

Section 7. Landscape Framework

Generally, the landscape framework envisioned in downtown El Sobrante includes four types of landscape improvements.

- Public Streetscape
- Village Center Park
- Informal Landscape Improvements
- Natural Landscape Areas

Figure 26 illustrates the general location of these types of landscape improvements.

Public Streetscape

These improvements include plantings, lighting, street furnishings, signage, special pedestrian paving, public art and amenities that will be located along the streets of the downtown. Planned streetscape improvements are described in the Village Center and San Pablo Dam Road portions of the Urban Design Concepts section.

Village Center Park

The Village Center Park will have a landscape design that uniquely expresses downtown El Sobrante. A description of landscape improvements for the park is provided in the Open Space Framework section and in figures 17 and 18, which refer to Village Center Park.

Informal Landscape Improvements

Informal landscape improvements are located throughout the downtown public areas, notably in the pedestrian corridors that link hillside residential areas to the downtown and in the creekside parks and linear parks.

Adjacent property owners will be encouraged to care for these spaces, similar to the way such spaces are cared for in the Berkeley Hills, in San Francisco, and in various Marin County towns.

A mix of ornamental, background and accent plantings, paving and amenity features are appropriate in these spaces. Although the general landscape character is informal, at night a unified lighting scheme will be incorporated to help guide pedestrians and other users in appropriate directions.



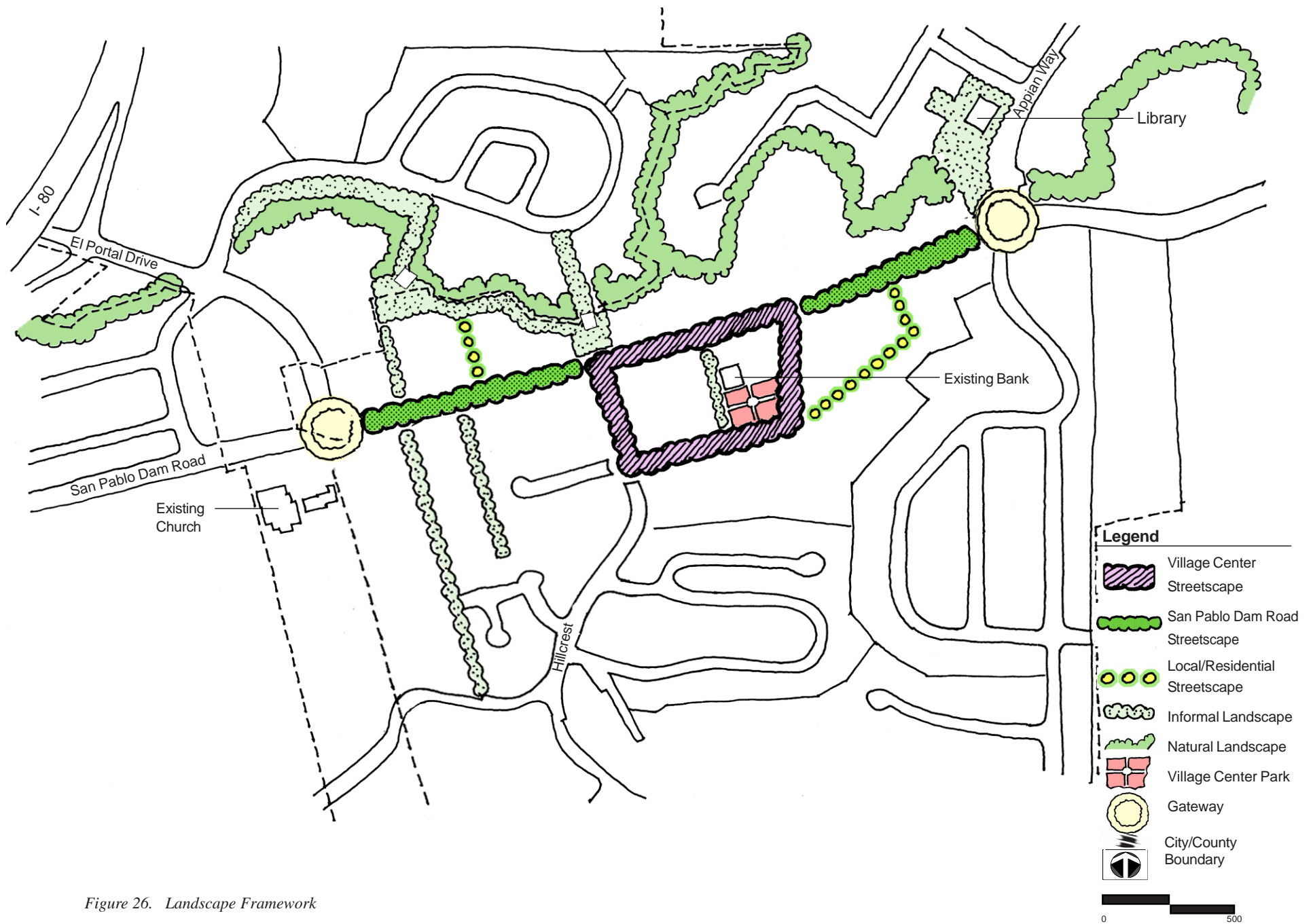


Figure 26. Landscape Framework

Natural Landscape

Natural landscape areas to remain are located primarily along the entire length of San Pablo Creek in the downtown. This natural landscape provides several benefits, including:

- An attractive backdrop to the downtown
- Wildlife habitat
- Buffer between nearby existing residential areas and commercial areas

In some areas the natural landscape along the creek will be selectively cleared and improved (in the vicinity of Library park, for example) to improve visibility between San Pablo Dam Road and other areas. Such improvements to natural landscape areas will also allow better surveillance, promote safety and security and generate better opportunities for people wishing to view the creek and its setting from creekside parks and businesses which overlook the creek. In order to protect sensitive wildlife habitat along the creek and prevent entry onto neighboring residential properties, however, improvement along the creek will be designed such that access into the creek itself will not be allowed.