranked fourth among respondents' dislikes about Downtown, after types of businesses, hours of operation, and concerns about parking.

B.3 CULTURAL RESOURCES

Downtown's historic character is among its most highly valued features. In the Specific Plan survey, the most frequently mentioned asset was scale, with responses mentioning topics such as small-town feel, quiet, and lack of crowding. The next two most frequent topics were the historic nature of the Downtown and its character or quaintness.

Traveling toward Downtown Martinez on Alhambra Avenue is like traveling back in time. As one approaches the historic core, contemporary strip commercial development gives way to post-World War II neighborhoods, then to prewar, Edwardian, and Victorian homes. Upon arriving Downtown, visitors find a built record of Martinez history, with streets and blocks laid out during the Gold Rush, homes built throughout the late 19th and early 20th Centuries, and commercial buildings recalling the boom years of industrial expansion in the 1910's and 20's. While many historic buildings have been altered beyond recognition by insensitive remodeling, there are still many architectural gems Downtown. Some, like the Old State Theater and the City Hall Apartments, have been adaptively rehabilitated by private landowners at considerable expense.

There are 91 known cultural resources within or adjacent to the study area. (See the Draft Environmental Impact Report for the full discussion of these resources and the regulatory context.) Thirty are listed in county, state or federal registers, and 61 are listed in the local Martinez Historic Resource Inventory. Known resources include historic architectural properties, one National Historic Trail corridor, and sites at which notable historical events or buildings and structures once stood. In addition to these more formal

designations, groups such as the Martinez Historical Society, the Old Town Preservation and Beautification Committee, and Main Street Martinez all advocate for the preservation and rehabilitation of historic structures. The plaques placed by these groups on many of the historic buildings and homes Downtown help relate their significance to visitors.

Chapters 7 and 8 of this plan discuss historic preservation issues, and the Appendices include a case study of building rehabilitation.

B.4 EXISTING DEVELOPMENT AND LAND USE

Existing development in the Specific Plan area shows a fine-grained mix of land uses, ranging from industrial, institutional, commercial and office uses to single family and multi family residential uses (Table B-3). Existing commercial, civic and mixed-use buildings are generally one to three stories tall and have few if any setbacks; Downtown buildings date from many eras, from the 1880s to the 1980s (see Chapter 7, Downtown Historic Preservation Overlay District, for some examples). Approximately 32% of the study area is in institutional use, making this the predominant use in the Downtown, followed by residential uses which constitute about 30% of the land area. Together, institutional and residential uses make up almost two thirds of the Specific Plan area. Institutional uses include several historic public buildings, as well as more contemporary high-rise structures such as the County Administration Building and Community College District building (see Chapter 6, Civic District) Industrial uses, which also account for a significant amount of the land area, are mainly concentrated in the northern end of the Specific Plan area, near the railroad – these include the Telfer oil refinery with its large storage tanks, as well as lower-intensity one-story storage and warehouse uses. Figure B-3 shows the current land use in map form.

TABLE B-3 Percentage of Total Land Area by Land Use

Land Use	Land Area in Acres	Percentage of Total Land Area
Commercial	12	5%
Office	7	3%
Industrial	23	10%
Institutional	54	25%
Single Family Residential	32	15%
Multi Family Residential	19	9%
Parks, Playgrounds	4	2%
Parking	1	0%
Garages/Undetermined	2	1%
Vacant	14	6%
No Data	3	1%
Street Rights of Way	49	22%
Total	220	100%

Source: County Assessor, 2003 (Study Area)

Commercial and office uses comprise about 11% of the study area, while vacant land makes up about 8%. Commercial uses are concentrated primarily along Main Street and Ferry Street and are generally in either single-story retail structures (which generally fill most or all of their parcel), or in two or three story mixed-use buildings with residential or office uses over ground-floor retail. The majority of vacant lots are small and are scattered throughout the area. These lots offer opportunities for infill commercial, multi-family residential, or mixed-use development. The few larger vacant lots are located in the northern and eastern corners of the area and include steep slopes. Some of the surface parking lots also offer potential for infill. Underutilized industrial and commercial lots also provide opportunities for reuse, in keeping with the General Plan policy of encouraging the relocation of industry away from the waterfront.⁴

While Downtown is directly adjacent to over 400 acres of open space, parks and other open space account for only about four acres within the study area. Existing parks include Susana Park, Highland Avenue Park and Ygnacio Plaza, as well as the pocket park near the Intermodal Station. These parks, along with the Martinez Regional Shoreline and Martinez Waterfront Park, offer numerous recreational opportunities to residents.

There are about 1,089 housing units in the Specific Plan area. Of these, single family homes account for about 27% while multi-family residential accounts for over 70%, making it the predominant housing type in the study area.⁵ Multi-family housing is much more prevalent Downtown than in the rest of the city, accounting for only about 20 percent of the housing units citywide. Moreover, the proportions of renters and owners are reversed: 70 percent of the units in the two Downtown tracts are occupied by renters, compared to only 30 percent in Martinez as a whole.⁶ The multifamily building stock covers the full range from smaller 2-4 plexes to larger buildings. (See Table B-4.) Figure B-4 shows the distribution of the various types of housing in map form.

⁴ Central Martinez Specific Area Plan, section 30.351.

⁵ Source: Contra Costa County Community Development Department, County Assessor parcel data via ParcelQuest, February 2003.

⁶ U.S. Census 2000.

TABLE B-4 Housing by Structure Type and Tenure

Structure Type	Downtown Study Area					
	Owner		Renter		Total	
Single Family	193	78%	99	12%	292	27%
Duplex	40	16%	62	7%	102	9%
3 to 4 Units	7	3%	163	19%	170	16%
5 to 9 Units	6	2%	84	10%	90	8%
10 Units or More	0	0%	435	52%	435	40%
Other	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
<i>Total Units</i>	246	100%	843	100%	1089	100%
Tenure Share	23%		77%			

Source: County Assessor, 2003 (Study Area); U.S. Census, 2000 (City)

The two Downtown census tracts contain slightly more than 10 percent of the city’s housing stock, 1,561 units out of a total of 14,637. Given the way the city evolved and grew, Downtown housing is much older than housing in the rest of the city: more than half of the Downtown housing stock was built before 1940, and fully 70 percent before 1950, compared to only about 17 percent in the city as a whole. Table B-5 shows the date of construction of housing units in Martinez, both Downtown and citywide.

Year Structure Built	Downtown Units		Total Units in City		Downtown Units as % of City Total
	#	% of Total	#	% of Total	
1999 to March 2000	0	0.0	152	1.0	0.0
1995 to 1998	13	0.8	346	2.4	3.8
1990 to 1994	21	1.3	856	5.8	2.5
1980 to 1989	43	2.8	3,755	25.7	1.1
1970 to 1979	86	5.5	3,547	24.2	2.4
1960 to 1969	143	9.2	1,983	13.5	7.2
1950 to 1959	151	9.7	1,468	10.0	10.3
1940 to 1949	233	14.9	982	6.7	23.7
1939 or earlier	871	55.8	1,548	10.6	56.3
All Units:	1,561	100.0	14,637	100.0	10.7

Source: U.S. Census

B.5 GENERAL PLAN CATEGORIES AND ZONING DESIGNATIONS

There are 11 General Plan categories and 14 zoning designations plus an overlay district within the Specific Plan area. Part of the Downtown’s historic character is the mix of uses

and densities within a block. Much of the historic building stock Downtown would not be permitted under current zoning, due to height, setback and lot coverage restrictions.

The Martinez General Plan was adopted in 1973 after an extensive public process. It includes policies, objectives and standards for future physical development of the city. The Central Martinez Specific Area Plan, a section of the General Plan, provides additional detail regarding policy goals for the older part of Martinez, extending from Downtown south to Highway 4. The General Plan categories, which set policies to be implemented through zoning and other tools, include commercial, industrial, and mixed use designations; four residential designations, varying by density and minimum site area; and designations for schools, open space and government facilities.

The zoning designations control the uses of land, locations and uses of structures, the height and bulk of structures, areas and dimensions of sites among a number of other issues. Current zoning districts include three commercial districts, four residential districts (plus the overlay), two industrial districts, and a government facilities district. The purpose of the Downtown Overlay District is to recognize the existing higher density development in Downtown, encourage future infill development and promote the consolidation of smaller lots. The overlay allows additional density if certain conditions are met and is credited with encouraging small multifamily housing developments on scattered sites in recent years.

Both the General Plan and the zoning ordinance describe specific allowable residential densities or ranges, which vary by block. However, the two are inconsistent with each other and are also not always consistent with the existing conditions, which vary at a very fine grain from parcel to parcel, as shown in Figure B-5.

The current General Plan and zoning reflect uncertainty regarding future uses of the industrial areas north of the railroad tracks. The General Plan designates these areas as a “special study area,” and its policies encourage the relocation of industry away from the waterfront and the conversion of industrial lands encircling the Downtown to other uses, including housing.⁷ The Waterfront Policy zone in the Open Space Element says the waterfront should remain “essentially unimproved and devoted to open space land use,” with limited industrial development or recreational facilities.⁸ The zoning reflects the existing industrial and residential uses, with the residential properties in a special mixed-use district that allows only the conversion of the smaller residential parcels at the north end of Berrellesa Street to open space or recreation.

⁷ Martinez General Plan Sections 30.351 and 30.522

⁸ Martinez General Plan Section 2B.23.

B.6 DEMOGRAPHIC AND ECONOMIC CONTEXT⁹

The following section discusses the demographic and economic context of the existing conditions in Downtown Martinez.

B.6.1 Population

Until at least the 1920s, Downtown Martinez¹⁰ contained most of the city’s population and jobs. Although Downtown’s share of the city’s total population declined steadily from the 1920s to the 1950s, in 1960 Downtown still had nearly 40 percent of the city’s population; today it is home to only 10 percent.¹¹ In absolute terms, the Downtown population today is about what it was in 1960, but the rest of the city has grown around it. The historical population figures are summarized in Table B-6.

Year	Downtown Population	Total Population
1920	n/a	3,858
1930	n/a	6,569
1940	n/a	7,381
1950	n/a	8,268
1960	3,564	9,604
1970	3,475	16,506
1980	2,872	22,582
1990	3,432	31,808
2000	3,736	35,866

Source: U.S. Census
 Note: Downtown population figures unavailable before 1960 due to lack of census data at the tract/block group level.

By the 1970s Downtown was falling on hard times. Although the city was growing quite rapidly, Downtown suffered absolute population losses. As in many older California communities, the cumulative effects of changes in the transportation system, the decline of traditional industry, more dispersed auto-oriented retail, and shifting metropolitan spatial patterns began to make themselves felt. Only 129 units of housing were built Downtown during the 1970s and 1980s, despite the fact that fully 50 percent of the city’s

⁹ All data in section B.6 are from the U.S. Census except when noted otherwise.

¹⁰ In this section, “Downtown” is defined as census tracts 316000 and 317000. Each of these tracts is composed of two block groups, the smallest geographic unit of census data readily available and comparable over time. The two census tracts in question include an area extending six blocks south of the study area, to Robinson Street.

¹¹ The lack of census tract-level data earlier than 1960 makes it impossible to determine the Downtown population; however, qualitative historical sources and census data on the age of the housing stock Downtown vs. the rest of Martinez indicate that Downtown was home to the bulk of the city’s population. There were also significant annexations that led to an expansion of the city’s total area.

current housing stock was built in those two decades, and the retail base suffered from competition elsewhere. Thus, just as Martinez lost its central place in Contra Costa County, so Downtown became far less important within the city.

Downtown has seen its population rebound in the last 20 years, reversing the decline of the 1970s and even surpassing the 1960 level, even though it now represents a much smaller percentage of the city's total population. The population of Downtown Martinez was 3,736 in the year 2000. In racial and ethnic terms, Downtown residents constitute a slightly more diverse population than city residents as a whole, with proportionately more African American and Hispanic residents (but fewer Asian residents). However, Downtown residents are less likely than other Martinez residents to have been born abroad or even in another state, and those who are immigrants came to the U.S. much earlier than immigrants in other parts of the city. These statistics suggest that Downtown is home to more long-time residents, including those with significant family ties to Martinez, than the newer areas of the city.

Downtown residents are also more concentrated in the middle age brackets between 18 and 49 years old. Both children and older people are more prevalent in other parts of the city. The lower number of families with children means that household size is smaller Downtown: two persons per household, compared to 2.4 citywide.

The median household income Downtown is much lower than in the rest of the city: \$39,000 compared to \$63,000, or 62 percent of the citywide level.¹² Downtown also has a much higher percentage of residents living under the poverty line: 14 percent compared to 5 percent in the city as a whole. Lower incomes are consistent with the higher proportion of renters Downtown than in other areas of the City. Multi-family housing is much more prevalent Downtown than in other parts of the City, accounting for nearly 50% of Downtown units compared to about 20% of the Citywide total. Moreover, the proportions of renters and owners are reversed: about 70% of Downtown units are occupied by renters, compared to about 30% in Martinez as a whole.

Downtown residents have significantly different commuting patterns than those in other parts of the city. They are more likely to walk, bicycle, or take the bus to work, and also more likely to work at home and more likely to work in Martinez. This has important implications for the type of residents and businesses that might choose to locate Downtown, and for making decisions about the types of amenities that can and should be supported there.

B.6.2 Employment

¹² Median income data from the U.S. Census is based on the long form questionnaire circulated to 1 in 6 Martinez households. At the 95 percent confidence level, the margin of error of this sample is ± 5.55 percentage points. Roughly, the maximum range within which the true median household income could fall is between \$30,000 and \$44,999 for the combined census tracts. See Appendix III for a discussion of the U.S. Census and other data sources.

Table B-7 shows the number of businesses and jobs in the Downtown.

Table B-7: Downtown Breakdown of Business Types, excluding Government, 2003

Sector	Firms		Employees	
	Count	Share	Count	Share
Agriculture	5	2%	36	2%
Construction	7	2%	35	2%
Manufacturing	11	3%	52	3%
Transportation/Public Utilities	10	3%	173	9%
Wholesale Trade	9	3%	174	10%
Retail Trade	88	27%	303	17%
FIRE (Finance, Insurance, Real Estate)	42	13%	197	11%
Services	151	47%	859	47%
Total	323	100%	1829	100%

Source: Info USA¹³. Data is for Census Tracts 316000 and 317000.

Since Martinez is the County seat, public administration is the largest single employer in the Downtown. County offices house approximately 1,300 employees, and an average of 180 jurors visit the Downtown each day.¹⁴ Most jurors visit the courts from Monday to Thursday, and juror attendance is generally highest on Monday and Wednesday. Meanwhile, an estimated 323 private businesses Downtown employ 1,800 workers.

While the private sector offers some diversity in the Downtown economy, a significant yet incalculable majority of Downtown businesses are supported indirectly by county offices. Approximately 115 service-oriented businesses are located Downtown because their work involves interaction with the county. These businesses include newspaper bureaus, law firms, unions, and nonprofit associations, as well as more standard business-to-business firms such as copy centers, computer support, and office storage companies. Moreover, interviews with several retailers in the Downtown indicated that county employees and jurors are a large part of their customer base, which suggests that even businesses with no apparent connection to the county benefit from being in close proximity to its offices.

Retail trade comprises nearly one third of all Downtown businesses, yet this sector employs only one fifth of all workers in the Downtown. However, the presence of retail in the Downtown plays an important role in the character of the city, as described in the Retail Market Assessment.

The Services sector includes nearly half of the businesses Downtown, and nearly half of all private-sector jobs. It is important to note that the “services” designation includes a wide array of business types. Approximately one quarter of the businesses in the services sector fill the personal or recreational needs of the community, ranging from massage to auto repair. The remaining three quarters of the businesses in this sector include

¹⁴ Contra Costa County General Services Department (based on a 1998 study)

accountants, law firms, business services such as copying or computer assistance, and public and private educational services, among others.

Downtown firms in the Transportation and Utilities sector appear to be some of the largest employers in the community. The few firms in this sector, which include taxi companies and truck transit, are labor-intensive operations which also require large amounts of land for vehicle storage. The employment numbers for this sector are misleading; while the firms are headquartered in the Downtown, many of these employees are not actually situated in the Downtown.

B.6.3 The Future

The preceding sections have described the changing roles of Martinez and its Downtown throughout the history of the city. Because of its location relative to major transportation routes, Downtown Martinez is unlikely to become a major job center, with the notable exception of having a concentration of county employees. However, it holds significant appeal for some segments of the population as a residential area, and for certain types of businesses as an employment location. The challenge is to build on existing assets to attract the people and jobs that can help revitalize the Downtown. Detailed assessments of the market potential for office, industrial, residential, and commercial development prepared as part of this Plan are listed in Section 1.8 and are available from the City.

Downtown has a beautiful natural setting, a significant base of county employment, a new train station on a line with improving service, potential ferry service to other parts of the Bay Area, a stock of attractive older buildings, and a unique, pedestrian-friendly atmosphere. In the heyday of the refineries and maritime industries, almost everyone walked to work. Even today a significant percentage of Downtown residents get to work without a car. With Martinez as a whole projected to add roughly 5,000 new residents and 6,000 jobs between 2000 and 2025¹⁵, there are significant opportunities for Downtown to attract a share of the newcomers.

Transit is also playing a more important role in the location decisions of individuals and businesses alike. The ability to live close to work and services is increasingly appealing for much of the population. The city's new Amtrak/Capitol Corridor station can serve as the focus for new development by providing a convenient rail link to San Jose, Oakland, and Sacramento, with a connection to BART in Richmond. There are currently 24 daily Capitol Corridor trains (with additional, less frequent passenger service to other parts of California), and the Capitol Corridor Joint Powers Authority's (CCJPA) business plan calls for 32 daily trains by 2010—one per hour in each direction from 6 a.m. to 10 p.m. A ferry service, if implemented, would provide an additional transit connection.

As the dynamics of the county's growth and transportation change, Martinez has an opportunity to reconnect to the rest of the county while also creating a unique, high-quality character and environment. Downtown Martinez will never occupy the central

¹⁵ ABAG *Projections 2008*.

role in the city or county that it once did, but there is significant potential to enhance the physical and economic health of the area and to accommodate a portion of the city's future growth Downtown. By providing more opportunities for people to live and work Downtown, Martinez can minimize the impact of growth on traffic congestion, air pollution, and open space while helping to enhance an amenity that the whole city can enjoy.

More and more cities are discovering that a vibrant, attractive Downtown is not just a quality of life amenity; it is also an economic development asset. Some cities are going to great lengths to build new Downtowns from scratch or reconfigure Downtowns marred by auto-oriented planning. Martinez has the good fortune of already possessing an attractive, historic Downtown that can serve to attract residents and businesses alike.

B.6.4 Why Plan?

This Specific Plan includes changes in land use regulations intended to create additional opportunities for development Downtown in order to harness the power of private investments to bring about revitalization. There are implications for the Downtown if current land use regulations remain unchanged:

- **Current zoning does not accommodate market demand for housing.** There is considerable demand for ownership housing Downtown but little available residentially zoned land. Commercial and industrial sites are not available for residential development but are in low demand for their designated uses, resulting in a cycle of low lease revenue, deferred maintenance, and physical decay.
- **Downtown commercial buildings are in dire need of physical reinvestment.** If new investment is not made in the physical structures of the Downtown, the costs of revitalizing these buildings will continue to increase, until the only option remaining is demolition. The sooner the Specific Plan can stimulate private investment in Downtown structures, the less costly this investment process will be.
- **The expansion and diversification of retail services in the Downtown will not occur without changes to land use regulations.** Widespread investment in the Downtown's stock of commercial buildings will only happen if investors feel secure that they will realize a profit. New residential development, and changes to regulations in the commercial core, will enable investors to salvage the historic structures in the Downtown with some guarantee that their efforts will be rewarded through increased business.

B.7 PARKING – EXISTING CONDITIONS AND POLICIES

Prior to this Plan, the most recent comprehensive study of Downtown parking needs was the Downtown Martinez Parking Study undertaken for the City of Martinez, County of Contra Costa, and Contra Costa Community College District. This study was prepared in November 1987 by Abrams Associates and Majors Engineering and addressed current conditions, future parking needs, potential parking improvements and recommended

short- and long-term programs. Several potential sites for joint City/County/College District parking garages were presented and discussed. A previous parking study in 1980 was done by JHK & Associates. Since these studies were done, new County facilities and the Intermodal Station have created additional demand for Downtown parking, so a new survey was needed.

As part of this Specific Plan, Fehr & Peers Associates prepared a parking demand analysis and an estimate of parking supply including both on-street and off-street parking spaces. The parking demand analysis determined the occupancy of on-street parking spaces during a weekday in Martinez when potential jurors were called for duty: Monday, September 22, 2003.

The main results of this data collection effort were as follows:

- The total number of non-residential parking spaces in the Downtown area is approximately 3,100. There are about 1,600 off-street spaces and 1,500 on-street spaces.
- Overall, the Downtown area has sufficient on-street parking for current uses with an overall maximum occupancy of 63% at the peak hour, 10 to 11 AM. (The occupancy of off-street parking lots was not surveyed).
- There are significant variations between sub-areas of the Downtown, with the greatest demand for on-street parking near the Courthouse.
- The hourly distribution is generally flat, with few spaces occupied after 6 PM.
- Metered parking has a higher occupancy than non-metered parking with a pronounced morning peak.

B.7.1 Parking Supply

This parking supply includes on-street parking spaces and off-street spaces, both distributed through the Downtown streets. On-street parking is shown in Figure B-6. Most of the streets allow some form of parking. Several local streets have been converted to one-way traffic to allow diagonal parking to be installed on one side. There are approximately 1,500 on-street parking spaces. These spaces are almost equally divided between metered and un-metered spaces.

In addition, there are about 1,600 off-street spaces in public lots, County lots, or private lots associated with commercial, office, industrial and institutional uses. Existing off-street parking areas and their ownership are shown in Figure 12-1. Therefore, the number of spaces available in the study area is approximately 3,100. This total does not include parking spaces in the Waterfront Park and Regional Shoreline, which are outside the study area and serve County demand to a degree as well.

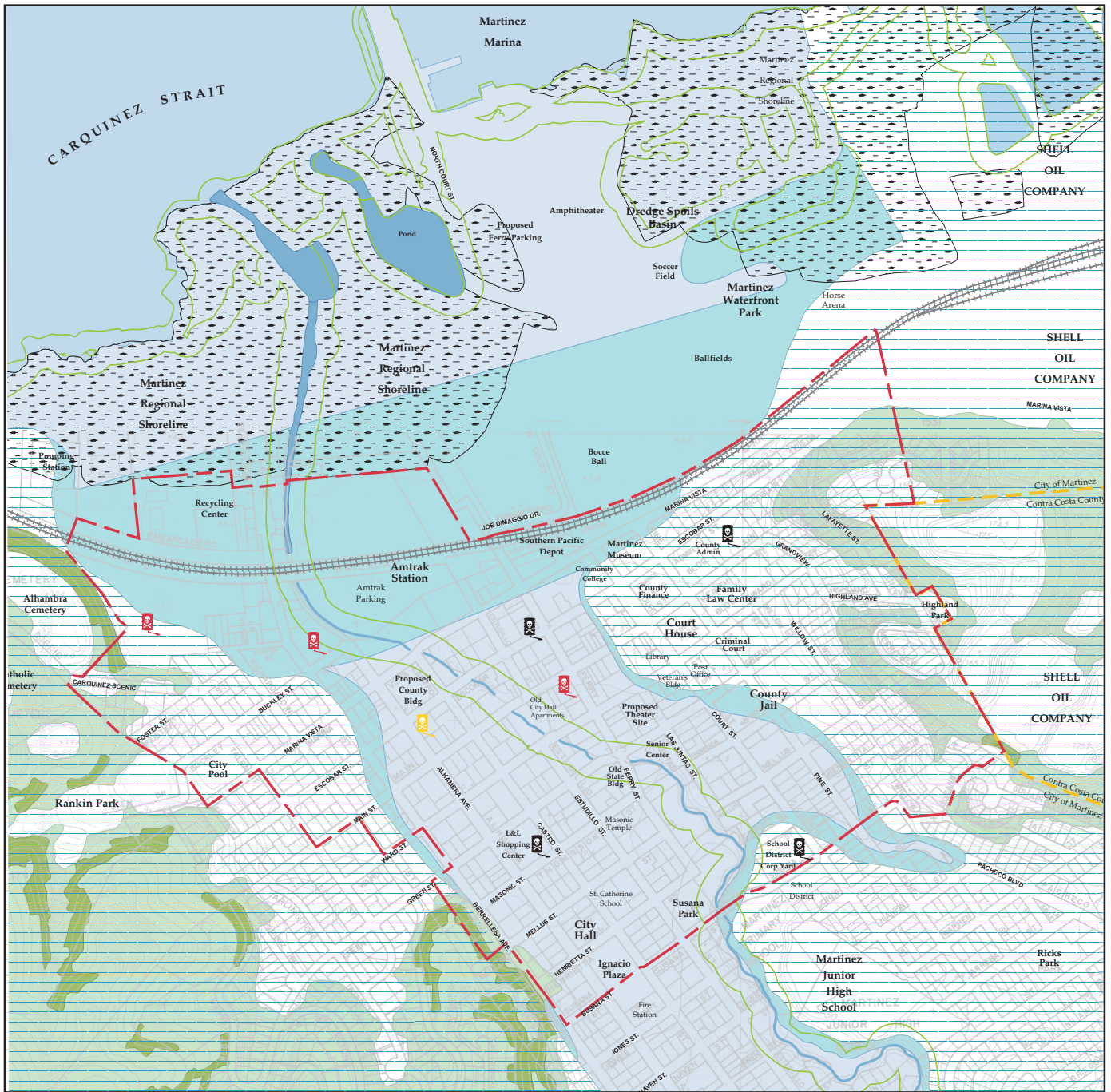
B.7.2 Parking Demand

The occupancy survey found significant variation in parking demand across the study area. Roadways close to the Contra Costa Offices and the Courthouse had relatively little on-street parking available on the day of the survey. For example, Pine Street, Marina Vista Avenue Court Street, and Ferry Street were fully occupied throughout the day. Several blocks of Pine Street, Court Street, and Main Street reached full occupancy between 8 AM and 9 AM. Other areas of the Downtown had very limited parking demand for on-street parking, with half or more of the spaces typically unoccupied. The parking demand was lower along sections of Henrietta Street, Mellus Street, and Estudillo Street. In general, the parking occupancy was highest in the portion of the study area north of Ward Street and east of Estudillo Street.

Overall, the peak occupancy occurred between 9 AM and 10 AM, but the demand throughout the day was relatively flat. After 6PM, only 26% of all spaces were occupied. Non-metered parking was occupied fairly consistently throughout the day, but the metered parking had a pronounced peak at 10 AM, with a gradual decline throughout the rest of the day. Factors contributing to this peak could include the traffic associated with jury duty, court and county office visitors, and retail traffic.

B.7.3 Parking Policies

Most of the Downtown Core and a portion of the Civic District fall within Martinez Parking District No. 1, which was established in the 1950s. The parking district collects meter revenue and a portion of the property tax revenue from uses in the district. Revenue from the district is used for parking enforcement and the acquisition and improvement of off-street parking lots. Except for residential uses, uses in the Parking District are not required to provide off-street parking nor to pay an in-lieu fee (City Code section 22.36.020 D.) Instead, these uses rely on City parking lots and on-street parking.



LEGEND

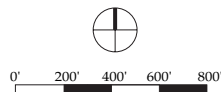
- - - Study Area Boundary
- Property Lines
- Alhambra Creek
- 100' Riparian Buffer
- Slope > 10% (Source: Digitized from Topographic Map from City Engineer; Slope Calculations-Calthorpe Associates)
- Slope > 30% (Source: Digitized from Topographic Map from City Engineer; Slope Calculations-Calthorpe Associates)
- Wetlands (Source: U.S. Fish and Wildlife Services' National Wetland Inventory; Satellite Image)
- Floodplain** (Source: Federal Emergency Management Agency (F.E.M.A.)-Flood Insurance Rate Map)
 - Zone A (100-year floodplain)
 - Zone X 500 (500-year floodplain- area inundated by 100 year flooding with average depths of less than 1 foot or with drainage areas less than 1 square mile; or area protected by levees from 100 year flooding)
 - Zone X (Area outside the 100- and 500-year floodplains)
- Underground Storage Tank Leaks**
 - ☒ Leak Confirmed
 - ☒ Leak Under Investigation
 - ☒ Post Remediation Monitoring

Fig. B-1 ENVIRONMENTAL FEATURES

Downtown Martinez Specific Plan

Martinez, California

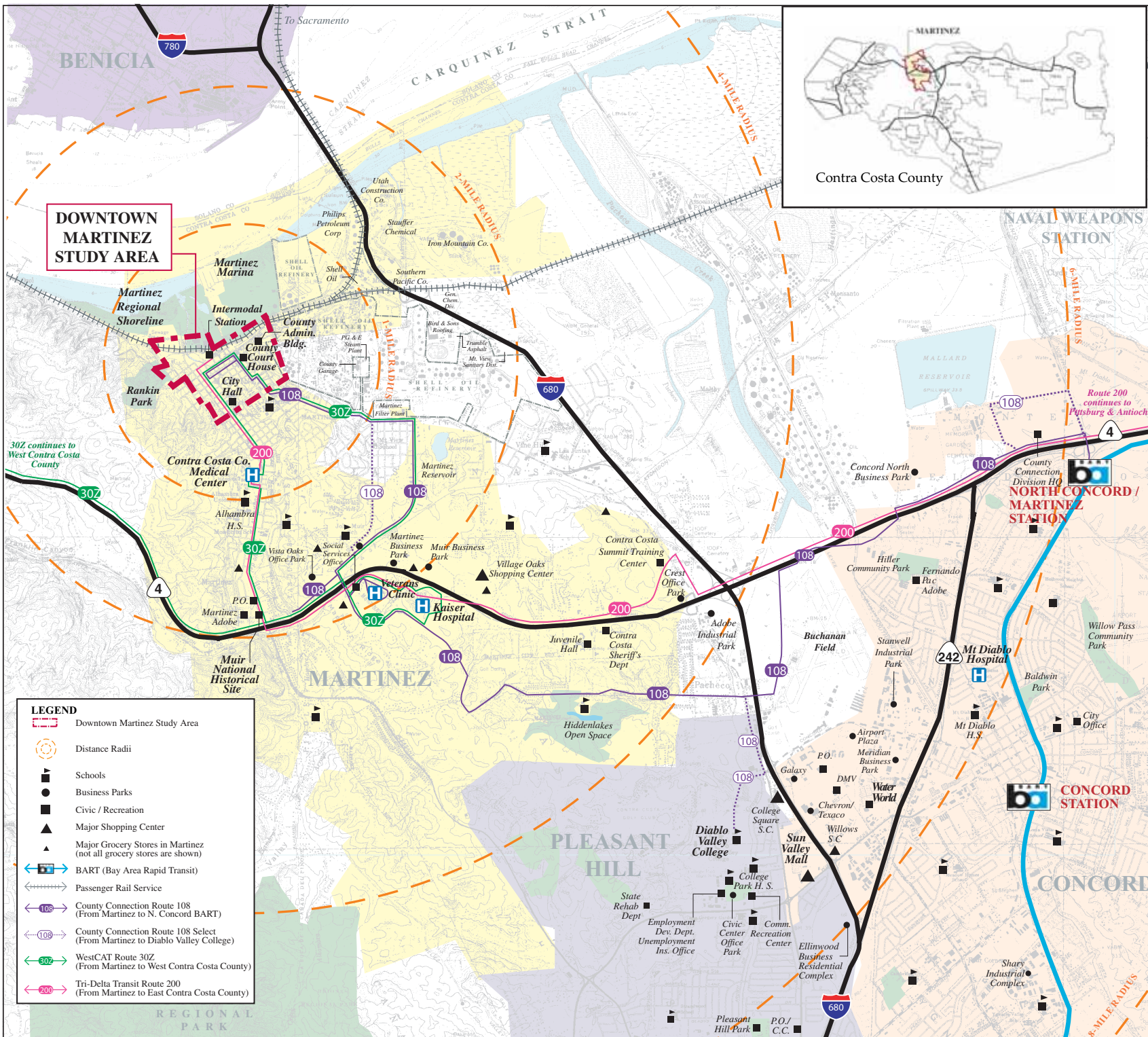
Sources: San Francisco Bay Regional Water Quality Control Board, 2003; LUSTIS (Leaking Underground Storage Tank Information System) Database, March 1 and RWQCB, 2003; SLIC (Spills, Leaks, Investigations, and Cleanup) Database, March



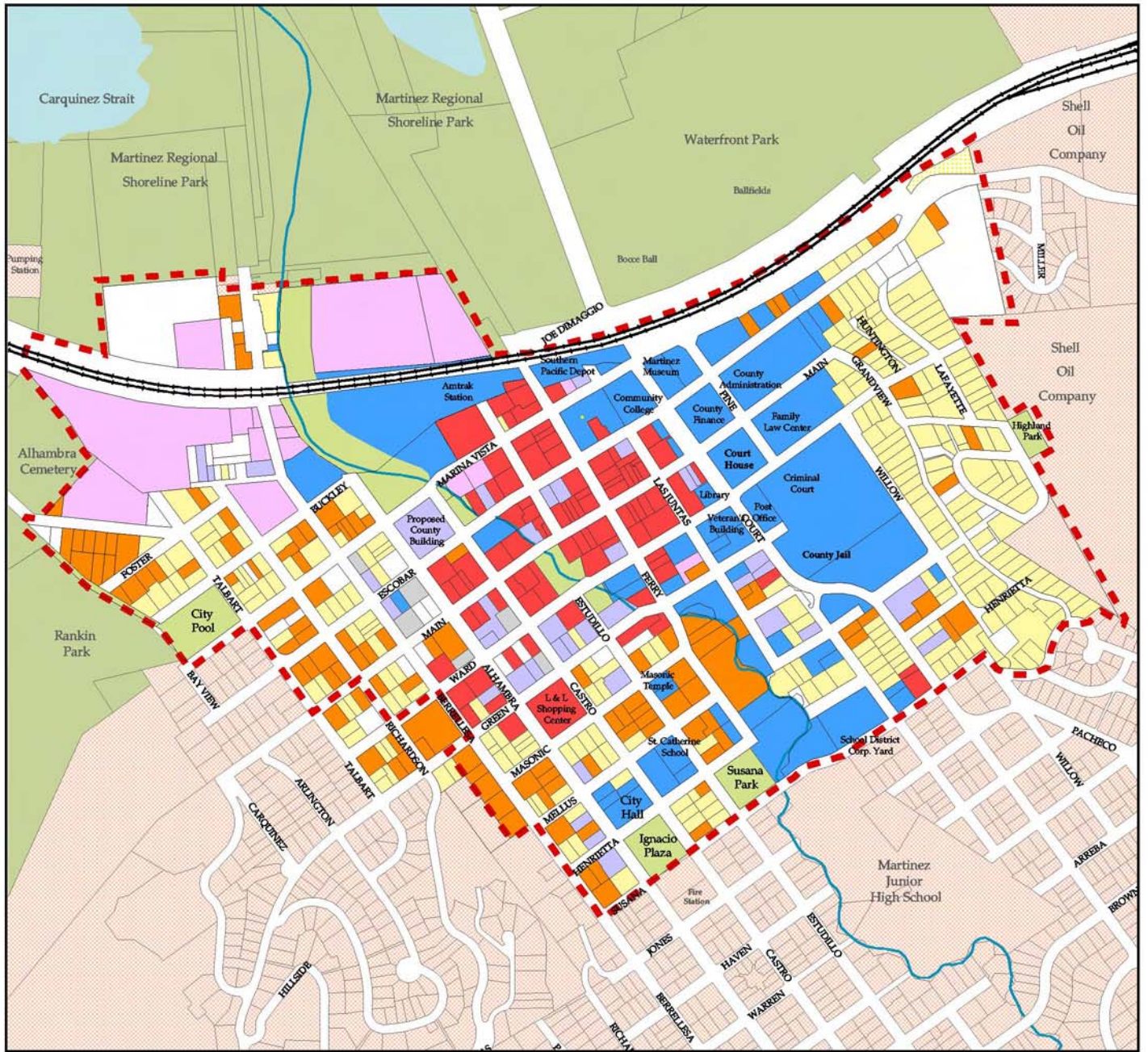
City of Martinez, California

**Fig.B-2 REGIONAL
CONTEXT**

**Downtown Martinez
Specific Plan**
Martinez, California



- LEGEND**
- Downtown Martinez Study Area
 - Distance Radii
 - Schools
 - Business Parks
 - Civic / Recreation
 - Major Shopping Center
 - Major Grocery Stores in Martinez (not all grocery stores are shown)
 - BART (Bay Area Rapid Transit)
 - Passenger Rail Service
 - County Connection Route 108 (From Martinez to N. Concord BART)
 - County Connection Route 108 Select (From Martinez to Diablo Valley College)
 - WestCAT Route 302 (From Martinez to West Contra Costa County)
 - Tri-Delta Transit Route 200 (From Martinez to East Contra Costa County)



LEGEND

- Study Area
- Alhambra Creek
- Rail Road

LAND USE

- Single Family Residential
- Multi Family Residential
- Commercial
- Office
- Industrial
- Civic/Institutional
- Parking
- Vacant
- Parks and Playground

Sources:
 Mapped from the Use Code information from the Contra Costa County Assessor, Feb 2003 Parcel Quest Data and cross-checked with site visit (May 2003)

Fig. B-3 CURRENT LAND USE

Downtown Martinez Specific Plan

Martinez, California

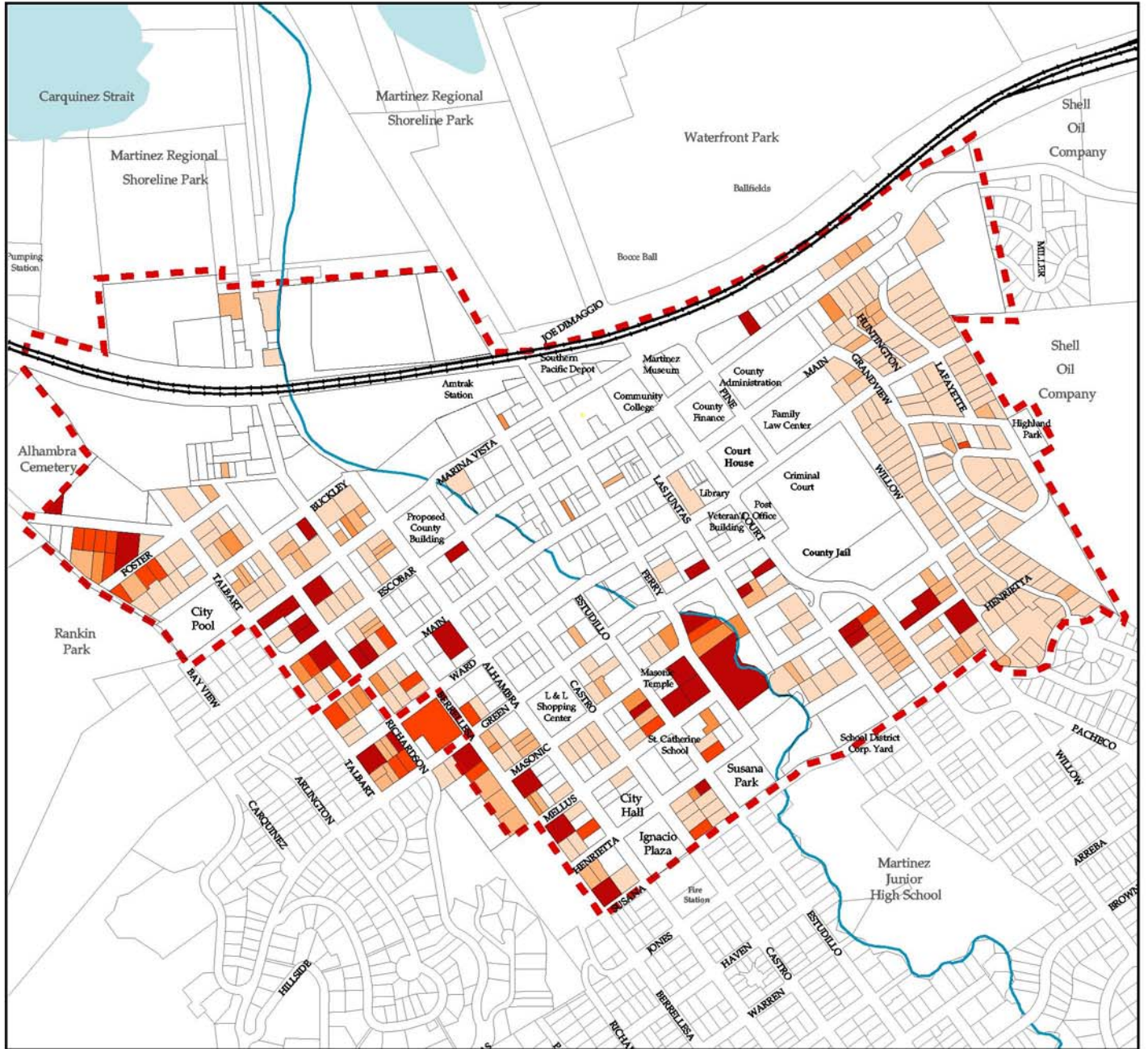


0 350 700 1050 Feet



Galton Associates
 URBAN DESIGNERS
 PLANNERS
 ARCHITECTS
 Berkeley, California

City of Martinez, California



LEGEND

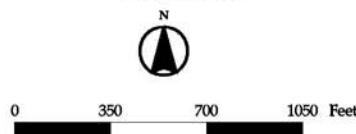
- Study Area
- Alhambra Creek
- Rail Road

Density - Units per Acre

- 0 - 10
- 10 - 20
- 20 - 30
- 30 - 40
- Above 40

Fig. B-5 RESIDENTIAL DENSITY

Downtown Martinez Specific Plan
Martinez, California



Galthorpe Associates
URBAN DESIGN
PLANNERS
ARCHITECTS
Berkeley, California

City of Martinez, California

Sources:
Mapped from the Contra Costa County Assessor, Feb 2003 Parcel Quest Data



ON STREET PARKING

Fig. B-6