



ENVISION CONTRA COSTA 2040

Kensington and East Richmond Heights Community Meeting: Issues and Vision

Kensington Library
61 Arlington Drive, Kensington, CA 94707
Wednesday, May 1st, 2019

A community meeting for Kensington and East Richmond Heights residents as part of Envision Contra Costa 2040 took place on Wednesday, May 1st, 2019, from 6:00 to 8:00 PM at the Kensington Library. The purpose of this workshop was to begin establishing a vision for the future of each community and identify issues the General Plan should address to achieve that vision. County staff and consultants facilitated the workshop and approximately 20 residents attended and participated. After a presentation about the Envision Contra Costa 2040 process, community members worked in four small groups discussing questions regarding the future of these communities. Responses to each question are summarized below. Detailed notes from the small group discussions are attached to this summary. No comment cards were submitted at the meeting.

Question 1: What do you like most about Kensington and East Richmond Heights? What would you like to see supported, preserved, or enhanced as part of this planning effort?

- Preserve the friendly, safe, and quiet, small community feel.
- Preserve the views, parks, trails, and open spaces.
- Support existing services including the fire facilities, sheriff, Kensington library and community center, public transit, and schools.

Question 2: What are the challenges facing Kensington and East Richmond Heights? What would you like to see changed in Kensington and East Richmond Heights in order to make them better places to live and work?

- Consider the benefits and drawbacks of enhanced cellular coverage.
- Address wildfire hazards and improve emergency evacuation planning.
- Improve access to hospitals and emergency services.
- Underground utilities.
- Improve pedestrian and roadway infrastructure with designated paths and lit crossings.
- Address on-street parking and traffic/speeding issues.
- Improve street lighting in East Richmond Heights.
- Encourage siting and construction of a library in East Richmond Heights.

Question 3: Do you think changes are needed to the planned land uses shown in the General Plan land use and zoning maps? If so, what changes are needed?

- Implement viewshed protections in East Richmond Heights.
- Update the Zoning Code to reflect current land uses and conditions in Kensington.
- Consider multi-family housing on large lots in Kensington.

- Add floor area ratio (FAR) or lot coverage requirements to Zoning Code in East Richmond Heights.
- Designate pedestrian paths throughout Kensington as publicly owned trails.
- Establish fire evacuation routes in Kensington.
- Allow for flexibility in accessory dwelling unit (ADU) requirements to encourage development.



The future of Kensington/East Richmond Heights is...

Kensington

Good quality of life
Wonderful people
Beautiful place to live
No longer a special
District?

East Richmond Heights

Preserve trees & nature
REMOVE DEAD TREES

Zoning

PLANNING STAFF FLEXIBILITY
IN INTERPRETING ZONING
& VARIANCE ISSUES.

Q1

group 1

K

ERH

Pg. 1

- Very quiet
- Safe
- VIEWS!

- MOSTLY RESIDENTIAL
- NICE
- VIEWS!

Q2

K

ERH

group! pg. 2

- HOSPITAL NEEDED TO REPLACE ~~THURSDAY~~ DOCTORS MED. (CURE)
↳ OR MAYBE SMALL MED. OFFICE IN OUTSIDE AREAS
- MORE OFF-STREET PARKING, ESPECIALLY FOR PROPERTIES WITH ADUs.
- OBSTRUCTION OF VIEW ORDINANCE NEEDS MORE TEETH. ADDITIONAL STEP BEFORE COURT.
- PROPERTIES OUTSIDE ULL ON PARK AVE. SHOULD BE MOVED INSIDE ULL
- EMERGENCY WARNING SIREN NEEDED
- UNDERGROUND UTILITIES
- CONSIDER ~~WIND~~ VIBR WHEN INSTALLING UTILITY LI
- PROVIDE GUIDANCE REGARDING ENERGY EFFICIENT BUILDING PRACT AND UPGRADES
- CONCERNED ABOUT FIRE RISK

Q2

K

EPH

group 1
pg. 3

- | | |
|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">- PROVIDE CONSIDER MULTI-FAMILY HOUSING ON LARGE LOTS. (A FEW ARE SCATTERED THROUGHOUT COMMUNITY)- HOUSING SHOULD BE REQUIRED TO ACCOMPANY COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENT (COUNTYWIDE) | <ul style="list-style-type: none">- DEDICATED SHERIFF DEPUTY- ADD FEAR AND/OR LOT COVERAGE REQUIREMENTS TO ZONING CODE |
|--|---|

Assets -

View

ERH/K

group 2
pg. 1

Weather

ERH

Library

Paths (K)

Low traffic (ERH)

Shopping / Farmers Market (K)
(walkable)

tennis Courts

Community Events (K) - Nat. Night at (ERH)

grade school

trees ±

Community Center (K)

Local & Regional Parks

Dog Park

Bus Service

#2

Trees (fire hazard) ^{group 2} public ^{private} and
above ground utilities (fire hazard)
easement/ownership of Paths

~~illegal~~ too many cars parked in
residential area / irregular parking

• roads too narrow for Emergency
Services (due to over parking)

• view ordinance - ERH
(trees & additions)

• illegal dumping

• Arlington too busy for driveway
in/out

• Drivers using streets as
short cuts

• house numbers not always
visible

3
Paint curbs red, when needed
yield side

group 2
pg. 3

Clear sight distance (vegetation blocks views for traffic)

Drone delivery Regulations

Put Paths on maps (K)

Add signage/lighting/handrails/ADA to paths (K) (where possible)

Allow mixed use in Commercial area (K)

EXPlore changing CO. area in (FRH) to Residential

Safe Ped/Bike Access to Tilden Park

Assets: quiet, good ^{Group 3} pg. 1

Police & fire services, lower taxes than cities, good schools, views, good access to nature (Tilden & Wildcat Canyon)

- Small community not part of cities nearby, views, transportation services, library, transportation, sheriff responds quickly, sheriff visible at MAC meetings

Group 3 Pg. 2
Challenges: pedestrian access

+ safety (few sidewalks) → would be good for CAP. Fire exit routes. Professionalism at County in fire department in response to fire. Emergency response & evacuation.

• Traffic. shortcuts through neighborhoods heightens volumes. Vehicles going too fast.

Poor parking → streets too narrow.

Parking strategy → culs de sac direct "in" so evacuation is difficult.

No library. Play areas for kids.

5 G network ^{sitting near people}. Reception is bad → but Kensington
East Richmond Heights opposes towers near residences

* need County's help facilitating establishment of evacuation routes & create parking strategy

* Street tree planting. County should encourage replacement of trees. more conscious understanding of tree replacement.

* undergrounding utilities. Expensive & needs incentives in unincorporated areas.
↳ also influences views.

* change zoning of PS → OS in park next to the school.

* school district zone is disjointed with ERH paired with Pt. Richmond

* pedestrian thru-ways. They need ownership & improvement, via public ownership
designate as open space/recreational trail.

need county's help so thru-ways can be maintained to facilitate public ownership to create public agency that owns & maintains Traffic ~~lane~~ lights & painted lanes.

Blinking traffic lights to facilitate pedestrian crossings. Street lights ^{or reflectors} too dark at night & cannot see.

Goals: safe, clean air, pedestrian accessibility, high-quality schools (maintain), high-quality infrastructure aesthetically pleasing neighborhood character (via regulation), refined parking

(Challenger (cont): encourage

neighborhood pride & community investment w/cleaner street fronts. Lack of diversity

Positive* neighborhood festival. Increase neighborhood community events & increase use of public spaces

- Wildfire risk. Public information to get neighborhoods to apply for fire protection grants.
- Better integration of fire protection services across different jurisdictions

- * Protect public spaces → create laws that disallow building in Wildcat Canyon

- * need more parks
- * allow ADUs for lots w/less than 10,000 sq. ft..
- * new structures cannot block existing views → create Viewshed Ordinance

Loves

ERH: Rural, ^{-also small-town feel} natural setting, ^{low} traffic

* K: Small-town feel - only 5k pop

~~Small~~ → everyone knows each other

Both: Next to regional park - guaranteed viewshed. And wildlife, in midst of urbanized region.

K: Very safe, low crime (far from city).

ERH: Preserve general Quality of Life - in whole hills area - hard to put into words / measure.
- eg: housing density, traffic

Challenges

Table 5, pg 2

K: Police services thru CSD.

- Duplicative, expensive
- Too small pop & surrounded by City police.
- May make sense to be annexed into El Cerrito

ERH: Safe, but not enough service from Sheriff - not enough staff.

K: Bldg permits - requires variances for almost everything. Zoning: setbacks are unrealistic + don't reflect (e) dev.

ERH: Sunset Dr: property lines run down center of rd.

~~Both~~ County staff / ^{regs} geared towards subdivisions.

- We are not Rookie-cutter neighborhood

ERH: Very walkable, but if traffic increases, would be an issue b/c lack of ped infrastructure & tree pruning needs.

Challenges, Cont'd

Table S, pg. 3

↳ When I-80 backed up, traffic on Arlington is an issue.

ERH: Disconnect blw City & of Richmond & Co. on rd. maintenance.

Both: Need standard: when road dug up for repairs, need to replace at eq or better condition. Don't rely on "patches."

- Also do a dig-once policy.

Both: Wildland-urban interface. Park has huge fuel load

- Need plan for fire in Wildcat Canyon.

- Also losing fire insurance.

* Both: Need more cooperation w/ park districts, cities, and County

- Esp. planning the CWPP - Community Wildfire Protection Plan.

Both: Seismic hazard / Hayward Fault.

- Need emergency planning, & bldg code changes (eg retrofits)

Challenges (cont'd)

Table 5, pg. 4

~~Both~~ Housing affordability: where will our kids/grandkids live?

~~Both~~ A: Tree removal process cumbersome - need to be able to remove dead/dying trees for fire safety.
K - Need flexibility in Code to deal w/ special, site-specific issues.

Both: Also need flexibility in Planning Codes.
- Also (coordination w/ cities - similar issues.
- Make it easier to develop ADUs.

~~Both~~: Cell phone coverage is poor.

Both - Relates to transportation / map programs.

~~Both~~: Potholes are a problem.

Both: Reduce limitations/rigidity in Code requirements re: roads, so can turn private rd. over to Co.

Both: Need better hospitals in LCC, at least in West Co.

Maps

~~Both~~ ^{Few} map As needed, but change Code to reflect (c) character.

- Consider Ding zoning to reflect public / park uses.

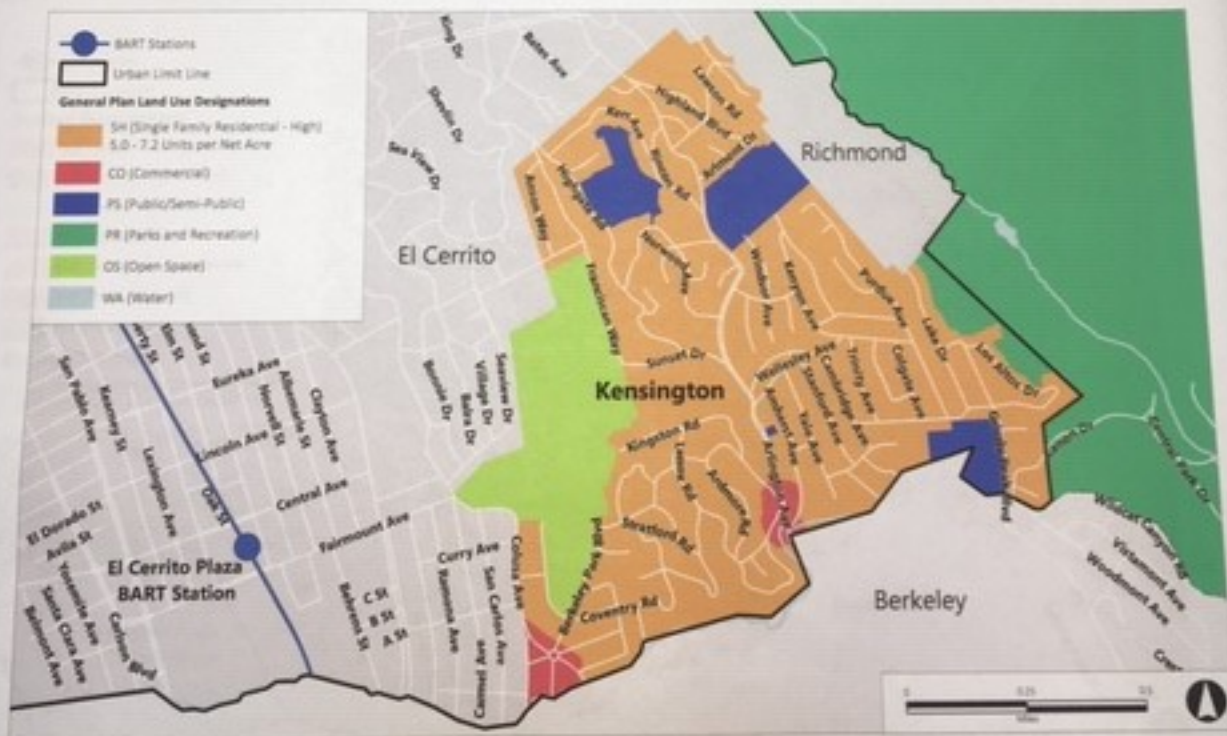
Code Ds (both)

Table S, pg. 5

- Make ADUs easier
- Reduce distance b/w bldgs requirements
- Also make it easier to retrofit homes to split units for renters, including being able to rent if home is not up to code ^{reval.}

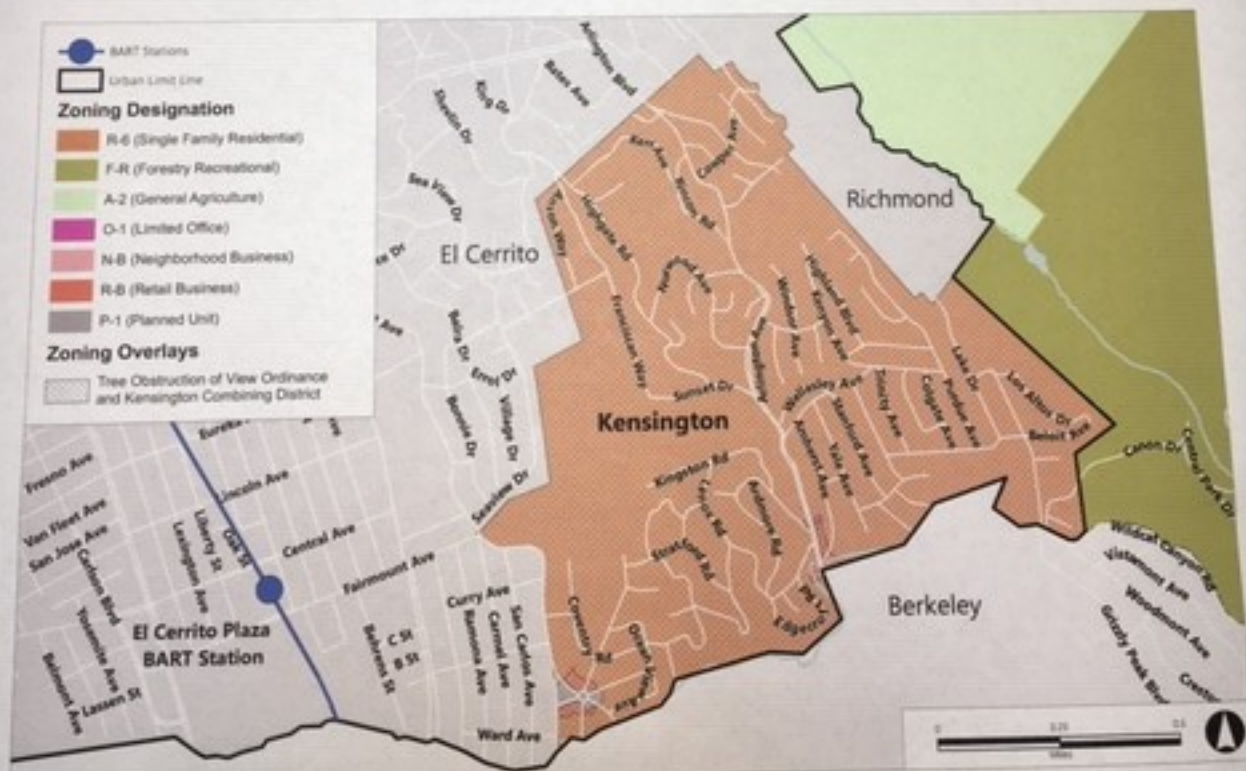
~~K~~ - Parking - issue. Problem with fire truck access.

- Generally, Co. should support plans/projects that would ↑ housing/renter opportunities.



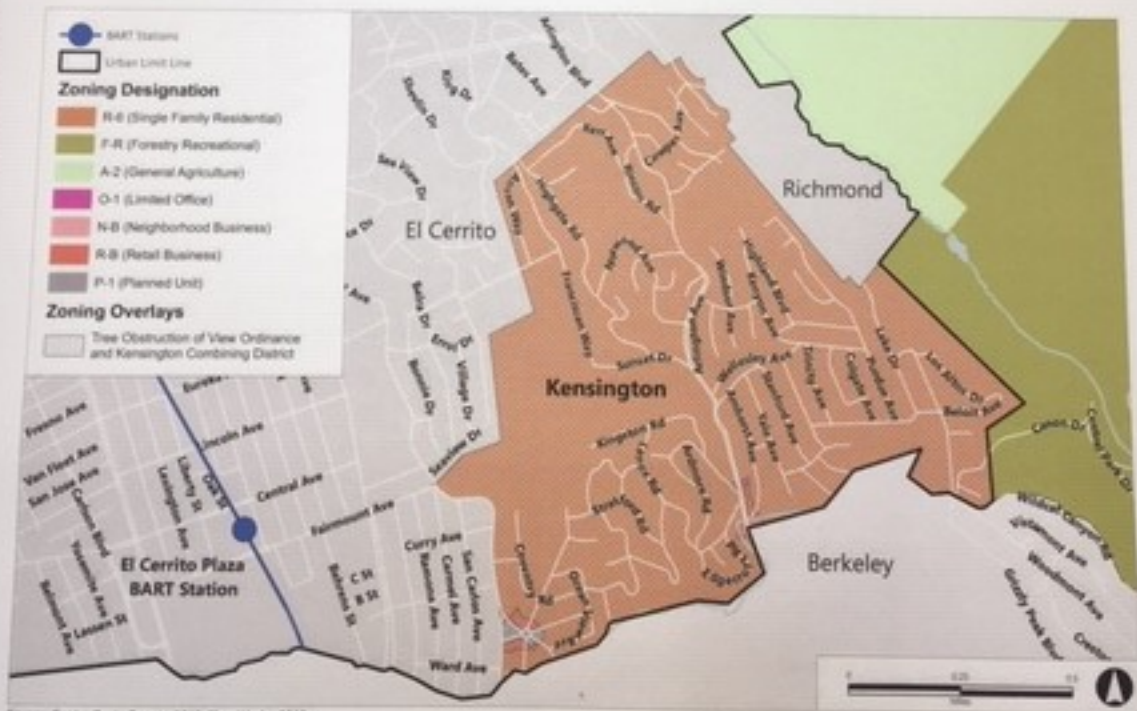


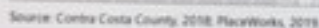
Source: Contra Costa County, 2018; PlaceWorks, 2019



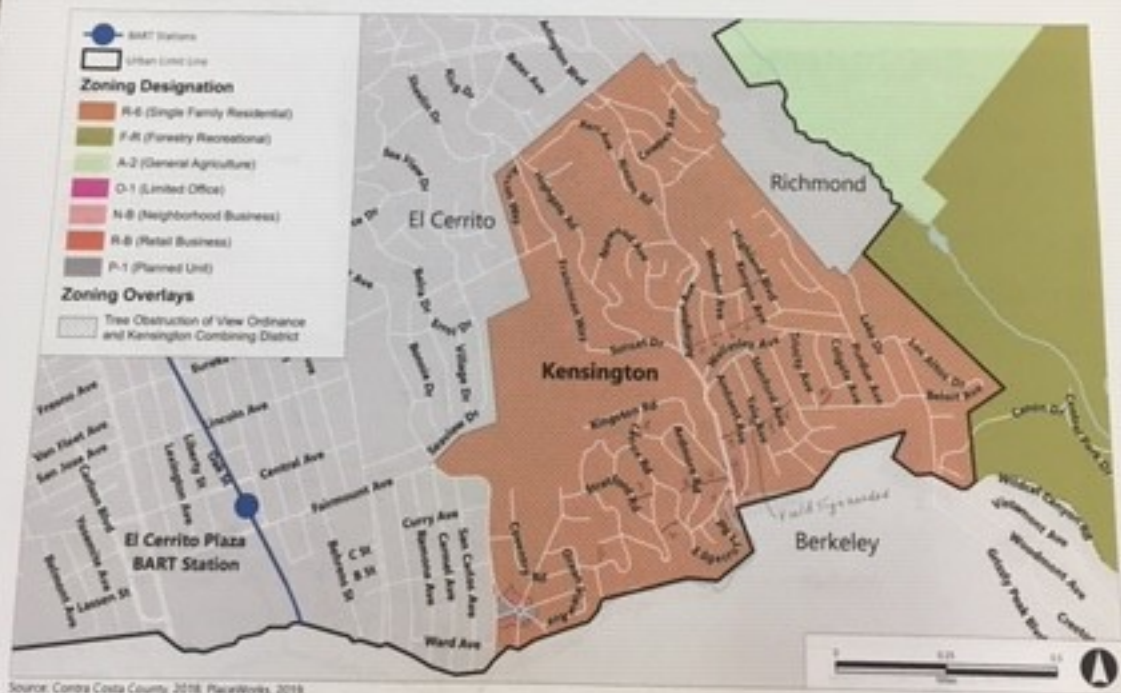
Source: Contra Costa County, 2018; PlaceWorks, 2019.

Group 3





group 2



Source: Contra Costa County, 2018; PlaceWorks, 2018.



Zoning Designations for Kensington and East Richmond Heights

General Plan, Land Use, and Transportation for Contra Costa County

KENSINGTON AND EAST RICHMOND HEIGHTS COMMUNITY MEETING



Source: Contra Costa County 2018; Playworks, 2018.

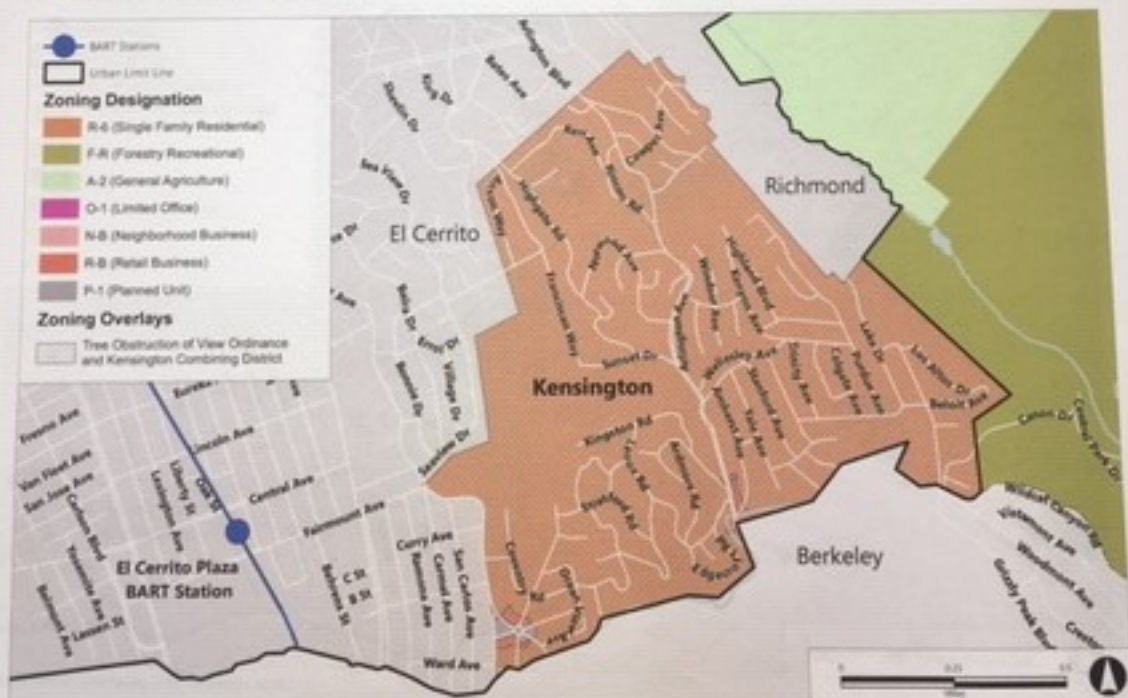


Source: Contra Costa County, 2018; PlaceWorks, 2019.

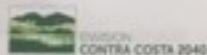




Source: Contra Costa County, 2018; Placentino, 2019.



Source: Coema Costa County, 2018; PlaceWorks, 2019.



Zoning Designations for Kensington and East Richmond Heights