

**CITY OF SAN MATEO**  
**City Council Special Meeting**  
**October 30, 2023**  
**6:00 PM**

City Hall Council Chamber 330 W.  
20th Avenue San Mateo CA 94403  
Entrance is on O'Farrell Street



**COUNCIL MEMBERS**  
Amourance Lee, Mayor  
Lisa Diaz Nash, Deputy Mayor  
Rich Hedges  
Adam Loraine  
Rob Newsom Jr.

## AGENDA

**THIS MEETING CAN BE ATTENDED IN PERSON OR REMOTE BY JOINING ZOOM – SEE CODES BELOW.**  
**PUBLIC COMMENTS WILL BE ACCEPTED BOTH IN PERSON AND REMOTELY.**  
**SEE END OF AGENDA FOR OPTIONS AND INSTRUCTIONS ON HOW TO PARTICIPATE IN THE MEETING.**

**To join via Zoom – click here: [October 30, 2023](#)**

**To join via telephone: (408) 638-0968**

**Webinar ID: 884 8501 6750    Passcode: 993689**

Council Member Rich Hedges will teleconference into this meeting from:  
3000 N 103rd Terrace, Kansas City, KS, 66109

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### CALL TO ORDER

Roll Call

### STUDY SESSION

*The public will have an opportunity to comment during the consideration of this item.*

**1. Voter Opinion Survey on Draft General Plan 2040 Heights and Land Use Designations**

Receive an informational report on the results of a statistically reliable survey on land use designation heights and growth options within the Draft General Plan 2040.

*CEQA: This informational item is not a project subject to CEQA, because it can be seen with certainty that it will not cause a physical change in the environment. (Public Resources Code Section 21065.)*

### OLD BUSINESS

*The public will have an opportunity to comment during the consideration of this item.*

**2. Draft General Plan 2040 – Land Use Element, Introduction, Glossary, and Community Engagement Summary**

Receive an informational overview of the Draft General Plan 2040, take public comments and provide direction on the Land Use Element, Introduction and Glossary.

*CEQA: In accordance with Public Resources Code section 21065, the City Council's direction on Draft General Plan 2040 is not a project subject to CEQA because it can be seen with certainty that this activity will not cause a physical change in the environment. The Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR) for the General Plan Update was published on August 11, 2023. The DEIR 45-day public comment started on August 11, 2023 and ended on September 25, 2023. A Final EIR will be prepared and presented to the City Council for certification prior to any formal decisions on General Plan 2040.*

## ADJOURNMENT

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**AGENDAS:** Agendas and material are posted on the City's website on the Friday preceding each Council Meeting and can be viewed on the City's website at [www.cityofsanmateo.org](http://www.cityofsanmateo.org) . Any supplemental material distributed to the Council after the posting of the agenda will be made part of the official record.

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### **PUBLIC COMMENTS/REQUEST TO SPEAK**

Prior to the Meeting

Send comments to: [clerk@cityofsanmateo.org](mailto:clerk@cityofsanmateo.org) until 4 p.m. the day of the meeting.

During the meeting

**By Zoom:** Click the link at the top of the agenda and you'll be added to the meeting. All attendees are muted by default. When the item of interest is open for consideration, select the "Raise Your Hand" icon and you will be called on at the appropriate time.

**By telephone:** Call (408) 638-0968 and enter the conference ID found at the top of the meeting agenda. When the item of interest is open for consideration, select \*9 to raise your hand. When called upon, press \*6 to unmute, state your name and provide your comments.

**In Person:** At the meeting complete a "Request to Speak" form, submit a request at the speaker kiosk or scan the QR code.

**ACCESSIBILITY:** In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, those with disabilities requiring special accommodations to participate in this meeting may contact the City Clerk's Office at (650) 522-7040 or [clerk@cityofsanmateo.org](mailto:clerk@cityofsanmateo.org) . Notification 48 hours prior to the meeting will enable the City to make reasonable arrangements to ensure accessibility to this meeting.





# CITY OF SAN MATEO

City Hall  
330 W. 20th Avenue  
San Mateo CA 94403  
[www.cityofsanmateo.org](http://www.cityofsanmateo.org)

## Agenda Report

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Agenda Number: 1

Section Name: STUDY SESSION

Account Number: 25-3112

File ID: 23-8133

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**TO:** City Council  
**FROM:** Alex Khojikian, City Manager  
**PREPARED BY:** Community Development Department  
**MEETING DATE:** October 30, 2023

**SUBJECT:**

Voter Opinion Survey on Draft General Plan 2040 Heights and Land Use Designations

**RECOMMENDATION:**

Receive an informational report on the results of a statistically reliable survey on land use designation heights and growth options within the Draft General Plan 2040.

**BACKGROUND:**

Over the past five years, the City has been conducting extensive community outreach and engagement as it prepares the Strive San Mateo General Plan 2040. Following this item on the October 30 meeting agenda, the City Council will hold the third of three public meetings on the Draft General Plan, with a specific focus on the Land Use Element and a review of the community engagement process.

In preparation for providing input and direction on the Draft General Plan, the City Council on April 3, 2023, directed staff to engage a professional survey consultant to gauge voter sentiment on preferences for future growth and building height limits. Direction was provided to conduct a statistically reliable survey after the Draft General Plan was published to survey likely voters on the heights in the Mixed-Use High I and High II, and Residential High I and High II land use categories.

To conduct the survey, the City hired True North Research, an independent professional research firm that has conducted four prior surveys for the City. The firm was previously selected after a competitive request for proposals (RFP) process based on its years of experience conducting research for California municipalities. In addition to this recent survey, True North was hired to conduct prior community surveys in 2020 and 2022, which surveyed San Mateo residents on a variety of topics that included questions related to preferences for future growth and building heights. True North Research President Dr. Timothy McLarney led the General Plan survey project and will present the findings during the Council meeting. The final survey report is included as Attachment 1.

The General Plan survey was issued online between September 29 and October 4, 2023 in English and Spanish. The study employed a methodology that would provide statistically reliable results by surveying a random sample of residents who represent San Mateo's voting population and are likely to vote in the November 2024 election. With 635 residents participating, the statistical margin of error is 3.9%.

Purpose of the Survey

The survey is just one of many ways the City has been engaging the community during the General Plan Update process. A comprehensive overview of the outreach and engagement conducted as part of the Draft General Plan phase of the process will be presented after this item. The City has worked to provide ample opportunities for community members to

share feedback on the draft plan; however this particular survey was intentionally targeted toward likely voters. The Draft General Plan proposes possible height increases beyond what is currently allowed under Measure Y and any future increases to those limits would need to be voted upon by City of San Mateo voters. Based on the current timeline for the General Plan Update, an updated ballot initiative could go before the voters in November 2024. Therefore, a random sample of residents who are representative of likely November 2024 voters in the City were invited to participate in this General Plan survey.

## **DISCUSSION:**

### Survey Methodology and Results

The survey employed a mixed-methodology recruitment of email and text message invitations, and controls were in place to help ensure the survey could only be taken once by the intended recipient. The survey was conducted online to allow participants to view imagery, including of the General Plan's 10 study area map, locations of where the High I and High II land use designations are located, and building design examples showing different heights and densities. The survey provided basic information about the state's mandate that the City plan for new growth and the City's Regional Housing Needs Allocation over the next 8 years. Participants were then asked about whether they prefer concentrating future growth in taller buildings located near transit, jobs, stores and restaurants; or if they prefer spreading new housing in lower-height buildings that meet Measure Y's five-story height limit throughout the city.

The survey also polled on support for maximum building heights in the select portions of the study areas designated within the Draft General Plan. This included questions about the High I category of allowing up to 8 stories, and the High II category of up to 10 stories. A final question regarding support for buildings up to 12 stories was included as a way to capture the potential for additional height that could happen if a project requested it using State Density Bonus law.

At the end of the survey, preferences for how to plan for growth were at 51% for concentrating future development, 35% for spreading it out, and 15% preferred not to answer. Regarding building heights at the end of the survey, 72% were supportive of buildings up to 8 stories in select locations, 58% for buildings up to 10 stories, and 45% for buildings up to 12 stories.

## **BUDGET IMPACT:**

The cost to prepare the survey was \$28,550 and will be covered by the Advance Planning Fund (Fund 225).

## **ENVIRONMENTAL DETERMINATION:**

This informational item is not a project subject to CEQA, because it can be seen with certainty that it will not cause a physical change in the environment. (Public Resources Code Section 21065.)

## **NOTICE PROVIDED:**

All meeting noticing requirements were met.

## **ATTACHMENTS**

Att 1 – Voter Opinion Survey on General Plan

## **STAFF CONTACT**

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# GENERAL PLAN SURVEY

SUMMARY REPORT

PREPARED FOR THE  
CITY OF SAN MATEO



OCTOBER 2023

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## INTRODUCTION

Encompassing 15.9 square miles in the San Francisco Bay Area, the City of San Mateo was incorporated in 1894 and is currently home to an estimated 103,318 residents.<sup>1</sup> The City's dedicated team of full-time and part-time employees provides a full suite of services to residents and local businesses.

Like most California cities, San Mateo relies on its General Plan to guide decisions with respect to land use, development, mobility, sustainability, and related policy matters. Feeling that it was time to conduct a comprehensive review and update of the General Plan to ensure that it reflects current community values, updated technical and environmental information, and addresses relevant issues that have surfaced since the existing General Plan was created, in 2018 the City embarked upon the General Plan Update process with a series of visioning workshops and community meetings. Over the past five years, as part of the General Plan Update effort, the City has conducted extensive community outreach and engagement, and used the community input received to guide how *Strive San Mateo General Plan 2040* has been developed. This culminated in the publication of the Draft General Plan this past July along with a timeline to have General Plan 2040 ready for adoption in the beginning of 2024.

**MOTIVATION FOR STUDY** One of the key challenges that must be addressed in General Plan 2040 is how best to accommodate future growth and development. California State law requires that all cities plan for additional housing. With a general shortage of housing in California, the state is requiring that the City of San Mateo plan for 7,015 new units by 2031, and it is expected that the State will require the City to plan for about 15,000 new units by 2040. A key question is thus where to plan for these new housing units to be located? Would residents prefer to *spread* future housing throughout the City in medium height buildings, which means allowing more units per parcel in existing residential neighborhoods with higher-density infill projects OR *concentrate* future housing in taller buildings in locations that are closer to transit, jobs, services, stores and restaurants, including downtown, along El Camino Real, and near Cal Train stations? The latter approach would require voter approval to amend Measure Y to allow taller, higher density mixed-use buildings in these select areas. The purpose of the survey described in this report was to provide the City with statistically reliable feedback from likely San Mateo voters on this central question as Council seeks to finalize and adopt General Plan 2040.

**OVERVIEW OF METHODOLOGY** A full description of the methodology used for this study is included later in this report (see *Methodology* on page 39). In brief, the survey was administered to a random sample of 635 voters who reside within the City of San Mateo. Because the survey required respondents to review maps and visuals, the survey was fielded in an online format at a secure website. Respondents were recruited to participate via email and text invitations which included unique hyperlinks for each respondent. All surveys were completed between September 29 and October 4, 2023.

**ORGANIZATION OF REPORT** This report is designed to meet the needs of readers who prefer a summary of the findings as well as those who are interested in the details of the results. For those who seek an overview of the findings, the section titled *Key Findings* is for you. It pro-

1. State of California, Department of Finance, City/County Population and Housing Estimates, January 2023.

vides a summary of the most important factual findings of the survey in a Question & Answer format. For the interested reader, this section is followed by a more detailed question-by-question discussion of the results from the survey by topic area (see *Table of Contents*), as well as a description of the methodology employed for collecting and analyzing the data. And, for the truly ambitious reader, the questionnaire used for the interviews is contained at the back of this report (see *Questionnaire & Toplines* on page 41), and a complete set of crosstabulations for the survey results is contained in Appendix A.

**ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS** True North thanks the City of San Mateo for the opportunity to conduct the study and for contributing valuable input during the design stage of this study. The collective experience, insight, and local knowledge provided by city staff and representatives improved the overall quality of the research presented here.

**DISCLAIMER** The statements and conclusions in this report are those of the authors (Dr. Timothy McLarney and Richard Sarles) at True North and not necessarily those of the City of San Mateo. Any errors and omissions are the responsibility of the authors.

**ABOUT TRUE NORTH** True North is a full-service survey research firm that is dedicated to providing public agencies with a clear understanding of the values, perceptions, priorities, and concerns of their residents and customers. Through designing and implementing scientific surveys, focus groups, and one-on-one interviews, as well as expert interpretation of the findings, True North helps its clients to move with confidence when making strategic decisions in a variety of areas—such as planning, policy evaluation, performance management, establishing fiscal priorities, passing revenue measures, and developing effective public information campaigns.

During their careers, Dr. McLarney (President) and Mr. Sarles (Principal Researcher) have designed and conducted over 1,200 survey research studies for public agencies—including more than 400 studies for California municipalities and special districts.



## KEY FINDINGS

As noted in the *Introduction*, this study was designed to provide the City of San Mateo with a statistically reliable understanding of its residents' preferences regarding how best to accommodate future residential housing in the City. Whereas subsequent sections of this report are devoted to conveying the detailed results of the survey, in this section we attempt to 'see the forest through the trees' and note how the survey results answer key questions that motivated the research.

*How do residents prefer to accommodate future housing?*

When provided with the option to concentrate *or* spread future housing throughout the City, nearly half (48%) of respondents preferred that future housing be **concentrated** in taller buildings in locations that are close to transit, stores and restaurants, such as downtown, along El Camino Real, and near Cal Train stations. Thirty-nine percent (39%) of respondents preferred that new housing be **spread** throughout the City in medium height buildings, which means allowing more units per parcel in existing residential neighborhoods with higher-density infill projects such as townhomes, condominiums, and low- and mid-rise apartments. The remaining 13% were unwilling to share their opinion.

Consistent with the aggregate results, most subgroups preferred that future housing be concentrated in taller buildings and located in areas of the City that are close to transit, stores, and restaurants. That said, there were notable exceptions, with those who currently reside in multifamily housing, renters, African Americans, Latinos, residents under the age of 40, individuals living in Council Districts 2 and 3, and those who anticipated living in the City of San Mateo less than five more years demonstrating a preference for spreading future housing throughout the City.

*Why do residents favor a particular approach?*

Respondents who preferred that new housing be **concentrated** in taller buildings and located in areas of the City that are close to transit, stores, and restaurants were most apt to cite easier access to public transportation (21%), less traffic congestion/having fewer cars on the road (20%), and preserving the character of existing neighborhoods (18%) as the main reasons for their preference. Other reasons cited by at least 5% of respondents who preferred that additional housing be concentrated in taller buildings included that new housing will be in convenient/walkable locations (13%) and will provide better access to shopping and dining (10%), and concentrating housing preserves open space/limits sprawl (9%), encourages people to take transit (7%), and will help develop/improve the areas where its located (6%).

Respondents who preferred that new housing be **spread** throughout the City by having smaller infill projects and allowing for more housing units per parcel within existing residential neighborhoods cited a desire for less density (37%) and a belief that it will reduce congestion by spreading people out (21%) as the main reasons for their preference. Respondents

in this group also reasoned that spreading new housing throughout the City will allow for more diversity and integration of cultures/demographics (10%), will allow residents in these units to be a part of the community (9%), and will reduce the impacts of growth on streets and infrastructure (8%).

*Does support for concentrating future housing depend on building heights?*

In 2020, San Mateo voters renewed Measure Y, which places limits on the height and density of buildings in the City. However, in order to meet State mandated requirements for new housing, the City's draft General Plan Update has identified 10 areas around the City where growth and change can be concentrated. Concentrating growth in these 10 areas, which are in proximity to transit, jobs and services, would require amending Measure Y in order to allow new mixed-use buildings to be taller and have higher residential densities than currently allowed (if approved by voters).

Provided that future housing is concentrated in the identified locations, 60% of respondents initially indicated they would support eight story buildings, and a majority (52%) also indicated they would support a mix of eight and 10 story buildings. Once respondents were exposed to arguments in favor of concentrating future housing (as well as arguments in favor of spreading housing throughout the City), support increased for both eight story buildings (72%) and 10 story buildings (59%) in these locations. However, even after arguments in favor of concentrating future housing, just 45% of respondents were supportive of 12 story buildings in the identified locations.

*To what extent do residents support specific strategies for infill housing?*

Spreading future housing throughout the City will require allowing more housing units per parcel in existing residential areas. Overall, nearly half (49%) of respondents indicated they would support allowing single family homes to be redeveloped with up to six units per parcel, whereas 47% opposed this strategy for accommodating future growth and 5% were unsure or unwilling to share their opinion. Support was similar (48%) for allowing apartments or condominiums to be built in areas currently zoned for single family homes, whereas 50% opposed this strategy for accommodating future housing and 2% were unsure or unwilling to answer the question.

*Did learning more about the alternative approaches change respondents' preferences?*

Yes. After sharing with respondents the types of strategies that would be required to concentrate additional housing or spread it throughout the City, as well as arguments in favor of both approaches, residents were given another opportunity to share how they would prefer future housing to be accommodated in San Mateo. At this point in the survey, a majority of respondents (51%) favored **concentrating** future housing in taller buildings in locations that are close to transit, stores and restaurants, such as downtown, along El Camino Real, and near Cal Train stations. Just over one-third (35%) favored **spreading** future housing

throughout the City in medium height buildings, which means allowing more units per parcel in existing residential neighborhoods with higher-density infill projects such as townhomes, condominiums, and low- and mid-rise apartments. Approximately 15% remained unsure or preferred to not answer the question.

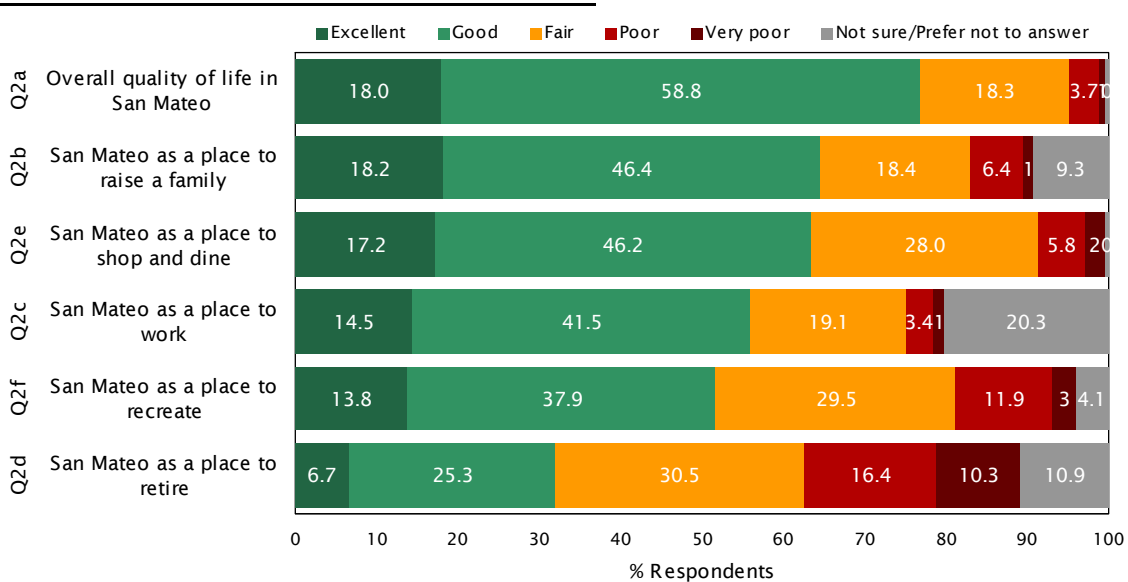
## QUALITY OF LIFE

The opening series of questions in the survey was designed to assess residents' top of mind perceptions about the quality of life in San Mateo, what they would most like to preserve about the City, as well as ways to improve the quality of life in San Mateo.

**OVERALL QUALITY OF LIFE** At the outset of the interview, respondents were asked to rate the City of San Mateo on a number of key dimensions—including overall quality of life, as a place to raise a family, and as a place to work—using a five-point scale of excellent, good, fair, poor, or very poor. As shown in Figure 1 below, the majority of residents shared favorable opinions of San Mateo on five of the six aspects tested, with the most positive ratings provided for the overall quality of life in the City (77% excellent or good), San Mateo as a place to raise a family (65%), and as a place to shop and dine (63%). Although still rated favorably by over half of respondents, residents provided somewhat softer ratings for San Mateo as a place to work (56%) and as a place to recreate (52%). When compared to the other dimensions tested, residents were less positive about San Mateo as a place to retire (32%).

### Question 2 How would you rate: \_\_\_\_\_?

FIGURE 1 RATING CITY OF SAN MATEO



For the interested reader, tables 1-4 show how the ratings for each dimension tested in Question 2 varied by a host of demographic characteristics. For ease of comparison, the top three ratings within each subgroup are highlighted green.

TABLE 1 RATING CITY OF SAN MATEO BY YEARS IN SAN MATEO & CHILD IN HSLD (SHOWING % EXCELLENT & GOOD)

	Years in San Mateo (Q1)				Child in Hsld (QD3,4)		
	Less than 5	5 to 9	10 to 14	15 or more	Yes, under 18	Yes, under 6	No child in hslld
Overall quality of life in San Mateo	78.5	85.8	76.3	73.7	68.7	60.7	83.2
San Mateo as a place to raise a family	53.1	57.0	58.0	70.2	72.4	66.4	61.9
San Mateo as a place to shop and dine	70.4	62.0	74.5	59.5	62.4	51.5	65.1
San Mateo as a place to work	55.7	57.0	67.7	53.4	55.1	39.8	59.0
San Mateo as a place to recreate	50.6	52.6	61.8	51.4	56.9	50.7	50.2
San Mateo as a place to retire	18.9	29.6	33.9	35.1	29.4	19.1	33.7

**TABLE 2 RATING CITY OF SAN MATEO BY AGE & GENDER (SHOWING % EXCELLENT & GOOD)**

	Age (QD1)				Gender (QD2)	
	Under 40	40 to 49	50 to 64	65 or older	Male	Female
Overall quality of life in San Mateo	75.7	72.1	81.1	76.0	79.8	73.8
San Mateo as a place to raise a family	50.6	72.0	70.1	71.3	66.6	64.2
San Mateo as a place to shop and dine	59.7	68.5	62.0	66.6	67.5	62.9
San Mateo as a place to work	45.5	65.1	61.7	56.6	56.4	60.5
San Mateo as a place to recreate	40.8	63.5	53.8	56.0	51.4	54.8
San Mateo as a place to retire	17.8	30.1	33.5	50.3	32.1	35.0

**TABLE 3 RATING CITY OF SAN MATEO BY ETHNICITY & HOME OWNERSHIP STATUS (SHOWING % EXCELLENT & GOOD)**

	Ethnicity (QD12)					Home Ownership Status (QD6)	
	Caucasian / White	Asian American	African American	Latino / Hispanic	Mixed / Other	Own	Rent
Overall quality of life in San Mateo	81.1	71.8	72.9	88.8	77.1	82.1	71.3
San Mateo as a place to raise a family	65.2	60.2	68.6	57.5	65.2	69.8	59.8
San Mateo as a place to shop and dine	59.8	65.1	68.5	72.4	76.9	59.6	69.9
San Mateo as a place to work	55.3	57.7	59.2	50.3	57.7	54.2	61.7
San Mateo as a place to recreate	48.9	57.6	50.0	69.8	66.4	54.1	49.4
San Mateo as a place to retire	32.5	34.2	29.4	23.8	43.3	35.7	25.8

**TABLE 4 RATING CITY OF SAN MATEO BY COUNCIL DISTRICT & SENIOR 65+ IN HSLD (SHOWING % EXCELLENT & GOOD)**

	Council District					Senior 65+ in Hsld (QD5)	
	One	Two	Three	Four	Five	Yes	No
Overall quality of life in San Mateo	82.9	60.7	77.4	77.8	80.6	78.8	77.4
San Mateo as a place to raise a family	71.9	52.0	60.8	68.4	65.8	68.7	63.2
San Mateo as a place to shop and dine	54.9	75.7	57.5	67.2	65.8	63.2	64.7
San Mateo as a place to work	54.5	58.5	54.9	65.3	49.5	52.1	59.4
San Mateo as a place to recreate	45.3	55.1	46.2	52.5	60.4	52.8	50.9
San Mateo as a place to retire	35.4	31.6	23.7	31.6	36.0	43.6	25.1

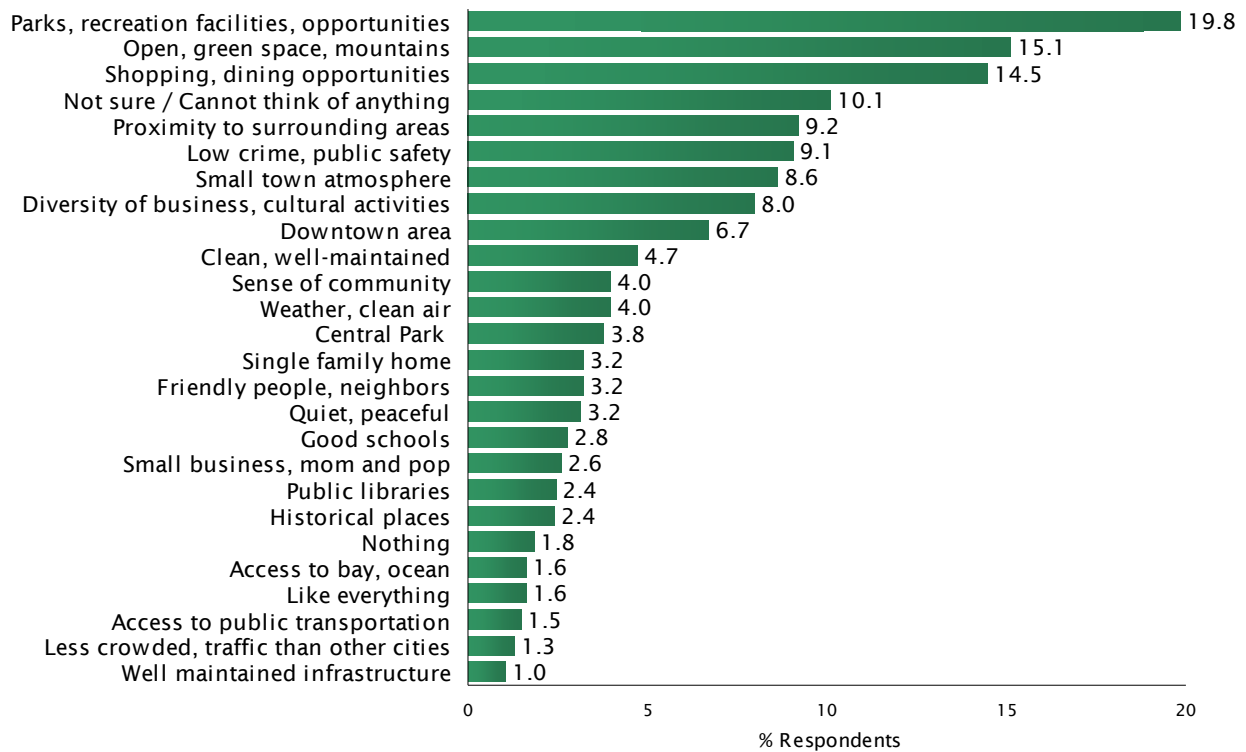
**WHAT DO YOU LIKE MOST ABOUT LIVING IN SAN MATEO?** The next question in this series asked residents to identify what they like most about living in the City of San Mateo that city government should make sure to preserve in the future. Question 3 was posed in an open-ended manner, thereby allowing residents to mention any aspect or attribute that came to mind without being prompted by—or restricted to—a particular list of options. True North later reviewed the verbatim responses and grouped them into the categories shown in Figure 2 on the next page.

San Mateo residents were most apt to cite parks and recreation facilities and opportunities (20%) as what they like most about living in the City of San Mateo and would like to preserve, followed by open space/green spaces/mountains (15%), shopping and dining opportunities (15%), proximity to surrounding cities/areas (9%), low crime rate/public safety (9%), small town atmosphere (9%), diversity of business, cultures, and activities (8%), and the downtown area (7%).



**Question 3** What do you like most about the City of San Mateo that should be preserved in the future?

**FIGURE 2 LIKE MOST ABOUT SAN MATEO**

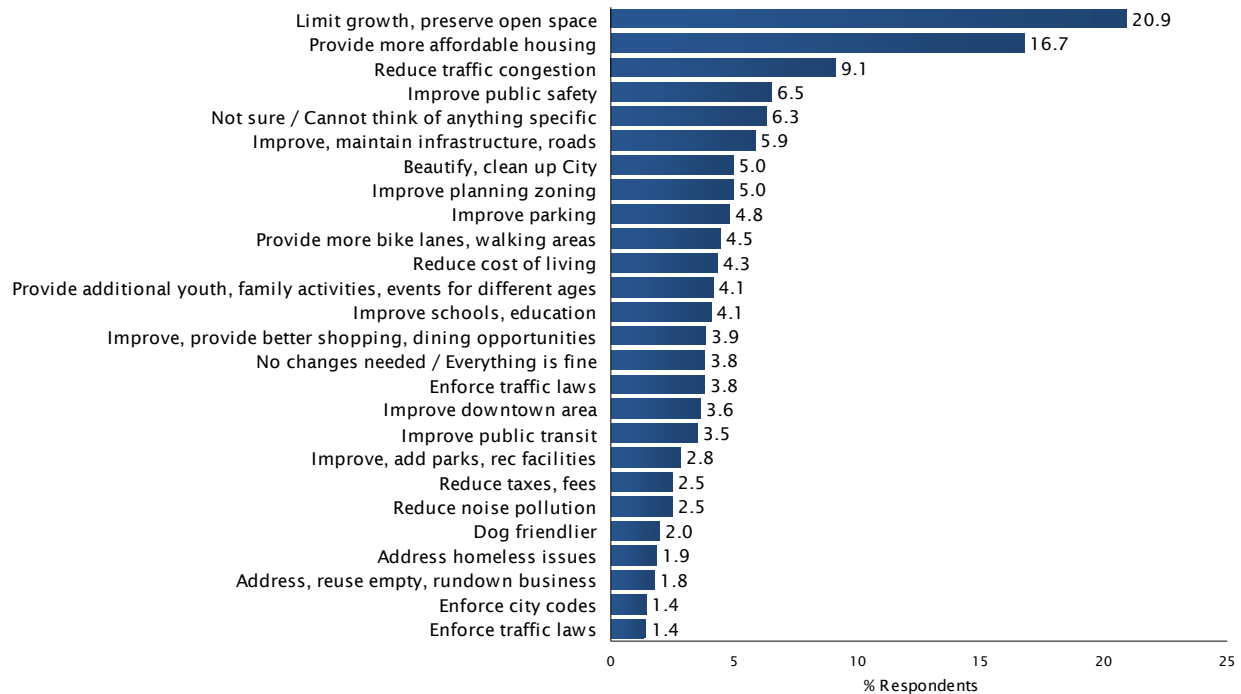


**WHAT SHOULD BE CHANGED?** In an open-ended manner similar to that described for Question 3, all respondents were also asked to indicate the one thing that city government could *change* to make San Mateo a better place to live. True North reviewed the verbatim responses to Question 4 and grouped them into the categories shown in Figure 3 on the next page.

Among the specific changes desired, limiting growth and preserving open space was the most common (21%), followed by providing more affordable housing (17%), reducing traffic congestion (9%), improving public safety (7%), and improving/maintaining infrastructure (6%). Approximately one-in-ten respondents could not think of a desired change (6%) or reported that no changes are needed (4%).

**Question 4** *If the city government could change one thing to make San Mateo a better place to live now and in the future, what change would you like to see?*

**FIGURE 3 CHANGES TO IMPROVE CITY**



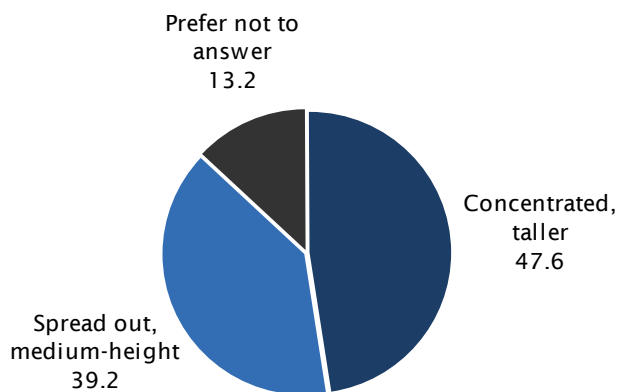
## INITIAL HOUSING PREFERENCE

California State law requires that all cities plan for additional housing. With a general shortage of housing in California, the state is requiring that the City of San Mateo plan for 7,015 new units by 2031, and it is expected that the State will require the City to plan for about 15,000 new units by 2041. One of the key questions facing the General Plan—and the main motivation for this survey—was to determine how best to accommodate future housing in the City.

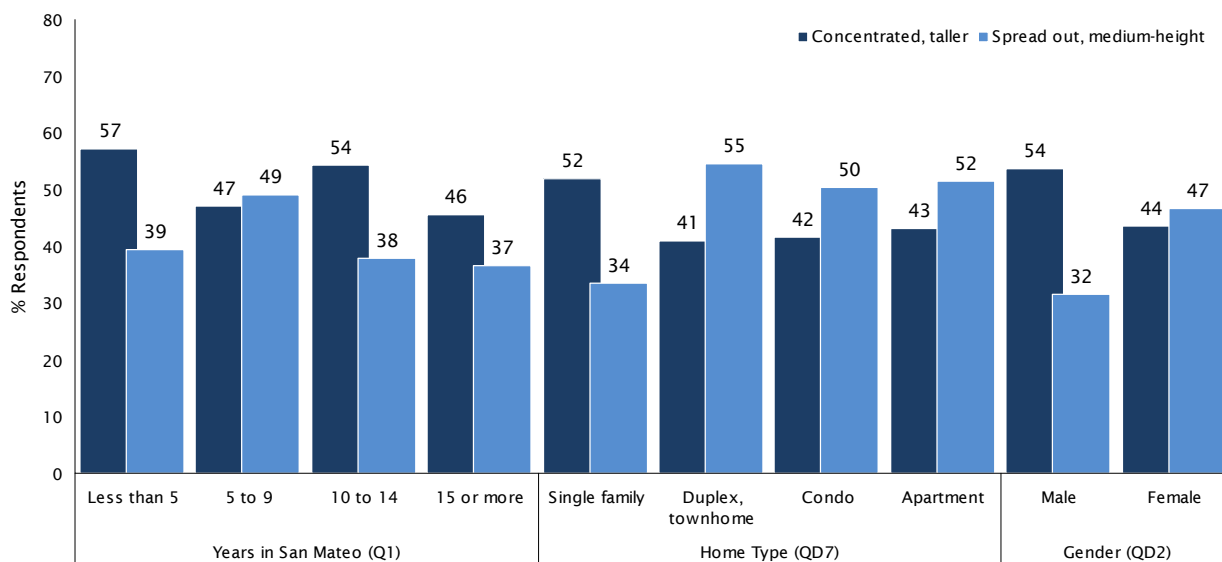
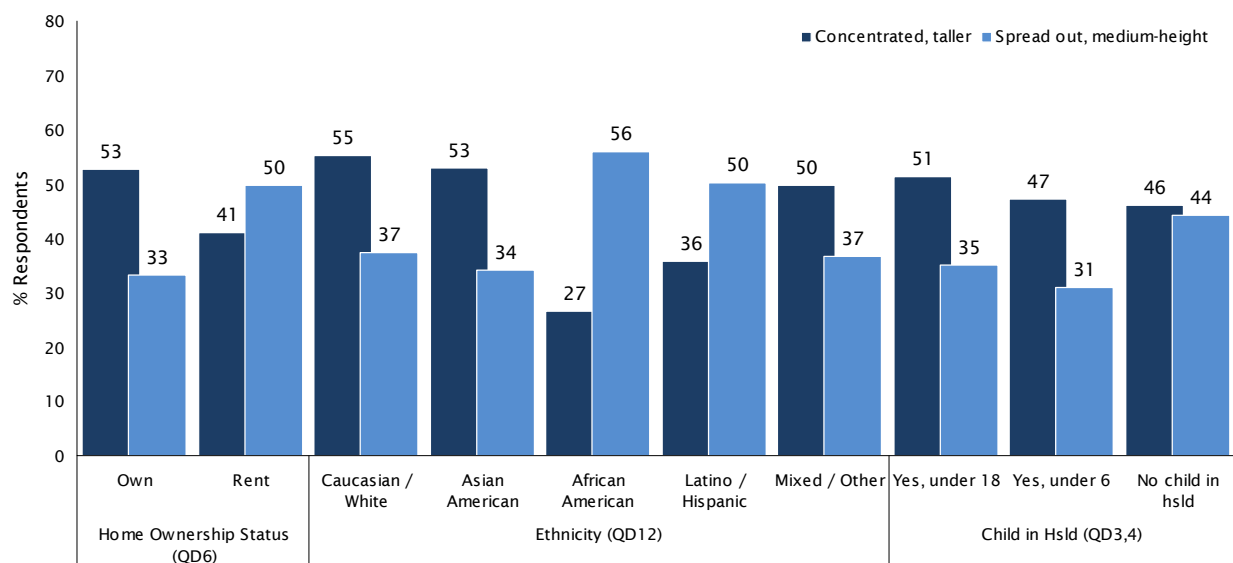
**INITIAL HOUSING PREFERENCE** After informing respondents of the above, Question 5 inquired as to how they would prefer to accommodate these new housing units. As shown in Figure 4, nearly half (48%) preferred that new homes be **concentrated** in taller buildings in locations that are close to transit, stores and restaurants, such as downtown, along El Camino Real, and near Cal Train stations. Thirty-nine percent (39%) of respondents preferred that new housing be **spread** throughout the City in medium height buildings, which means allowing more units per parcel in existing residential neighborhoods with higher-density infill projects such as townhomes, condominiums, and low- and mid-rise apartments. The remaining 13% were unwilling to share their opinion.

**Question 5** *Next are a few questions about how best to plan for future housing in the City of San Mateo. California State law requires that all cities plan for additional housing. With a general shortage of housing in California, the state is requiring that the City of San Mateo plan for 7,015 new units by 2031, and it is expected that the State will require the City to plan for about 15,000 new units by 2041. Understanding that San Mateo is required by law to plan for thousands of new homes, the central question is where to locate these new housing units. Which of the following options would you prefer?*

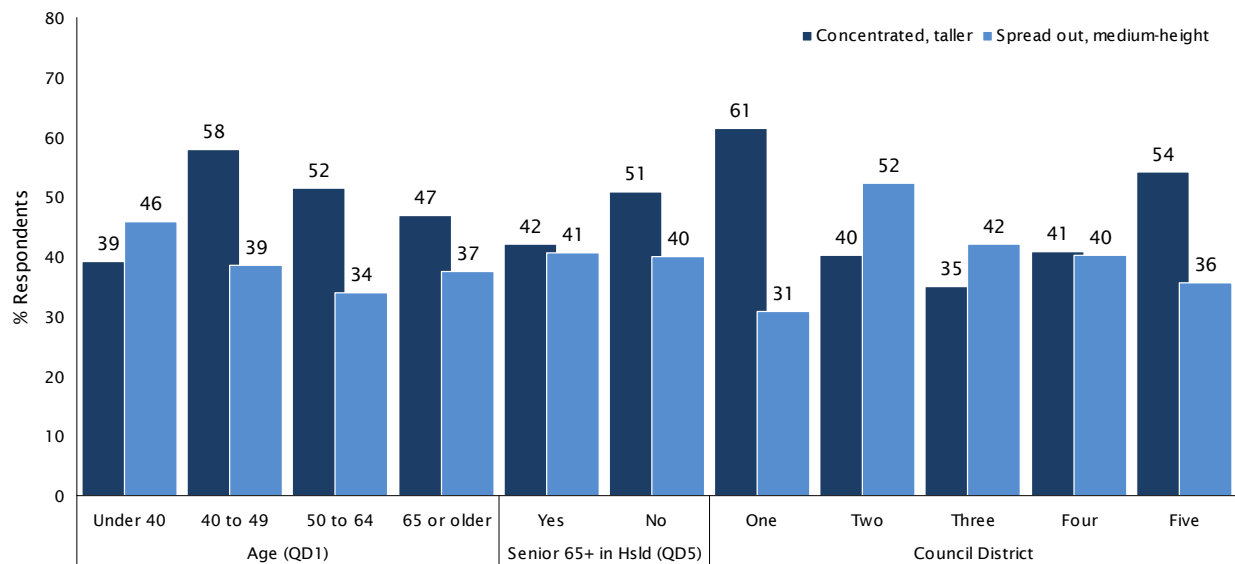
**FIGURE 4 INITIAL PREFERENCE FOR FUTURE RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT**



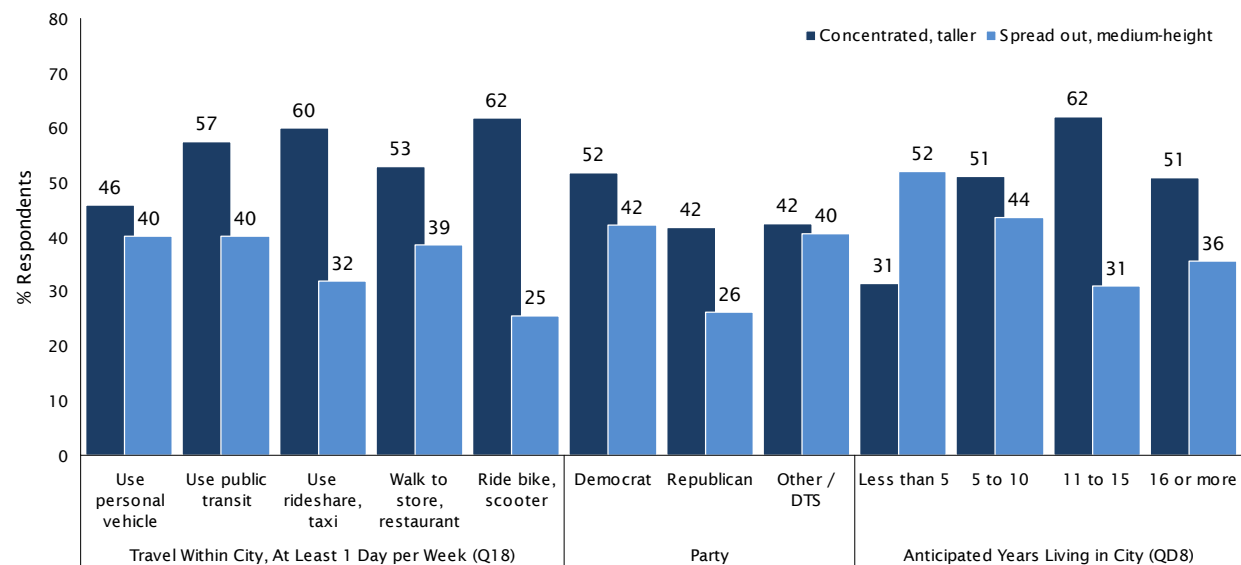
Figures 5-8 demonstrate that although most subgroups favored future housing to be concentrated in taller buildings and located in areas of the City that are close to transit, stores, and restaurants, there were notable exceptions. Specifically, those who currently reside in multifamily housing, renters, African Americans, Latinos, residents under the age of 40, individuals living in Council Districts 2 and 3, and those who anticipated living in the City of San Mateo less than five more years generally favored future housing to be spread throughout the City.

**FIGURE 5 INITIAL PREFERENCE FOR FUTURE RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT BY YEARS IN SAN MATEO, HOME TYPE & GENDER****FIGURE 6 INITIAL PREFERENCE FOR FUTURE RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT BY HOME OWNERSHIP STATUS, ETHNICITY & CHILD IN HSLD**

**FIGURE 7 INITIAL PREFERENCE FOR FUTURE RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT BY AGE, SENIOR 65+ IN HSLD & COUNCIL DISTRICT**



**FIGURE 8 INITIAL PREFERENCE FOR FUTURE RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT BY TRAVEL WITHIN CITY, AT LEAST 1 DAY PER WEEK, PARTY & ANTICIPATED YEARS LIVING IN CITY**



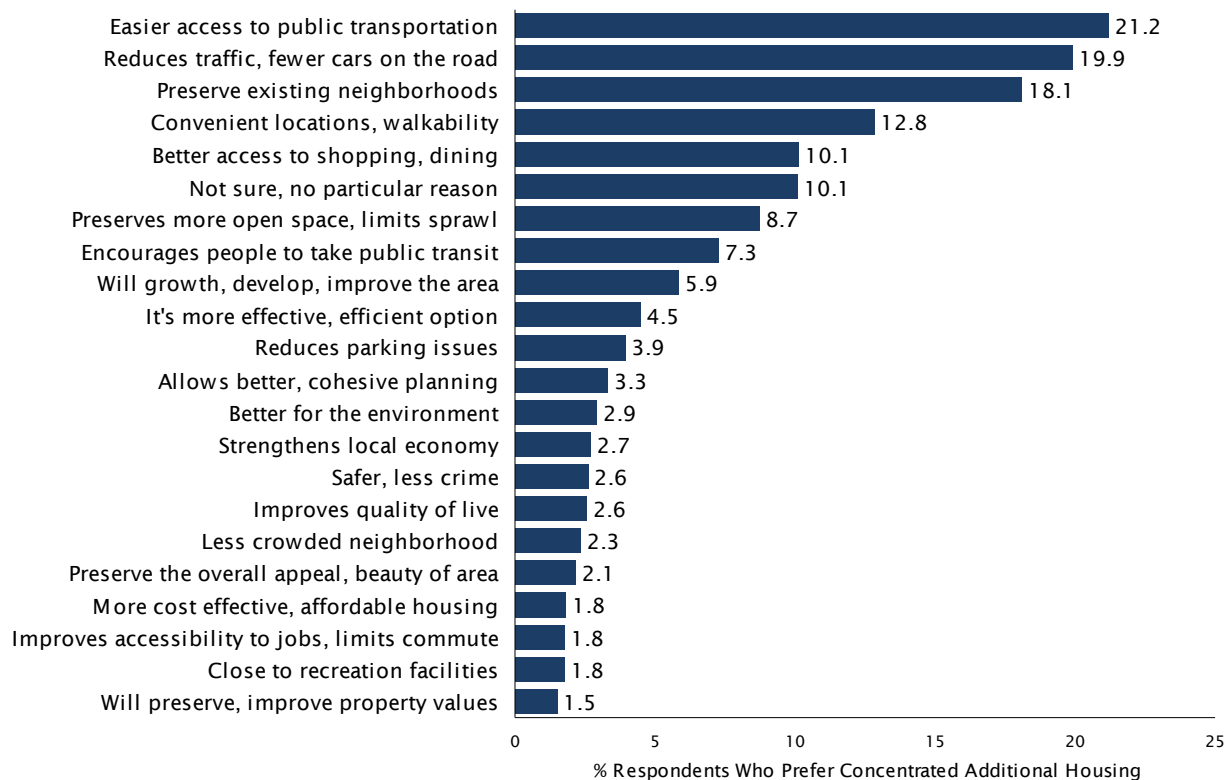
**REASONS FOR HOUSING PREFERENCE** To better understand the reasons behind their preference, residents were next asked a follow-up question based on which option they preferred for future residential housing in the City. Both questions 6 and 7 were asked in an open-ended manner, which allowed respondents to describe the reasons for their opinion without being prompted by, or restricted to, a particular list of options. True North later reviewed the verbatim responses and grouped them into the categories shown in figures 9 and 10.

Respondents who preferred that new housing be **concentrated** in taller buildings and located in areas of the City that are close to transit, stores, and restaurants were most apt to cite easier access to public transportation (21%), less traffic congestion/having fewer cars on the road

(20%), and preserving the character of existing neighborhoods (18%) as the main reasons for their preference (see Figure 9). Other reasons cited by at least 5% of respondents who preferred that additional housing be concentrated in taller buildings included that new housing will be in convenient/walkable locations (13%) and will provide better access to shopping and dining (10%), and concentrating housing preserves open space/limits sprawl (9%), encourages people to take transit (7%), and will help develop/improve the areas where its located (6%).

**Question 6** *Is there a particular reason why you prefer to concentrate future housing in taller buildings located in a few areas of the City?*

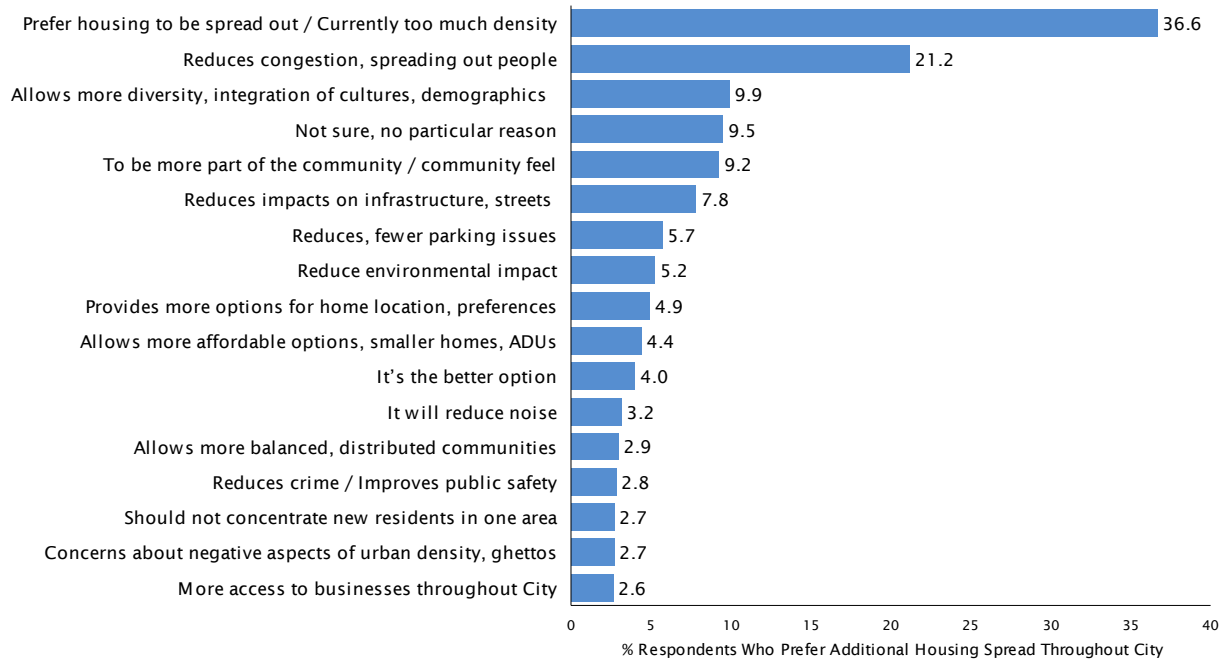
**FIGURE 9 REASONS FOR PREFERRING CONCENTRATED ADDITIONAL HOUSING**



Respondents who preferred that new housing be **spread** throughout the City by having smaller infill projects and allowing for more housing units per parcel within existing residential neighborhoods cited a desire for less density (37%) and a belief that it will reduce congestion by spreading people out (21%) as the main reasons for their preference (see Figure 10). Respondents in this group also reasoned that spreading new housing throughout the City will allow for more diversity and integration of cultures/demographics (10%), will allow residents in these units to be a part of the community (9%), and will reduce the impacts of growth on streets and infrastructure (8%).

**Question 7** *Is there a particular reason why you prefer to spread future housing in medium-height buildings throughout existing residential neighborhoods in the City?*

**FIGURE 10 REASONS FOR PREFERRING ADDITIONAL HOUSING SPREAD THROUGHOUT CITY**



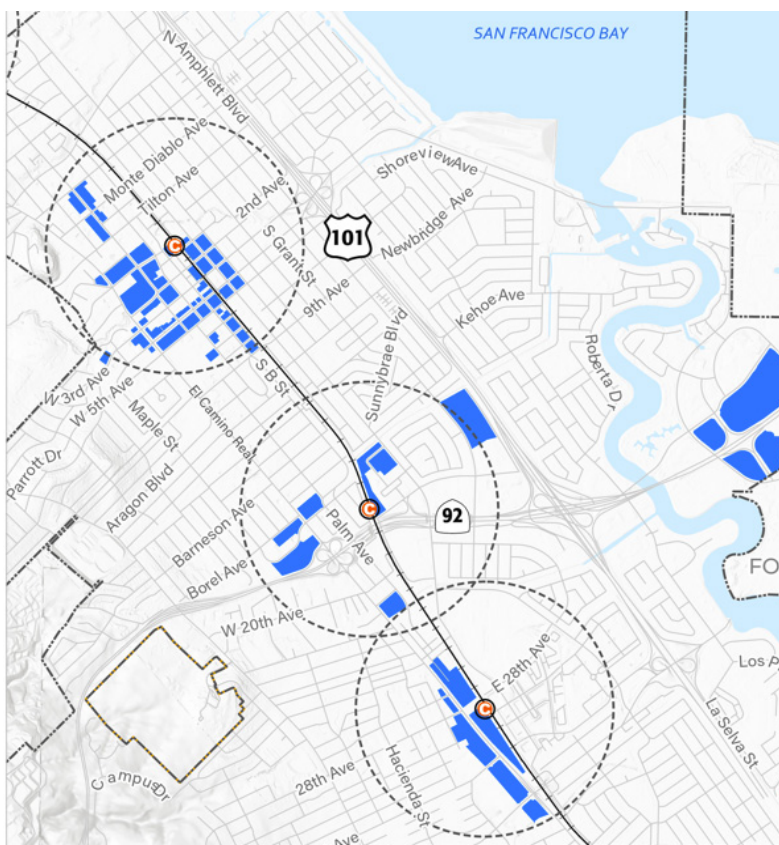
## CONCENTRATED HOUSING OPTION

Having captured respondents' initial preferences regarding how best to accommodate future housing, the survey transitioned to gauging their level of support for specific strategies for concentrating or spreading out housing in the City. Questions pertaining to concentrating housing are presented in this section, whereas questions regarding spreading out housing are presented in the next (see *Spread Out Housing Option* on page 26).

**EIGHT STORY BUILDINGS** In 2020, San Mateo voters renewed Measure Y, which places limits on the height and density of buildings in the City. However, in order to meet State mandated requirements for new housing, the City's draft General Plan Update has identified 10 areas around the City where growth and change can be concentrated. Concentrating growth in these 10 areas, which are in proximity to transit, jobs and services, would require amending Measure Y in order to allow new mixed-use buildings to be taller and have higher residential densities than currently allowed (if approved by voters).

After presenting respondents with the aforementioned information, the map shown in Figure 11, and a visual representation of an eight story building (see Figure 12), respondents were asked whether they would support or oppose allowing buildings up to eight (8) stories high in the blue areas shown in the map. As indicated in Figure 13 on the next page, 60% of respondents indicated they would support eight story buildings in these locations, whereas 36% were opposed and 4% were unsure or preferred to not answer the question.

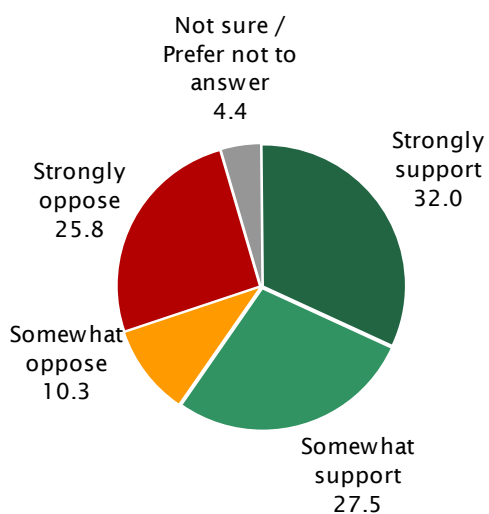
**FIGURE 11 CONCENTRATING HOUSING: MAP OF IDENTIFYING LOCATIONS FOR BUILDINGS UP TO 8 STORIES**



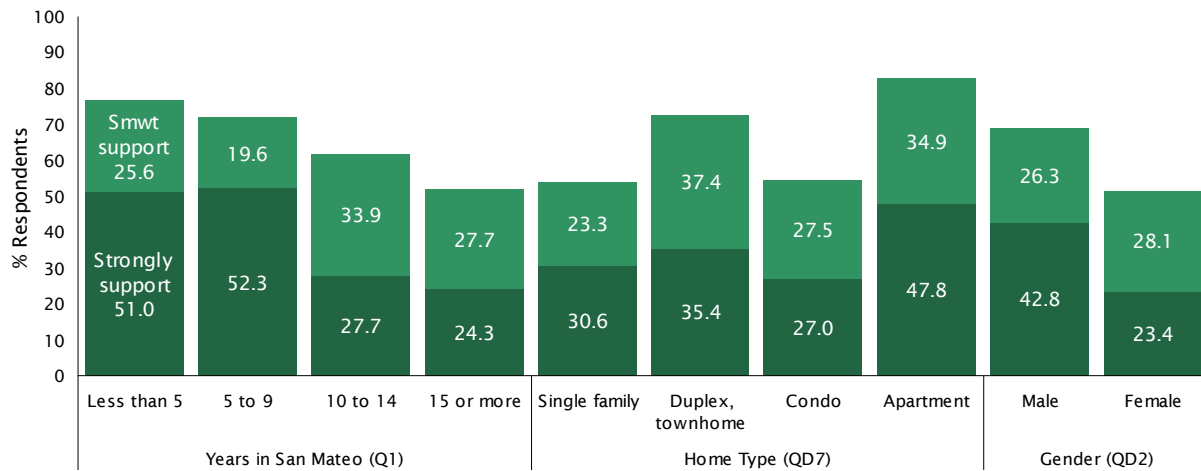
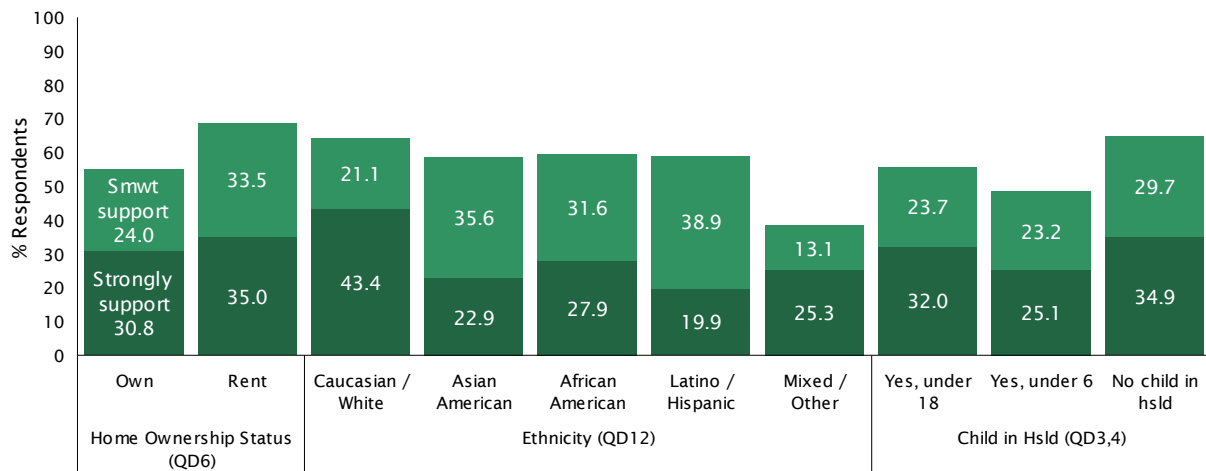
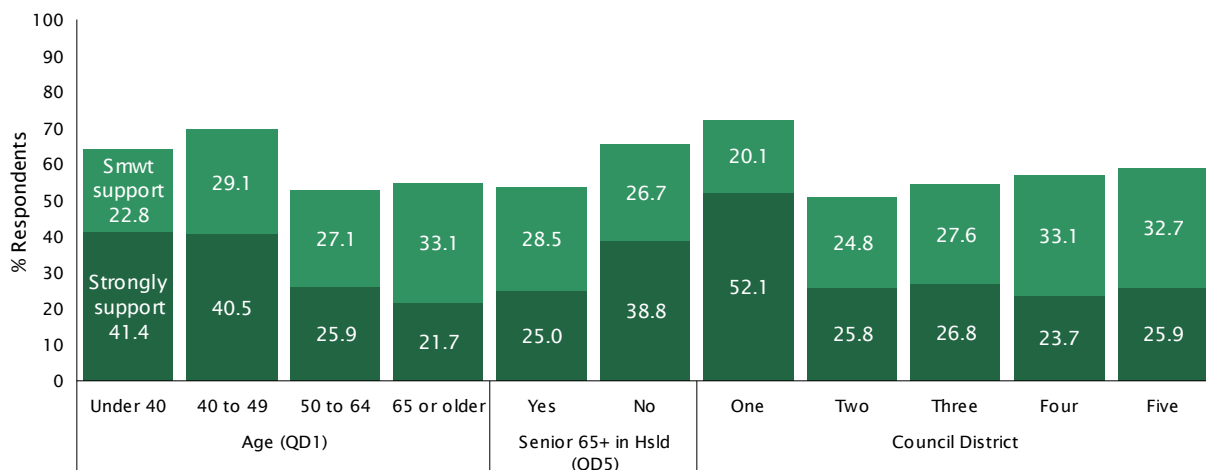


**FIGURE 12 VISUAL REPRESENTATION OF EIGHT STORY BUILDING**

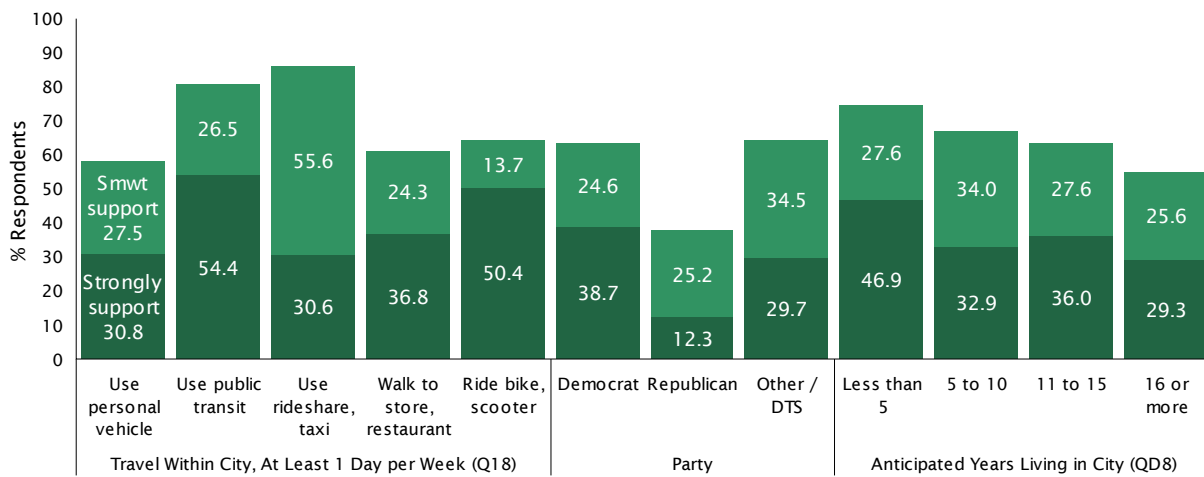
**Question 8** In 2020, San Mateo voters renewed Measure Y, which places limits on the height and density of buildings in the City. However, in order to meet State mandated requirements for new housing, the City's draft General Plan Update has identified 10 areas around the City where growth and change can be concentrated. Concentrating growth in these 10 areas, which are in proximity to transit, jobs and services, would require amending Measure Y in order to allow new mixed-use buildings to be taller and have higher residential densities than currently allowed (if approved by voters). Shown below is a map that identifies the 10 areas in San Mateo where building heights and densities could exceed existing limits through a voter-approved ballot measure (see colored parcels) in order to concentrate future growth and change. To be able to concentrate future housing in the areas identified in the map will require taller buildings and/or allowing more units per acre in these locations. Keeping this in mind, would you support or oppose allowing buildings up to 8 stories high in the blue areas shown in the map below?

**FIGURE 13 SUPPORT FOR ALLOWING BUILDINGS UP TO 8 STORIES**

Figures 14-17 show how support for allowing eight story buildings in the identified locations varied across key subgroups. When compared to their respective counterparts, support for allowing eight story buildings in the identified locations was strongest among those who had lived in San Mateo less than five years, individuals currently living in an apartment, males, renters, households without children, residents under the age of 50, households without a senior, residents of Council District 1, those who use transit or rideshare at least once per week, Democrats and Independents, and those who anticipate living in San Mateo for less than five more years.

**FIGURE 14 SUPPORT FOR 8 STORY BUILDINGS BY YEARS IN SAN MATEO, HOME TYPE & GENDER****FIGURE 15 SUPPORT FOR 8 STORY BUILDINGS BY HOME OWNERSHIP STATUS, ETHNICITY & CHILD IN HSLD****FIGURE 16 SUPPORT FOR 8 STORY BUILDINGS BY AGE, SENIOR 65+ IN HSLD & COUNCIL DISTRICT**

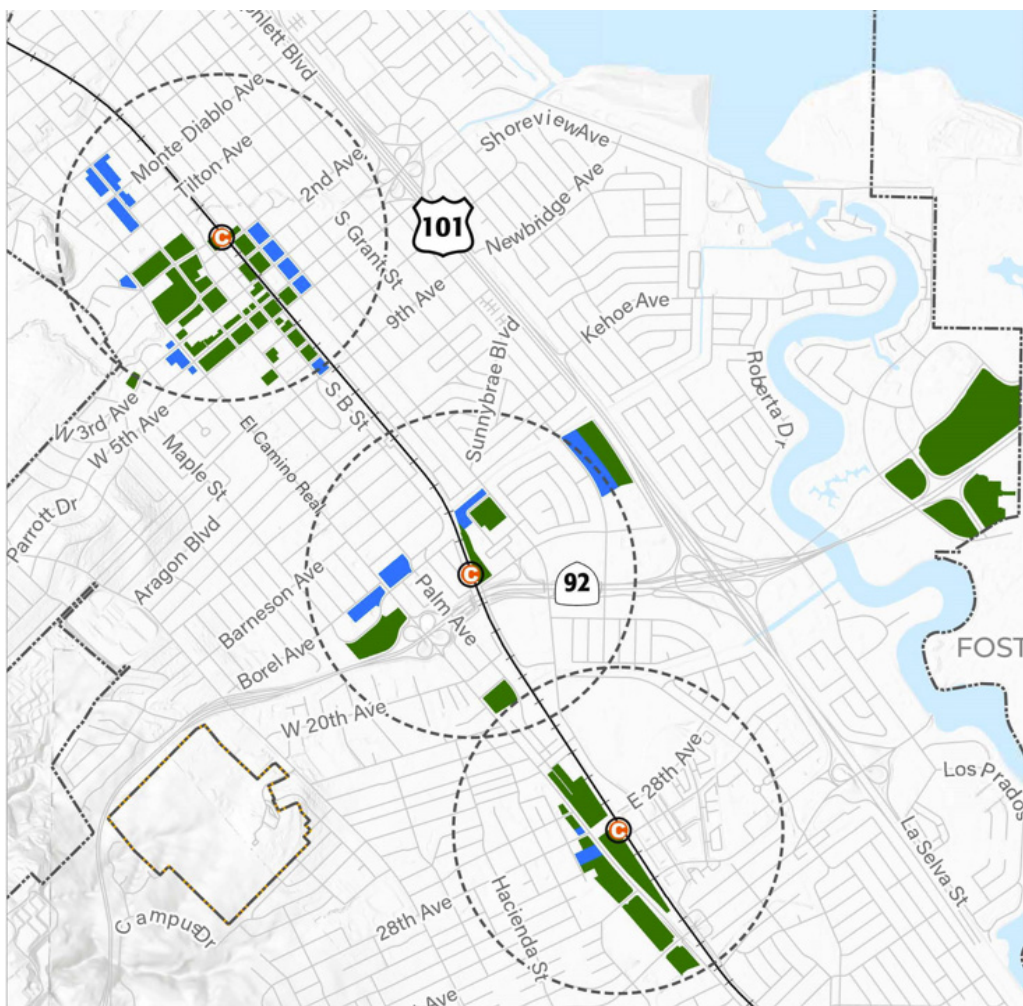
**FIGURE 17 SUPPORT FOR 8 STORY BUILDINGS BY TRAVEL WITHIN CITY, AT LEAST 1 DAY PER WEEK, PARTY & ANTICIPATED YEARS LIVING IN CITY**



**10 STORY BUILDINGS** Having gauged respondents' support for eight story buildings in Question 8, the survey next explored whether they would support or oppose allowing a mix of eight and 10 story buildings in the locations shown in Figure 18. Respondents were instructed that eight story buildings would be located in the blue areas of the map and 10 story buildings in the green areas. They were also provided with a visual representation of a 10 story building (see Figure 19)

As indicated in Figure 20, a majority (52%) of respondents indicated they would support a mix of eight and 10 story buildings in these locations, whereas 35% were opposed and 3% were unsure or preferred to not answer the question. Although support for a mix of eight and 10 story buildings was softer than support when buildings were capped at eight stories, the patterns of support across subgroups were similar (see figures 21-24).

**FIGURE 18 CONCENTRATING HOUSING: MAP OF IDENTIFYING LOCATIONS FOR BUILDINGS UP TO 10 STORIES**

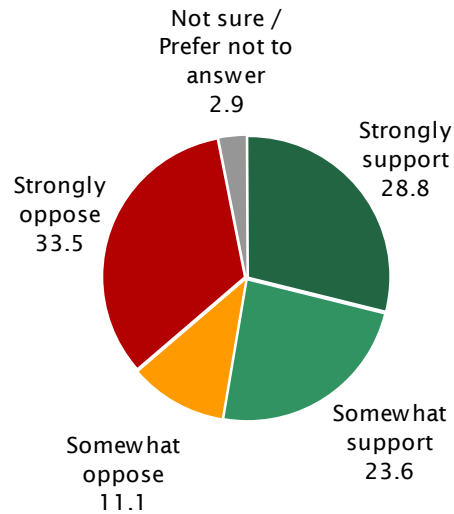


**FIGURE 19 VISUAL REPRESENTATION OF 10 STORY BUILDING**

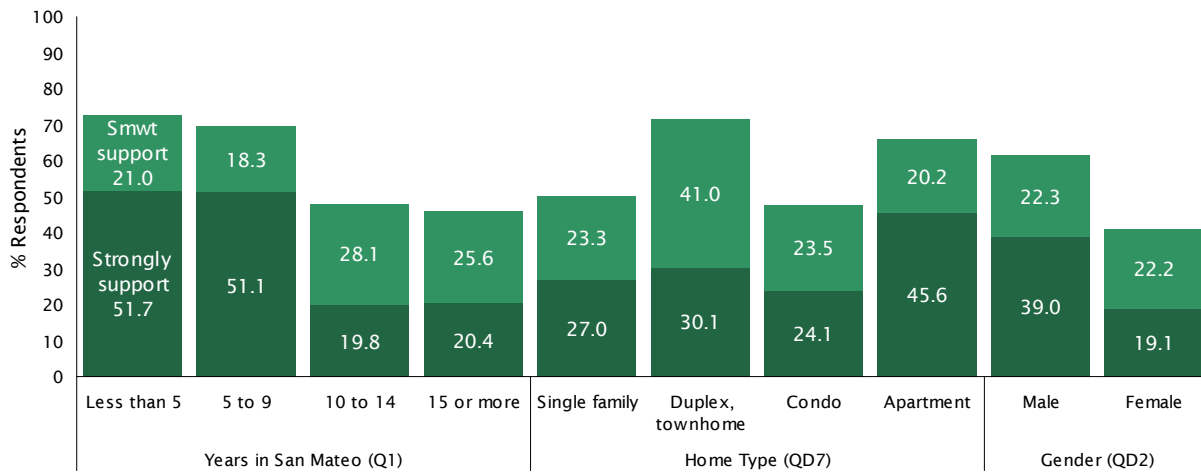


**Question 9** *Would you support or oppose allowing buildings up to 8 stories high in the blue locations, with buildings up to 10 stories in the green locations shown in the map below?*

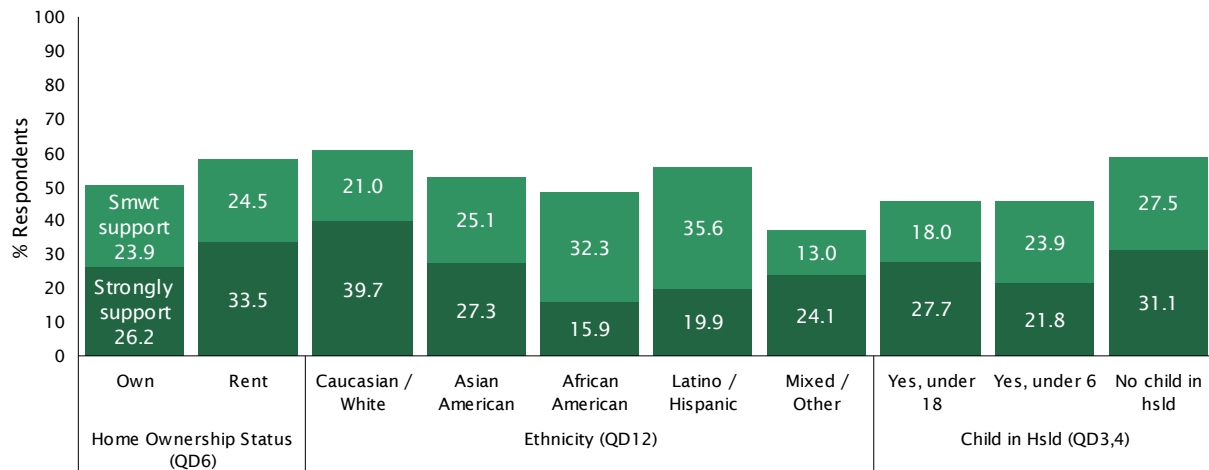
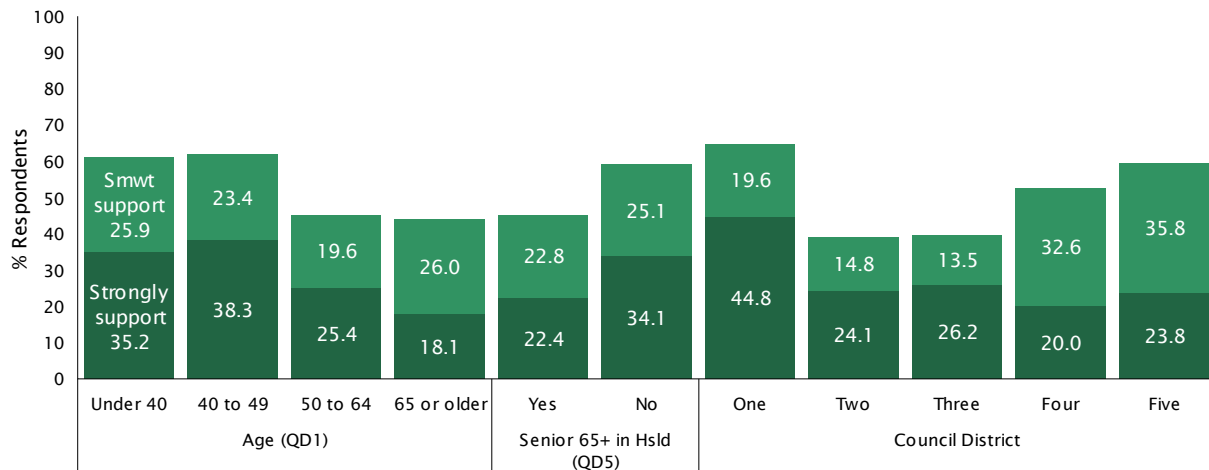
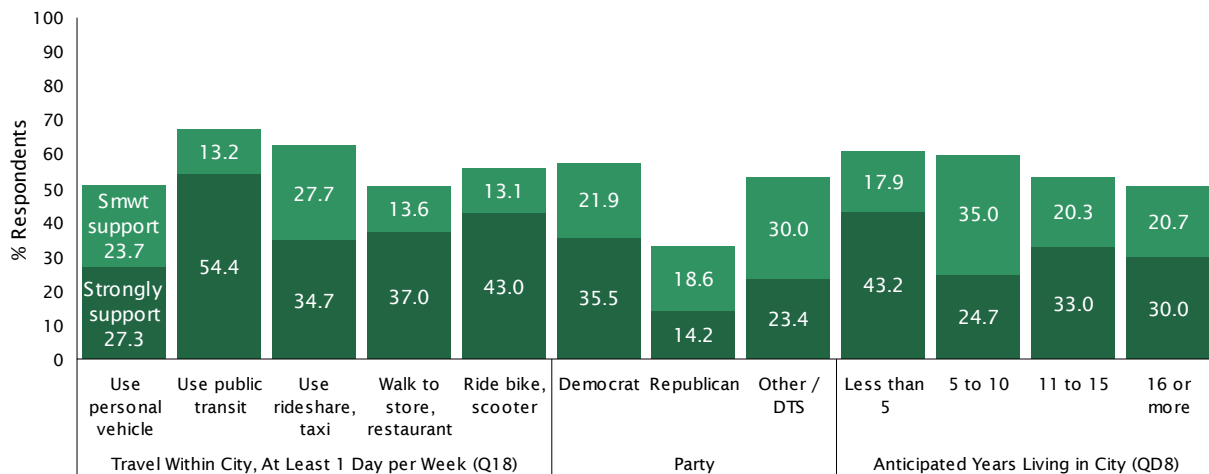
**FIGURE 20 SUPPORT FOR ALLOWING BUILDINGS UP TO 10 STORIES**



**FIGURE 21 SUPPORT FOR 10 STORY BUILDINGS BY YEARS IN SAN MATEO, HOME TYPE & GENDER**



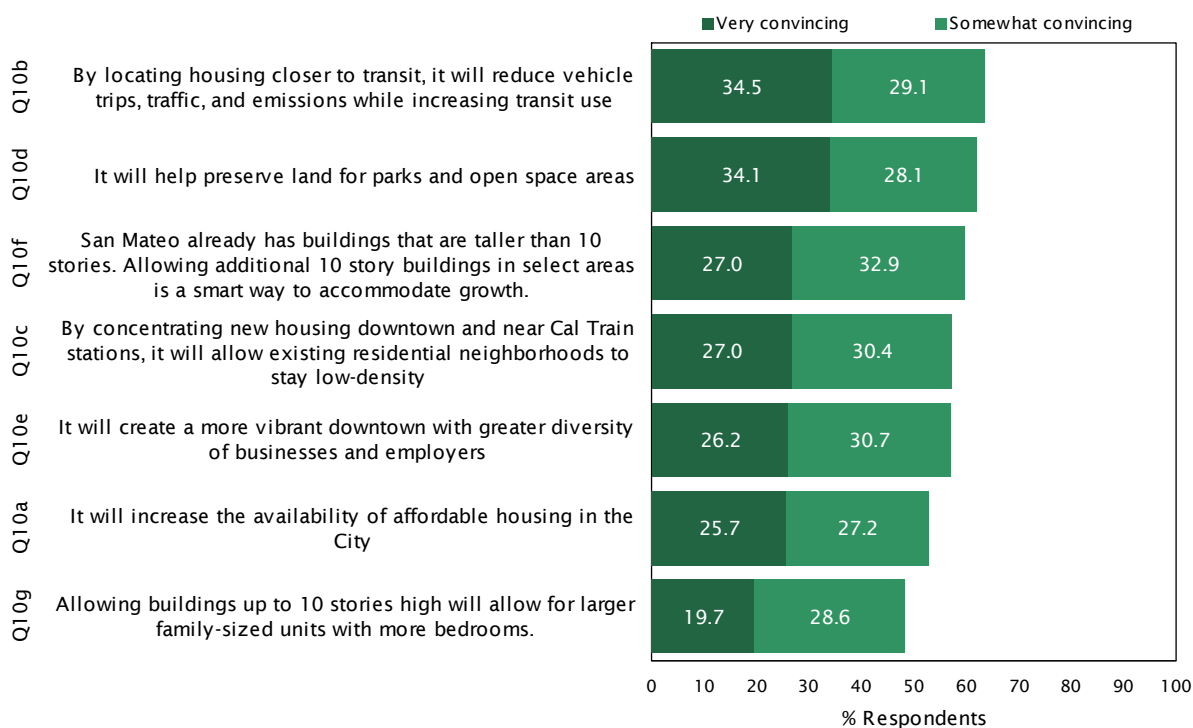


**FIGURE 22 SUPPORT FOR 10 STORY BUILDINGS BY HOME OWNERSHIP STATUS, ETHNICITY & CHILD IN HSLD**

**FIGURE 23 SUPPORT FOR 10 STORY BUILDINGS BY AGE, SENIOR 65+ IN HSLD & COUNCIL DISTRICT**

**FIGURE 24 SUPPORT FOR 10 STORY BUILDINGS BY TRAVEL WITHIN CITY, AT LEAST 1 DAY PER WEEK, PARTY & ANTICIPATED YEARS LIVING IN CITY**


**REASONS TO CONCENTRATE HOUSING** Recognizing that some respondents may not have considered all of the reasons for why concentrating future housing can be beneficial, the objective of Question 10 was to expose respondents to arguments in favor of concentrating future housing and gauge the degree to which they find the information compelling. Figure 25 presents the arguments tested, as well as respondents' reactions to the information.

**Question 10** *Shown below are reasons why some people favor concentrating future housing in taller, higher-density buildings downtown and near transit. For each statement, please indicate whether you think it is a very convincing, somewhat convincing, or not at all convincing reason to SUPPORT concentrating future housing.*

**FIGURE 25 ARGUMENTS IN FAVOR OF CONCENTRATING FUTURE HOUSING**



The arguments in Figure 25 are sorted from most convincing to least convincing based on the combined percentage of respondents who indicated that the argument was either a 'very convincing' or 'somewhat convincing' reason to support concentrating future housing. Using this methodology, the most compelling arguments were: *By locating housing closer to transit, it will reduce vehicle trips, traffic, and emissions while increasing transit use* (64%), *It will help preserve land for parks and open space areas* (62%), and *San Mateo already has buildings that are taller than 10 stories. Allowing additional 10 story buildings in select areas is a smart way to accommodate growth* (60%).

For the interested reader, tables 5-10 on the following pages show how the percentage who found each argument tested in Question 10 to be very or somewhat convincing varied across key subgroups. To ease comparisons, the top two most convincing arguments within each subgroup are highlighted in green.

**TABLE 5 ARGUMENTS IN FAVOR OF CONCENTRATING FUTURE HOUSING BY YEARS IN SAN MATEO & CHILD IN HSLD (SHOWING % OF VERY & SOMEWHAT CONVINCING)**

	Years in San Mateo (Q1)				Child in Hsld (QD3,4)		
	Less than 5	5 to 9	10 to 14	15 or more	Yes, under 18	Yes, under 6	No child in hslld
By locating housing closer to transit, it will reduce vehicle trips, traffic, emissions while increasing transit use	81.0	76.1	58.2	59.6	64.7	71.3	66.1
It will help preserve land for parks and open space areas	80.4	71.1	69.4	54.0	61.7	60.2	65.9
San Mateo already has buildings that are taller than 10 stories; allowing additional 10 story buildings in select areas is a smart way to accommodate growth.	79.4	72.6	65.9	52.5	59.6	57.6	62.8
By concentrating new housing downtown, near Cal Train stations, it will allow existing residential neighborhoods to stay low-density	63.2	63.4	58.6	56.2	61.4	54.9	56.6
It will create a more vibrant downtown with greater diversity of businesses, employers	70.1	67.9	64.9	50.9	53.4	50.6	61.7
It will increase availability of affordable housing in the City	79.2	69.6	50.2	44.3	46.7	39.7	58.7
Allowing buildings up to 10 stories high will allow for larger family-sized units with more bedrooms.	71.4	59.6	49.6	39.0	47.5	40.9	50.9

**TABLE 6 ARGUMENTS IN FAVOR OF CONCENTRATING FUTURE HOUSING BY AGE & GENDER (SHOWING % OF VERY & SOMEWHAT CONVINCING)**

	Age (QD1)				Gender (QD2)	
	Under 40	40 to 49	50 to 64	65 or older	Male	Female
By locating housing closer to transit, it will reduce vehicle trips, traffic, emissions while increasing transit use	72.2	64.2	58.6	57.9	70.6	56.3
It will help preserve land for parks and open space areas	68.5	72.5	55.9	55.0	67.9	58.9
San Mateo already has buildings that are taller than 10 stories; allowing additional 10 story buildings in select areas is a smart way to accommodate growth.	67.9	68.2	56.0	48.6	65.5	53.5
By concentrating new housing downtown, near Cal Train stations, it will allow existing residential neighborhoods to stay low-density	45.8	70.3	59.1	62.1	60.9	56.3
It will create a more vibrant downtown with greater diversity of businesses, employers	60.9	67.6	52.3	50.6	62.5	50.6
It will increase availability of affordable housing in the City	63.8	58.5	46.0	43.4	56.0	48.4
Allowing buildings up to 10 stories high will allow for larger family-sized units with more bedrooms.	56.5	55.7	44.5	37.1	57.2	41.2



**TABLE 7 ARGUMENTS IN FAVOR OF CONCENTRATING FUTURE HOUSING BY ETHNICITY & HOME OWNERSHIP STATUS (SHOWING % OF VERY & SOMEWHAT CONVINCING)**

	Ethnicity (QD12)					Home Ownership Status (QD6)	
	Caucasian / White	Asian American	African American	Latino / Hispanic	Mixed / Other	Own	Rent
By locating housing closer to transit, it will reduce vehicle trips, traffic, emissions while increasing transit use	70.7	62.1	61.7	66.2	53.3	62.9	66.7
It will help preserve land for parks and open space areas	66.9	67.2	53.4	73.3	40.8	62.9	63.9
San Mateo already has buildings that are taller than 10 stories; allowing additional 10 story buildings in select areas is a smart way to accommodate growth.	69.3	56.6	54.0	66.7	43.9	57.6	65.6
By concentrating new housing downtown, near Cal Train stations, it will allow existing residential neighborhoods to stay low-density	62.8	60.1	45.6	67.1	48.8	61.8	52.1
It will create a more vibrant downtown with greater diversity of businesses, employers	64.3	62.1	47.6	64.0	44.5	58.7	58.0
It will increase availability of affordable housing in the City	59.5	53.5	49.2	56.6	43.6	47.5	62.4
Allowing buildings up to 10 stories high will allow for larger family-sized units with more bedrooms.	51.2	46.0	45.7	66.0	40.2	42.5	58.2

**TABLE 8 ARGUMENTS IN FAVOR OF CONCENTRATING FUTURE HOUSING BY COUNCIL DISTRICT & SENIOR 65+ IN HSLD (SHOWING % OF VERY & SOMEWHAT CONVINCING)**

	Council District					Senior 65+ in HslD (QD5)	
	One	Two	Three	Four	Five	Yes	No
By locating housing closer to transit, it will reduce vehicle trips, traffic, emissions while increasing transit use	72.4	60.6	53.7	59.7	67.6	62.5	65.8
It will help preserve land for parks and open space areas	65.0	59.5	54.9	59.7	69.2	54.1	69.1
San Mateo already has buildings that are taller than 10 stories; allowing additional 10 story buildings in select areas is a smart way to accommodate growth.	69.6	55.7	50.1	55.9	63.8	47.9	69.4
By concentrating new housing downtown, near Cal Train stations, it will allow existing residential neighborhoods to stay low-density	69.9	43.6	45.8	52.1	67.4	56.5	58.9
It will create a more vibrant downtown with greater diversity of businesses, employers	63.9	52.5	47.8	49.1	66.5	51.5	62.6
It will increase availability of affordable housing in the City	60.0	49.4	45.5	49.2	56.7	44.6	59.9
Allowing buildings up to 10 stories high will allow for larger family-sized units with more bedrooms.	56.3	46.6	45.3	44.4	46.3	39.0	55.5

**TABLE 9 ARGUMENTS IN FAVOR OF CONCENTRATING FUTURE HOUSING BY INITIAL PREFERENCE FOR RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT & TRAVEL WITHIN CITY, AT LEAST 1 DAY PER WEEK (SHOWING % OF VERY & SOMEWHAT CONVINCING)**

	Initial Preference for Residential Development (Q5)		Travel Within City, At Least 1 Day per Week (Q18)				
	Concentrated	Spread out	Use personal vehicle	Use public transit	Use rideshare, taxi	Walk to store, restaurant	Ride bike, scooter
By locating housing closer to transit, it will reduce vehicle trips, traffic, emissions while increasing transit use	79.7	55.3	62.4	79.1	79.7	66.2	71.4
It will help preserve land for parks and open space areas	76.9	56.6	61.2	78.3	82.1	59.9	64.1
San Mateo already has buildings that are taller than 10 stories; allowing additional 10 story buildings in select areas is a smart way to accommodate growth.	77.4	55.1	58.5	81.7	86.2	57.1	64.3
By concentrating new housing downtown, near Cal Train stations, it will allow existing residential neighborhoods to stay low-density	78.9	45.0	56.4	69.8	78.7	59.0	63.9
It will create a more vibrant downtown with greater diversity of businesses, employers	75.1	50.1	55.8	73.2	74.5	57.6	58.9
It will increase availability of affordable housing in the City	65.0	53.0	51.8	79.4	72.0	52.2	59.2
Allowing buildings up to 10 stories high will allow for larger family-sized units with more bedrooms.	63.1	41.0	46.9	72.4	82.1	46.7	53.0

**TABLE 10 ARGUMENTS IN FAVOR OF CONCENTRATING FUTURE HOUSING BY PARTY & ANTICIPATED YEARS LIVING IN CITY (SHOWING % OF VERY & SOMEWHAT CONVINCING)**

	Party			Anticipated Years Living in City (QD8)			
	Democrat	Republican	Other / DTS	Less than 5	5 to 10	11 to 15	16 or more
By locating housing closer to transit, it will reduce vehicle trips, traffic, emissions while increasing transit use	71.0	53.7	54.2	70.5	69.6	65.4	65.4
It will help preserve land for parks and open space areas	68.1	36.5	64.6	68.8	65.2	74.3	60.3
San Mateo already has buildings that are taller than 10 stories; allowing additional 10 story buildings in select areas is a smart way to accommodate growth.	66.3	35.8	60.5	66.6	68.0	68.4	56.9
By concentrating new housing downtown, near Cal Train stations, it will allow existing residential neighborhoods to stay low-density	59.8	50.6	56.2	37.1	69.3	62.8	60.7
It will create a more vibrant downtown with greater diversity of businesses, employers	66.2	27.9	54.6	60.1	60.9	70.4	54.7
It will increase availability of affordable housing in the City	61.5	28.5	49.2	60.9	62.0	52.1	51.2
Allowing buildings up to 10 stories high will allow for larger family-sized units with more bedrooms.	54.0	28.5	47.9	70.5	55.2	52.8	41.5

## SPREAD OUT HOUSING OPTION

To be able to spread future housing throughout the City will require allowing more housing units per parcel in existing residential areas. Questions 11-13 sought to gauge respondents' support for specific strategies for spreading out future housing, as well as their receptiveness to arguments in favor of this approach.

**SIX UNITS PER PARCEL** After reminding respondents that spreading out future housing will require more housing units per acre in existing residential areas, Question 11 simply asked respondents whether they would support or oppose allowing single family homes to be redeveloped with up to six units per parcel. Respondents were also shown an example of what a six unit building can look like if four units face the street and two units face the rear of the property (see Figure 26)

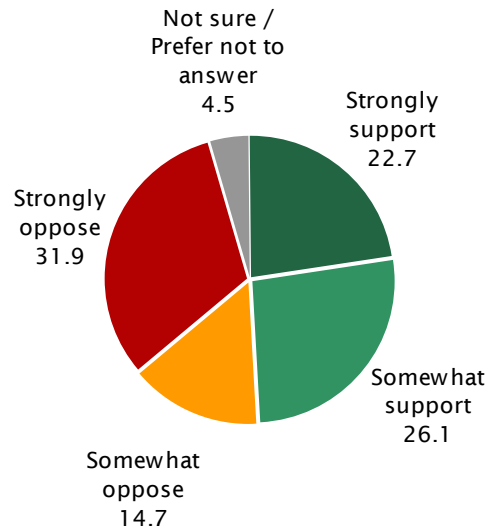
**FIGURE 26 VISUAL REPRESENTATION OF SIX UNIT BUILDING**



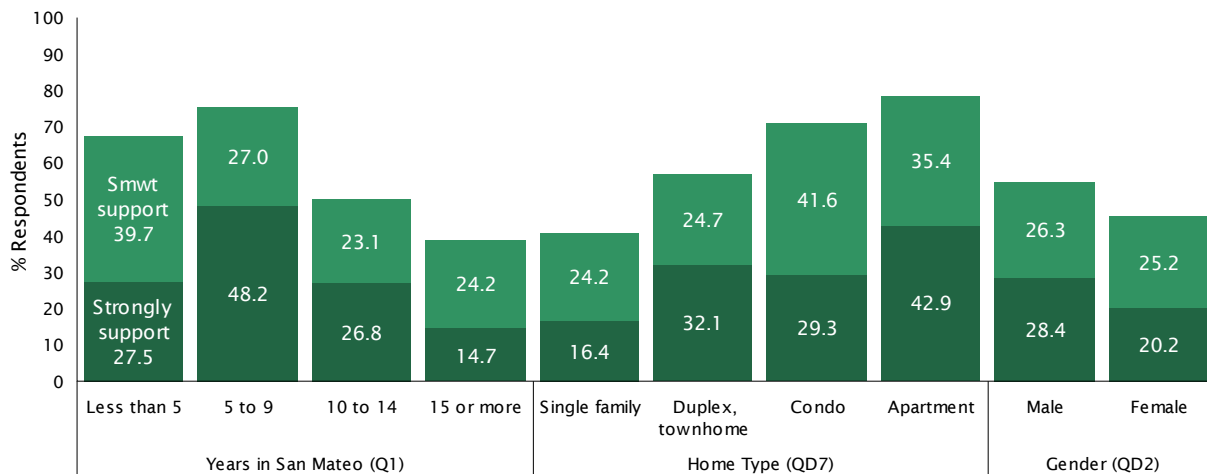
Overall, nearly half (49%) of respondents indicated they would support allowing single family homes to be redeveloped with up to six units per parcel, whereas 47% opposed this strategy for accommodating future growth and 5% were unsure or unwilling to share their opinion (see Figure 27 on the next page). When compared to their respective counterparts, support for allowing up to six units per parcel was highest among those who had lived in San Mateo less than 10 years, individuals who currently live in an apartment, males, renters, Latinos, households without children, individuals who use public transit at least once per week, Democrats, and those who anticipated living in the City of San Mateo no more than five additional years (see figures 28-31).

**Question 11** *To be able to spread future housing throughout the City will require allowing more housing units per parcel in existing residential areas. Keeping this in mind, would you support or oppose allowing single family homes to be redeveloped with up to 6 units per parcel? An example of what a 6 unit building looks like is shown below, with four units facing the street and two units in the back.*

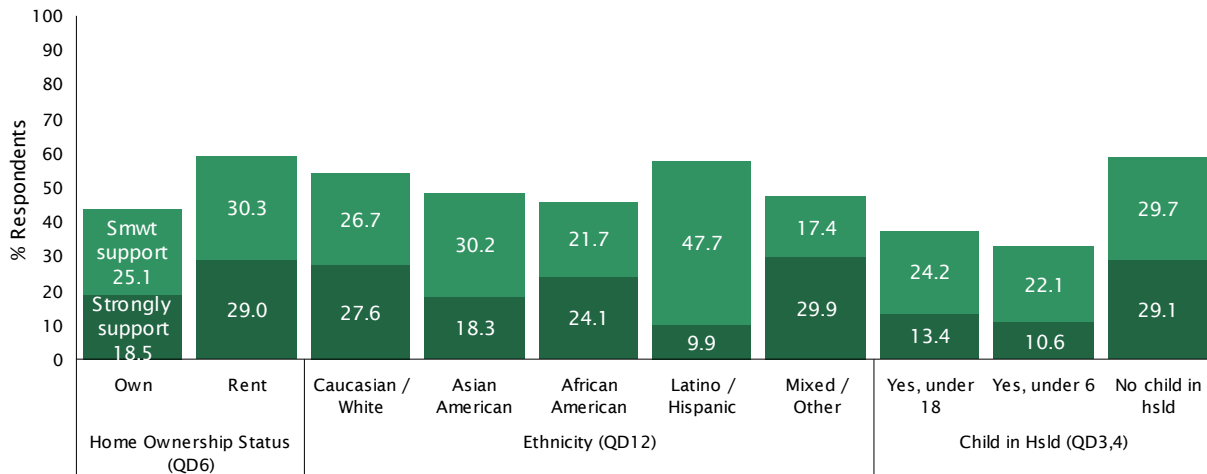
**FIGURE 27 SUPPORT FOR SPREADING OUT HOUSING**



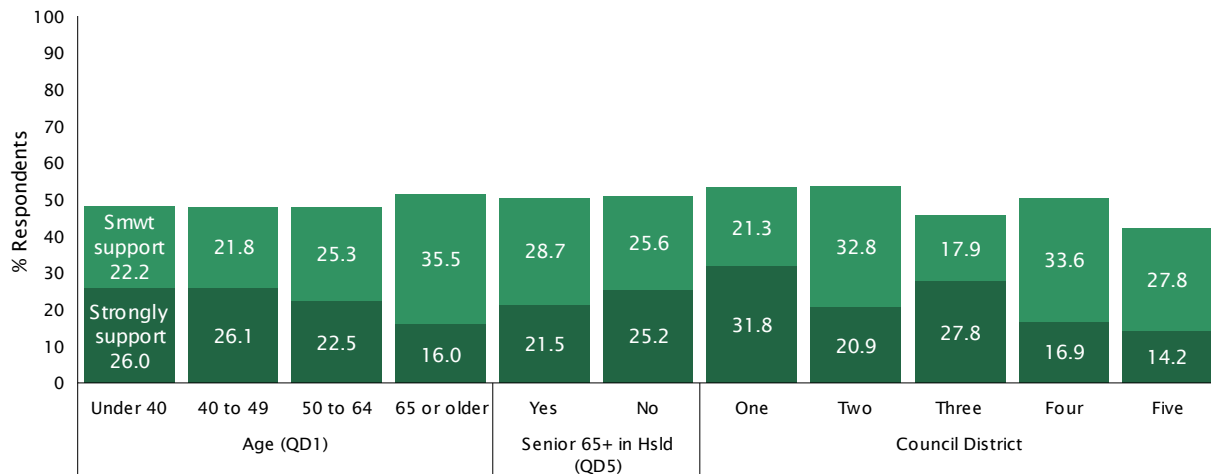
**FIGURE 28 SUPPORT FOR SPREADING OUT HOUSING BY YEARS IN SAN MATEO, HOME TYPE & GENDER**



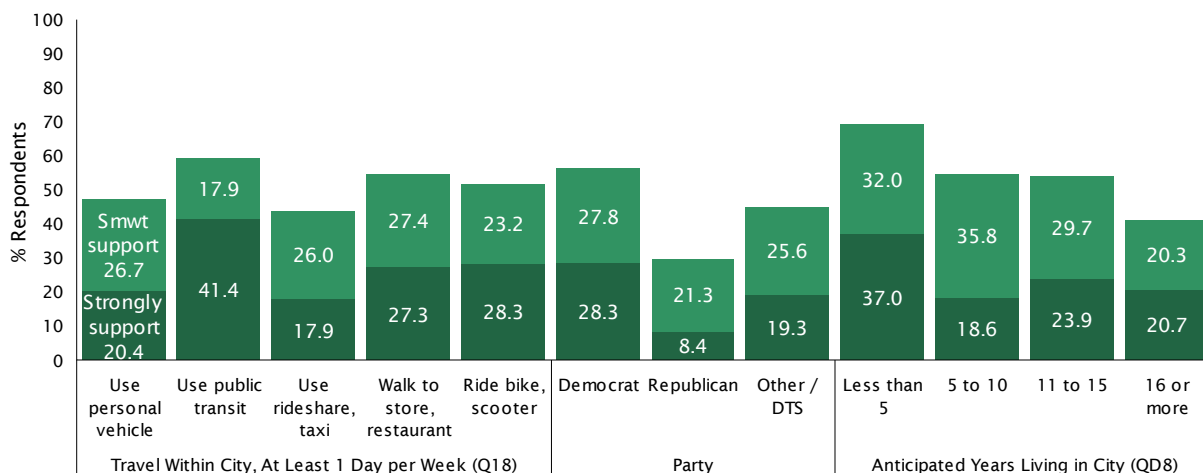
**FIGURE 29 SUPPORT FOR SPREADING OUT HOUSING BY HOME OWNERSHIP STATUS, ETHNICITY & CHILD IN HSLD**



**FIGURE 30 SUPPORT FOR SPREADING OUT HOUSING BY AGE, SENIOR 65+ IN HSLD & COUNCIL DISTRICT**



**FIGURE 31 SUPPORT FOR SPREADING OUT HOUSING BY TRAVEL WITHIN CITY, AT LEAST 1 DAY PER WEEK, PARTY & ANTICIPATED YEARS LIVING IN CITY**



**MULTIFAMILY HOUSING IN SINGLE FAMILY HOUSING ZONES** Respondents were next asked whether they would support or oppose allowing apartments or condominiums to be built in areas currently zoned for single family homes as a way to spread future housing throughout the City. Respondents were also shown an example of what an infill apartment building could look like (see Figure 32) to inform their answer.

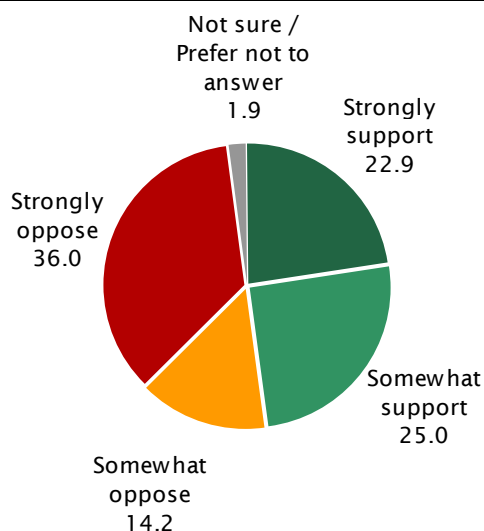
**FIGURE 32 VISUAL REPRESENTATION OF INFILL APARTMENT BUILDING**



Overall, 48% of respondents indicated they would support allowing apartments or condominiums to be built in areas currently zoned for single family homes, whereas 50% opposed this strategy for accommodating future housing and 2% were unsure or unwilling to answer the question (Figure 33).

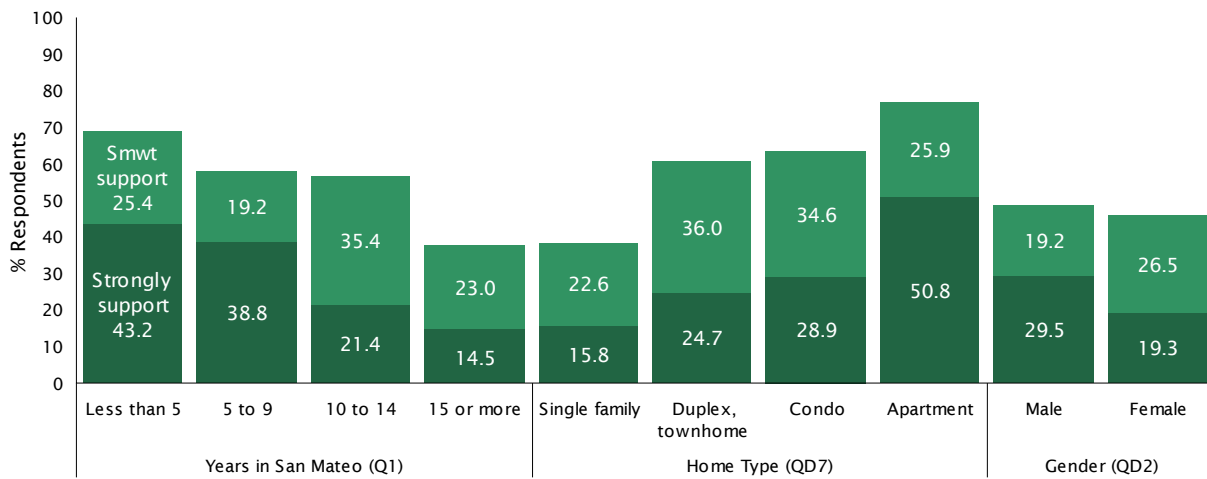
**Question 12** *To be able to spread future housing throughout the City will require allowing more housing units per parcel in existing residential areas. Keeping this in mind, would you support or oppose allowing apartments or condominiums to be built in areas currently zoned for single family homes?*

**FIGURE 33 SUPPORT FOR MULTIFAMILY HOUSING IN SINGLE FAMILY HOME ZONES**

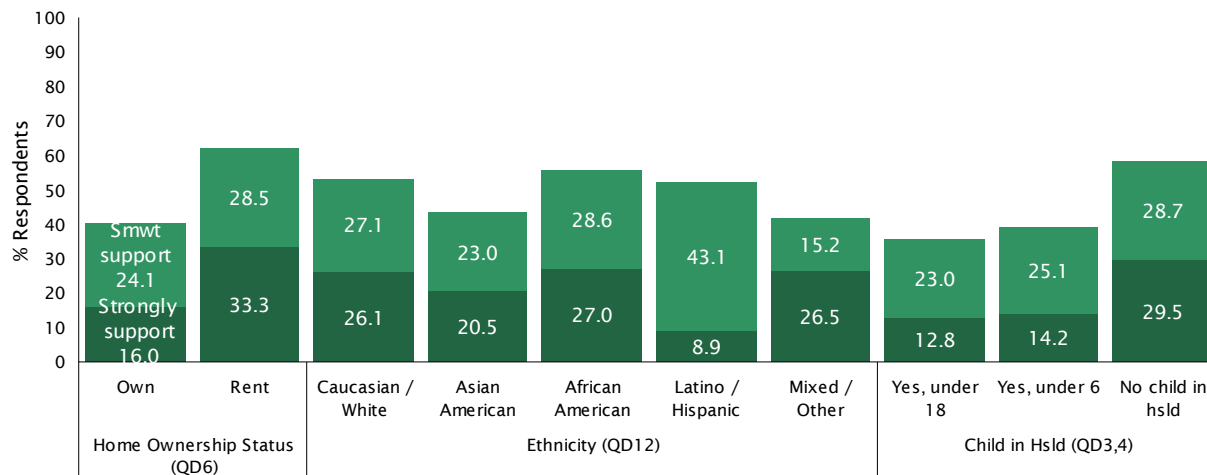


When compared to their respective counterparts, support for allowing apartments and condominiums in areas currently zoned for single family homes was highest among those who had lived in San Mateo less than five years, individuals who currently live in an apartment, renters, households without children, those under 40 years of age, residents of Council District 2, individuals who use public transit at least once per week, Democrats, and those who anticipated living in the City of San Mateo no more than 10 additional years (see figures 34-37).

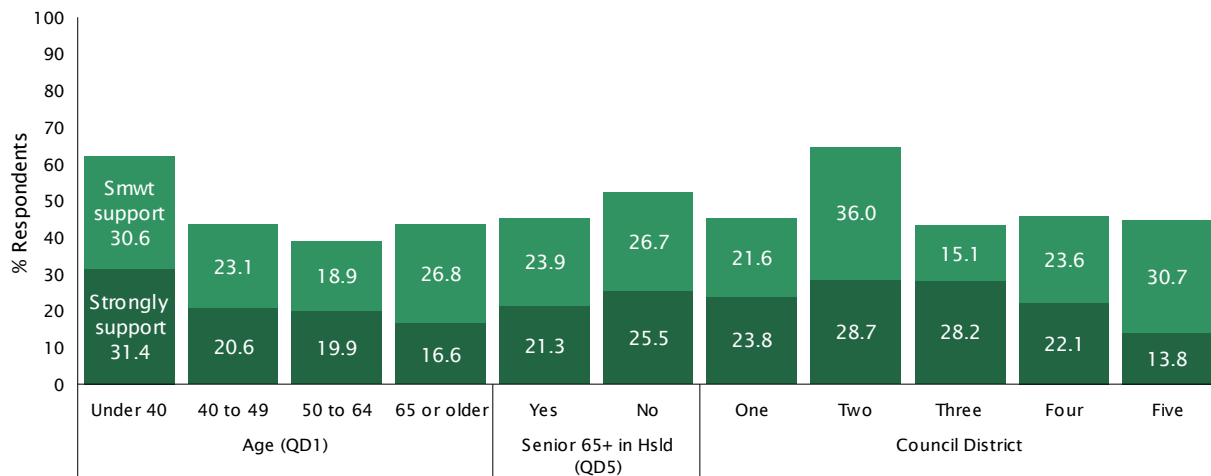
**FIGURE 34 SUPPORT FOR MULTIFAMILY HOUSING IN SINGLE FAMILY HOME ZONES BY YEARS IN SAN MATEO, HOME TYPE & GENDER**



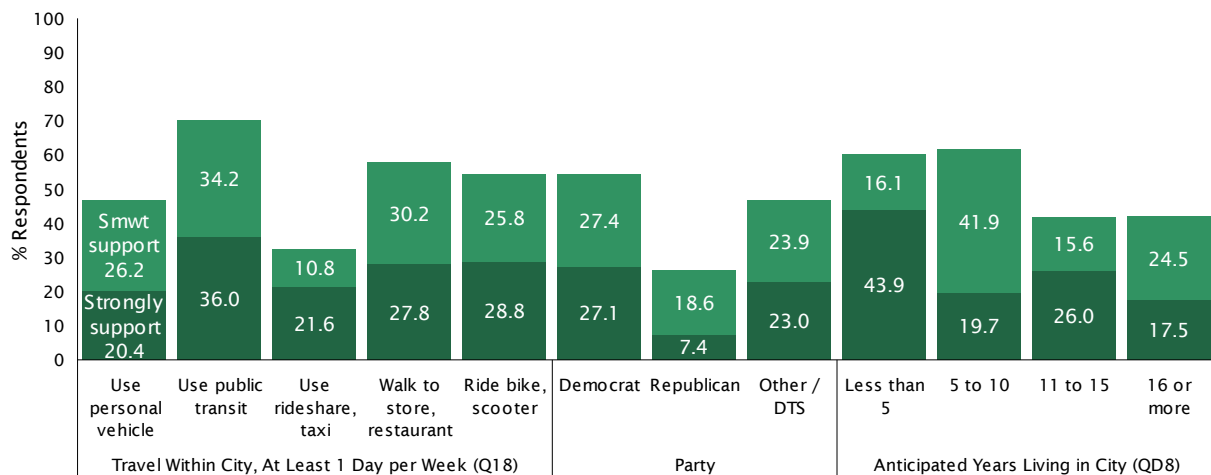
**FIGURE 35 SUPPORT FOR MULTIFAMILY HOUSING IN SINGLE FAMILY HOME ZONES BY HOME OWNERSHIP STATUS, ETHNICITY & CHILD IN HSLD**



**FIGURE 36 SUPPORT FOR MULTIFAMILY HOUSING IN SINGLE FAMILY HOME ZONES BY AGE, SENIOR 65+ IN HSLD & COUNCIL DISTRICT**



**FIGURE 37 SUPPORT FOR MULTIFAMILY HOUSING IN SINGLE FAMILY HOME ZONES BY TRAVEL WITHIN CITY, AT LEAST 1 DAY PER WEEK, PARTY & ANTICIPATED YEARS LIVING IN CITY**



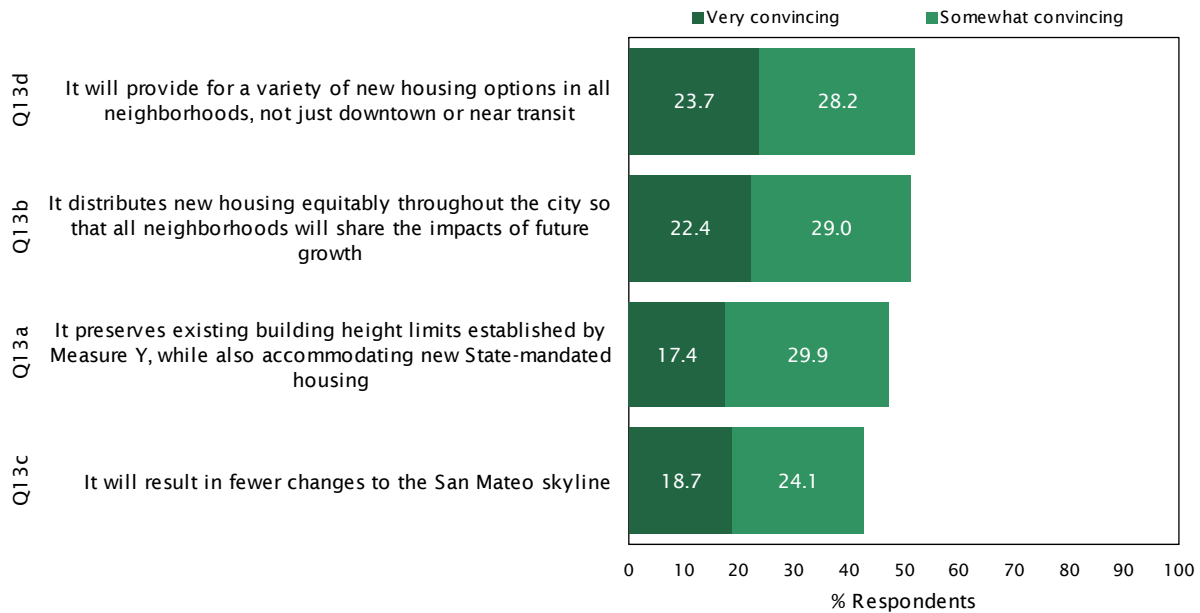
**REASONS TO SPREAD OUT HOUSING** In a manner similar to that described previously for concentrating housing, all respondents were exposed to arguments in favor of spreading future housing throughout the City to gauge the degree to which they find the information compelling. Figure 38 presents the arguments tested, as well as respondents' reactions to the information.

The arguments in Figure 38 are sorted from most convincing to least convincing based on the combined percentage of respondents who indicated that the argument was either a 'very convincing' or 'somewhat convincing' reason to support spreading future housing. Using this methodology, the most compelling arguments were: *It will provide for a variety of new housing options in all neighborhoods, not just downtown or near transit* (52%) and *It distributes new housing equitably throughout the City so that all neighborhoods will share the impacts of future growth* (51%).



**Question 13** Shown below are reasons why some people favor spreading future housing throughout the City. For each statement, please indicate whether you think it is a very convincing, somewhat convincing, or not at all convincing reason to SUPPORT spreading future housing.

**FIGURE 38 ARGUMENTS IN FAVOR OF SPREADING HOUSING THROUGHOUT CITY**



Tables 11-16 show how the percentage who found each argument tested in Question 13 to be very or somewhat convincing varied across key subgroups. To ease comparisons, the top two most convincing arguments within each subgroup are highlighted in green.

**TABLE 11 ARGUMENTS IN FAVOR OF SPREADING HOUSING THROUGHOUT CITY BY YEARS IN SAN MATEO & CHILD IN HSLD (SHOWING % VERY & SOMEWHAT CONVINCING)**

	Less than 5	5 to 9	10 to 14	15 or more	Yes, under 18	Yes, under 6	No child in hsl
It will provide for a variety of new housing options in all neighborhoods, not just downtown or near transit	58.6	66.9	60.5	44.4	44.4	40.1	59.6
It distributes new housing equitably throughout the city so that all neighborhoods will share the impacts of future growth	62.8	64.9	63.0	43.9	48.0	46.8	57.2
It preserves existing building height limits established by Measure Y, while also accommodating new State-mandated housing	49.2	40.5	61.7	46.7	52.0	60.8	46.9
It will result in fewer changes to the San Mateo skyline	39.2	34.8	57.2	43.7	48.0	60.9	42.2

**TABLE 12 ARGUMENTS IN FAVOR OF SPREADING HOUSING THROUGHOUT CITY BY AGE & GENDER (SHOWING % VERY & SOMEWHAT CONVINCING)**

	Age (QD1)				Gender (QD2)	
	Under 40	40 to 49	50 to 64	65 or older	Male	Female
It will provide for a variety of new housing options in all neighborhoods, not just downtown or near transit	60.2	51.1	50.0	44.0	49.4	56.2
It distributes new housing equitably throughout the city so that all neighborhoods will share the impacts of future growth	59.6	53.7	47.3	44.3	47.5	57.4
It preserves existing building height limits established by Measure Y, while also accommodating new State-mandated housing	51.4	45.0	43.2	48.8	40.4	55.5
It will result in fewer changes to the San Mateo skyline	47.0	43.3	38.9	41.6	37.4	49.1

**TABLE 13 ARGUMENTS IN FAVOR OF SPREADING HOUSING THROUGHOUT CITY BY ETHNICITY & HOME OWNERSHIP STATUS (SHOWING % VERY & SOMEWHAT CONVINCING)**

	Ethnicity (QD12)					Home Ownership Status (QD6)	
	Caucasian / White	Asian American	African American	Latino / Hispanic	Mixed / Other	Own	Rent
It will provide for a variety of new housing options in all neighborhoods, not just downtown or near transit	51.7	49.0	69.1	54.1	43.2	45.2	64.5
It distributes new housing equitably throughout the city so that all neighborhoods will share the impacts of future growth	52.0	50.6	61.7	59.9	49.0	45.4	62.8
It preserves existing building height limits established by Measure Y, while also accommodating new State-mandated housing	42.3	50.1	69.1	33.3	43.7	45.5	52.7
It will result in fewer changes to the San Mateo skyline	34.4	45.1	66.4	44.2	46.8	40.5	48.4

**TABLE 14 ARGUMENTS IN FAVOR OF SPREADING HOUSING THROUGHOUT CITY BY COUNCIL DISTRICT & SENIOR 65+ IN HSLD (SHOWING % VERY & SOMEWHAT CONVINCING)**

	Council District					Senior 65+ in Hsld (QD5)	
	One	Two	Three	Four	Five	Yes	No
It will provide for a variety of new housing options in all neighborhoods, not just downtown or near transit	44.3	73.6	53.3	50.8	44.6	47.6	57.4
It distributes new housing equitably throughout the city so that all neighborhoods will share the impacts of future growth	45.5	66.8	48.0	50.4	50.7	46.1	57.9
It preserves existing building height limits established by Measure Y, while also accommodating new State-mandated housing	35.3	58.8	43.2	62.5	44.0	48.1	48.1
It will result in fewer changes to the San Mateo skyline	29.0	54.4	42.1	59.2	37.0	46.1	42.1

**TABLE 15 ARGUMENTS IN FAVOR OF SPREADING HOUSING THROUGHOUT CITY BY INITIAL PREFERENCE FOR RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT (SHOWING % VERY & SOMEWHAT CONVINCING)**

	Initial Preference for Residential Development (Q5)		Travel Within City, At Least 1 Day per Week (Q18)				
	Concentrated	Spread out	Use personal vehicle	Use public transit	Use rideshare, taxi	Walk to store, restaurant	Ride bike, scooter
It will provide for a variety of new housing options in all neighborhoods, not just downtown or near transit	35.7	85.4	52.0	64.1	48.7	52.6	43.0
It distributes new housing equitably throughout the city so that all neighborhoods will share the impacts of future growth	37.8	81.6	51.8	62.2	49.6	49.4	51.4
It preserves existing building height limits established by Measure Y, while also accommodating new State-mandated housing	37.3	65.1	48.5	47.8	57.0	42.9	49.1
It will result in fewer changes to the San Mateo skyline	28.1	63.4	43.5	29.9	45.6	35.5	33.0

**TABLE 16 ARGUMENTS IN FAVOR OF SPREADING HOUSING THROUGHOUT CITY BY PARTY & ANTICIPATED YEARS LIVING IN CITY (SHOWING % VERY & SOMEWHAT CONVINCING)**

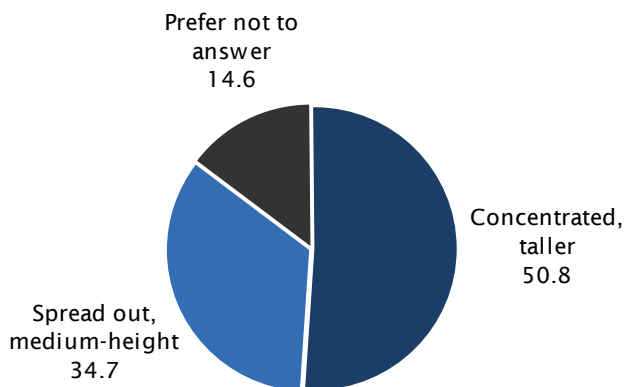
	Democrat	Party Republican	Other / DTS	Anticipated Years Living in City (QD8)			
				Less than 5	5 to 10	11 to 15	16 or more
It will provide for a variety of new housing options in all neighborhoods, not just downtown or near transit	61.7	25.1	47.4	57.7	59.1	50.5	49.3
It distributes new housing equitably throughout the city so that all neighborhoods will share the impacts of future growth	63.1	24.3	43.3	58.6	54.3	50.3	49.9
It preserves existing building height limits established by Measure Y, while also accommodating new State-mandated housing	53.2	35.2	42.5	16.4	53.9	45.3	55.9
It will result in fewer changes to the San Mateo skyline	44.5	43.6	38.7	13.3	47.4	35.0	51.2

## FINAL HOUSING PREFERENCE

After sharing with respondents the types of strategies that would be required to concentrate additional housing or spread it throughout the City, as well as arguments in favor of both approaches, residents were given another opportunity to share how they would prefer future housing to be accommodated in San Mateo. At this point in the survey, a majority of respondents (51%) favored **concentrating** future housing in taller buildings in locations that are close to transit, stores and restaurants, such as downtown, along El Camino Real, and near Cal Train stations (see Figure 39). Just over one-third (35%) favored **spreading** future housing throughout the City in medium height buildings, which means allowing more units per parcel in existing residential neighborhoods with higher-density infill projects such as townhomes, condominiums, and low- and mid-rise apartments. Approximately 15% remained unsure or preferred to not answer the question.

**Question 14** *Sometimes people change their minds once they hear more about a topic. Now that you've heard more about the two options the City has for locating future housing, which of the following options do you prefer?*

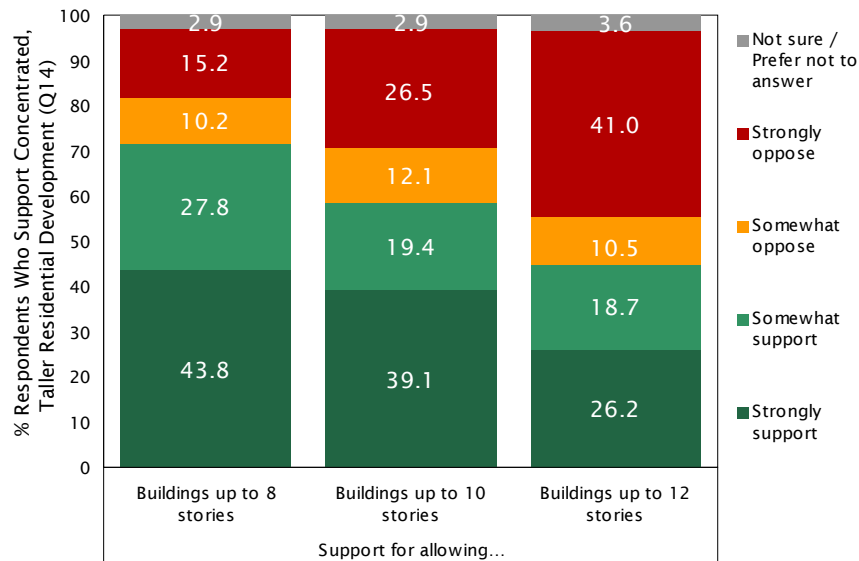
**FIGURE 39 INFORMED PREFERENCE FOR FUTURE RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT**



**BUILDING HEIGHTS** Anticipating that some respondents may change their minds over the course of the survey as they learned more about the benefits of each strategy, Questions 15-17 revisited the topic of building heights. At this point in the survey, 72% of respondents indicated they would support buildings up to eight stories high in locations that are close to transit, stores and restaurants, while 59% offered support for buildings up to 10 stories high in these locations (see Figure 40 on the next page). Support declined significantly, however, when respondents were asked if they would support or oppose buildings up to 12 stories in locations that are close to transit, stores and restaurants (45%).

**Questions 15-17** Now that you've heard more about the options the City is considering, would you support allowing buildings up to <#> stories high in locations that are close to transit, stores and restaurants, such as downtown, along El Camino Real, and near Cal Train stations?

**FIGURE 40 SUPPORT FOR ALLOWING BUILDINGS UP TO 8, 10 & 12 STORIES HIGH IN LOCATIONS CLOSE TO TRANSIT, STORES, RESTAURANTS**



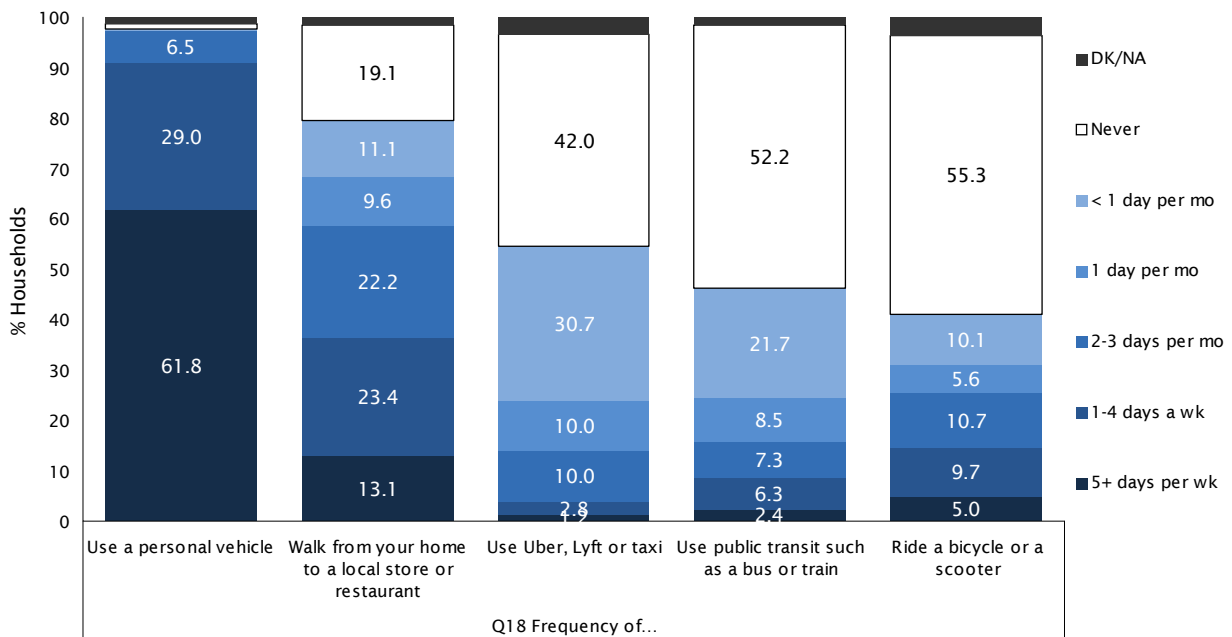
## MOBILITY

The final substantive question of the survey (Question 18) asked respondents to identify how often they use each of the modes shown in Figure 41 when traveling in San Mateo and neighboring areas.

As shown in the figure, using a personal vehicle was by far the dominant mode of travel, with 97% indicating they use this mode at least two to three days per month, and 62% reporting they do it at least five days per week. Most respondents also reported walking from their home to a local store or restaurant at least two to three days per month (59%), while fewer use Uber, Lyft or a taxi (15%), use public transit (16%), or ride a bicycle or scooter (25%) at least two to three days per month.

**Question 18** When traveling in the City of San Mateo and neighboring areas, how often do you \_\_\_\_\_?

**FIGURE 41 WHEN TRAVELING IN CITY HOW OFTEN DO YOU...**





## BACKGROUND & DEMOGRAPHICS

**TABLE 17 DEMOGRAPHICS OF SAMPLE**

<b>Total Respondents</b>	<b>635</b>
<b>Years in San Mateo (Q1)</b>	
Less than 5	14.8
5 to 9	13.9
10 to 14	13.7
15 or more	55.3
Prefer not to answer	2.3
<b>Age (QD1)</b>	
Under 40	31.3
40 to 49	15.4
50 to 64	30.2
65 or older	23.2
<b>Gender (QD2)</b>	
Male	47.1
Female	43.9
Prefer not to answer	9.1
<b>Child in Hsld (QD3,4)</b>	
Yes, under 18	30.7
Yes, under 6	13.8
No child in hsld	61.3
<b>Senior 65+ in Hsld (QD5)</b>	
Yes	38.4
No	57.2
Prefer not to answer	4.4
<b>Home Ownership Status (QD6)</b>	
Own	58.3
Rent	37.8
Prefer not to answer	3.9
<b>Home Type (QD7)</b>	
Single family	59.0
Duplex, townhome	9.8
Condo	9.2
Apartment	15.5
Prefer not to answer	6.5
<b>Anticipated Years in San Mateo (QD8)</b>	
Less than 5	12.9
5 to 10	22.5
11 to 15	10.1
16 or more	44.0
Prefer not to answer	10.5
<b>Employment Status (QD9)</b>	
Full time	61.1
Part time	7.0
Retired	18.5
Other	7.3
Prefer not to answer	6.1
<b>Ethnicity (QD12)</b>	
Caucasian / White	44.8
Asian American	19.9
African American	18.6
Latino / Hispanic	3.9
Mixed / Other	5.7
Prefer not to answer	7.2
<b>Party</b>	
Democrat	56.2
Republican	15.7
Other / DTS	28.0
<b>Registration Year</b>	
Since Nov '18	14.2
Jun '12 to <Nov '18	22.7
Jun '06 to <Jun '12	12.6
Before Jun '06	50.4
<b>Household Party Type</b>	
Single dem	33.6
Dual dem	14.9
Single rep	6.5
Dual rep	2.9
Other / Mixed	42.1
<b>Likely to Vote by Mail</b>	
Yes	90.6
No	9.4
<b>Council District</b>	
One	24.3
Two	15.9
Three	19.4
Four	17.6
Five	22.7

Table 17 presents the key demographic information collected during the survey. The primary motivation for collecting the background and demographic information was to provide a better insight into how the results of the substantive questions of the survey vary by demographic characteristics, and to ensure that the resulting sample matched the profile of San Mateo's likely November 2024 voter population on key characteristics.

## M E T H O D O L O G Y

The following sections outline the methodology used in the study, as well as the motivation for using certain techniques.

**QUESTIONNAIRE DEVELOPMENT** Dr. McLarney of True North Research worked closely with the City of San Mateo to develop a questionnaire that covered the topics of interest and avoided possible sources of systematic measurement error, including position-order effects, wording effects, response-category effects, scaling effects, and priming. Several questions included multiple individual items. Because asking the items in a set order can lead to a systematic position bias in responses, items were asked in random order for each respondent.

Some questions asked in this study were presented only to a subset of respondents. For example, only individuals who initially preferred to concentrate future development (Question 5) were subsequently asked the follow-up, open-ended Question 6 regarding their reasons for preferring this option. The questionnaire included with this report (see *Questionnaire & Toplines* on page 41) identifies the skip patterns that were used during the interview to ensure that each respondent received the appropriate questions.

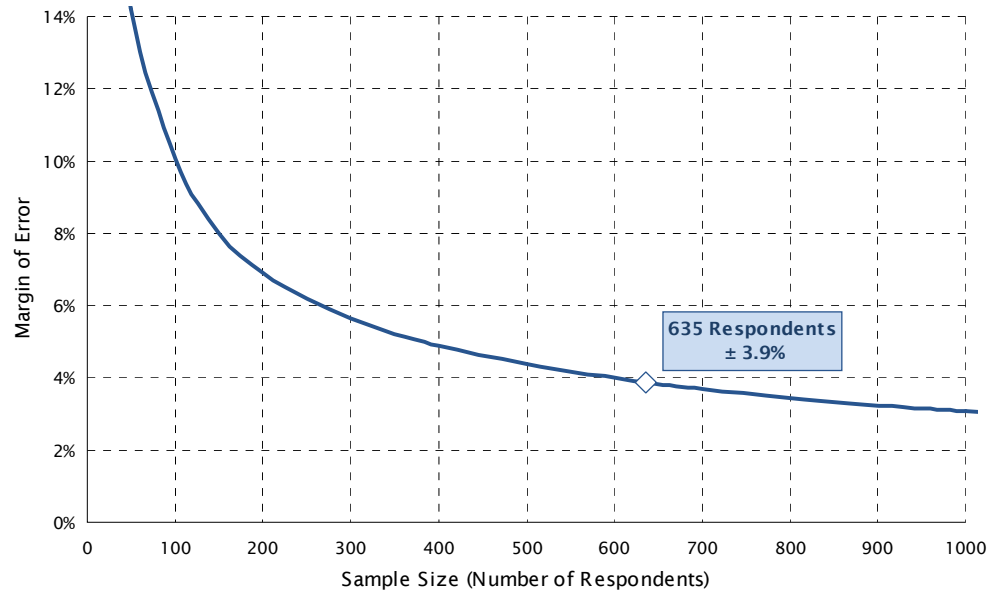
**PROGRAMMING, PRE-TEST & TRANSLATION** Prior to fielding the survey, the questionnaire was programmed into a passcode-protected online survey application to allow online participation for sampled voters, and professionally translated into Spanish. The integrity of the questionnaire was pre-tested internally by True North prior to formally beginning the survey.

**SAMPLE** Because any future amendments to Measure Y will need to be approved by voters, the survey was administered to a stratified and clustered random sample of registered voters in the City who are likely to participate the November 2024 general election, with a subset of voters who are also likely to participate in the lower turnout March 2024 primary election. Consistent with the profile of this universe, the sample was stratified into clusters, each representing a combination of age, gender, and household party type. Individuals were randomly selected based on their profile into an appropriate cluster. This method ensures that if a person of a particular profile refuses to participate, they are replaced by an individual who shares their same profile.

**STATISTICAL MARGIN OF ERROR** By using the probability-based sampling design noted above, True North ensured that the final sample was representative of voters in the City who are likely to participate in the November 2024 general election. The results of the survey can thus be used to estimate the opinions of *all* voters likely to participate in said election. Because not all voters participated in the study, however, the results have what is known as a statistical margin of error due to sampling. The margin of error refers to the difference between what was found in the survey of 635 voters for a particular question and what would have been found if all of the estimated 52,065 likely November 2024 voters identified in the City had been surveyed for the study.

Figure 42 provides a graphic plot of the *maximum* margin of error in this study. The maximum margin of error for a dichotomous percentage result occurs when the answers are evenly split such that 50% provide one response and 50% provide the alternative response. For this survey, the maximum margin of error is  $\pm 3.9\%$ .



**FIGURE 42 MAXIMUM MARGIN OF ERROR DUE TO SAMPLING**

Within this report, figures and tables show how responses to certain questions varied by subgroups such as age, gender, and partisan affiliation. Figure 42 is thus useful for understanding how the maximum margin of error for a percentage estimate will grow as the number of individuals asked a question (or in a particular subgroup) shrinks. Because the margin of error grows exponentially as the sample size decreases, the reader should use caution when generalizing and interpreting the results for small subgroups.

**RECRUITING & DATA COLLECTION** Respondents were recruited to participate in the online survey using a combination of email and text invitations, and multiple data collection methods (telephone and online). Each respondent was assigned a unique passcode to ensure that only voters who received an invitation could access the online survey site, and that each voter could complete the survey only one time. During the data collection period, an email reminder notice was also sent to encourage participation among those who had yet to take the survey. A total of 635 surveys were completed between September 29 and October 4, 2023.

**DATA PROCESSING** Data processing consisted of checking the data for errors or inconsistencies, coding and recoding responses, weighting, and preparing frequency analyses and cross-tabulations.

**ROUNDING** Numbers that end in 0.5 or higher are rounded up to the nearest whole number, whereas numbers that end in 0.4 or lower are rounded down to the nearest whole number. These same rounding rules are also applied, when needed, to arrive at numbers that include a decimal place in constructing figures and tables. Occasionally, these rounding rules lead to small discrepancies in the first decimal place when comparing tables and charts for a given question.



# QUESTIONNAIRE & TOPLINES



City of San Mateo  
Community Opinion Survey  
Final Toplines (n=635)  
October 2023

## Section 1: Introduction to Study

**Welcome!** Thank you for taking this survey about important issues in the City of San Mateo.

During this survey do not use the forward and back buttons on your browser – use the “Next” and “Back” buttons that appear at the bottom of your screen. When you are finished answering the questions on a page, click the “Next” button to move to the next page of questions. Only click the “Back” button if you need to change your answer to a previous question. If you need to stop while taking this survey, your answers will be saved so that you may return and resume where you left off by clicking the survey link in your invitation email.

Please click “Next” to begin.

## Section 2: Quality of Life

To begin are a few questions about what it is like to live in the City of San Mateo.

Q1 How long have you lived in the City of San Mateo?

1	Less than 1 year	2%
2	1 to 4 years	12%
3	5 to 9 years	14%
4	10 to 14 years	14%
5	15 years or longer	55%
99	Not Sure/Prefer not to answer	2%

Q2 How would you rate: \_\_\_\_\_?

		Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor	Very poor	Not sure	Prefer not to answer
	<i>Always ask A first, then randomize remaining items</i>							
A	The overall quality of life in the City of San Mateo	18%	59%	18%	4%	1%	0%	0%
B	San Mateo as a place to raise a family	18%	46%	18%	6%	1%	8%	2%
C	San Mateo as a place to work	14%	42%	19%	3%	1%	20%	1%
D	San Mateo as a place to retire	7%	25%	31%	16%	10%	9%	1%
E	San Mateo as a place to shop and dine	17%	46%	28%	6%	2%	0%	0%
F	San Mateo as a place to recreate	14%	38%	30%	12%	3%	4%	0%

Q3	What do you like <b>most</b> about the City of San Mateo that should be preserved in the future? <i>Provide your response in the text box below or check the appropriate box. Verbatim responses recorded and later grouped into categories shown below.</i>	
	Parks, recreation facilities, opportunities	20%
	Open, green space, mountains	15%
	Shopping, dining opportunities	14%
	Not sure / Cannot think of anything specific	10%
	Small town atmosphere	9%
	Low crime, public safety	9%
	Proximity to surrounding areas	9%
	Diversity of business, cultural activities	8%
	Downtown area	7%
	Clean, well-maintained	5%
	Weather, clean air	4%
	Sense of community	4%
	Central Park	4%
	Friendly people, neighbors	3%
	Good schools	3%
	Quiet, peaceful	3%
	Single family home	3%
	Small business, mom and pop establishments	3%
	Access to bay, ocean	2%
	Historical places	2%
	Like everything	2%
	Public libraries	2%
	Nothing	2%
Q4	If the city government could <b>change</b> one thing to make San Mateo a better place to live now and in the future, what change would you like to see? <i>Provide your response in the text box below or check the appropriate box. Verbatim responses recorded and later grouped into categories shown below.</i>	
	Limit growth, preserve open space	21%
	Provide more affordable housing	17%
	Reduce traffic congestion	9%
	Improve public safety	7%
	Improve, maintain infrastructure, roads	6%
	Not sure / Cannot think of anything specific	6%
	Beautify, clean up City	5%

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Improve parking	5%
Improve planning zoning	5%
Enforce traffic laws	4%
Provide additional youth, family activities, events for different ages	4%
Improve downtown area	4%
Improve public transit	4%
Improve schools, education	4%
Reduce cost of living	4%
Improve, provide better shopping, dining opportunities	4%
Provide more bike lanes, walking areas	4%
No changes needed / Everything is fine	4%
Improve, add parks, rec facilities	3%
Reduce taxes, fees	3%
Reduce noise pollution	3%
Address homeless issues	2%
Dog friendlier	2%
Address, reuse empty, rundown business	2%

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**Section 3: Initial Housing Preference**

Next are a few questions about how best to plan for future housing in the City of San Mateo.

**Q5** California State law requires that all cities plan for additional housing. With a general shortage of housing in California, the state is requiring that the City of San Mateo plan for **7,015** new units by 2031, and it is expected that the State will require the City to plan for about 15,000 new units by 2041.

Understanding that San Mateo is required by law to plan for thousands of new homes, the central question is where to locate these new housing units. Which of the following options would you prefer?

*Randomize order of options 1 & 2.*

1	New housing units should be <b>concentrated</b> in taller buildings in locations that are close to transit, stores and restaurants, such as downtown, along El Camino Real, and near Cal Train stations.	48%
2	New housing units should be <b>spread</b> throughout the City in medium height buildings, which means allowing more units per parcel in existing residential neighborhoods with higher-density infill projects such as townhomes, condominiums, and low- and mid-rise apartments.	39%
99	Prefer not to answer	13%

*Ask Q6 if Q5=1.*

**Q6** Is there a particular reason why you prefer to **concentrate** future housing in taller buildings located in a few areas of the City? *Provide your response in the text box below or check the appropriate box. Verbatim responses recorded and later grouped into categories shown below.*

Easier access to public transportation	21%
Reduces traffic, fewer cars on the road	20%
Preserve existing neighborhoods	18%
Convenient locations, walkability	13%
Better access to shopping, dining	10%
Not sure, no particular reason	10%
Preserves more open space, limits sprawl	9%
Encourages people to take public transit	7%
Will growth, develop, improve the area	6%
Reduces parking issues	4%
It's more effective, efficient option	4%

	Strengthens local economy	3%
	Better for the environment	3%
	Improves quality of live	3%
	Safer, less crime	3%
	Allows better, cohesive planning	3%
	Improves accessibility to jobs, limits commute	2%
	More cost effective, affordable housing	2%
	Close to recreation facilities	2%
	Will preserve, improve property values	2%
	Less crowded neighborhood	2%
	Preserve the overall appeal, beauty of area	2%
<i>Ask Q7 if Q5=2.</i>		
Q7	Is there a particular reason why you prefer to <b>spread</b> future housing in medium-height buildings throughout existing residential neighborhoods in the City? <i>Provide your response in the text box below or check the appropriate box. Verbatim responses recorded and later grouped into categories shown below.</i>	
	Prefer housing to be spread out / Currently too much density	37%
	Reduces congestion, spreading out people	21%
	Allows more diversity, integration of cultures, demographics	10%
	Not sure, no particular reason	10%
	To be more part of the community / community feel	9%
	Reduces impacts on infrastructure, streets	8%
	Reduces, fewer parking issues	6%
	Reduce environmental impact	5%
	Provides more options for home location, preferences	5%
	Allows more affordable options, smaller homes, ADUs	4%
	It's the better option	4%
	Allows more balanced, distributed communities	3%
	Concerns about negative aspects of urban density, ghettos	3%
	Reduces crime / Improves public safety	3%
	More access to businesses throughout City	3%
	Should not concentrate new residents in one area	3%
	It will reduce noise	3%

The next sections provide additional information about the two options being considered – **concentrating** future housing or **spreading** it out.

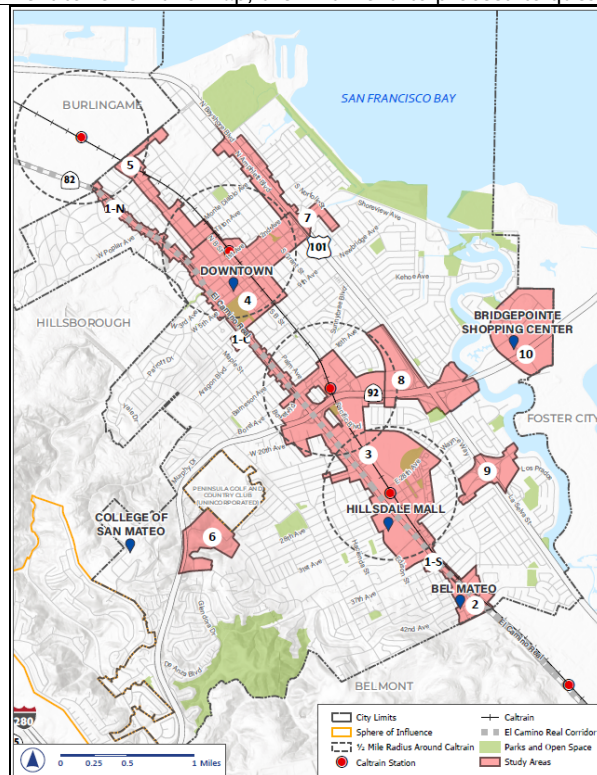
*Randomize the order of Sections 4 and 5. Half receive Section 4 first, then Section 5. Half receive Section 5 first, then Section 4.*

#### Section 4: Concentrated Housing Option

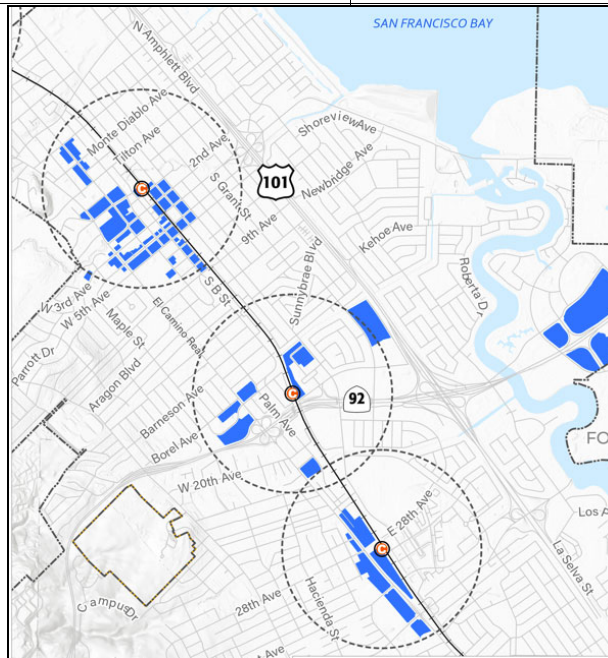
In 2020, San Mateo voters renewed Measure Y, which places limits on the height and density of buildings in the City. However, in order to meet State mandated requirements for new housing, the City's draft General Plan Update has identified 10 areas around the City where growth and change can be **concentrated**. Concentrating growth in these 10 areas, which are in proximity to transit, jobs and services, would require amending Measure Y in order to allow new mixed-use buildings to be taller and have higher residential densities than currently allowed (if approved by voters).

Shown below is a map that identifies the 10 areas in San Mateo where building heights and densities could exceed existing limits through a voter-approved ballot measure (see colored parcels) in order to **concentrate** future growth and change.

Please take a moment to review this map, then hit 'next' to proceed to questions.

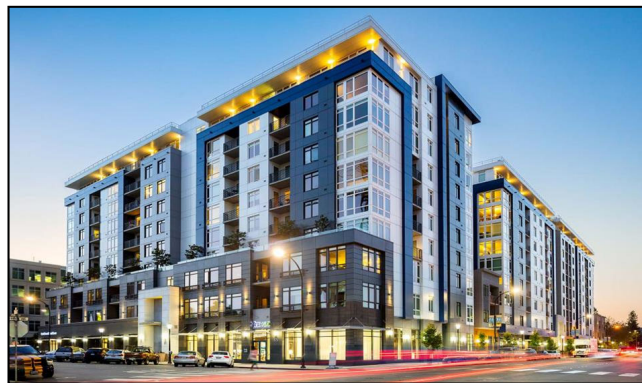
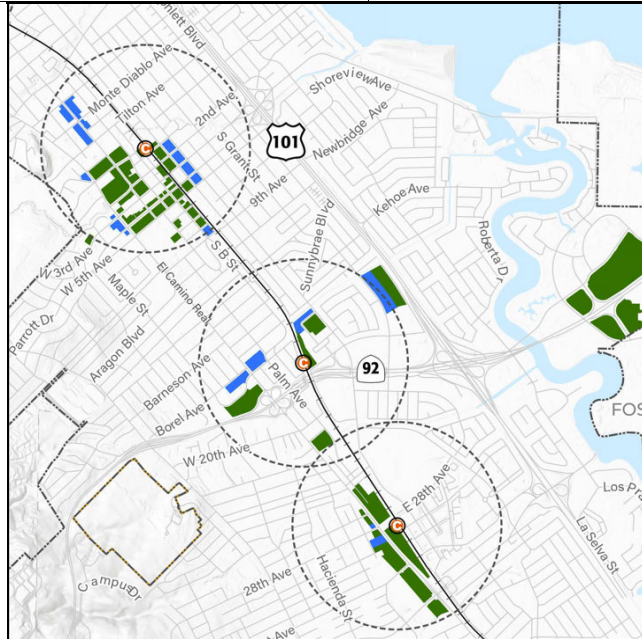


Q8	To be able to <b>concentrate</b> future housing in the areas identified in the map will require taller buildings and/or allowing more units per acre in these locations.		
	Keeping this in mind, would you support or oppose allowing buildings up to <b>8 stories</b> high in the blue areas shown in the map below? An example of what an 8 story building looks like is shown below the map.		
	1	Strongly Support	32%
	2	Somewhat Support	27%
	3	Somewhat Oppose	10%
	4	Strongly Oppose	26%
	99	Not Sure/Prefer not to answer	4%





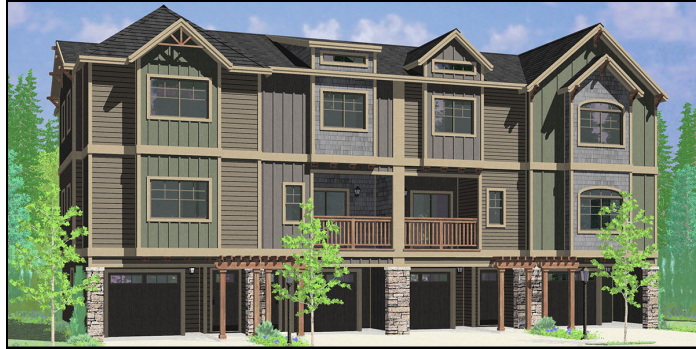
Q9	Would you support or oppose allowing buildings up to <b>8 stories</b> high in the blue locations, with buildings up to <b>10 stories</b> in the green locations shown in the map below? An example of what a 10 story building looks like is shown below the map.	
	1	Strongly Support
	2	Somewhat Support
	3	Somewhat Oppose
	4	Strongly Oppose
	99	Not Sure/Prefer not to answer



Q10	Shown below are reasons why some people favor <b>concentrating</b> future housing in taller, higher-density buildings downtown and near transit. For each statement, please indicate whether you think it is a very convincing, somewhat convincing, or not at all convincing reason to SUPPORT <b>concentrating</b> future housing.						
	<i>Randomize</i>	Very Convincing	Somewhat Convincing	Not At All Convincing	Don't Believe	Not sure	Prefer not to answer
A	It will increase the availability of affordable housing in the City	26%	27%	16%	27%	3%	0%
B	By locating housing closer to transit, it will reduce vehicle trips, traffic, and emissions while increasing transit use	34%	29%	13%	20%	2%	0%
C	By concentrating new housing downtown and near Cal Train stations, it will allow existing residential neighborhoods to stay low-density	27%	30%	23%	16%	3%	1%
D	It will help preserve land for parks and open space areas	34%	28%	16%	18%	3%	1%
E	It will create a more vibrant downtown with greater diversity of businesses and employers	26%	31%	21%	19%	3%	1%
F	San Mateo already has buildings that are taller than 10 stories. Allowing additional 10 story buildings in select areas is a smart way to accommodate growth.	27%	33%	16%	20%	3%	1%
G	Allowing buildings up to 10 stories high will allow for larger family-sized units with more bedrooms.	20%	29%	24%	23%	4%	1%

#### Section 5: Spread Out Housing Option

Q11	To be able to <b>spread</b> future housing throughout the City will require allowing more housing units per parcel in existing residential areas.	
	Keeping this in mind, would you support or oppose allowing single family homes to be redeveloped with up to <b>6 units</b> per parcel? An example of what a 6 unit building looks like is shown below, with four units facing the street and two units in the back.	
1	Strongly Support	23%
2	Somewhat Support	26%
3	Somewhat Oppose	15%
4	Strongly Oppose	32%
99	Not Sure/Prefer not to answer	5%



Q12	To be able to <b>spread</b> future housing throughout the City will require allowing more housing units per parcel in existing residential areas.	
	Keeping this in mind, would you support or oppose allowing <b>apartments</b> or <b>condominiums</b> to be built in areas currently zoned for single family homes? An example of what an infill apartment building looks like is shown below.	
	1 Strongly Support	23%
	2 Somewhat Support	25%
	3 Somewhat Oppose	14%
	4 Strongly Oppose	36%
	99 Not Sure/Prefer not to answer	2%



Q13	Shown below are reasons why some people favor <b>spreading</b> future housing throughout the City. For each statement, please indicate whether you think it is a very convincing, somewhat convincing, or not at all convincing reason to SUPPORT <b>spreading</b> future housing.						
	<i>Randomize</i>	Very Convincing	Somewhat Convincing	Not At All Convincing	Don't Believe	Not sure	Prefer not to answer
A	It preserves existing building height limits established by Measure Y, while also accommodating new State-mandated housing	17%	30%	30%	17%	4%	2%
B	It distributes new housing equitably throughout the city so that all neighborhoods will share the impacts of future growth	22%	29%	23%	21%	3%	1%
C	It will result in fewer changes to the San Mateo skyline	19%	24%	33%	20%	3%	2%
D	It will provide for a variety of new housing options in all neighborhoods, not just downtown or near transit	24%	28%	25%	20%	2%	1%

#### Section 6: Final Housing Preference

Q14	Sometimes people change their minds once they hear more about a topic. Now that you've heard more about the two options the City has for locating future housing, which of the following options do you prefer? <i>Randomize order of options 1 &amp; 2.</i>		
	1	New housing units should be <b>concentrated</b> in taller buildings in locations that are close to transit, stores and restaurants, such as downtown, along El Camino Real, and near Cal Train stations.	51%
	2	New housing units should be <b>spread</b> throughout the City in medium height buildings, which means allowing more units per parcel in existing residential neighborhoods with higher-density infill projects such as townhomes, condominiums, and low- and mid-rise apartments.	35%
	99	Prefer not to answer	15%
Q15	Now that you've heard more about the options the City is considering, would you support allowing buildings up to <b>8 stories</b> high in locations that are close to transit, stores and restaurants, such as downtown, along El Camino Real, and near Cal Train stations?		
	1	Strongly Support	44%
	2	Somewhat Support	28%
	3	Somewhat Oppose	10%
	4	Strongly Oppose	15%
	99	Not Sure/Prefer not to answer	3%

Q16	Now that you've heard more about the options the City is considering, would you support allowing buildings up to <b>10 stories</b> high in locations that are close to transit, stores and restaurants, such as downtown, along El Camino Real, and near Cal Train stations?	
	1 Strongly Support	39%
	2 Somewhat Support	19%
	3 Somewhat Oppose	12%
	4 Strongly Oppose	26%
	99 Not Sure/Prefer not to answer	3%
Q17	Now that you've heard more about the options the City is considering, would you support allowing buildings up to <b>12 stories</b> high in locations that are close to transit, stores and restaurants, such as downtown, along El Camino Real, and near Cal Train stations?	
	1 Strongly Support	26%
	2 Somewhat Support	19%
	3 Somewhat Oppose	10%
	4 Strongly Oppose	41%
	99 Not Sure/Prefer not to answer	4%

#### Section 7: Mobility

Q18	When traveling in the City of San Mateo and neighboring areas, how often do you _____?							
	<i>Read in Order</i>	5+ days per week	1 to 4 days per week	2 to 3 days per month	1 day per month	Less than 1 day per month	Never	Prefer not to answer
A	Use a personal vehicle	62%	29%	6%	0%	0%	1%	1%
B	Use public transit such as a bus or train	2%	6%	7%	9%	22%	52%	2%
C	Use Uber, Lyft or taxi	1%	3%	10%	10%	31%	42%	3%
D	Walk from your home to a local store or restaurant	13%	23%	22%	10%	11%	19%	2%
E	Ride a bicycle or a scooter	5%	10%	11%	6%	10%	55%	4%

Section 8: Background & Demographics		
D1	A few more background questions for statistical purposes.... In what year were you born? Please enter the four-digit year in the box below or check the appropriate box. Year recorded and grouped into categories shown below.	
	18 to 29	16%
	30 to 39	16%
	40 to 49	15%
	50 to 64	30%
	65 or older	23%
D2	What is your gender?	
	1 Male	47%
	2 Female	44%
	3 Non-binary	4%
	99 Prefer not to answer	5%
D3	Do you have one or more children under the age of 18 living in your household?	
	1 Yes	31%
	2 No	61%
	99 Prefer not to answer	8%
D4	Do you have one or more children under the age of six living in your household?	
	1 Yes	14%
	2 No	78%
	99 Prefer not to answer	8%
D5	Do you have one or more adults 65 years of age or older in your household?	
	1 Yes	38%
	2 No	57%
	99 Prefer not to answer	4%
D6	Do you own or rent your residence in San Mateo?	
	1 Own	58%
	2 Rent	38%
	99 Prefer not to answer	4%

D7	Which of the following best describes your current home?			
	1	Single family detached home	59%	
	2	Duplex	4%	
	3	Townhome	6%	
	4	Condominium	9%	
	5	Apartment	15%	
	99	Prefer not to answer	7%	
D8	Looking forward, how many <b>more</b> years do you anticipate that you will be living in the City of San Mateo?			
	1	Less than 5 years	13%	
	2	5 to 10 years	23%	
	3	11 to 15 years	10%	
	4	16 years or more	44%	
	99	Prefer not to answer	10%	
D9	Which of the following best describes your employment status? Would you say you are employed full-time, part-time, a student, a homemaker, retired, or are you in-between jobs right now?			
	1	Employed full-time	61%	Ask D10
	2	Employed part-time	7%	Ask D10
	3	Student	2%	Skip to D11
	4	Stay-at-home parent or caregiver	3%	Skip to D11
	5	Retired	19%	Skip to D11
	6	In-between jobs	2%	Skip to D11
	98	Not sure	0%	Skip to D11
	99	Prefer not to answer	6%	Skip to D11
D10	Are you currently working from home, commuting to a workplace outside of your home, or a mixture of both?			
	1	Working from home	17%	Ask D11
	2	Commuting to a workplace outside home	40%	Skip to D12
	3	Mixture of both	37%	Ask D11
	99	Prefer not to answer	5%	Skip to D12

D11	How many days do you <i>primarily</i> work from home in a typical week?		
	0	Zero	6%
	1	One	7%
	2	Two	28%
	3	Three	17%
	4	Four	15%
	5	Five or more	24%
	99	Prefer not to answer	3%
D12	What ethnic group do you consider yourself a part of or feel closest to? <i>Read list if respondent hesitates.</i>		
	1	Caucasian/White	45%
	2	Asian -- Korean, Chinese, Vietnamese, Japanese, Filipino or other Asian	20%
	3	Indian (India)	2%
	4	Latino/Hispanic/Mexican	19%
	5	African-American/Black	4%
	6	Native American Indian or Alaskan Native	<1%
	7	Pacific Islander	<1%
	8	Mixed Heritage	2%
	9	Other	1%
	99	Prefer not to answer	7%

Thanks so much for participating in this important survey! Your survey has been stored, so you may close this browser window.

#### Post-Interview & Sample Items

S1	Party		
	1	Democrat	56%
	2	Republican	16%
	3	Other	4%
	4	DTS	24%



S2	Registration Date		
	1	Since Nov 2018	14%
	2	Jun 2012 to before Nov 2018	23%
	3	Jun 2006 to before Jun 2012	13%
	4	Before June 2006	50%
S3	Household Party Type		
	1	Single Dem	34%
	2	Dual Dem	15%
	3	Single Rep	6%
	4	Dual Rep	3%
	5	Single Other	14%
	6	Dual Other	6%
	7	Dem & Rep	3%
	8	Dem & Other	12%
	9	Rep & Other	4%
	0	Mixed (Dem + Rep + Other)	3%
S4	Likely to Vote by Mail		
	1	Yes	91%
	2	No	9%
S5	Likely November 2024 Voter		
	1	Yes	100%
	2	No	0%
S6	Council District		
	One		24%
	Two		16%
	Three		19%
	Four		18%
	Five		23%

S7	Survey Language		
	1	English	97%
	2	Spanish	3%



# CITY OF SAN MATEO

City Hall  
330 W. 20th Avenue  
San Mateo CA 94403  
[www.cityofsanmateo.org](http://www.cityofsanmateo.org)

## Agenda Report

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Agenda Number: 2

Section Name: OLD BUSINESS

Account Number: 25-3112

File ID: 23-7902

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**TO:** City Council  
**FROM:** Alex Khojikian, City Manager  
**PREPARED BY:** Community Development Department  
**MEETING DATE:** October 30, 2023

**SUBJECT:**  
Draft General Plan 2040 – Land Use Element, Introduction, Glossary, and Community Engagement Summary

**RECOMMENDATION:**

Receive an informational overview of the Draft General Plan 2040, take public comments and provide direction on the Land Use Element, Introduction and Glossary.

**BACKGROUND:**

The City's General Plan Update kicked off in Fall 2018 and began with a series of visioning workshops and community meetings. From April 2019 through October 2023, the General Plan team held a series of meetings and events to establish the General Plan study areas; create the range of alternatives; confirm the draft alternatives; and receive feedback and direction on the preferred land use and circulation scenarios as well as on goals and policies from the community and, ultimately, the City Council. More information about the background information, technical reports, and outreach process, including meeting materials and recordings, is available at [www.StriveSanMateo.org](http://www.StriveSanMateo.org).

To date, the Strive San Mateo General Plan Update has focused on crafting a shared community vision for what San Mateo can be in the year 2040, selecting the preferred land use and circulation scenarios that will guide the General Plan's Land Use and Circulation Elements, establishing the goals and policies for all of the elements in the General Plan, and compiling all of these efforts into the Draft General Plan 2040 ([Attachment 1](#)). Draft General Plan 2040 was published on July 17, 2023, which started the next phase of community outreach and engagement. Public meetings, workshops, and pop-up events, as well as an online commenting tool, will be happening through October 2023. Draft General Plan 2040, plus numerous supporting resources and tools, are available at [www.strivesanmateo.org/draft-general-plan](http://www.strivesanmateo.org/draft-general-plan).

Draft General Plan 2040 Process

The Draft General Plan was started with a foundation based on the existing General Plan, but has been updated to reflect the community's current policy priorities, address the key issues the City is facing today, and improve organization and clarity. To reach this milestone, the City of San Mateo has hosted 80+ events, a combination of workshops, staff presentations, and pop-up events, five online activities, 12 General Plan Subcommittee meetings, six Planning Commission meetings, and 12 meetings with the City Council from 2018 through 2022.

These events and meetings shaped the development of Draft General Plan 2040 at every step of the project. Draft General Plan 2040 is a culmination of community, General Plan Subcommittee, and Planning Commission feedback and ultimately City Council direction. In addition, the Strive San Mateo General Plan 2040 website included online activities and shared information about upcoming meetings and draft documents throughout the process.

Draft General Plan 2040 Overview

Draft General Plan 2040 is made up of a Vision Statement and Guiding Principles, text describing key issues of community

interest, and goals and policies that outline how the City will address those issues, as well as accompanying maps and diagrams. Draft General Plan 2040 addresses all the topics required by State law and has tailored the organization to reflect the local context. It also includes other topics that are not required by State law, but that community members have identified as being fundamental to the quality of life in the city. Once adopted, the optional elements have the same legal status as the mandatory elements. No single element or subject supersedes any other, and all elements must be internally consistent; policies and actions must complement one another across topic areas without conflicting. The elements in the Draft General Plan 2040 include: Land Use; Circulation; Housing (adopted separately); Community Design and Historic Resources; Conservation, Open Space, and Recreation; Public Services and Facilities; Safety; and Noise.

Each element, or chapter, of Draft General Plan 2040 also includes a concise set of background narratives that summarizes current conditions in the city related to the topics in the element. The background information provides context about the issues the City plans to address, explaining why there is policy direction so that the policies and actions can focus on how the City can achieve a desired outcome. The narratives also provide information on other regulations and/or agencies that influence the decision making process. Together, these items paint a picture of the community's future.

The elements in Draft General Plan 2040 address a specific set of topics and include a set of goals, policies and actions that provide a blueprint for how the City will address these issues. These goals, policies, and actions provide guidance to the City on how to direct change and manage resources over the next 20 years.

Draft General Plan 2040 also embodies **three key themes: Sustainability, Environmental Justice, and Community Engagement**. Because these themes are interrelated with all of the other elements, they are woven throughout Draft General Plan 2040 rather than being in a stand-alone element. Policies and actions in each element that relate to each of these themes are marked with a corresponding icon.

#### Community Outreach on Draft General Plan 2040

The community outreach and engagement effort for this phase of the General Plan Update began on July 17, 2023 with the publication of Draft General Plan 2040. Since that time, the City has been promoting awareness of Draft General Plan 2040 through direct mailers, informational displays, community group presentations, social media and other mechanisms (i.e. sidewalk decals). The General Plan team has also been collecting community input and feedback on the Draft General Plan through a series of workshops, meetings, events, and online commenting tools over the past two and a half months. A Community Outreach and Engagement Summary Report of all activities that happened during this phase of the General Plan Update is included as [Attachment 2](#).

Overall, between July 17, 2023 and October 10, 2023, 236 comments were submitted via the online tool, 62 written comments were submitted via email on the Draft General Plan and 26 written comments were received on the Draft EIR. In addition, over 360 members of the public attended the five district town hall meetings, with many verbal and written comments received at each event. Verbal feedback on the General Plan has also been received by staff at various other pop-up events and activities that have occurred over the past three months. Based on the virtual community workshop, online tool, written comments, town hall meetings and other engagement activities, the emerging community feedback themes on the Draft General Plan, specific to the Introduction, Land Use Element and Glossary, which are being reviewed at this meeting, are as follows:

#### Introduction

- *Discuss how the Draft 2040 General Plan differs from the existing General Plan.*
- *Increase outreach to bilingual households.*
- *Need to better define sustainability.*

#### Land Use Element

- *Support and maintain local businesses.*
- *Ensure there will be sufficient retail and other services available to support future growth.*
- *Maintain Measure Y height and density limits.*
- *Increase allowed density in single-family neighborhoods.*

- *Increase heights and densities to allow for more affordable housing.*
- *The City should not adopt more aggressive building decarbonization and climate change initiatives.*
- *Add stronger climate change policies and actions.*
- *Determine whether there is sufficient demand for the new office and commercial uses being proposed.*
- *Require developers to provide new parks and open space as part of new development.*

#### Glossary

- *Define criteria for what is considered transit accessible.*
- *Define what community means.*

#### General Plan Subcommittee Feedback

The GPS met on August 29, 2023, to review and provide feedback on Draft General Plan 2040. At this meeting, the GPS accepted public comments, asked clarifying questions and provided a range of comments and feedback on all of the topics covered in the seven elements. Attachment 3 includes a summary of the GPS comments and feedback. Some of the overarching themes that emerged from the GPS's discussions and comments included:

- Make it clear how the General Plan will affect the community, perhaps by summarizing the outcomes in an Executive Summary at the start of each element.
- Add actions to enhance placemaking in San Mateo to ensure the charm and identity of the city is maintained as the city grows.
- Support local businesses and highlight the positive impacts local business has on the community.
- Add policies and actions to support seniors and aging and policies and actions to support seniors as a growing proportion of the population.
- Outside of the General Plan, examine fees and policies that could be an obstacle to housing production and update City policies that impede housing development.

#### Planning Commission Feedback and Recommendations

The Planning Commission held a public meeting on September 26, 2023, to review and provide input on the Draft General Plan. At this meeting, the Commission accepted public comments, asked clarifying questions and provided a range of comments and recommendations on all of the topics covered in the Draft General Plan. With regards to the Land Use Element, Introduction and Glossary, the Commission had the following comments and recommendations:

#### Land Use Element

1. *Add an action item to explore allowing accessory commercial units to accommodate small businesses to operate out of small units in residential areas.*
2. *Revise the draft land use map to limit residential densities in Study Areas 7 and 8 along US 101 and at the intersection of US 101 and SR 92 to existing densities due to the increased air pollution exposure risk.*
3. *Add new Action LU 3.10 "Explore providing incentives to support local community serving businesses such as density bonuses for retaining retail at the ground floor at low rental rates."*
4. *Add a new Action 3.11 to explore providing incentives to encourage developers to provide publicly accessible new park and plaza spaces on private property.*
5. *Add text to LU 8.6 to ensure that open space is aggregated away from pollution sources to the greatest extent possible.*
6. *Change Action LU 8.12 City Services, "Improve Services provided by the City and other partners in order to achieve full neighborhood level parity in areas of safety, security and sanitation in equity priority communities."*
7. *Modify Action LU 8.13 Neighborhood Beautification. "Support and promote neighborhood clean-up and beautification initiatives in equity priority communities, such as planting and maintenance of street trees to support neighborhood beautification, including in partnership with neighborhood organizations."*
8. *Modify Policy LU 9.1 Inclusive Outreach, "Notify the community when planning and development decisions are being considered and inform community members about how they can engage in the process. Use outreach and engagement methods that encourage broad representation and are culturally sensitive, particularly for equity*

priority communities. Provide language translation services as needed at City Council and Planning Commission meetings.”

9. *Modify Action LU 12.13 Fiscal Neutrality. “Study the feasibility and potential impacts of adopting a Fiscal Neutrality Policy that would require new development to offset any difference between future tax revenue and the cost of City services to that development. The policy ~~should~~ must also consider the City’s goals to provide a diverse range of housing affordable to all members of the community.”*

For the Planning Commission recommendations that align with GPS and/or community input, as well as past Council direction, staff has added them to the recommended revisions in Attachments 4, 5 and 6. For the other recommendations, staff would look to Council for direction before including them as revisions to the General Plan. Regarding recommendation No. 8, The City currently provides translation services for all public meetings when requested.

## **DISCUSSION:**

Staff is seeking direction from the Council on what updates and revisions should be made to Draft General Plan 2040 before the final version is published. Based on the community input received, along with feedback from the GPS and Planning Commission, staff developed a list of recommended revisions for each Element. Does the Council support these recommended revisions? Are there any other changes or updates that should be made to the Draft General Plan?

### Land Use Element

This Element sets the policy framework for future growth, change, and preservation in San Mateo and serves as the blueprint for the development of public and private property in the city. The Element seeks to balance well-designed development and thoughtful preservation with a full spectrum of choices for housing, while also cultivating a diverse economy and supporting resiliency.

This element includes goals, policies, and actions that support the equitable health and well-being of all neighborhoods in San Mateo and all members of the community. It also encourages a diverse range of land uses to meet the needs of the community, including housing, parks, open space, recreation, retail, commercial services, offices, and industrial. In addition, this element covers environmental justice, community engagement, climate change, a sustainable economy, development review, regional cooperation, and maintaining the General Plan.

Based on the community input received, along with input from the GPS and Planning Commission, staff prepared a list of recommended revisions for Council consideration (Attachment 4). These revisions include improving the narrative that explains the relationship between Draft General Plan 2040 and Measure Y, add a definition for story that correlates it with height (one story is an average of 11 feet, provided that the applicable overall height limit shall not be exceeded), updating various policies and actions to strengthen support for local businesses and neighborhood serving commercial uses, and clarify policy language related to equity priority communities. Staff is also recommending that the title of the Service Commercial land use designation be expanded to be “Service Commercial/Light Industrial” to more accurately reflect the mix of uses that exist within this designation.

### Land Use Map

The Land Use Map, in conjunction with the Land Use Table, in the Land Use Element defines the range of existing and desired land use designations within the City and sets parameters for the type of public and private uses that are allowed on each parcel of land under the City’s jurisdiction. In addition to specifying the range of allowed uses, each designation sets standards for density (units per acre), intensity (floor area ratio) and height range (stories). The Land Use Map is the blueprint for City’s development projections and guides where growth and change will occur.

Based on the community input received, along with input from the GPS and Planning Commission, staff prepared a list of eight recommended Land Use Map revisions for Council consideration (Attachment 5). These revisions include some minor land use designation clean-ups to better align with adjacent land use designations and/or reflect the existing use of the parcel, removal of the Waypoint Church Parking Lot site at 25<sup>th</sup> Ave from Study Area 3, changing the land use designation along the east side of Palm Ave adjacent to the rail corridor to Service Commercial to support and retain this existing concentration of service commercial and light industrial uses, and changing the land use designations in Study Area 7

adjacent to Highway 101 to align with existing densities.

#### Prior Council Direction on the Land Use Map

On March 6 and April 3, 2023, the City Council reviewed and discussed the heights and densities that should go into the Draft General Plan, with a specific focus on if the High II land use designation, with a height range of 6-10 stories and density range of 100-200 units per acre, should stay in the Land Use Element. Following public comments and deliberation, the consensus Council direction was to not remove Residential High II and Mixed-Use High II from consideration so that it could be included in the environmental impact report (EIR) evaluation. Direction was also provided to conduct a statistically reliable survey after the Draft General Plan was published to survey likely voters on the heights in High I and High II categories. The General Plan team was also authorized to make minor adjustments to the draft land use map as per Council direction to support height/density step-downs and buffers between lower and higher density land use designations.

Pursuant to this direction, the Draft General Plan and Draft Environmental Impact Report that were published in July and August included the High II land use designations. The City also engaged with True North Research to conduct a survey on the heights in High I and High II categories. The survey was conducted in September and early October and the results of the survey were presented to the Council under separate cover at this meeting on October 30, 2023.

Thus, based on the results of the survey and other feedback and comments collected during the community engagement for the Draft General Plan, does the City Council want to make any changes to the Land Use Map included in the Draft General Plan? Regarding the High II intensity, it should be noted that there are 231 parcels (out of approximately 24,200 parcels in the City total) that are designated as Residential High II or Mixed-Use High II, and this includes all of the City's existing buildings that are 8+ stories in height. It is also worth noting that increased base densities will support increased affordable housing production. If the High II categories were to be removed, these sites would revert to High I and staff anticipates that it would reduce the 20-year growth capacity by approximately 1,000 units. It should also be noted that prior to publication of the Draft General Plan, the Land Use Map was revised per Council's direction to enhance buffers and transitions along the edges of Study Areas and these changes likely reduced the 20-year growth capacity by some degree. As part of preparation of the final General Plan, staff will update the Land Use Map's 20-year growth capacity estimate.

#### Introduction and Glossary

The Introduction, Chapter 1, provides an overview of the General Plan purpose, describes the community engagement process to prepare the plan, highlights the ten Big Ideas, provides a demographic and economic context for when the General Plan was drafted, discusses projected growth through 2040, explains how environmental justice is reflected in the General Plan, summarizes the General Plan content, and describes how the General Plan will be implemented. The Glossary, which is Chapter 10, defines the technical terms that are used in this General Plan.

Based on the community input received, along with input from the GPS and Planning Commission, staff prepared a list of recommended revisions for Council consideration ([Attachment 6](#)). Highlights of these recommendations include some targeted text updates to the Big Ideas and minor clarifications to the Equity Priority Communities section to the Introduction, and adding a definition for story that correlates it with height (one story equals 11 feet) and a definition for active transportation to the Glossary.

#### Additional Policy Recommendations

Based on City Council direction at the meeting on October 2, 2023 as well as GPS feedback, staff reviewed the General Plan for ways to emphasize and strengthen the importance of arts, culture, and entertainment in appropriate policies and actions. To support this direction staff is recommending some narrative updates to the Land Use Element, updates to four Land Use policies/actions to specifically reference entertainment and culture, and two updates to Conservation, Open Space and Recreation Element policies to specifically reference entertainment and culture.

There were also several public comments submitted under the Land Use Element comment tool that addressed improving pedestrian safety/access when crossing El Camino Real. These comments align with other community input received and is

consistent with a City Transit Oriented Development (TOD) objective to improve pedestrian connectivity to the Hillsdale Caltrain station, so staff is recommending three revisions to Circulation Element policies to specifically support pedestrian connectivity across El Camino Real. The recommended revisions for both culture and entertainment, and El Camino Real pedestrian connectivity are included in Attachment 6.

#### **NEXT STEPS:**

Following the October 30, 2023 City Council Meeting, the next steps to finalize the Draft General Plan 2040 include:

- Prepare written responses to all comments received on the Draft EIR which will be compiled in the Final EIR (target to publish is **January 2024**).
- Document revisions to General Plan 2040 per Council direction (target to publish is **January 2024**).
- Hold two Planning Commission hearings to provide recommendations to the City Council on General Plan 2040, CAP 2023 Technical Update, and the Final EIR (anticipated in **February 2024**).
- Hold City Council hearings to consider adoption of General Plan 2040 and the CAP 2023 Technical Update and certification of the EIR (anticipated in **March 2024**).

#### **ENVIRONMENTAL DETERMINATION:**

In accordance with Public Resources Code section 21065, the City Council's direction on Draft General Plan 2040 is not a project subject to CEQA because it can be seen with certainty that this activity will not cause a physical change in the environment. The Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR) for the General Plan Update was published on August 11, 2023. The DEIR 45-day public comment started on August 11, 2023 and ended on September 25, 2023. A Final EIR will be prepared and presented to the City Council for certification prior to any formal decisions on General Plan 2040.

#### **NOTICE PROVIDED:**

All meeting noticing requirements were met.

#### **ATTACHMENTS**

Att 1 – Draft General Plan 2040

Att 2 – Community Engagement Summary

Att 3 – Summary of General Plan Subcommittee Feedback

Att 4 – Land Use Element – Recommended Revisions

Att 5 – Land Use Map – Recommended Revisions

Att 6 – Introduction, Glossary and Other General Plan Sections – Recommended Revisions

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# Strive San Mateo

## General Plan 2040

Draft | July 2023





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# VISION AND VALUES









# VISION AND VALUES

The Strive San Mateo General Plan 2040 Vision and Values expresses the community's aspirations for San Mateo for the next 20 years. Developed through a community visioning process, the Vision describes the future of San Mateo as the community would like it to be in 2040 and sets the tone for the entire document. The Values provide direction for decision making as the General Plan is implemented over time and are meant to remind local leaders and City of San Mateo staff of the community's most important ideals. The Vision and Values informed the development of the General Plan goals, policies, and actions. All policies and actions are intended to support the implementation of the Vision and Values.

## VISION

San Mateo is a vibrant, livable, diverse, and healthy community that respects the quality of its neighborhoods, fosters a flourishing economy, is committed to equity, and is a leader in environmental sustainability.

## VALUES

### Diversity

We embrace diversity and respect the experiences, contributions, and aspirations of people of all ages, abilities, incomes, and backgrounds. We celebrate arts and culture.



### Balance

We seek to balance well-designed development and thoughtful preservation with a full spectrum of choices for housing and effective transportation.



### Inclusivity

We strive to include everyone in community life and decisions for a shared, sustainable future.



### Prosperity

We cultivate a diverse and thriving economy with different types of homes, jobs, recreation, lifelong learning opportunities, and services for both current and future generations.



### Resiliency

We are leaders in sustainability, making San Mateo strong and resilient by acting boldly to adapt to a changing world.



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# CHAPTER 1

## Introduction









# INTRODUCTION

## WHAT IS A GENERAL PLAN?

The Strive San Mateo General Plan 2040 is the City's primary tool to guide physical changes in the city. It lays out the community's vision for how San Mateo will look, feel, and change over the next 20 years. The Strive San Mateo General Plan 2040 covers many important topics, including where housing and businesses get built; how people travel around the city; and how to adapt to a changing climate, protect the natural environment, and provide parks and community services. This General Plan also expresses the City's commitment to environmental justice, community engagement, and sustainability.

Every municipality in California is required by State law to adopt and periodically update a general plan that provides a comprehensive, long-range statement of the jurisdiction's land use policies for the coming decades. It must respond to existing conditions on the ground today and anticipate broad, emerging trends that will shape the San Mateo of tomorrow. State law requires that general plans must address many different topics that affect our daily lives, such as housing, land use, transportation, climate change, natural resources, community health and safety, and public services and amenities.

Together with the City's Zoning Code and other related sections of the Municipal Code, the Strive San Mateo General Plan 2040 will serve as the basis for planning and policy-related decisions made by City staff, the City Council, the Planning Commission, and other City boards and commissions. Strive San Mateo General Plan 2040 is also an important reference document for residents and those seeking to develop property in the city since it relays the City's vision for the future of San Mateo.

## WHO MADE THE GENERAL PLAN?

The process to update the 2030 General Plan kicked off in May 2018. At the outset of the project, the City Council appointed a seven-member General Plan Subcommittee (GPS) that was charged with providing feedback and encouraging community participation throughout the Strive San Mateo General Plan 2040 process. The GPS included two City Councilmembers, two Planning Commissioners, and three representatives from other City commissions and the San Mateo-Foster City School District.

Community engagement and feedback was the foundation for each decision point of the Strive San Mateo General Plan 2040 process. Public outreach began in fall 2018 with a series of visioning workshops and community meetings. Over the next four years, the City received input from over 4,000 people or organizations. Outreach activities included:

- Hosting over 20 community meetings, workshops, and open houses virtually and across the city.
- Staffing booths at 20 different community events, such as September Nights on B Street, Movies in the Park, and the Día de los Muertos event at the Martin Luther King Jr. Community Center.
- Offering five online surveys and mapping activities to encourage remote participation.
- Making presentations to numerous community organizations, including neighborhood groups, business associations and major property owners, and local nonprofit groups.

- Holding pop-ups at local businesses, churches, parent group meetings, food distribution centers, bus stops, and various community events.
- Holding over 30 public meetings with the City Council, Planning Commission, and General Plan Subcommittee.

In addition, the Strive San Mateo General Plan 2040 website included online activities and shared information about upcoming meetings and draft documents throughout the process. The online activities allowed community members to provide input without having to attend events in person, which was especially important during the COVID-19 pandemic that limited public gatherings for much of 2020 and into 2021.

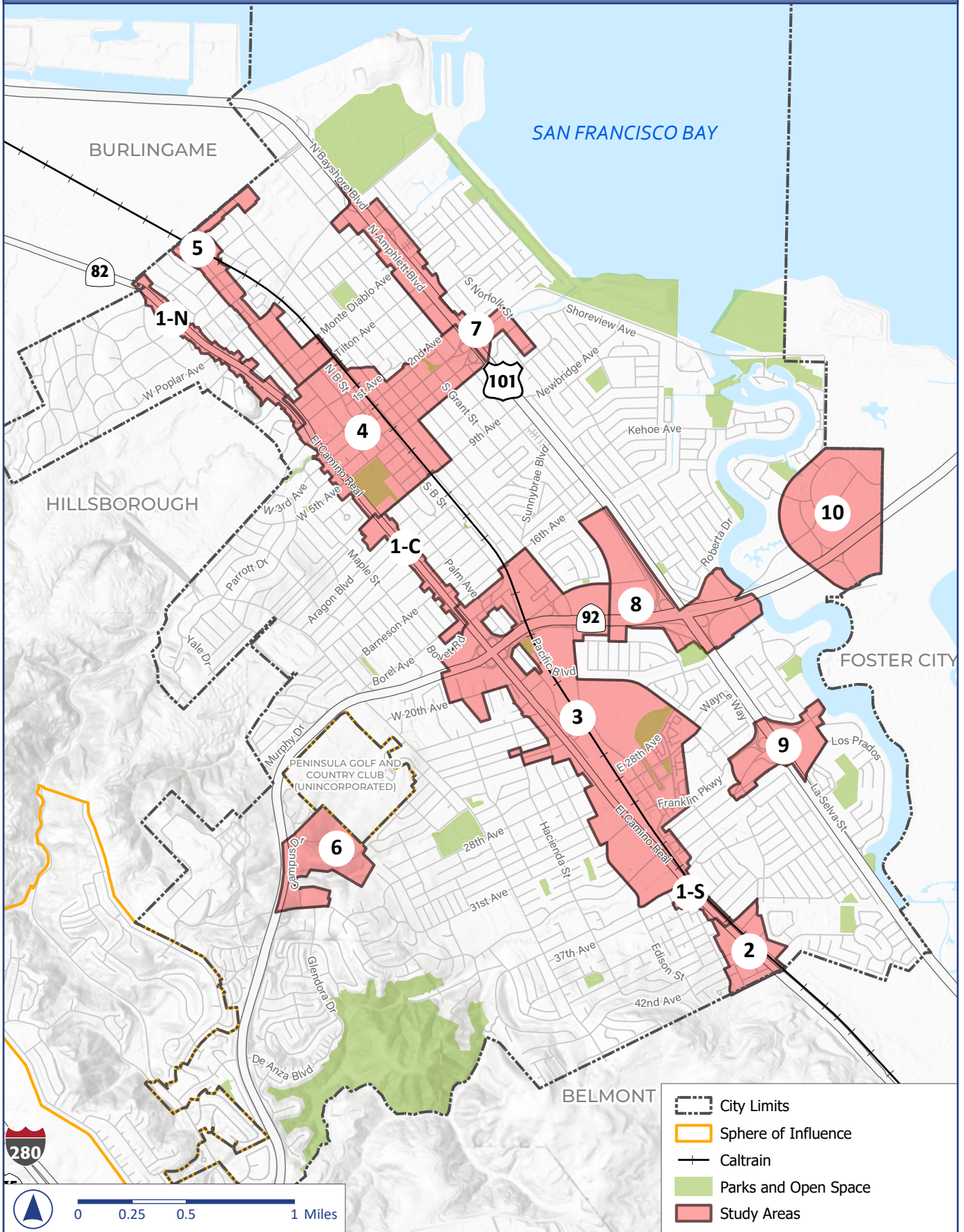
Throughout the Strive San Mateo General Plan 2040 process, the City Council emphasized inclusive outreach to ensure engagement from non-English speakers, renters, residents under the age of 44, low-income households, and underrepresented areas, including the North Shoreview, Shoreview, and North Central neighborhoods, and areas east of US Highway 101. City staff held pop-up events and workshops in the underrepresented neighborhoods and saw an increase in participation from these targeted groups over the course of the process.

Establishing the community's vision and values for San Mateo in 2040 was a first major step of the Strive San Mateo General Plan 2040 preparation process. Between September 2018 and April 2019, hundreds of San Mateo residents provided input on the vision and values for 2040. The City Council finalized the vision statement included as a preamble to this General Plan. The final vision and values statement will guide the implementation of this General Plan over the next 20 years.

Following the visioning phase, the City held community workshops, meetings, and online activities, to identify areas of the city that have the greatest potential to support growth and change over the next 20 years. Ten areas were identified as part of this process, as shown in Figure I-1, and they included the El Camino Real corridor, areas around the three Caltrain stations, and aging and underutilized shopping centers that have potential to transition to other uses. Although the 10 areas reflect the locations where the City anticipates most growth to occur, the Strive San Mateo General Plan 2040 will allow for continued growth outside of these areas based on existing densities, regulations, and State law. The City published an Alternatives Evaluation that analyzed land use and transportation alternatives for these 10 areas in January 2022. After receiving input from the community, General Plan Subcommittee, and Planning Commission, the City Council selected the preferred land use and transportation scenarios in spring 2022.



Figure I-1 Strive San Mateo General Plan 2040 Study Areas



Source: City of San Mateo, 2022; ESRI, 2022; PlaceWorks, 2023.

Note: This map is included for informational purposes and is not adopted as part of this General Plan.





After the alternatives process, the City prepared draft goals, policies, and actions for each Strive San Mateo General Plan 2040 Element. The goals and policies are based on a combination of guidance from the existing General Plan, input from community members and decision makers throughout the process, State and local laws, and best practices in the planning profession. The community, General Plan Subcommittee, Planning Commission, and City Council reviewed the draft policies and actions in a series of public meetings in summer and fall 2022. In addition, the community provided input on the draft policies and actions through an online survey that was active for over two months.

The Strive San Mateo General Plan 2040 team incorporated City Council direction into the draft goals, policies, and actions, and prepared the Draft Strive San Mateo General Plan 2040 for community, General Plan Subcommittee, Planning Commission, and City Council review.



# BIG IDEAS IN STRIVE SAN MATEO'S GENERAL PLAN 2040

The Strive San Mateo General Plan 2040 includes the following big ideas that will guide the next 20 years of San Mateo.



## Balance Growth and Change.

Strive San Mateo General Plan 2040 sets the stage for higher density residential and mixed-use development close to transit and jobs while maintaining existing development patterns in lower density neighborhoods. Allowing a range of housing densities encourages a broad variety of housing types and sizes that fit many different needs, and building new homes near Caltrain and high frequency bus routes helps reduce vehicle miles traveled and greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions.



## Enhance San Mateo's Neighborhood Fabric and Quality of Life.

Strive San Mateo General Plan 2040 promotes context sensitive single-family design, supports neighborhood shopping areas, improves neighborhood walkability and traffic congestion, protects homes, schools, and libraries from excessive noise levels, and provides for a comprehensive network of parks and recreational facilities for all to enjoy.



## Preserve Nature as the Foundation of the City.

Strive San Mateo General Plan 2040 honors San Mateo's natural setting as an irreplaceable asset that is the physical foundation of the community by protecting open space and natural habitat, planting trees, maintaining the City's urban forest, investing in natural infrastructure, preserving natural views and expanding access to parks and open space.



## Encourage All Ways to Travel Around the City.

Strive San Mateo General Plan 2040 supports a multimodal transportation system implemented using a complete streets approach that emphasizes safety and access for walking, bicycling, transit, and driving. By prioritizing mobility options and connectivity for all modes, the General Plan works toward reducing congestion on local streets, vehicle miles traveled and greenhouse gas GHG emissions.



### **Support the Local Economy.**

Strive San Mateo General Plan 2040 focuses on ways to keep jobs and dollars in San Mateo by supporting local shops, businesses, and services. It encourages new businesses that residents need and enjoy, such as restaurants, daycares, medical clinics, gyms, pharmacies, and grocery stores, in convenient locations throughout the community.



### **Address Historic Preservation Holistically.**

Strive San Mateo General Plan 2040 provides a comprehensive blueprint for historic preservation, starting with a citywide historic context statement and Historic Preservation Ordinance update, followed by updates to the historic resources inventory to identify architecturally, culturally, and historically significant buildings, structures, sites, and districts. These efforts will be based on community input and best practices from State and federal agencies, to find the right balance between preservation and other important priorities such as providing new homes.



### **Initiate a Comprehensive Sea Level Rise Strategy.**

Strive San Mateo General Plan 2040 prioritizes development of a climate change adaptation plan that addresses all ongoing efforts, including the work of regional agencies, local jurisdictions, and private property owners, to establish a comprehensive strategy for resiliency and adaptation against sea level rise and flooding.



### **Strengthen Community Outreach.**

Strive San Mateo General Plan 2040 prioritizes extensive community engagement and affirms culturally sensitive outreach methods that encourage early communication and broad representation, such as offering information and materials in the predominant language spoken in the community and scheduling meetings at convenient times and locations for community members.



### **Focus on Equity and Health for all Residents.**

Strive San Mateo General Plan 2040 directs City investment to public improvements that address health and infrastructure disparities in equity priority communities, including the North Central and North Shoreview neighborhoods. City investments will also support active and healthy lifestyles, reducing health disparities around the city, improving access to fresh and health foods, making parks and open space equitably accessible for all residents, and making streets safer and more beautiful.



### **Improve Community Safety Planning and Awareness.**

Strive San Mateo General Plan 2040 establishes clear actions to protect the community from flooding, wildfires and earthquakes by reinforcing the City's emergency readiness and response capabilities, increasing power system resilience, maintaining a state-of-the-art emergency notification system, providing community training programs, and planning ahead for disaster recovery.



## SAN MATEO'S PLANNING CONTEXT

### Setting

San Mateo is in the center of the Peninsula, between the bay and foothills, as shown on Figure I-2. It has the largest population in San Mateo County. San Mateo's vibrant and historic downtown, desirable neighborhoods, diversity of employment options, and high-quality public services make it a popular place to live and work. The city's three Caltrain stations, extensive bicycle and pedestrian network, SamTrans bus service, and well-maintained local roadways make it easy to travel to destinations in the city, along the Peninsula, and beyond.

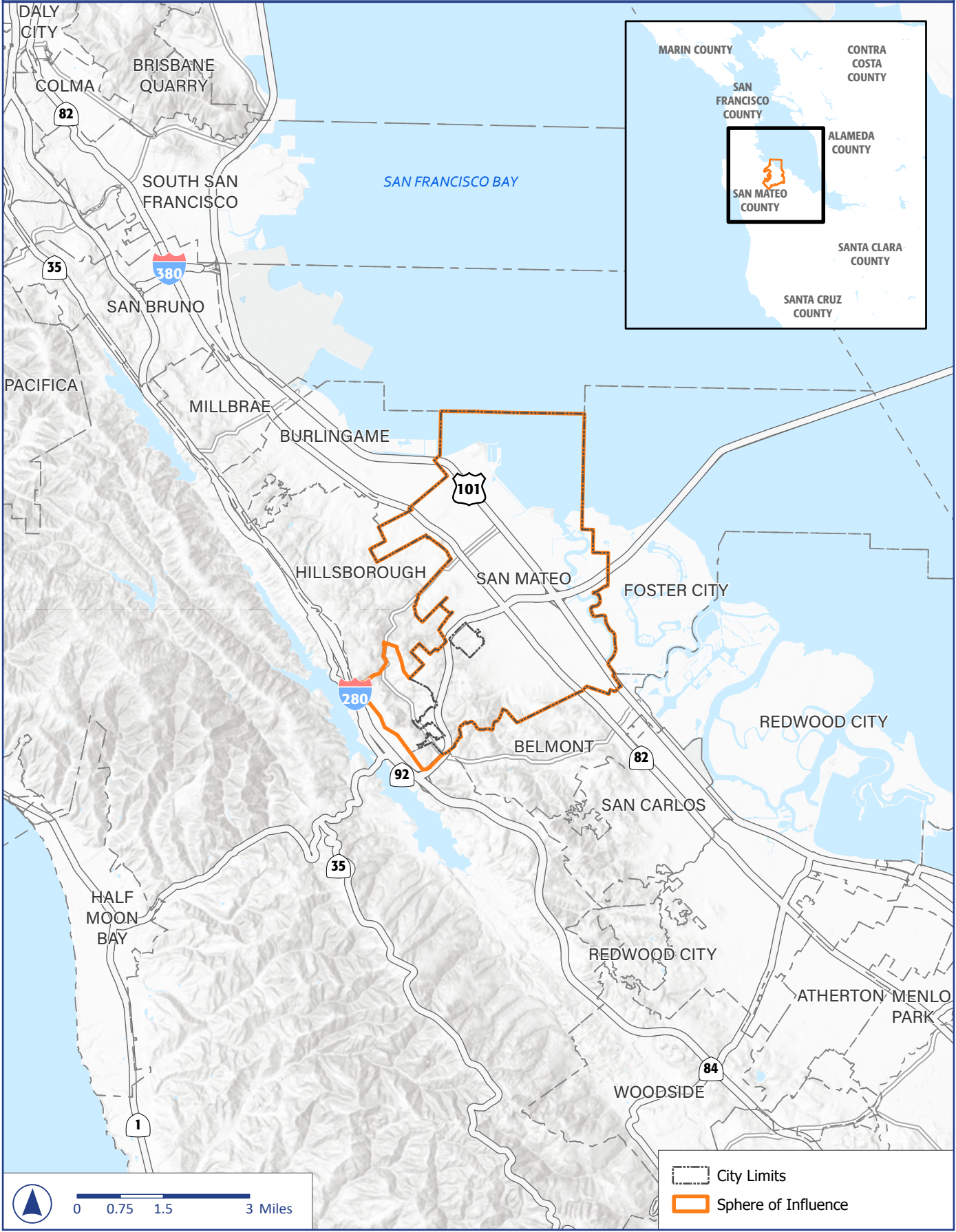
As shown on Figure I-3, residential uses account for the largest amount of land in the city. San Mateo also has a wide range of uses, including offices; commercial uses, such as shops and restaurants; and high-tech and light-industrial areas. Parks, open space, and private recreation make up most of the remaining land in the city, along with public facilities and quasi-public uses. There is only a small amount of vacant land in the city. Major new development in San Mateo is primarily concentrated around the three Caltrain stations (in the Downtown, Hayward Park, and Hillsdale areas) and along El Camino Real. Given San Mateo's central location on the Peninsula, the city functions as a crossroads for regional travel routes. The San Mateo-Hayward Bridge links San Mateo and other Peninsula communities to the East Bay. US Highway 101, State Route (SR-) 92, and El Camino Real (SR-82) all pass through San Mateo, and Interstate 280 passes just west of the City Limits. Traffic congestion from these regional roadways regularly spills over to local city streets.

### Community Profile

At the time of the creation of the Strive San Mateo General Plan 2040, the population in San Mateo was about 102,200 people from a diverse range of racial and ethnic backgrounds, as shown in Table I-1. The working-age population cohort, those aged 20 to 64, represented the largest population segment in the city. About half of San Mateo residents aged 25 years or older hold at least a bachelor's degree, as compared to about a third of California residents. The relatively high level of educational achievement among city residents meant that many were qualified for technology and innovation economy job opportunities. As a result of their high educational attainment and employability in high-income, high-growth fields, many residents' average earnings were also relatively high compared with the region and state medians.



Figure I-2 Regional Context



Source: ESRI, 2022; PlaceWorks, 2023.  
Note: This map is included for informational purposes and is not adopted as part of this General Plan.



However, there are also many members of the San Mateo community who aren't reflected in these average statistics. Vulnerable populations in San Mateo include children, seniors living alone, families living in overcrowded households, unhoused people, low-income households and households in poverty, people with disabilities, non-English speakers, and people without a car. Strive San Mateo General Plan 2040 includes policies and actions aimed at improving the quality of life for all of the people that live in San Mateo, including vulnerable populations.

**Figure I-3 Proportions of Existing Land Use in San Mateo**

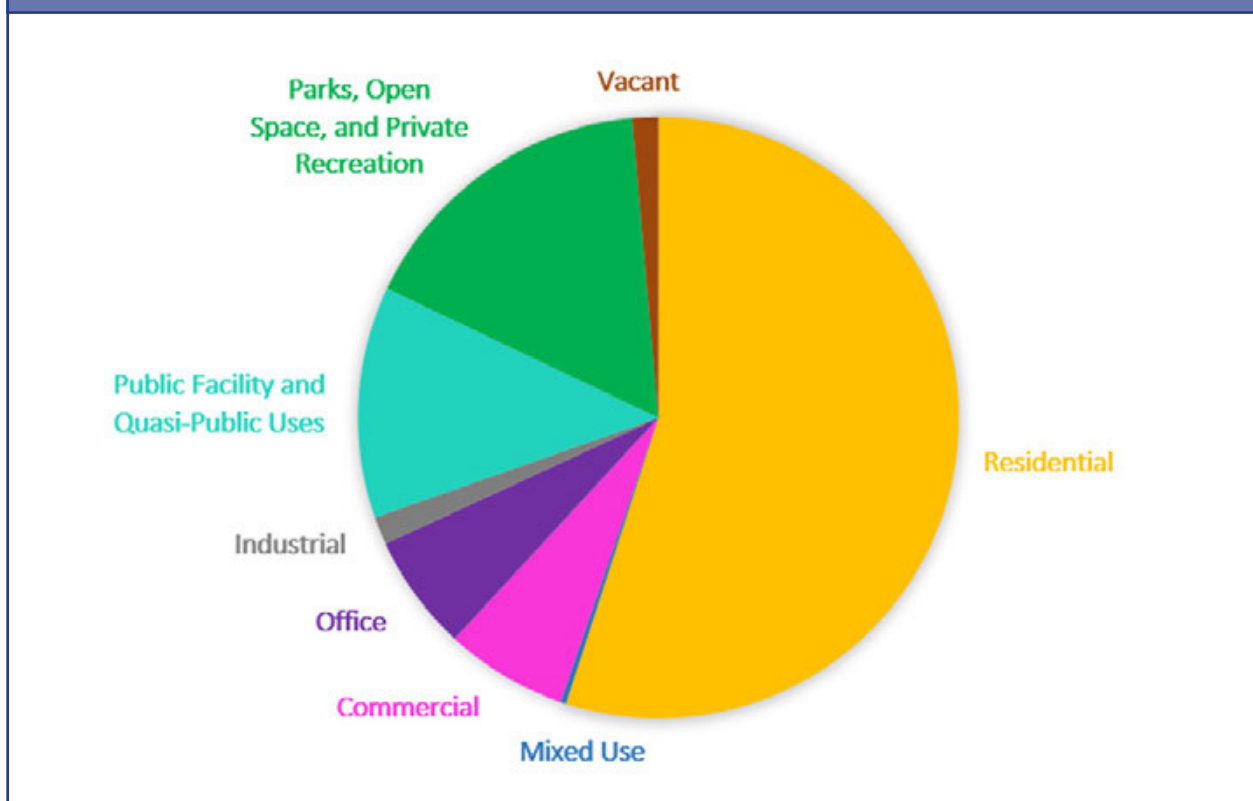


Table I-1 Race and Hispanic Origin	
White alone	48.6%
Black or African American alone <sup>a</sup>	1.9%
American Indian and Alaska Native alone <sup>a</sup>	0.8%
Asian alone <sup>a</sup>	25.5%
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander alone <sup>a</sup>	1.8%
Two or More Races	9.2%
Hispanic or Latino <sup>b</sup>	24.1%
White alone, not Hispanic or Latino	40.9%

<sup>a</sup> Includes persons reporting only one race

<sup>b</sup> People of Hispanic or Latino origin may be of any race, so also are included in applicable race categories

Source: US Census Bureau, 2021 American Community Survey (ACS), 5-year estimates. <https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/sanmateocitycalifornia>

## ECONOMIC PROFILE

San Mateo's economy has been strongly influenced by the strength of Silicon Valley technology companies and the city's prime geographic location. Many of the major employers in San Mateo are public agencies, such as the County Medical Center, County Environmental Health Services, local public schools and college districts, County Behavioral Health, and the City of San Mateo. The largest employers in the private sector include the entertainment and electronics conglomerate Sony, Franklin Templeton Investors, and the internet services company Rakuten.

San Mateo will continue to be attractive to office and other commercial development because of its unique location between the technology industry in San Mateo and Santa Clara Counties and downtown San Francisco, proximity to San Francisco Airport, accessibility to the East Bay via the San Mateo-Hayward Bridge, and the capacity of Caltrain and regional freeways to accommodate additional growth.

Jobs-housing balance is a measure that can help inform how well the local economy provides jobs for the local labor force. An adequate balance of jobs and housing can benefit the city's economy, environment, and quality of life for residents. Although this topic is often described as "jobs-housing" balance, comparing the number of jobs to the number of residents is a more direct comparison of individuals, rather than comparing people to homes. While the City cannot control whether jobs within San Mateo are filled by residents, striving for a balanced jobs-to-employed residents ratio increases the opportunity for employed residents to find a job in San Mateo. When the number of employed residents is significantly higher or lower than the number of jobs in the city, it can lead to increased traffic congestion as workers commute either in or out, which in turn creates increased air pollution, noise, and GHG emissions.



Theoretically, an ideal jobs-to-employed residents ratio for a city like San Mateo would be 1.0, which would indicate that there is a job in the community for every employed resident. It should be noted that the ratio of jobs to employed residents indicates a numerical match, not a qualitative match in job type vs. resident skills and abilities. Even with an ideal jobs-to-employed residents ratio of 1.0, many residents will continue to commute outside of San Mateo while workers that do not reside in San Mateo will continue to commute in. Nevertheless, the Strive San Mateo General Plan 2040 is an opportunity for the City to enact policies that help to balance the amount and type of new jobs and new housing in the community and to maintain a balance between employment income levels and housing costs within the city, striving for a goal of one job for each employed resident.





## FUTURE GROWTH AND PROJECTED TRENDS

The City of San Mateo can reasonably assume the city will continue to grow, and that there will be a need to designate land for a range of uses to accommodate that growth. Strive San Mateo General Plan 2040 sets the foundation for future growth that is logical, orderly, and achieves the community’s vision of San Mateo as a place that is vibrant, livable, diverse, and healthy.

Although San Mateo is largely “built out,” California law requires cities to plan for housing to accommodate a range of households and income levels. The Association of Bay Area Governments (ABAG) – the regional planning agency for the Bay Area – assigns a State-mandated Regional Housing Needs Allocation (RHNA) to each jurisdiction. The RHNA is the number of new housing units the City needs to accommodate for every eight-year Housing Element cycle. Every jurisdiction, including San Mateo, must show how it can accommodate its RHNA in the Housing Element by designating and zoning land for new homes. Although the RHNA is not a direct requirement to build units, the State has stringent requirements on cities to ensure they are doing everything possible for housing to be built and to remove common barriers to housing construction. The legal consequences of not allowing for new housing development can be severe. Strive San Mateo General Plan 2040 will cover three Housing Element cycles: the 6th (January 2023 to January 2031), 7th (January 2031 to January 2039), and part of the 8th (January 2039 to January 2047). Although the scale of future RHNA is unknown, the Strive San Mateo General Plan 2040 Land Use Map was designed to anticipate sufficient housing capacity for the Housing Element cycles between now and 2040.

Strive San Mateo General Plan 2040 was prepared as the City, nation, and world continued to address the COVID-19 pandemic, an unprecedented public health crisis. Research for this General Plan was completed as the Bay Area, generally, appeared to be emerging from the worst of it. The COVID-19 pandemic accelerated trends relating to the demand for office and commercial uses (e.g., gig economy, remote work, online shopping). During this time, some companies shifted towards open floor plans, shared workstations, and flexible work hours/locations. While the economic implications and future trends resulting from the pandemic may still not be fully known, it is anticipated that the demand for technology and innovation economy jobs will continue to grow through the year 2040 in San Mateo and the broader Peninsula region.

In the coming years, it is also anticipated that the sharing and electrification of vehicles will continue to increase. How people travel could also continue to change as mobile phone technologies and private transportation services expand, which may result in less need for parking in San Mateo. The COVID-19 pandemic that began in 2020 initiated a significant trend of remote work for office workers and corresponding changes in commutes and office space demand; however, there will continue to be a need for office space as employers and workers see value in face-to-face work. In addition, other types of work, such as medical treatment or research and development in a lab environment, cannot feasibly happen from home. Many people will want to live in areas that are close to their jobs and have multiple transportation options. Strive San Mateo General Plan 2040 was prepared with consideration of these projected trends.



## USER'S GUIDE

Strive San Mateo General Plan 2040 is for all members of the community and anyone interested in the future of the city. It was crafted with a constant eye toward keeping it useful, clear, and easy to understand. The following section provides an overview of the elements; describes the planning context for San Mateo; explains what a goal, policy, and action is in the context of the General Plan; and defines major themes integrated throughout the General Plan.

### Overview of the Elements

State law requires that general plans contain eight mandatory sections, or “elements.” The State provides considerable flexibility in how these elements are organized. Table I-2 shows the State-mandated elements and their counterparts in the Strive San Mateo General Plan 2040. This General Plan addresses all the topics required by State law but has tailored the organization to reflect the local context. It also includes other topics that are not required by State law, but that community members have identified as being fundamental to the quality of life in the city. Once adopted, the optional elements have the same legal status as the mandatory elements. No single element or subject supersedes any other, and all elements must be internally consistent; policies and actions must complement one another across topic areas without conflicting.

Table I-2 State-Mandated and Strive San Mateo General Plan 2040 Elements	
State-Mandated Element	Strive San Mateo General Plan 2040 Element
Land Use	Land Use Element
Circulation	Circulation Element
Housing	Housing Element (adopted separately)
Open Space	Conservation, Open Space, and Recreation Element
Conservation	
Safety	Safety Element
Noise	Noise Element
Environmental Justice	Land Use Element Also incorporated in other elements
Optional Elements	
	Public Services and Facilities Element
	Community Design and Historic Resources Element

A brief description of each General Plan element is provided below:

- The **Land Use Element** provides guidance for the future use and development of land, and also addresses environmental justice issues, community engagement, climate change and sustainability, regional cooperation, economic development, and development review.
- The **Circulation Element** provides guidance to help design a sustainable and comprehensive transportation system that is safe and accessible for all users and modes of travel.
- The **Housing Element** provides policies and programs to ensure that San Mateo can accommodate housing for all members of the community at all income levels.
- The **Community Design and Historic Resources Element** guides the development and physical form of San Mateo from the individual neighborhood scale to the overall cityscape and includes actions to support preservation of the City’s historic resources.
- The **Conservation, Open Space, and Recreation Element** provides guidance for the development, management, and preservation of San Mateo’s natural, cultural, and recreational resources.
- The **Public Services and Facilities Element** addresses public facility and infrastructure needs, such as community safety, water supply, sewer and storm drainage, energy supply, childcare and schools, healthcare and social services, and solid waste.
- The **Safety Element** provides guidance to help protect the community and mitigate potential impacts from natural and human-caused hazards, such as flooding, sea level rise, wildfires, seismic and geotechnical hazards, and hazardous materials. This element also covers emergency preparedness.
- The **Noise Element** provides guidance to protect the community from excessive noise exposure.

The General Plan includes a **Glossary** to aid in understanding technical terminology used in the document.

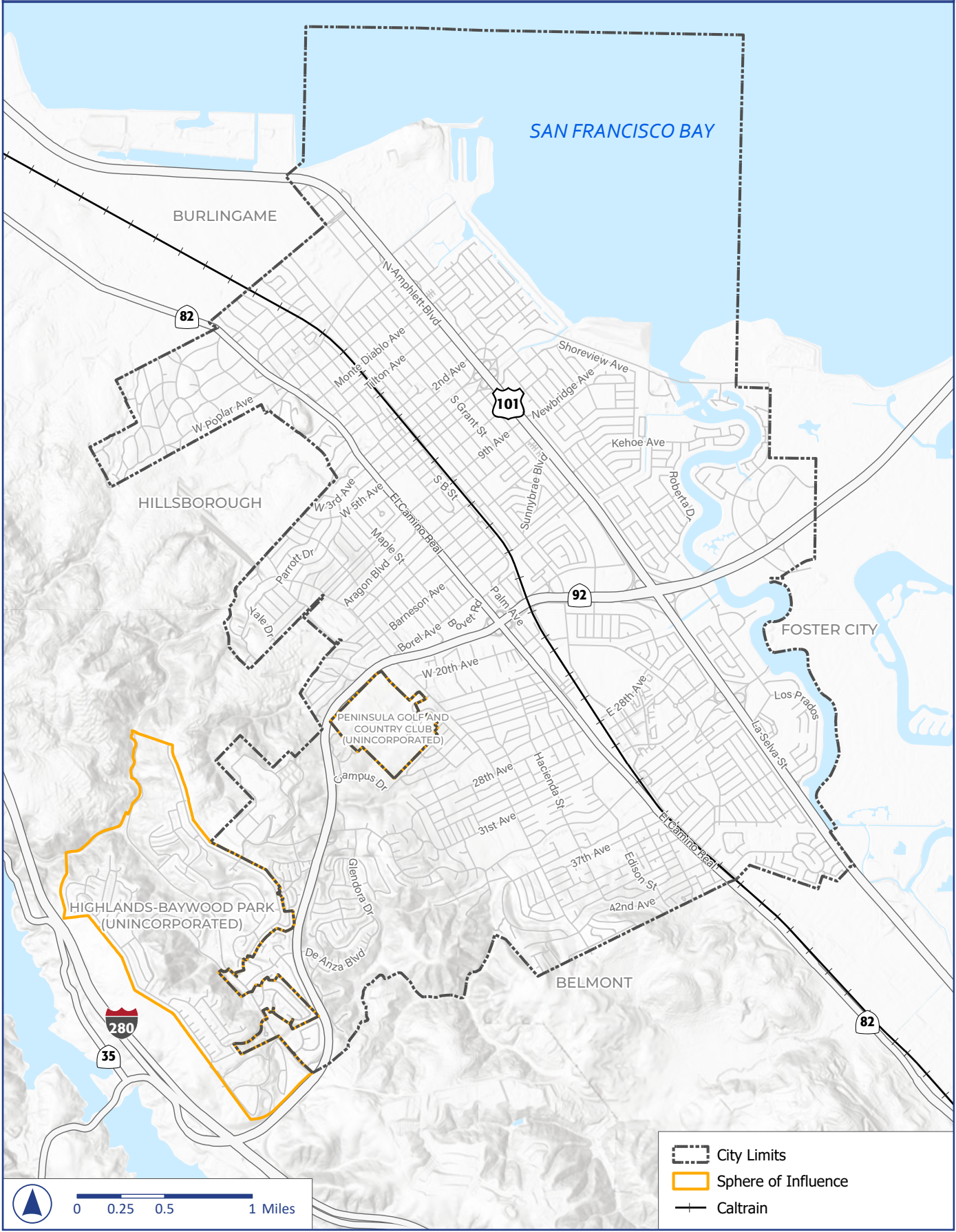
## Planning Boundaries

The Strive San Mateo General Plan 2040 considers land within the City Limits as well as surrounding land the City may annex in the future, known as the Sphere of Influence (SOI). Determined in conjunction with the San Mateo County Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCO), the SOI is the area that could be provided with City services in the future and can therefore be considered as a potential future boundary of San Mateo. The City Limits boundary encompasses the land over which the City of San Mateo has jurisdictional authority. Together, the City Limits and the SOI shown in Figure I-4 comprise the Planning Area for San Mateo.

## Goals, Policies, and Actions

Strive San Mateo General Plan 2040 is built around a series of goals, policies, and actions that describe what needs to be done to achieve the community’s vision for the future. Goals are end-statements; they describe what the community wants to accomplish to resolve a particular issue or problem. Policies and actions guide day-to-day decision making so that there will be continuing progress toward the attainment of goals. Many goals will be implemented by both policies and actions.

Figure I-4 San Mateo Planning Area



Source: ESRI, 2022; PlaceWorks, 2023.  
Note: This map is included for informational purposes and is not adopted as part of this General Plan.

### **The State Law Defines Environmental Justice as:**

*The fair treatment of people of all races, cultures, and incomes with respect to the development, adoption, implementation, and enforcement of environmental laws, regulations, and policies.*  
(Government Code Section 65040.12(e)(1)).



The goal, policy, and action terms are defined as follows.

- **Goal:** A description of the general desired result that the City seeks to create through the implementation of the General Plan. Each goal has one or more policies and/or actions associated with the goal.
- **Policy:** A specific statement that regulates activities in the city, guides decision making, and directs ongoing efforts as the City works to achieve a goal. General Plan policies establish standards that will be used by City staff, Planning Commission, and City Council when prioritizing initiatives and expenditures, reviewing and approving new development, and in related City decision making.
- **Action:** A measure, procedure, or technique intended to help reach a specified goal or implement one or more policies. The actions in the General Plan will serve as a to-do list for City staff and officials to implement the goals and policies of the General Plan.

The placement of a goal, policy, or action in a specific element does not limit its scope to only that element topic. For example, a policy in the Circulation Element can apply to topics beyond the realm of transportation. Similarly, there is not a one-to-one correspondence between policies and actions. An individual action can implement more than one policy and can contribute to achieving multiple goals across different elements.

The graphic later in this chapter explains the goals, policies, and actions numbering in the General Plan.

## **Equity Priority Communities**

Throughout California, low-income communities and communities of color have experienced a combination of historic discrimination, negligence, and political and economic disempowerment, with the result that today, they are struggling with both a disproportionate burden of pollution and health impacts, as well as disproportionate social and economic disadvantages, such as poverty or housing instability. Environmental justice is the idea that planning and environmental policies should treat people of all races, cultures, and incomes fairly and equitably. Senate Bill (SB) 1000, the Planning for Healthy Communities Act, requires that General Plans address environmental justice for communities disproportionately burdened by pollution within San Mateo.

## **Identifying Equity Priority Communities**

Figure I-5 shows the communities in San Mateo that are disproportionately burdened by environmental pollution: North Central and North Shoreview/Shoreview. These areas are called “Equity Priority Communities” throughout this General Plan. This area was mapped using local knowledge and California Communities Environmental Health Screening Tool (CalEnviroScreen), a tool

## Sustainability, Environmental Justice, and Community Engagement

Strive San Mateo General Plan 2040 goes beyond the minimum State requirements and embodies three key themes: sustainability, environmental justice, and community engagement. These themes are interrelated and woven throughout Strive San Mateo General Plan 2040. Policies and actions in each element that relate to each of these themes are marked with a corresponding icon, as shown below.

The specific themes of Strive San Mateo General Plan 2040 include:



**Sustainability.** Sustainability means ensuring that San Mateo can meet its current needs and leave viable resources for future generations. The sustainability policies and actions aim to improve resiliency, especially to the impacts of climate change, and to protect the environment, reduce pollution, water and energy use, and enhance overall quality of life. Strive San Mateo General Plan 2040 also emphasizes sustainable modes of transportation to help lower pollution and GHG emissions, such as walking, bicycling, and taking transit.



**Environmental Justice.** Environmental justice policies and actions intend to reduce the unique or compounded health risks in the neighborhoods in the city that experience the highest levels of pollution and negative health outcomes, such as asthma and low birth weight babies, as well as the greatest social and economic disadvantages, such as poverty and housing instability. Strive San Mateo General Plan 2040 uses the term equity priority community for these neighborhoods and focuses on improving environmental justice and public health for the people who live in these communities by promoting meaningful community engagement and prioritizing improvements that address their needs.



**Community Engagement.** Providing support for increased community participation in the planning and development processes is another important theme of Strive San Mateo General Plan 2040. Residents in San Mateo may face barriers when participating in the community engagement process. Strive San Mateo General Plan 2040 aims to engage all residents and stakeholders on all matters of development, growth, and public policy in ways that are inclusive, equitable, and give everyone an opportunity to participate in the process.

developed by the State Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment on behalf of the California Environmental Protection Agency. CalEnviroScreen measures pollution and population characteristics using 21 indicators, such as air quality, hazardous waste sites, asthma rates, and poverty. It applies a formula to each Census tract in the state to generate a score that ranks the level of cumulative impacts in each area relative to the rest of the Census tracts in the state. A Census tract with a higher score is one that experiences higher pollution burdens and social or health vulnerabilities than Census tracts with lower scores. In addition to using CalEnviroScreen as a tool for identifying equity priority communities, SB 1000 encourages local agencies to work with community members and stakeholders to consider the available data from other sources, including the lived experience of community members, to refine the boundaries of equity priority communities and identify additional communities, if appropriate, to support planning efforts to improve environmental justice.

Using local knowledge and CalEnviroScreen, the City identified two equity priority communities per the data available as of December 2022: North Central and North Shoreview/Shoreview. Environmental justice issues in each community are described in more detail in the pages that follow. It is important to note that the State regularly updates CalEnviroScreen, and new data sources may become available. The equity priority communities mapped in this General Plan may change as conditions change.





## Example Goals and Policies Page

**Goal Numbering:** Each goal number starts with the element acronym and is followed by the number of the goal. (e.g., C 1 = Circulation Element, first goal)

**Policy and Action Numbering:** The policy or action number has two parts: first, the number of the goal it supports, and second, the sequential number of the policy or action in the order underneath that goal. (e.g., C 1.4 = Circulation Element, first goal, fourth policy or action)

**Icons:** Policies and actions related to the three themes of the General Plan – sustainability, environmental justice, and community engagement – are identified using these icons. A policy or action can respond to more than one theme, so multiple icons may be applied.

Chapter 9
Noise Element

### GOALS, POLICIES, AND ACTIONS

**GOAL N-1** Protect noise sensitive land uses from excessive noise levels.


#### POLICIES

**Policy N 1.1** **Noise and Land Use Planning.** Integrate noise considerations into land use planning decisions to minimize noise impacts to or from new development.

**Policy N 1.2** **Interior Noise Level Standard.** Require submittal of an acoustical analysis and interior noise insulation for all noise sensitive land uses listed in Table N-1 that have an exterior noise level of 60 dBA ( $L_{eq}$ ) or above, as shown on Figure N-2. The maximum interior noise level shall not exceed 45 dBA ( $L_{eq}$ ) in any habitable rooms, as established by the California Building Code.

**Policy N 1.3** **Exterior Noise Level Standard for Residential Uses.** Require an acoustical analysis for new multi-family common open space for residents that have an exterior noise level of 60 dBA ( $L_{eq}$ ) or above, as shown on Figure N-2. Incorporate necessary mitigation measures into residential project design to minimize common open space noise levels. Maximum exterior noise should not exceed 65 dBA ( $L_{eq}$ ) for residential uses and should not exceed 65 dBA ( $L_{eq}$ ) for public park uses.

**Policy N 1.4** **Exterior Noise Level Standard for Parks and Playgrounds.** Require a feasibility analysis of noise-reduction measures for public parks and play areas that have an exterior noise level of 70 dBA ( $L_{eq}$ ) or above.

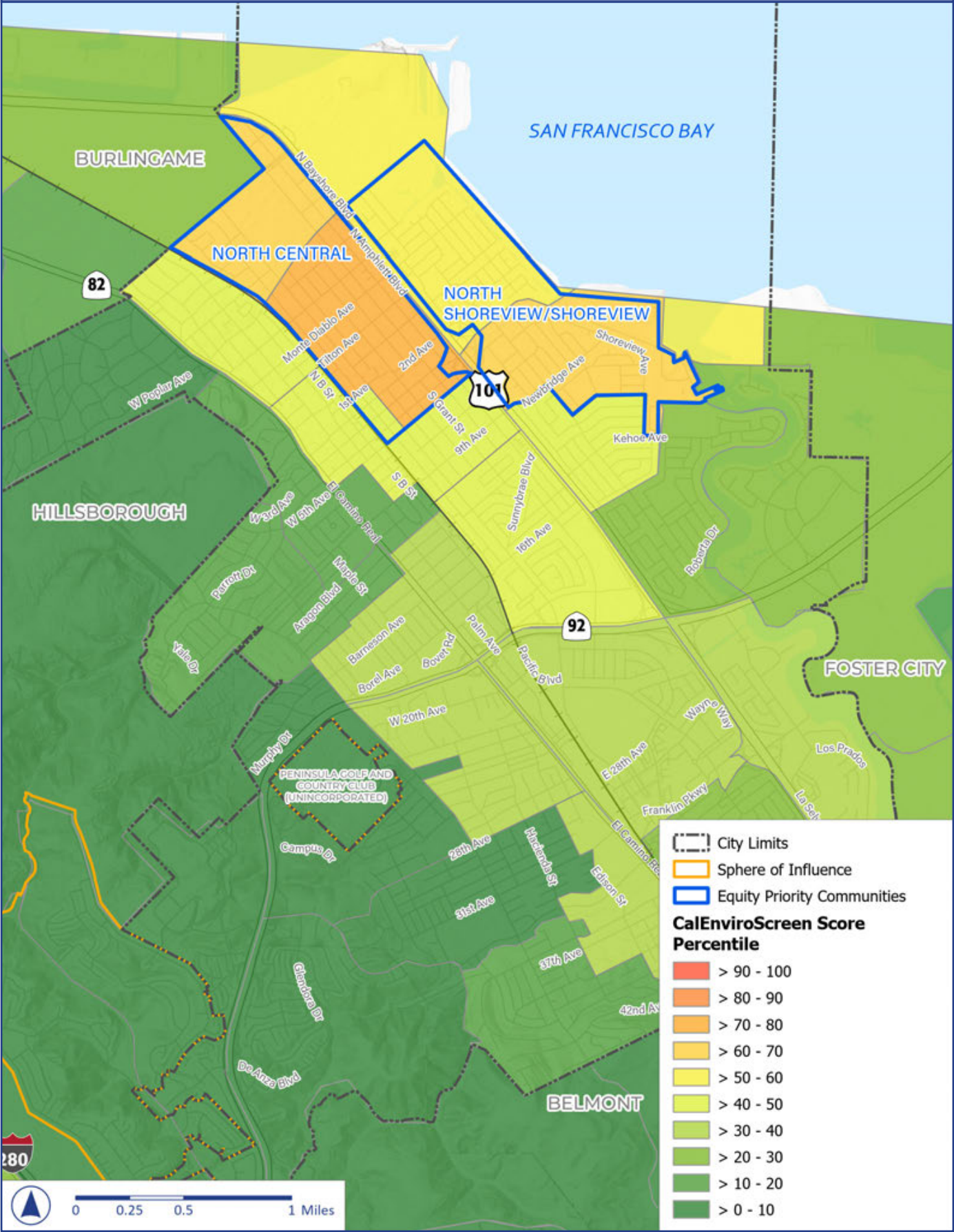
 **Policy N 1.5** **Inclusive Outreach.** Notify the community when new land uses that would result in excessive noise levels are being considered and inform community members about how they can engage in the process. Use outreach and engagement methods that encourage broad representation and are culturally sensitive, particularly for equity priority communities.

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### North Central and North Shoreview/Shoreview

There are three Census tracts that encompass the North Central Equity Priority Community: 6000, 6200, and 6300. After reviewing the CalEnviroScreen data, the City defined the boundary for the North Central Equity Priority Community based on local knowledge of the neighborhood to focus on the residential areas within the Census tract. Two Census tracts encompass the North Shoreview/Shoreview Equity Priority Community: 6100 and 7701. After reviewing the CalEnviroScreen data, the City also refined the boundary for the North Shoreview/Shoreview Equity Priority Community based on their local knowledge of the neighborhood. Figures I-7 and I-8 show the CalEnviroScreen score by Census tract within the North Central Equity Priority Community for the 21 pollution and population indicators. As shown in Figure I-5, Census tract 6200, which encompasses most of North Central, received a score over the 75th percentile for traffic, diesel particulate matter, impaired water, groundwater threats, hazardous waste, lead in housing, linguistic isolation, education, and poverty. Census tract 6000, in the northern area of the boundary, received a score over the 75th percentile for traffic, diesel particulate matter, impaired water, groundwater threats, and linguistic isolation. Census tract 6300, which covers a small portion of North Central, received a score over the 75th percentile for traffic, diesel particulate matter, impaired water, groundwater threats, and hazardous waste.

Figure I-5 Equity Priority Communities



Source: California OEHHA, 2021; PlaceWorks, 2023.  
Note: This map is included for informational purposes and is not adopted as part of this General Plan.





Figures I-6 and I-7 show the CalEnviroScreen score by Census tract within the North Shoreview/Shoreview equity priority community for the 21 pollution and population indicators. As shown in Figure I-6, Census tract 6100, which encompasses a large area of North Shoreview/Shoreview, received a score over the 75th percentile for traffic, impaired water, groundwater threats, lead in housing, poverty, education, and linguistic isolation. Census tract 7701, in the southern area of North Shoreview/Shoreview, received a score over the 75th percentile for traffic, impaired water, lead in housing, and unemployment.

North Central and North Shoreview/Shoreview received a high score for traffic. Both communities are near US Highway 101, one of the roadways that carries the highest amounts of traffic in San Mateo. North Central is also near El Camino Real, which is another roadway that carries a high amount of traffic. The amount of traffic and vehicles on the road directly impacts the amount of pollution in the air. Exposure to air pollution is associated with a variety of negative health outcomes, including reduced lung function, pneumonia, asthma, cardiovascular diseases, and premature death. It may also affect lung cancer rates. North Central also received a high score for diesel particulate matter, which is a harmful type of pollutant that comes from exhaust from trucks, buses, and other motorized vehicles that use diesel engines and may travel on US Highway 101 or city streets.

Impaired waters are also a concern in North Central and in part of North Shoreview/Shoreview. A 2012 report from the State Water Resources Control Board found that the San Mateo Creek, which runs through North Central and North Shoreview/Shoreview, is an impaired water, as defined by Section 303(d) of the federal Clean Water Act. Impaired waters have contaminants that do not meet water quality standards. Contaminated waterways can impact equity priority communities if residents come in contact with contaminated water by interacting with the creek or during a flooding event.

Residents in North Central and North Shoreview/Shoreview may live in older homes that were built prior to the adoption of building standards that prohibited the use of lead-based paint. Lead in housing ranked high as a toxin of concern in part of North Central and in North Shoreview/Shoreview. The California Building Standards Code was created in 1978. Approximately 73 percent of the homes in San Mateo were built before 1979, which increases the chances that lead can be found in these houses. Exposure to lead can

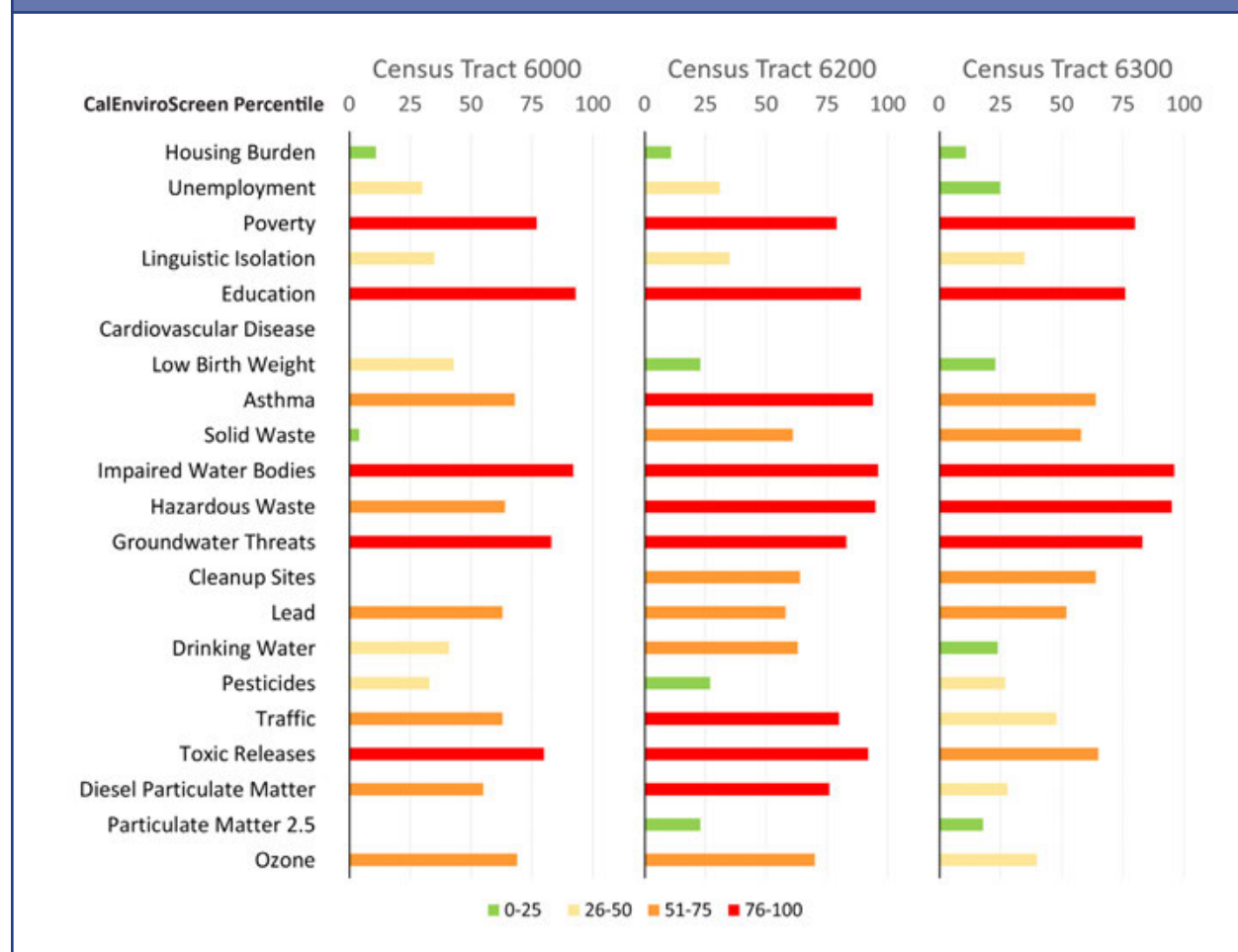


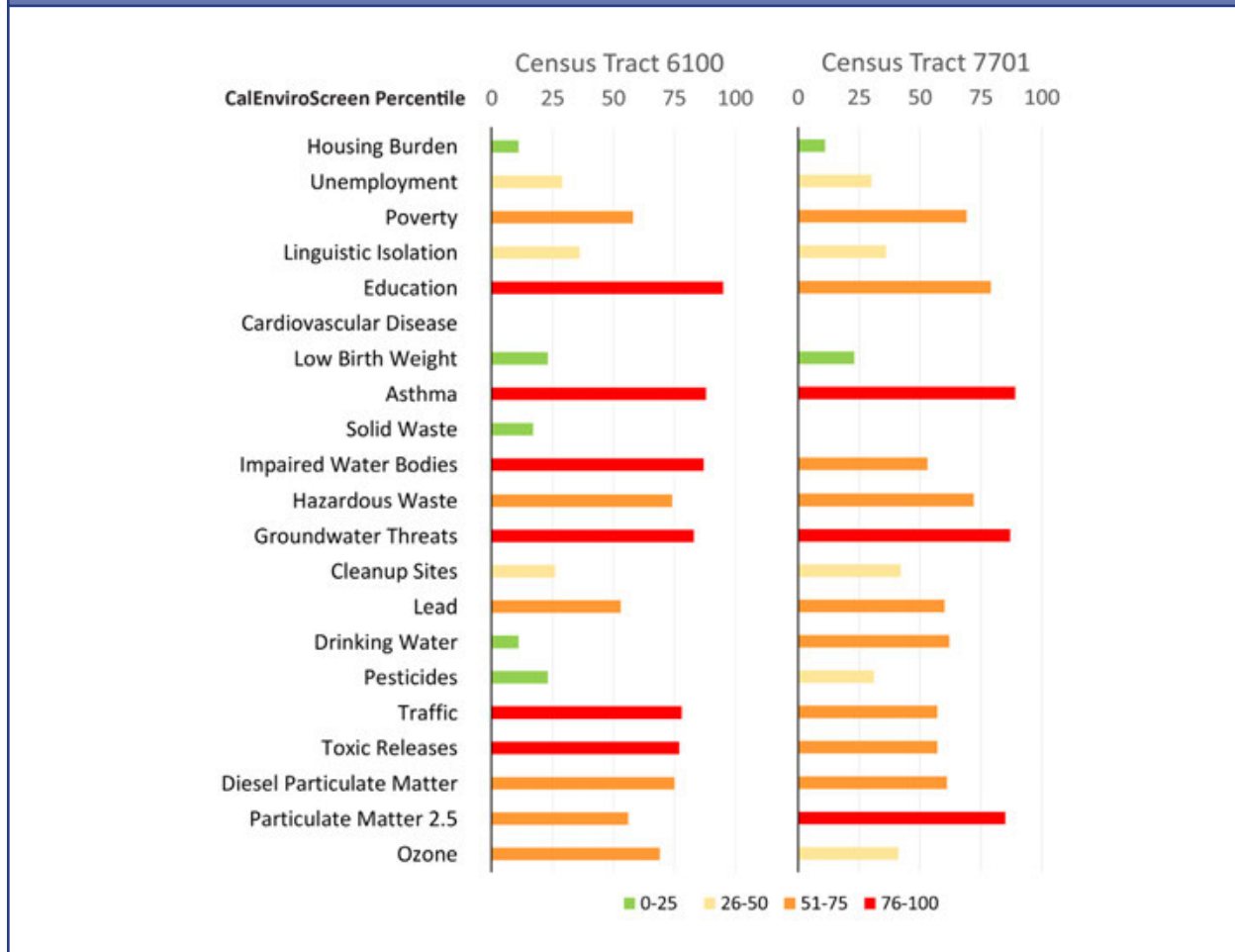
result in negative health impacts for children, such as slowed development and growth, learning difficulties, and hearing or speech problems.

Most of North Central and part of North Shoreview/Shoreview ranked high in linguistic isolation, which means there are individuals in these communities that mainly speak another language, which may be Spanish, Mandarin or Cantonese, Tagalog, or another language. Barriers in communication can prevent people from participating in the planning process or may limit the amount of information that is available during an emergency. Data also indicated that some North Central and North Shoreview/Shoreview residents could be living below the federal poverty level and/or did not receive education beyond high school. There may also be people in the North Shoreview/Shoreview community that are over the age of 16 and are unemployed.

Hazardous waste materials, sites, or facilities that could emit toxins into the air, water, and soil that are harmful to people are present in North Central. California's Department of Toxic Substances Control tracks hazardous waste facilities and sites. As of January 23, 2023, the Department of Toxic Substances Control's data management system shows there is an active case at the College Park Elementary School that could pose a threat to public health.

**Figure I-6 Equity Priority Communities – North Central**



**Figure I-7 Equity Priority Communities – North Shoreview/Shoreview**

## Equity Priority Communities in Strive San Mateo General Plan 2040

Strive San Mateo General Plan 2040 must include policies and actions that will lead to an equitable distribution of resources and opportunities and will reduce the impacts of environmental hazards in the equity priority communities mentioned previously, or in other equity priority communities that are identified during the life of the General Plan. State law allows cities and counties to address environmental justice either by adopting a stand-alone Environmental Justice Element or by incorporating environmental justice goals, policies, and actions into other elements. Strive San Mateo General Plan 2040 takes the approach of incorporating environmental justice goals, policies, and actions into its other elements. In addition to policies and actions that the City will implement through this General Plan and other City plans, other agencies and organizations, such as San Mateo County, nonprofits, and religious groups also provide resources and help improve outcomes in equity priority communities.

# IMPLEMENTING STRIVE SAN MATEO GENERAL PLAN 2040

Long-range planning in San Mateo does not end with the adoption of this document. To achieve the community's vision, decisions about development projects, capital improvements, subdivision maps, specific plans, and other plans and policies affecting land use, transportation, and the physical environment will need to be consistent with Strive San Mateo General Plan 2040.

## Implementation Strategy

To complement the implementation of Strive San Mateo General Plan 2040, the City will identify a list of implementation programs to help achieve the goals, policies, and actions identified in each element. The implementation plan will be prepared after General Plan adoption and will describe and prioritize the timing, responsible City department, cost range, and actions to implement various aspects of Strive San Mateo General Plan 2040. Some programs may already be budgeted and ongoing, while the City Council will need to identify resources during future budget cycles to implement other programs.

## Relationship to the Zoning Ordinance and Other Plans

The General Plan establishes a broad vision and framework for land use in San Mateo and provides policies and actions to manage development through 2040. San Mateo's Zoning Code implements the General Plan with specific standards that regulate land uses and how and where they can be developed. The two must be consistent. Therefore, when the General Plan is amended, the Zoning Code must be amended to retain consistency with the General Plan. Other Municipal Code sections, specific plans, and City planning documents must also be amended as needed to retain consistency with the General Plan.

## Amending the Plan

Strive San Mateo General Plan 2040 provides long-range and comprehensive guidance to the City, but the process of growth and change is dynamic and often unpredictable. For these reasons, the City needs to monitor progress in achieving the major goals of the plan, periodically adjusting policy guidance as needed to advance those goals in light of contextual changes that may happen over the next 20 years. The City may need to revise portions of the General Plan to reflect land use map changes spurred by land use and development activity, changes in community values or the county's physical or economic conditions, or refinements to improve progress towards achieving the major goals of the General Plan. While some amendments change the land use designation of a particular property, any part of the General Plan may be amended as circumstances change.

Amendments to the General Plan may be initiated by an individual, organization, or the City, depending on the nature of the proposal. The Planning Commission reviews and provides recommendations to the City Council for all proposed General Plan amendments. The City Council then takes final action on all General Plan amendment requests. All amendments require public hearings by the Planning Commission and City Council and evaluation of the potential impacts to San Mateo's physical environment, in accordance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA).

While it is appropriate to revise the General Plan as conditions change in San Mateo, the goals and major themes of the plan are expected to endure for the life of the plan.

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# CHAPTER 2

## Land Use Element









# LAND USE ELEMENT

## INTRODUCTION

The Land Use Element sets the foundation for future growth, change, and preservation in San Mateo and serves as the blueprint for the development of public and private property in the city. The Element seeks to balance well-designed development and thoughtful preservation with a full spectrum of choices for housing, while also cultivating a diverse economy and supporting resiliency. It includes goals, policies, and actions that support the equitable health and well-being of all neighborhoods in San Mateo and all members of the community. It also encourages a diverse range of land uses to meet the needs of the community, including housing, parks, open space, recreation, retail, commercial services, offices, and industrial.

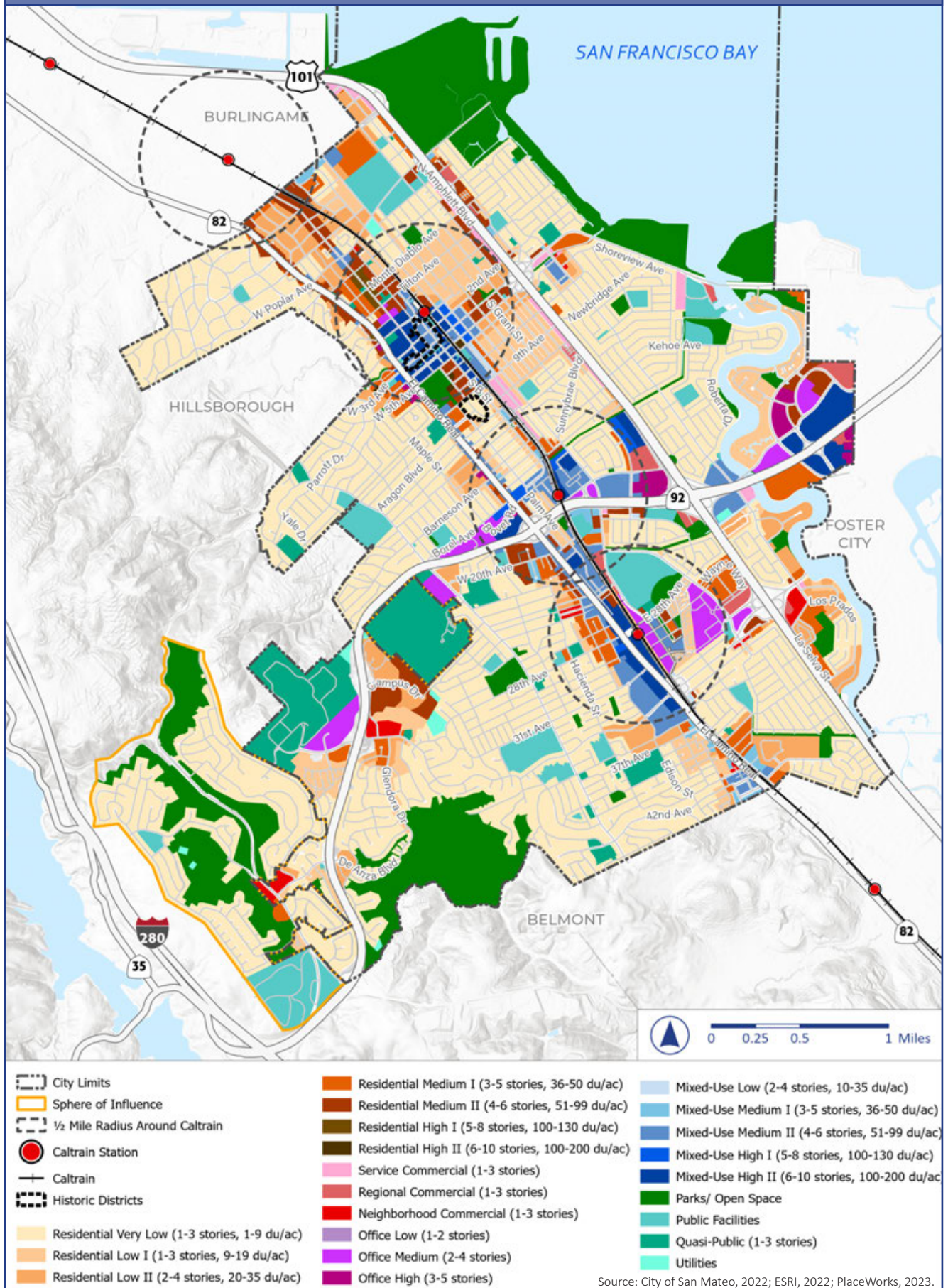
This element meets the State-mandated requirements for a Land Use Element. It defines categories for the location and type of public and private uses of land under the City's jurisdiction; it recommends standards for density on land covered by the Strive San Mateo General Plan 2040; it includes a Land Use Map (Figure LU-1); and includes goals, policies, and actions to guide land use distribution throughout the city. By satisfying these requirements, the Land Use Element lays out basic guidelines and standards that act as building blocks for the General Plan's other elements. Each element, such as Circulation or Conservation, Open Space, and Recreation, provide more specialized guidance and corresponds with a land use category of the Land Use Element. For more information about environmental justice, please also refer to Chapter 1, Introduction.

### **The Land Use Element addresses the following topic areas:**

- Balanced and Equitable Growth and Preservation
- A Diverse Range of Land Uses
- Focused Planning Areas
  - » Downtown
  - » El Camino Real Corridor
  - » Hillsdale Station Area
- Shopping Areas in Transition
- Environmental Justice
  - » Community Health
  - » Equity Priority Communities
  - » Access to Healthy Food
- Community Engagement
- Climate Change and Land Use
- A Sustainable Economy
- Development Review
- Regional Cooperation
- General Plan Maintenance



Figure LU-1 Land Use Map



## RELEVANCE TO GENERAL PLAN THEMES



### Sustainability in this Element:

- Encourages higher density multifamily and mixed-use development in proximity to transit and jobs, and improves transit, bicycle, and pedestrian access to support a multimodal transportation network; both of which reduce car dependency and vehicle miles traveled (VMT).
- Supports infill development that provides benefits for preservation and ecological function.
- Supports efforts to transition to cleaner energy sources that reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions, consistent with the City's adopted Climate Action Plan.



### Environmental Justice in this Element:

- Helps address vulnerabilities in equity priority communities, such as poverty, low educational attainment, and housing instability, by supporting affordable housing and economic development.
- Prioritizes City investment in public improvements that address health and infrastructure disparities in equity priority communities.
- Increases access to fresh food by allowing and encouraging local food production, micro agriculture, edible landscapes, rooftop gardens, community gardens, and urban farms.
- Supports collaboration between the City and local partners to improve healthy food access programs, such as the CalFresh Restaurant Meals Program.



### Community Engagement in this Element:

- Promotes inclusive outreach methods that encourage broad representation and are culturally sensitive, such as preparing notices and other materials in the predominant language spoken in the community and scheduling meetings at convenient times for community members.
- Supports early and frequent community engagement by clearly outlining when and how members of the public can provide input for development projects under review.
- Requires sponsors of new development projects to have early, frequent, and meaningful communication with community members and stakeholders.
- Encourages a recurring, statistically reliable community survey to gauge community service needs, policy preferences, and effective communication methods.



## GENERAL PLAN HEIGHT AND INTENSITY STANDARDS

Measure Y is a ballot measure that was passed by voters in November 2020. It retained existing height and density limits on new development, originally adopted under earlier ballot measures (Measure P and Measure H), and has a sunset date of 2030. Overall, the Measure Y height limit is set at up to 55 feet and a density limit that allows up to 50 units per acre. The height limit allows for exceptions in certain locations and under certain circumstances, and State Density Bonus law allows projects to exceed both height and density limits when certain percentages of affordable units are provided. Measure Y also established FAR limits, with a maximum of up to 3.0.

### General Plan Land Use Designations and Land Use Map

The General Plan land use designations are grouped into the following categories: Residential, Mixed-Use, Commercial, Office, Parks and Open Space, Public Facilities, Quasi-Public Facilities, and Utilities.

The land use designations identify the locations in the city where specific types of land uses may occur. The designations are meant to be broad enough to give the City flexibility, but also provide clear enough direction to achieve the vision of the General Plan. Figure LU-1 shows where each land use designation is applied within San Mateo.

The General Plan provides the overall parameters of density and intensity for urban land use designations, but each project must also comply with the specific rules of the relevant zoning district in the City's Zoning Code.

Residential densities for the land use designations are expressed in terms of dwelling units per acre (du/ac). Building heights are expressed by the number of stories. Building intensities for nonresidential uses are expressed in terms of floor-area ratio (FAR), which is the ratio of gross building floor area to net lot area, both expressed in square feet. For example, on a site with 10,000 square feet of land area, a FAR of 1.0 will allow 10,000 gross square feet of building floor area to be built. On the same site, a FAR of 2.0 would allow 20,000 square feet of floor area. FAR does not regulate building placement, form, or height, only the spatial relationship between building size and lot size; it represents an expectation of the overall intensity of future development. Figure LU-2 shows a visual representation of the relationship between height and FAR.

The maximum density assigned to each land use designation does not constitute entitlement, nor are property owners or developers guaranteed that an individual project, when tested against the General Plan's policies, will be able or permitted to achieve these maximums.



Some of the land use designations in this section include building heights and densities that exceed the limits set by Measure Y. Any components in the General Plan that are inconsistent with Measure Y will require voter approval before they can take effect. As required by law, for the duration that Measure Y is in effect, any inconsistency between the measure and other provisions of the Strive San Mateo General Plan 2040 shall default to the provisions specified in Measure Y, as stated in Policy LU 1-9.

Table LU-1 lists land use designations and their density, maximum FAR, height limit, and description.

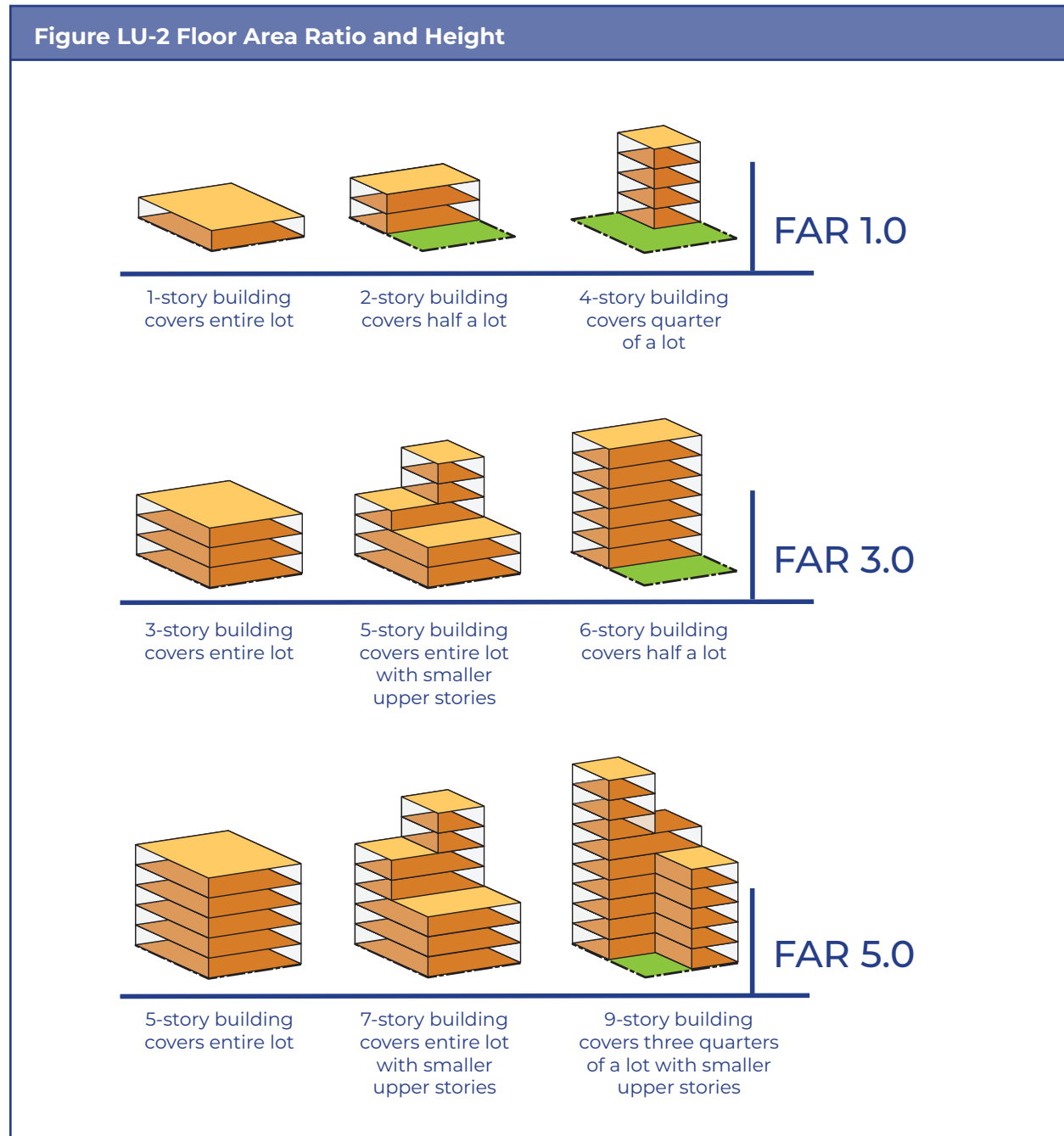




Table LU-1 Land Use Designations

Designation	Density (min/max) (Residential Uses)	Maximum FAR (Nonresi- dential uses)	Height Limit	Description
<b>Residential</b>				
<b>Residential Very Low</b>	Up to 9 du/ ac	n/a	1-3 stories	This designation allows very low-density residential dwellings, such as detached single-family homes, detached townhouses and duplexes, and accessory dwelling units.
<b>Residential Low I</b>	9 to 19 du/ ac	n/a	1-3 stories	This designation allows low-density residential dwellings, such as townhomes, duplexes, triplexes, fourplexes, condominiums, and apartments.
<b>Residential Low II</b>	20 to 35 du/ac	n/a	2-4 stories	This designation allows lower-density residential and multifamily dwellings, such as townhomes, duplexes, triplexes, fourplexes, condominiums, and apartments.
<b>Residential Medium I</b>	36 to 50 du/ac	n/a	3-5 stories	This designation allows low medium-density multifamily dwellings, such as townhomes, condominiums, and apartments.
<b>Residential Medium II</b>	51 to 99 du/ac	n/a	4-6 stories	This designation allows medium-density multifamily residential dwellings, such as condominiums and apartments, near mixed-use, office, and/or commercial areas. This designation can also be found along major streets, such as El Camino Real and near residential low or residential high areas of the city.
<b>Residential High I</b>	100 to 130 du/ac	n/a	5-8 stories	This designation allows higher-density multifamily residential dwellings, such as condominiums and apartments, in Downtown, in proximity to Caltrain stations and along major streets, such as El Camino Real.
<b>Residential High II</b>	100 to 200 du/ac	n/a	6-10 stories	This designation allows high-density multifamily residential dwellings, such as condominiums and apartments, in Downtown, in proximity to Caltrain stations, and along major streets, such as El Camino Real.
<b>Mixed-Use</b>				
<b>Mixed-Use Low</b>	10 to 35 du/ac	2.0	2-4 stories	This designation allows low-density mixed-use buildings that provide a mix of commercial, office, and/or residential uses within the same site or building. It is intended to allow a mix of uses that encourages people to live, work, play, and shop in close proximity.
<b>Mixed-Use Medium I</b>	36 to 50 du/ac	3.0	3-5 stories	This designation allows low medium-density mixed-use buildings that provide a mix of commercial, office, and/or residential uses within the same site or building. It is intended to allow a mix of uses that encourages people to live, work, play, and shop in close proximity.



Designation	Density (min/max) (Residential Uses)	Maximum FAR (Nonresi- dential uses)	Height Limit	Description
<b>Mixed-Use Medium II</b>	51 to 99 du/ac	4.0	4-6 stories	This designation allows medium-density mixed-use buildings that provide a mix of commercial, office, and/or residential uses within the same site or building. It is intended to allow a mix of uses near other mixed-use, commercial, or residential areas, and within Downtown.
<b>Mixed-Use High I</b>	100 to 130 du/ac	4.5	5-8 stories	This designation allows high-density mixed-use buildings that provide a mix of commercial, office, and/or residential uses within the same site or building. It is intended to allow a mix of uses near major streets, train stations, and shopping centers, and within Downtown.
<b>Mixed-Use High II</b>	100 to 200 du/ac	5.0	6-10 stories	This designation allows high-density mixed-use buildings that provide a mix of commercial, office, and/or residential uses within the same site or building. It is intended to allow a mix of uses near major streets, train stations, and shopping centers, and within Downtown.
<b>Commercial</b>				
<b>Neighborhood Commercial</b>	9 to 19 du/ ac	1.0	1-3 stories	This designation is intended for a mix of neighborhood-serving commercial uses that include small-scale retail stores and other commercial uses that serve the immediate neighborhood, such as grocery stores and pharmacies. Typical commercial uses include supermarkets, bakeries, drugstores, restaurants, delicatessens, barber shops, hair salons, laundromats, hardware stores, dry cleaners, small offices, and other personal services. Residential may also be allowed above the ground floor.
<b>Service Commercial</b>	Up to 20 du/ac	1.0	1-3 stories	This designation is intended for a wide range of service commercial and light industrial facilities. Example of uses in this land use include facilities that provide city-wide and regional services, such as auto repair services, building material yards, overnight boarding of animals, and industrial uses with light manufacturing, warehousing, and/or distribution facilities. These uses do not necessarily benefit from being in high-volume pedestrian areas, such as shopping centers or Downtown and can instead be found along South Amphlett Avenue, south of Indian Avenue and north of 2nd Avenue, in addition to other locations in the city.
<b>Regional Commercial</b>	Up to 50 du/ac	1.5	1-3 stories	This designation is intended for large-scale commercial developments that serve residents and visitors from the surrounding region, such as the Hillsdale Mall and Bridgepointe Shopping Center. Examples of commercial uses in this land use include shopping centers, large-format retail, auto sales, and travel-related services, such as hotels, gas stations, and restaurants. Residential may also be allowed.

Designation	Density (min/max) (Residential Uses)	Maximum FAR (Nonresi- dential uses)	Height Limit	Description
<b>Office</b>				
<b>Office Low</b>	10 to 35 du/ac	1.0	1-2 stories	This designation is intended for low-density office uses, such as medical, administrative, or professional offices. Supportive uses, including personal services, restaurants, health clubs, residential, day care, and limited retail sales are permitted. Research facilities that support the development of new products and may include professional uses, manufacturing, laboratories, and/or maker's spaces in the same building or site may be permitted depending on the type and intensity of the use.
<b>Office Medium</b>	36 to 50 du/ac	2.0	2-4 stories	This designation is intended for medium-density office uses, such as medical, administrative, or professional offices. Supportive uses, including personal services, restaurants, health clubs, residential, day care, and limited retail sales are permitted. Research facilities that support the development of new products and may include professional uses, manufacturing, laboratories, and/or maker's spaces in the same building or site may be permitted depending on the type and intensity of the use.
<b>Office High</b>	51 to 130 du/ac	3.0	3-5 stories	This designation is intended for high-density office uses, such as medical, administrative, or professional offices, and for research and science facilities that support the development of new products and may include professional uses, manufacturing, laboratories, and/or maker's spaces in the same building or site. Supportive uses including personal services, restaurants, health clubs, residential, day care, and limited retail sales are permitted.
<b>Other Designations</b>				
<b>Parks and Open Space</b>	n/a	n/a	n/a	This designation is intended for public parks, City-owned conservation lands and private open space or recreation facilities. Parks and open space areas can be found throughout the city and are important to preserve because they provide community members with access to nature, encourage healthy lifestyles, and support a mixture of active and passive recreation opportunities.
<b>Public Facilities</b>	n/a	See Zoning District or Specific Plans for maximum FAR	n/a	This designation is intended for facilities owned and/or operated by the City or other governmental agencies, such as City Hall, libraries, public school sites, San Mateo County's Event Center, and the public parking lots in Downtown.

Designation	Density (min/max) (Residential Uses)	Maximum FAR (Nonresi- dential uses)	Height Limit	Description
Quasi-Public	20 du/ac	See Zoning District or Specific Plans for maximum FAR	1-3 stories	This designation is intended for facilities owned and/or operated by quasi-public agencies and organizations, such as schools and faith-based organization facilities. Examples of these facilities include St. Matthew Catholic Church and the Nueva School. Ancillary residential uses, with a focus on affordable housing, may also be allowed when aligned with the organization’s mission or to provide employee housing.
Utilities	n/a	n/a	n/a	This designation is intended for facilities owned and/or operated by public utilities to serve the public with electricity, gas, water, and communications. Examples of uses in this designation include electricity substations, water tank sites and the sewer treatment plant.

## BALANCED AND EQUITABLE GROWTH AND PRESERVATION

It is important to plan future development and growth in the city in a way that maximizes efficient use of available land and infrastructure; limits adverse impacts to the environment; and improves social, economic, environmental, and health equity. The General Plan itself does not mandate change, but over time, change will occur based on market forces and the decisions of property owners. Climate change will also likely influence land use changes over the next 20 years in ways that are not currently fully known, which is why sustainability is a key theme throughout the General Plan.

Over the lifetime of this General Plan, the areas that are likely to change in the city include the El Camino Real corridor, Downtown, Hayward Park Caltrain station area, Hillsdale Mall and the surrounding Hillsdale Caltrain station area, and older shopping centers and office parks. The Strive San Mateo General Plan 2040 includes policies and actions that promote transit-oriented development around the Caltrain stations; encourages residential and mixed uses along El Camino Real; prioritizes a wide range of residential, lodging, restaurant, leisure, recreational, cultural, and other commercial uses in Downtown; and supports incorporating a mix of housing, shopping, services, and jobs into older shopping centers to create vibrant neighborhoods.

The Strive San Mateo General Plan 2040 also encourages innovative urban design approaches for Downtown, inspired by Barcelona’s “superblocks,” that focus on vehicle access at the periphery and reducing cut-through vehicle traffic to create pedestrian-focused, car-light spaces downtown. The Circulation Element adds more detail about the superblock concept and pedestrian improvements.



In addition to the General Plan, San Mateo has other plans that guide future development in specific areas of the city, including specific plans, master plans, and area plans. The City's existing specific plans, area plans, and master plans are shown on Figure LU-3. This figure also identifies two areas – Bel Mateo and 25th Avenue – that are opportunities for future focused planning efforts. This section is focused on balancing growth through land use. Policy direction on maintaining and improving the transportation network as the city grows can be found in the Circulation Element.

## GOALS, POLICIES, AND ACTIONS

**GOAL LU-1** Plan carefully for balanced growth that provides ample housing that is affordable at all levels and job opportunities for all community members; maximizes efficient use of infrastructure; limits adverse impacts to the environment; and improves social, economic, environmental, and health equity.

### POLICIES



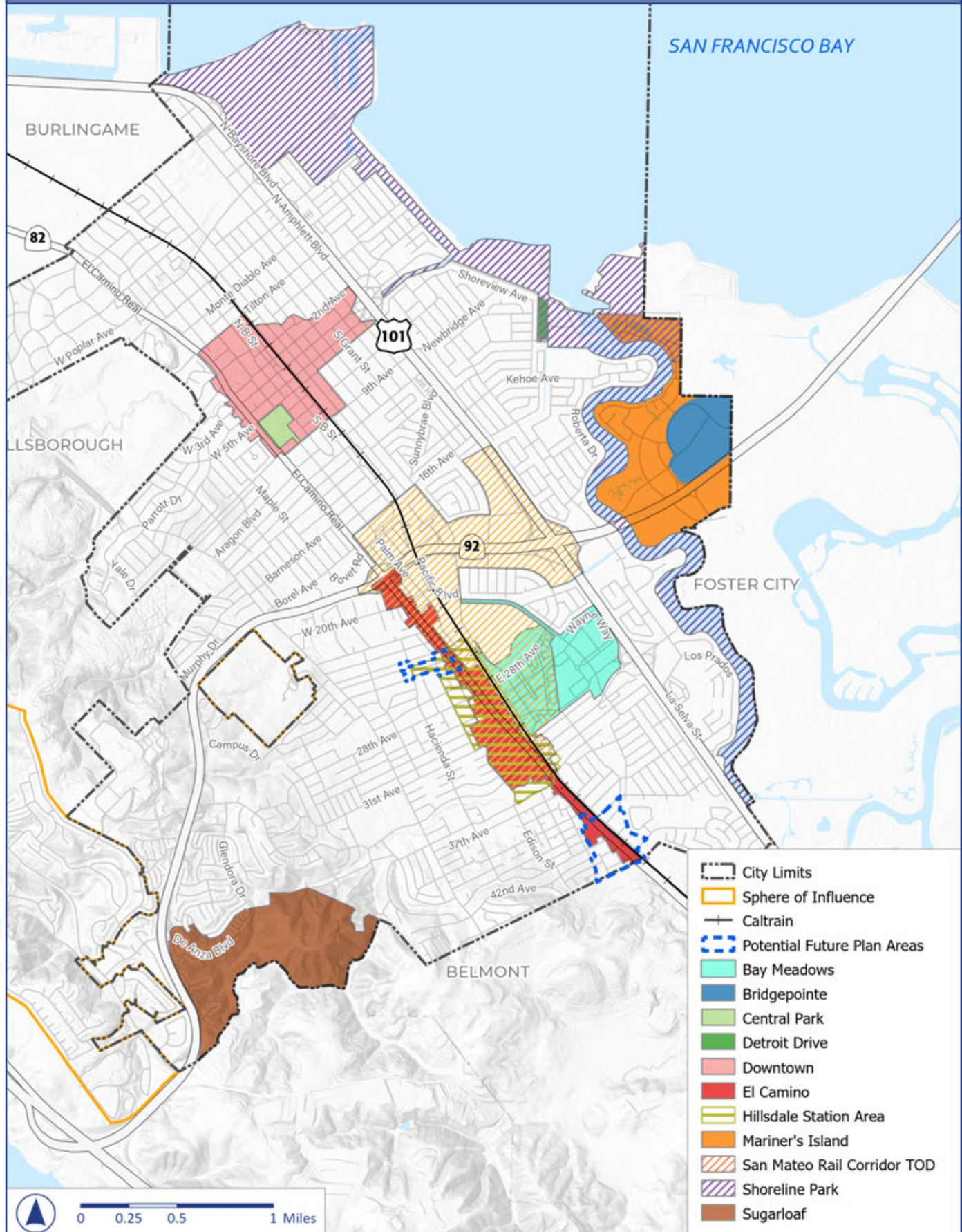
**Policy LU 1.1 Equitable Development.** Prioritize development projects that meet social and economic needs of the economically vulnerable populations to address and reverse the underlying socioeconomic factors in the community that contribute to residential and social segregation in the city. Provide a range of housing types, sizes, and affordability levels in all San Mateo neighborhoods.

**Policy LU 1.2 General Plan 2040 Maximum Development.** The General Plan Update Environmental Impact Report (EIR) assumes the following development projections for the year 2040:

- 21,410 new dwelling units
- 4,325,000 square feet of new nonresidential floor area



Figure LU-3 Specific Plan, Master Plan, and Area Plans



Source: City of San Mateo, 2022; ESRI, 2022; PlaceWorks, 2023.

Note: This map is included for informational purposes and is not adopted as part of this General Plan.



When approved nonresidential development reaches half of the anticipated development, evaluate the citywide jobs-housing balance.

When approved development within City Limits and unincorporated properties within the Sphere of Influence reaches the maximum number of new residential units and net new nonresidential square feet projected in the General Plan EIR, require that environmental review conducted for any subsequent development project address growth impacts that would occur from development exceeding the General Plan EIR's projections.

**Policy LU 1.3 Optimize Development Opportunities.** Encourage new development in major commercial and transit-oriented development areas, including the Downtown, Caltrain station areas, and the El Camino Real corridor, to maximize the density and intensity specified in the Land Use Plan and to efficiently use land and infrastructure resources.



**Policy LU 1.4 Mixed-Use.** Encourage mixed-use developments to include increased residential components to provide greater proximity between jobs and housing, promote pedestrian activity, and reduce traffic congestion and vehicle miles traveled (VMT).

**Policy LU 1.5 Surplus Land.** Consider redesignating City-owned land not required for public services, facilities, or infrastructure for development of affordable housing.

**Policy LU 1.6 Legal Nonconforming Developments.** Allow legally established nonconforming uses and buildings to be maintained, have minor expansions where appropriate, and be reconstructed if destroyed by fire or natural disaster. Encourage reconstruction and/or minor expansions to have a design that is visually compatible with surrounding development and complies with the City's development standards.

**Policy LU 1.7 Annexation.** Annex urbanized areas of the unincorporated land adjacent to the City Limits where landowners petition the City to be annexed, subject to the following conditions:

- The annexation is comprehensive, rather than piecemeal; and
- Landowners will pay the full cost of City services, will assume a proportionate share of existing City debts, and will contribute to the existing capital improvements of the City, which will benefit the area to be annexed.

**Policy LU 1.8 New Development within the Sphere of Influence.** Work with the County of San Mateo to require new developments and related infrastructure within the Sphere of Influence to be consistent with the City's General Plan, Zoning Code requirements, and development standards.

**Policy LU 1.9 Voter-Approved Growth Limits.** As required by law, for the duration that Measure Y is in effect, any inconsistency between the measure and other provisions of the General Plan's Land Use Element shall default to the provisions specified in Measure Y.

## ACTION

**Action LU 1.10 Review of New Development.** Track actual growth of both new housing units and net new nonresidential floor area annually and review every two to three years. Use this information to monitor nonresidential floor area and housing units in San Mateo and to adjust this General Plan, infrastructure plans, and circulation plans, as necessary, if actual growth is exceeding projections.

**GOAL LU-2** Balance well-designed development with thoughtful preservation.

## POLICIES

**Policy LU 2.1 Development Intensity/Density.** Regulate development density/intensity to recognize natural environmental constraints, such as floodplains, earthquake faults, debris flow areas and other hazards, availability of urban services, and transportation and circulation constraints.

**Policy LU 2.2 Caltrain Stations and El Camino Real Minimum Densities.** Require new residential development within a half mile of a Caltrain station or within one block of the El Camino Real corridor to meet the minimum density established by the applied land use designation and encourage new development to achieve maximum density.

**Policy LU 2.3 Community Benefits.** Develop a framework to allow density/intensity bonuses and concessions in exchange for the provision of community benefits, such as additional affordable housing, increased open space, public plazas or recreational facilities, subsidized retail space for small businesses, subsidized community space for nonprofits that provide community support services or childcare facilities, pedestrian and multimodal safety improvements, and/or off-site infrastructure improvements above minimum requirements.



**Policy LU 2.4 Clustering.** Encourage clustered development where benefits to natural ecology, habitat conservation, and/or preservation of historic resources can be achieved.

## ACTION



**Action LU 2.5 Community Benefits Dashboard.** Create an online public portal that highlights the community benefits derived from new development projects, such as payment of in-lieu fees, contribution to the childcare fund, contribution to the public art fund, and other benefits to improve and standardize communication about new development projects and their benefits.



## A DIVERSE RANGE OF LAND USES

To help keep San Mateo a great place to live, work, visit, and raise a family, it is important to plan for a diverse range of land uses that support one another. Placing housing, job centers, shopping, and eating areas close together and near transit encourages people to live, work, play, and shop without needing a car to travel between destinations. Commercial centers and an active Downtown provide a space where people can work, recreate, and build community while also supporting the city's fiscal health.

The Strive San Mateo General Plan 2040 includes land use designations and policies that concentrate higher-density residential, mixed-use, office, and commercial uses in and around Downtown, along the El Camino Real corridor or within a half mile from a Caltrain station. It also supports locating and preserving certain commercial uses, such as convenience retail or grocery stores, adjacent to residential neighborhoods, which encourages walkability and increases access to healthy foods. This General Plan supports the development of office buildings and business parks that facilitate transit, pedestrian, and bicycle commutes. It also promotes parks, open space, cultural and recreational facilities, and community gathering spaces for all members of the San Mateo community. For background information and policies about parks, open space, and recreational facilities, please refer to the Conservation, Open Space and Recreation Element.

## GOALS, POLICIES, AND ACTIONS

**GOAL LU-3** Provide a wide range of land uses, including housing, parks, open space, recreation, retail, commercial services, office, and industrial to adequately meet the full spectrum of needs in the community.

### POLICIES

**Policy LU 3.1 Housing Diversity.** Promote safe, attractive, and walkable residential neighborhoods with diverse types and sizes of homes for individuals, families, and households of all income levels.

**Policy LU 3.2 Commercial Development.** Encourage development that builds on the strengths and unique qualities of existing neighborhoods and provides appropriate transition in terms of intensity of use, height, bulk, and design. Require commercial development adjacent to residential areas to appropriately address circulation, traffic, truck loading, trash/recycling, noise, visual impacts, public safety, hazardous materials storage, fire safety, air pollutant emissions, and odors in a way that minimizes impacts on neighboring uses.

**Policy LU 3.3 Neighborhood Commercial Preservation.** Encourage the preservation of local-serving commercial retail and service uses in neighborhood shopping districts.

**Policy LU 3.4 Convenience Retail.** Encourage and preserve convenience stores and neighborhood retail uses adjacent to residential neighborhoods, including as part of new mixed-use development.



**Policy LU 3.5 Support Service Uses.** Encourage businesses that provide a variety of services, such as restaurants, daycare facilities, medical clinics, gyms, pharmacies, and grocery stores in locations that serve residential neighborhoods and commercial/office uses. Prioritize the development of these services in equity priority communities in the city.

**Policy LU 3.6 Hotels.** Encourage development of hotels in commercial areas and allow small hotels in mixed-use districts where they are consistent with the density of adjacent uses.

**Policy LU 3.7 Visitor Economy.** Collaborate with other Peninsula cities and the San Mateo County/Silicon Valley Convention and Visitors Bureau to support the continued development of the visitor economy of both the city and the region, including lodging, entertainment, recreation, retail, and local events; encourage uses that attract visitors. Incentivize through fee reduction and visitor perks, sustainable modes of travel to and from the city to reduce both the use of air travel and gas-powered vehicles.



**Policy LU 3.8 Workplaces.** Develop office buildings and business parks to facilitate transit, pedestrian, and bicycle commutes. Provide compact development, mixed uses, and connectivity to transit to reduce vehicle miles traveled (VMT).

- Policy LU 3.9 Office Park Evolution.** Support the transition of single-use office parks into mixed-use districts that include residential, retail, office, services, and/or parks and open space. Within an office site that is redeveloping as mixed-use, locate offices and commercial space closest to high-volume roadways and locate new residential uses as far as possible from high-volume roadways.
- Policy LU 3.10 Service Commercial.** Retain service commercial and light industrial uses in San Mateo to support local businesses and to meet the needs of residents locally. Preserve properties that are zoned for service commercial uses and discourage uses that are allowed elsewhere in the city from locating in service commercial areas.
- Policy LU 3.11 Community Gathering Places.** Provide and maintain inviting public spaces and streets that provide space for all members of the San Mateo community to meet, gather, and enjoy.
- Policy LU 3.12 Publicly Accessible Spaces.** Integrate a variety of privately owned and maintained publicly accessible spaces into new development and require signage that clearly identifies these spaces as publicly accessible.
- Policy LU 3.13 Cultural Facilities and Public Art.** Recognize cultural facilities and public art as part of a healthy and thriving community. Use funds from the City's art in-lieu fee to enhance existing public art and cultural facilities and encourage new facilities that reflect the character and identity of the surrounding neighborhoods.
- Policy LU 3.14 School Site Reuse.** Encourage the school district to prioritize affordable housing and community recreation needs when a school site is planned for reuse or redevelopment, in accordance with the priorities in the Housing Element and Conservation, Open Space, and Recreation Element.
- Policy LU 3.15 Residential Uses to Support Institutions.** Support the development of housing at quasi-public institutions such as schools, churches, and other facilities of an educational, religious, charitable, or philanthropic nature, consistent with the mission of these organizations. Encourage the development of ancillary residential uses when aligned with the organization's mission or to provide housing for employees.
- Policy LU 3.16 Public Facilities.** Encourage reuse or redevelopment of public facilities to residential and/or recreational uses that provide a public benefit to the community, such as community gardens.
- Policy LU 3.17 Peninsula Golf and Country Club.** Support the retention of the existing club and recreation use. If the site is redeveloped, residential development that is compatible with adjacent uses in terms of density and intensity should be encouraged.

## ACTIONS

- Action LU 3.18 Permitted Uses.** Re-evaluate the types of commercial uses that are permitted and that require a special-use permit in all commercial districts to ensure requirements are forward looking and aligned with current economic needs and trends.



**Action LU 3.19 Major Institutions/Special Facilities.** Work with relevant agencies and organizations to support the long-term viability of major institutions and special facilities that provide important recreational, educational, or medical services, such as the San Mateo County Events Center, College of San Mateo, San Mateo County Hospital, Mills Health Center, and Peninsula Golf and Country Club. Require a Specific Plan and/or Master Plan to guide reuse or redevelopment of institutions and special facilities when appropriate.

## FOCUSED PLANNING AREAS

This section focuses on three specific areas around the city – Downtown, the El Camino Real Corridor, and the Hillsdale Station Area. These areas are near transit and are designated for future growth and change in this General Plan as well as in other adopted planning documents:

- **The Downtown Area Plan**, adopted in 2003 and revised in 2009, covers about 70 blocks traditionally known as Downtown, plus the area known as the Gateway and portions of adjacent neighborhoods. This plan pertains to new Downtown development and focuses on preserving existing Downtown resources and enhancing its vitality and activity while also maintaining a sense of place.
- **The El Camino Real Master Plan**, adopted in 2001, provides guidance on streetscape, design guidelines, and implementation strategies for the future of the El Camino Real corridor, from State Route (SR) 92 to the Belmont city border.
- **The Hillsdale Station Area Plan**, adopted in 2011, is the guiding document for the Hillsdale Station Area that sets forth the regulatory framework, goals, and policies to transform the area surrounding the Hillsdale Caltrain station into a sustainable, pedestrian-oriented transit hub.



This General Plan includes additional policy guidance to help plan for the growth and change that is anticipated and encouraged in these three focused planning areas. Policy guidance focused on historic resources, city image, and the design of mixed-use and commercial areas can be found in the Community Design and Historic Resources Element. The Circulation Element also includes policies focused on promoting walking and multi-modal transportation improvements in Downtown and facilitating efficient travel and pedestrian safety along the El Camino Real corridor. It also includes policy guidance for transit stations, including the Hillsdale Station.

## GOALS, POLICIES, AND ACTIONS

### Downtown

**GOAL LU-4** Maintain downtown San Mateo as the economic, cultural, and social center of the community.

### POLICIES

- Policy LU 4.1** **Downtown Land Uses.** Allow and prioritize a wide range of residential, dining, entertainment, lodging, and other commercial uses downtown, at high intensities and densities, with strong multi-modal connectivity to the San Mateo Caltrain station and other transit.
- Policy LU 4.2** **Quality of Downtown Development.** Promote quality design of all new development that recognizes the regional and historical importance of Downtown San Mateo and strengthens its pedestrian-friendly, historic, and transit-oriented character.
- Policy LU 4.3** **Significant Historic Structures.** Protect key landmarks, historic structures, and the historic character of Downtown, as defined in the Community Design and Historic Resources Element.

### ACTIONS

- Action LU 4.4** **Downtown Area Plan.** Update the Downtown Area Plan to support and strengthen the Downtown as a vibrant and active commercial, cultural, and community gathering district. The updated Downtown Area Plan shall align with the General Plan, integrate recommendations from other concurrent City efforts, focus growth and intensity in proximity to the Caltrain station, encourage superblock concepts or approaches and allow parklets, update parking standards and parking management strategies, allow for increased housing units and density, and support high-quality, pedestrian-oriented design and architecture.
- Action LU 4.5** **Downtown Special Events.** Sponsor and support Downtown activities and events that brings Downtown to life, attract residents and visitors, promote local businesses, create inclusive community gatherings, and provide information to residents about City initiatives and services.



## El Camino Real Corridor

**GOAL LU-5** Promote residential and mixed land uses along El Camino Real to strengthen its role as both a local and regional corridor.

## POLICIES

- Policy LU 5.1 Housing on El Camino Real.** Encourage new residential uses along El Camino Real as part of both pure residential and mixed-use development to diversify the existing commercial character.
- Policy LU 5.2 El Camino Real Landscaping.** Retain the general residential and landscaped character of El Camino Real north of Tilton Avenue. Promote the visual upgrading of El Camino Real south of 9th Avenue through increased landscaping, coordination of public improvements, property maintenance, and sign control, and through conformance with the El Camino Real Master Plan or a future consolidated Corridor Plan per Action LU 5-3.

## ACTION

- Action LU 5.3 El Camino Real Corridor Plan.** Prepare a Corridor Plan for El Camino Real that assembles existing planning documents for the corridor into a single comprehensive plan that implements the El Camino Real policies in General Plan 2040.



## Hillsdale Station Area

**GOAL LU-6** Promote transit-oriented development around the Hillsdale Caltrain station.

### POLICIES

- Policy LU 6.1 Rail Corridor Transit-Oriented Development Plan (Rail Corridor Plan).** Continue to implement the Rail Corridor Plan to allow, encourage, and provide guidance for the creation of world-class transit-oriented, mixed-use development (TOD) within a half-mile radius of the Hillsdale and Hayward Park Caltrain stations, while maintaining and improving the quality of life for those who already live and work in the area.
- Policy LU 6.2 Hillsdale Shopping Center.** Allow redevelopment of the Hillsdale Shopping Center for a mix of uses, including commercial, retail, office, hotel, and residential uses. Update the Hillsdale Station Area Plan or require preparation of a master development plan to ensure the site is developed comprehensively and provides appropriate transitions to the adjacent neighborhoods.

### ACTION

- Action LU 6.3 Hillsdale Station Area Plan.** Update the Hillsdale Station Area Plan to foster higher-density residential, office and mixed-use, transit-oriented development that connects to neighborhoods to the east and west, improves bicycle and pedestrian circulation to the station, and increases park and open space areas.





## SHOPPING AREAS IN TRANSITION

Over the lifetime of this General Plan, some older shopping centers in the city are likely to change as old formats of brick-and-mortar retail evolve. The Hillsdale Mall, Bridgepointe Shopping Center, and Bel Mateo commercial area (Olympic Village) are three areas around the city that appear likely to experience meaningful transition over the next 20 years. Since these shopping areas provide neighborhood-serving uses that support nearby residences, the intent of this section is to support preservation while allowing for transition to a different mix of housing, shopping, services, and jobs. Policy guidance for other neighborhood shopping areas is contained under Goal LU-3 and policies related to the Hillsdale Mall are under Goal LU-6. Policies focused on the design of mixed-use and commercial areas can be found in the Community Design and Historic Resources Element.

## GOALS, POLICIES, AND ACTIONS

**GOAL LU-7** Support the transition of shopping areas designated for new uses into vibrant districts with a range of housing, shopping, services, and jobs.

### POLICY

**Policy LU 7.1 Shopping Areas in Transition.** Support the long-term viability of shopping centers and districts that provide neighborhood-serving uses by allowing these sites to redevelop with higher-density, mixed-use development that includes restaurants, services, other commercial uses, housing and open space, while preserving core neighborhood-serving uses.



## ACTIONS

- Action LU 7.2 Bridgepointe Area Plan.** Update and consolidate the Bridgepointe Master Plan and Mariner’s Island Specific Plan into one planning document to guide redevelopment of the Bridgepointe Shopping Center and the surrounding properties into a mixed-use neighborhood that maintains its regional retail component while developing a diverse range of housing types, including affordable housing; new parks and recreational facilities; community gathering places; ample facilities to support transit, bicycling, and walking; and a range of businesses and services. The plan shall include safe access for pedestrians, cyclists, and transit riders from Bridgepoint to the City’s transit corridors, such as Caltrain and El Camino Real.
- Action LU 7.3 Bel Mateo Area Plan.** Prepare a Specific Plan or Master Plan to guide redevelopment of the Bel Mateo area into a mixed-use neighborhood with a diverse range of neighborhood-serving commercial uses and amenities; new market-rate and affordable housing, ample facilities to support bicycling and walking; and publicly accessible park and open space areas.

## ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE

The Strive San Mateo General Plan 2040 includes policies and actions that will support equitable distribution of resources and opportunities and reduce the impacts of environmental hazards in the areas of the city that experience the highest levels of pollution and negative health outcomes, such as asthma and low birth weight babies, as well as the greatest social and economic disadvantages, such as poverty and housing instability. This General Plan uses the term equity priority community for these neighborhoods and focuses on improving environmental justice and public health for the people who live in these communities by promoting meaningful community engagement and prioritizing improvements that address their needs.

During the development of this General Plan, the City identified two equity priority communities using local knowledge and CalEnviroScreen: North Central and North Shoreview/Shoreview. Figure I-5 in Chapter 1, Introduction, shows the location of these communities and provides more context about the health and socioeconomic issues affecting residents in these neighborhoods.

This section includes policy guidance focused on improving community health and access to healthy foods, with specific policies focused on the identified equity priority communities. State law allows cities and counties to address environmental justice either by adopting a stand-alone Environmental Justice Element or by incorporating environmental justice goals, policies, and actions into other elements. This General Plan takes the approach of incorporating environmental justice goals, policies, and actions into all its elements; therefore, policies and actions focused on environmental justice can also be found throughout the Strive San Mateo General Plan 2040. Safe and sanitary housing, as required by Senate Bill (SB) 1000, is addressed in the Housing Element. Please refer to the Housing Element for housing-related programs that are focused on equity priority communities.

In addition to policies and actions that the City will implement through the Strive San Mateo General Plan 2040 and other City plans, other agencies and organizations, such as the County of San Mateo, nonprofits, and religious groups, also provide resources and help to support equity priority communities. It is important to note that the State regularly updates CalEnviroScreen, and new data sources may become available. The equity priority communities mapped in this General Plan may change as conditions change.

## GOALS, POLICIES, AND ACTIONS

**GOAL LU-8** Support the equitable health and well-being of all neighborhoods in San Mateo and all members of the San Mateo community by improving conditions in equity priority communities.

### Community Health

#### POLICY



**Policy LU 8.1** **Prioritizing Community Health.** Continue to support the physical and mental health and well-being in equity priority communities by prioritizing public safety, resolving land use conflicts and incompatible uses that pose risks to health or safety, remediating contamination, and enforcing building code standards.

#### ACTIONS



**Action LU 8.2** **Collaborations for Community Health.** Develop intentional, strategic, and mutually beneficial relationships with organizations engaged in improving health and well-being, reducing environmental health disparities, expanding access to affordable quality healthcare and mental healthcare, and mitigating negative environmental health hazards. Encourage greater emphasis on expanding or improving health services, including mental health services, in equity priority communities.



**Action LU 8.3** **Health Disparities.** Coordinate with the San Mateo County Public Health Department to promote healthier communities through education, prevention, intervention programs, and other activities that address health disparities and inequities that exist in San Mateo.



**Action LU 8.4** **City Investment.** Use funds collected by the park impact fee to invest in programs and public improvements that connect residents with opportunities to increase their physical activity and improve their physical and mental health, especially in equity priority communities with higher risk of negative public health outcomes. Identify new funding sources for programs and public improvements, if needed.

## Equity Priority Communities

### POLICIES



#### **Policy LU 8.5**

**Community Preservation.** Prevent displacement in equity priority communities by protecting tenants, helping homeowners remain in place, and funding affordable housing.



#### **Policy LU 8.6**

**Safe and Sanitary Homes.** Encourage homes and neighborhoods that are free of environmental health hazards.



#### **Policy LU 8.7**

**Access to Parks and Recreation.** Provide attractive, comfortable, and safe pedestrian and cyclist access to public parks and recreational facilities in and near equity priority communities.

### ACTIONS



#### **Action LU 8.8**

**Streetscape and Safety Improvements.** Work with residents in equity priority communities to identify sidewalk, lighting, landscaping, and roadway improvements needed to improve routes to parks, schools, recreation facilities, and other destinations within the community. Prioritize investments to address health disparities in equity priority communities in the annual Capital Improvement Program.



#### **Action LU 8.9**

**Equity Priority Community Mapping.** Regularly update the map identifying equity priority communities with data from CalEnviroScreen or other sources, including information from community members.



#### **Action LU 8.10**

**Equity Priority Communities Plan.** Prepare a plan for the equity priority communities that addresses the needs of each community, including health, safety, and improved circulation with community input. The plan shall seek to ensure the streets in each community are measurably safe, include ADA accessibility, and have adequate on-street parking. Changes included in the plan shall be developed and enacted with the express purposes of improving health, safety, and welfare for the members of each community.



#### **Action LU 8.11**

**City Services.** Work with residents in equity priority communities to identify services that the City or other partners could provide to improve safety, sanitation, and security in these neighborhoods.



#### **Action LU 8.12**

**Neighborhood Beautification.** Support and promote neighborhood clean-up and beautification initiatives in equity priority communities, including in partnership with neighborhood organizations.

## Access to Healthy Food

### POLICIES



**Policy LU 8.13 Locally Grown Food.** Increase access to fresh food by allowing and encouraging local food production, micro agriculture, edible landscapes, rooftop gardens, community gardens, and urban farms, and by distributing information about community-supported agriculture programs that provide affordable access to fresh food.



**Policy LU 8.14 Retail Food Sources.** Strive to ensure that all households in San Mateo, including those in equity priority communities, have access to retail sources of affordable healthy food, including organic options, such as full-service grocery stores, specialty food markets, farmers markets and/or community gardens, and convenience stores with fresh food options, by working to retain existing retail sources and attract new ones.

### ACTIONS



**Action LU 8.15 Healthy Food Access.** Support the work of San Mateo County Health and other local partners to:

- Continue and expand the ability to use the Electronic Benefit Transfer (EBT) program at farmers' markets and other sources of healthy food.
- Implement programs to encourage markets and convenience stores to stock fresh produce and other healthy foods.
- Encourage restaurants to enlist restaurants in the CalFresh Restaurant Meals Program, which allows people at a high risk of chronic hunger to use CalFresh benefits to buy prepared meals at participating restaurants.
- Continue to provide and expand the subsidized senior lunch program at the San Mateo Senior Center and the Congregate Nutrition Program at the King Center Community Center.



**Action LU 8.16 Urban Agriculture.** Develop City regulations that encourage urban agriculture, community gardens, and farm stands, as appropriate.



## COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Community engagement and resident participation is a high priority for San Mateo. The Strive San Mateo General Plan 2040 aims to engage all residents and stakeholders on matters of development, growth, and public policy in ways that are inclusive, equitable, and give everyone an opportunity to participate in the process. Public engagement with disadvantaged communities can help identify programming and policy changes to allow for improvements where it is needed most. However, many members of vulnerable populations and disadvantaged communities face barriers to meaningful engagement. For example, people with disabilities may have difficulty accessing a meeting location or hearing verbal dialogue. Non-English speakers may have difficulty reading meeting notices or meeting materials in English. Low-income households may be more likely to work multiple jobs or do shift work that precludes attending evening meetings. It is important to understand the specific vulnerable populations and disadvantages faced by San Mateo residents to minimize the barriers to their participation. This General Plan takes the approach of incorporating community engagement goals, policies, and actions into all of its elements; therefore, policies and actions focused on community engagement can also be found throughout the General Plan.

## GOALS, POLICIES, AND ACTIONS

**GOAL LU-9** Include everyone in community development decisions for a shared, sustainable future.

### POLICIES



#### Policy LU 9.1

**Inclusive Outreach.** Notify the community when planning and development decisions are being considered and inform community members about how they can engage in the process. Use outreach and engagement methods that encourage broad representation and are culturally sensitive, particularly for equity priority communities.



**Policy LU 9.2**

**Equitable Engagement.** Provide support for increased community participation in the planning and development processes, particularly in areas with language barriers or a concentration of low-income households that have been historically underrepresented and/or disproportionately impacted by traffic and municipal or industrial uses.

**Policy LU 9.3**

**Development Projects.** Communicate clearly how and at what stages members of the public can provide input on development projects under review and ensure public awareness of all the factors the City must consider in approving or denying a project.

**Policy LU 9.4**

**Applicant Communications.** Require that sponsors of new development projects, especially those that require Planning Commission and/or City Council approval, have early, frequent, and meaningful communication with affected community members and stakeholders, including members of equity priority communities.

## ACTIONS

**Action LU 9.5**

**Community Partners.** Work with community-based organizations and community partners to engage members of equity priority communities in planning and policy decisions.

**Action LU 9.6**

**Community Surveys.** Periodically conduct statistically reliable community surveys, representative of the demographics of the population, to gauge community service needs, policy preferences, and effective communication methods.

**Action LU 9.7**

**Communications Strategy.** Develop a communications strategy that outlines goals and tactics to engage a broad cross-section of the community.

- Prepare public notices and other materials in the predominant language(s) spoken in the community and provide interpretation services at meetings as needed.
- Make public notices and other important documents available in print at local libraries, community centers, or other gathering places.
- Use culturally appropriate approaches.
- When possible, schedule and locate meetings to be convenient for community members to attend.
- Use the City's website, social media, and other communication channels to share information about how community members can participate in public meetings.
- Gather data to understand the economic, gender, age, and racial diversity of the affected population before designing communication approaches aimed at reaching the affected population.
- Provide notification and outreach for development projects using clear and easy-to-understand language to ensure all stakeholders and interested community members understand and have the ability to engage in the development review process.



## CLIMATE CHANGE AND LAND USE

Climate change is driven by an increase in (GHGs in Earth's atmosphere, trapping more heat near the surface and changing Earth's climate in a number of ways. These changes often include increasing the frequency and severity of natural hazards, either directly (such as causing summer temperatures to reach dangerously high levels) or indirectly (such as warm temperatures and droughts leading to more dry vegetation, increasing wildfire risks). The hazardous situations created or exacerbated by climate change may result in an increased chance of personal injury or other harm, a greater risk of damage to buildings and infrastructure, and disruption of essential services, among other hardships. San Mateo, like most communities in California, is expected to experience multiple direct impacts as a result of climate change, including potential flooding, sea level rise, wildfires, drought, extreme heat, and negative effects on public health and biodiversity.

Land use decisions and regulations can decrease GHG emissions by affecting how frequently and how far people drive (the single greatest source of GHGs in San Mateo) and how much electricity or natural gas is used in buildings. Land use decisions can also reduce the exposure of people and assets to climate change hazards by locating new development outside of hazard areas and/or designing it to withstand expected future events. This element includes policies and actions aimed at significantly reducing GHG emissions by encouraging sustainable urban design, requiring transit-oriented and mixed-use development, and reducing car dependency. It also supports San Mateo's adopted Climate Action Plan, which is the City's comprehensive strategy to reduce GHG emissions.

Most buildings, both residential and nonresidential, use electricity and natural gas to operate appliances and other pieces of equipment. While sources of electricity have become much cleaner over time and will continue to become cleaner due to State law and utility policies, the GHG emissions associated with using a unit of natural gas has remained constant, as natural gas is a fossil fuel and cannot become a cleaner energy source. To reduce GHG emissions, buildings can be “decarbonized,” or constructed to be mostly electric or all electric, and existing buildings can be electrified as part of retrofit activities. Advances in electric equipment, such as those used for space heating, water heating, and cooking, can also help make building electrification easier and more cost-effective.

Both this Land Use Element and the Safety Element include policies and actions to plan ahead for future climate conditions and protect San Mateo residents from climate hazards. The Public Services and Facilities Element includes policies and actions to promote energy conservation and renewable energy.

While this General Plan includes policy guidance to help reduce GHG emissions, data about existing and projected GHG emissions in San Mateo and strategies for the reduction of GHG emissions can also be found in the City’s Climate Action Plan.

## GOALS, POLICIES, AND ACTIONS

**GOAL LU-10** Make San Mateo strong and resilient by acting to significantly reduce greenhouse gas emissions and adapt to a changing climate.

### POLICIES



**Policy LU 10.1 Effects of Climate Change.** Consider the effects of climate change in updating or amending the General Plan, disaster planning, City projects, infrastructure planning, future policies, and long-term strategies. Recognize potential climate change consequences, such as sea level rise, flooding, higher groundwater, less availability of drinking water, hotter temperatures, increased wildfire risk, and changing air quality. Prioritize protecting equity priority communities from the disproportionate burden of climate hazards, including against risks of displacement and challenges in rebuilding after major incidents.



**Policy LU 10.2 Decarbonized Building Stock.** Eliminate the use of fossil fuels as an energy source in all new building construction and reduce the use of fossil fuels as an energy source in the existing building stock at the time of building alteration through requirements for all-electric construction.



**Policy LU 10.3 Sustainable Improvements.** Ensure that all improvements to existing structures are developed or remodeled in a sustainable and resilient manner.

### ACTIONS



**Action LU 10.4 Climate Action Plan Implementation.** Implement the greenhouse gas reduction strategies to meet the City’s Climate Action Plan emission-reduction goals.



**Action LU 10.5 Climate Action Plan Monitoring.** Monitor and report progress on the implementation of the City’s Climate Action Plan on an annual basis. Regularly review new opportunities and approaches to reduce emissions consistent with the Climate Action Plan’s goals.



**Action LU 10.6 Greenhouse Gas Inventory.** Every five years, prepare an updated greenhouse gas emissions inventory consistent with the Climate Action Plan.



**Action LU 10.7 Engage the Public in the Climate Action Plan.** Provide public information to educate residents and businesses on the Climate Action Plan and to spark behavioral changes in individual energy and water consumption, transportation mode choices, and waste reduction.



**Action LU 10.8 Building Decarbonization.** Evaluate and adopt reach codes and other policies to decarbonize the building stock.



**Action LU 10.9 Resilience of Critical Facilities and Public Infrastructure.** Identify critical facilities and public infrastructure in areas vulnerable to climate change hazards, and work to site, design, and upgrade these facilities with consideration for future increases in severity that may occur over the anticipated life of the development. In cases where facilities cannot be sustainably maintained, evaluate the costs and benefits of relocation. Where facilities can be safely sited for the near term, but future impacts are likely, prepare an adaptive management plan detailing steps for maintenance, retrofitting, and/or relocation.



**Action LU 10.10 Clean Fuel Infrastructure.** Support efforts to build electric vehicle charging stations and clean fuel stations in San Mateo, including hydrogen and sustainably sourced biofuels, as supported by market conditions.



## A SUSTAINABLE ECONOMY

The City's fiscal health and livability depend on maintaining a diverse community of businesses that are supported by residents, visitors, and workers. High-quality public services, reliable infrastructure, and local quality of life are critical to attracting, retaining, and growing local businesses. In addition to providing land where businesses can locate and expand, the City plays a key role in building, maintaining, and/or coordinating infrastructure to support businesses, including roadways, water and sewer services, solid waste disposal, and energy and telecommunications systems. The financial resources to address these needs require that the City maintain a healthy and fiscally sustainable budget. This, in turn, depends on cultivating a diverse tax base that includes a broad mix of businesses and balances the need for both housing and job-generating land uses.

The economic success of regional industry clusters, such as technology, life science, and entertainment has generated a concentration of jobs on the Peninsula. As a result, demand for housing from workers moving to the area for job opportunities has increased at a much higher rate than housing production. Limited housing production in the Bay Area region has created a housing shortage, which has in turn led to rising costs and other housing challenges, such as overcrowding and displacement.

A sustainable economy in 2040 will harness the strength of the regional job market to create quality jobs, support the growth of local businesses, and provide local housing opportunities for residents and workers at all income levels. An important component of a sustainable economy includes balancing job growth with housing development to ensure that all workers have an opportunity to live in proximity to their job. There is also a need to support local workers and the local economy by encouraging local hires, living wages, and training for workers, such as an apprenticeship program. The City currently charges a Commercial Linkage Fee for new job-generating construction like offices, hotels, medical buildings, retail, and restaurants to support the creation or preservation of affordable housing to assist lower- and moderate-wage workers who cannot afford the current housing market prices.

During the development of the Strive San Mateo General Plan 2040, the City completed a comprehensive update to the Housing Element. Please refer to the Housing Element for programs aimed at supporting households facing housing challenges, such as overcrowding and potential displacement. The Housing Element also encourages housing for all income groups.



## GOALS, POLICIES, AND ACTIONS

**GOAL LU-11** Cultivate a diverse, thriving, inclusive, and green economy.

### POLICIES

**Policy LU 11.1 Economic Development.** Prioritize the retention and expansion of existing businesses and attract new businesses that strengthen and diversify the City's economic base.

**Policy LU 11.2 Local Employment.** Encourage a diverse mix of uses that provide opportunities for employment of residents of all skill and education levels.

**Policy LU 11.3 Local Hiring and a Living Wage.** Encourage developers and contractors doing work in the city to evaluate hiring local labor from the Bay Area region and providing living wages.

**Policy LU 11.4 Diverse Economic Base.** Strive to maintain a reasonable similarity between potential job generation and the local job market by maintaining a diverse economic base.

**Policy LU 11.5 Jobs to Housing Balance.** Strive to maintain a reasonable balance between income levels, housing types, and housing costs within the city. In future area-wide planning efforts, rather than with individual projects, recognize the importance of matching housing choice and affordability with job generation in the city, through an emphasis on the jobs-housing balance.



**Policy LU 11.6 Job Training Programs.** Collaborate with educational services, nonprofits, labor, and businesses to provide job training programs that meet the needs of businesses and industries. Help connect local businesses with programs, organizations, or educational institutions, such as NOVAworks, College of San Mateo, the San Mateo County Community College District, San Mateo Union High School District, and Small Business Development Centers.

**Policy LU 11.7 Apprenticeship Programs.** Encourage employers within San Mateo, especially building and construction companies, to evaluate hiring from or contributing to apprenticeship training programs that provide on-the-job training and are certified by the State's Division of Apprenticeship Standards (DAS).

**Policy LU 11.8 State-of-the-Art Telecommunications.** Support the development of telecommunications policies and infrastructure, including public Wi-Fi, to meet the needs of local businesses and residents and support remote work.

### ACTIONS

**Action LU 11.9 Quality Local Jobs.** Develop programs to retain and attract businesses that provide a living wage, offer health insurance benefits, and match the diverse range of education and skills of San Mateo residents.



**Action LU 11.10 Small Business Support.** Help small businesses stay and grow by offering tools and support, such as multilingual outreach, assistance accessing free educational services and financing opportunities, connecting with the Chamber of Commerce and Downtown San Mateo Association, and assistance understanding City requirements and preparing for code compliance.

**Action LU 11.11 Commercial Displacement.** Provide proactive support to local businesses affected by construction and redevelopment by communicating with business owners well in advance of construction and assisting in identifying potential locations for temporary relocation. Encourage and support the retention of existing businesses in new or renovated spaces that are a part of redevelopment projects.

**Action LU 11.12 First Source Hiring.** Explore the feasibility of establishing a First Source Hiring Program that encourages developers and contractors to make best efforts to hire new employees, workers, and subcontractors that are based in San Mateo County, and to partner with organizations that offer job training programs, such as the San Mateo County Community College District and San Mateo Union High School District.

**Action LU 11.13 Living Wage Incentives.** Maintain provisions in the Affordable Housing Commercial Linkage Fee that offer fee reductions to developers who voluntarily enter into Area Standard Wage Participation Agreements with the City.

**GOAL LU-12** Create financial stability for the City by maintaining its ability to pay for public improvements, core infrastructure, and essential services.

## POLICIES

**Policy LU 12.1 Revenue Generators.** Retain and grow existing businesses and attract new businesses that can generate and diversify the City's tax revenue and increase job opportunities to ensure the City has adequate resources for infrastructure improvements and essential City services, such as police, fire, parks, recreation, and libraries.

**Policy LU 12.2 Commercial Linkage Fee.** Maintain the City's Affordable Housing Commercial Linkage Fee assessed to new nonresidential construction that recognizes the connection between increased workers in San Mateo and increased demand for housing at all levels. Use the fees collected to support the creation or preservation of affordable housing to assist the workers who will make lower or moderate wages and cannot afford the current housing market prices.

## ACTION

**Action LU 12.3 Fiscal Neutrality.** Study the feasibility and potential impacts of adopting a Fiscal Neutrality Policy that would require new development to offset any difference between future tax revenue and the cost of City services to that development. The policy should also consider the City's goals to provide a diverse range of housing affordable to all members of the community.

## DEVELOPMENT REVIEW

New development projects in San Mateo go through a planning review process to ensure that all applicable City standards and requirements are addressed. Most development projects require a Planning Application, which is a written request for approval of a project before a building permit application can be submitted. Before a formal Planning Application, applicants usually meet with staff in the Community Development Department to discuss the scope of the project, application requirements, and applicable codes and policies. Most projects also require community outreach and engagement, usually in the form of mailed notification and a neighborhood meeting, prior to a Planning Application submittal to collect early input from residents. Larger projects can also include a Planning Commission study session. These early steps help to ensure success when a project's formal Planning Application is submitted.



Once the Community Development Department receives the plans and required application materials, the project is reviewed by other City departments, like Public Works, Parks and Recreation, Police, and Fire, for completeness and compliance with applicable codes, policies, and City requirements. During this time, the City also determines the scope of the environmental review, which could include an exemption, an Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration, or an Environmental Impact Report, consistent with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). After being deemed complete and finishing the environmental review process, City staff prepare findings and conditions of approval for the project. Depending on the size and scope of the project, and the type of approval being sought, final approval may come from the Zoning Administrator, the Planning Commission, or the City Council.

## GOALS, POLICIES, AND ACTIONS

**GOAL LU-13** Maintain Development Review and Building Permit processes that are comprehensive and efficient.

### POLICIES

**Policy LU 13.1 Development Review Process.** Review development proposals and building permit applications in an efficient and timely manner while maintaining quality standards in accordance with City codes, policies, and regulations, and in compliance with State requirements.



**Policy LU 13.2 Public Education.** Promote public awareness of the development review and permitting process.

**Policy LU 13.3 Fee Information.** Maintain an updated schedule of fees and housing development affordability requirements, all zoning ordinances and development standards, and annual fee or finance reports on the City's website. In addition, maintain archives of impact fee nexus studies, cost of service studies, or equivalent reports for ease of information sharing with the public.

## REGIONAL COOPERATION

Many issues addressed in the Strive San Mateo General Plan 2040 extend beyond the city boundaries; therefore, it is important to highlight the need for collaboration between the City and other public agencies on these issues. This General Plan encourages inter-agency cooperation and engagement by the City in current and long-range plans prepared by other regional agencies, such as Plan Bay Area. The Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC), in partnership with the Association of Bay Area Governments (ABAG), prepared Plan Bay Area 2050, which includes strategies that connect housing, the economy, transportation, and the environment. The vision of the plan is to ensure the Bay Area is affordable, connected, diverse, healthy, and vibrant for all by the year 2050. Plan Bay Area focuses on land use and transportation investments in Priority Development Areas, which are areas identified by local jurisdictions where housing and job growth will be concentrated close to public transit. San Mateo has identified five Priority Development Areas that are included in Plan Bay Area 2050.

## GOALS, POLICIES, AND ACTIONS

**GOAL LU-14** Collaborate and communicate with other public agencies regarding regional issues.

### POLICIES

- Policy LU 14.1 Interagency Cooperation.** Promote and participate in cooperative planning with other public agencies and the jurisdictions within San Mateo County, such as the 21 Elements regional collaboration, regarding regional issues such as water supply, traffic congestion, rail transportation, wildfire hazards, air pollution, waste management, fire services, emergency medical services, and climate change.
- Policy LU 14.2 Public Agency Developments.** Require developments constructed by other governmental agencies to conform to the City's General Plan, Zoning Ordinance, and other development regulations, to the extent possible.
- Policy LU 14.3 Plan Bay Area.** Remain engaged in current and future long-range plans prepared by Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC), Association of Bay Area Governments (ABAG), and other regional organizations to influence and be aware of projected growth assumptions for San Mateo and regional priorities for transportation, infrastructure, and the economy that could affect the city.
- Policy LU 14.4 Priority Development Areas.** Support the strategies outlined in Plan Bay Area 2050, especially within City-identified Priority Development Areas.



## GENERAL PLAN MAINTENANCE

Long-range planning in San Mateo does not end with the adoption of the Strive San Mateo General Plan 2040. To achieve the community's vision, decisions about development projects, capital improvements, specific plans, and other plans and policies affecting land use, transportation, and the physical environment will need to be consistent with this General Plan.

## GOALS, POLICIES, AND ACTIONS

**GOAL LU-15** Ensure that the City's General Plan is consistent with State law, legally adequate, and up to date.

### POLICIES

**Policy LU 15.1 General Plan Amendments.** Amendments to the General Plan shall be considered as needed. Revisions to the General Plan may be needed to ensure that elements remain consistent with each other and in compliance with State law.

**Policy LU 15.2 Specific and Master Plans.** All adopted plans, including transportation plans, Specific Plans, and Master Plans, shall be consistent with this General Plan.

### ACTIONS

**Action LU 15.3 Annual General Plan Progress Report.** Submit an Annual Progress Report on the status of the General Plan implementation to the City Council and to the Office of Planning and Research by April 1 of each year, per Government Code Section 65400.

**Action LU 15.4 Specific Plans and Master Plans.** Review all adopted Specific Plans and Master Plans and determine if updates are needed for consistency with this General Plan or if any out-of-date plans should be retired.





# CHAPTER 3

## Circulation Element









# CIRCULATION ELEMENT

## INTRODUCTION

This Circulation Element provides the policy framework for attaining a future multimodal transportation system that meets the community's needs, is sustainable, advances environmental justice, and improves the community's welfare. This element promotes a circulation system that serves the land use plan in the Land Use Element and is designed for all users and modes of transportation, welcomes innovation, and addresses the challenges of roadway improvements and parking.

For the larger Bay Area region, the Association of Bay Area Governments (ABAG) and the Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC) coordinate transportation and land use planning through the Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy, known as Plan Bay Area 2050. Plan Bay Area 2050 guides transportation funding and policy decisions for the region.

Transportation is the movement of people and goods and plays a significant role in a community's quality of life. A well-planned circulation system allows people and goods to get from where they are to where they want or need to go in an equitable, efficient, and timely manner. People, regardless of socioeconomic status, age, and physical ability, should be able to move around using many modes of transportation, whether that is walking, bicycling, using a mobility device, taking transit, driving, or other emerging technologies. Just as important, the circulation system plays a critical role in creating and enhancing public spaces like sidewalks, paseos, and pedestrian plazas for community interaction; providing access for goods to be transported and delivered; and managing the amount and location of parking and curbside access. With this in mind, the Circulation Element presents the priorities for developing a multimodal transportation network in the city based on a complete streets approach.

**This element addresses these eight transportation priorities:**

- Multimodal Transportation Network
- Transportation Demand Management
- Pedestrian Network
- Bicycles and Micromobility Network
- Transit Services
- Roadway Network Improvements
- Parking and Curbside Management
- Future Mobility and Technology



## RELEVANCE TO GENERAL PLAN THEMES



### Sustainability in this Element:

- Increases the safety, convenience, and appeal of walking, bicycling, and transit use to reduce reliance on gas-powered vehicles, one of the City's primary sources of greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions.
- Requires new development to include specific, measurable strategies to reduce motor vehicle trips.
- Establishes new parking management practices to support both economic growth and environmental sustainability.
- Encourages urban spaces that promote walking and multi-modal transportation improvements, through methods such as requiring sidewalks as part of new development or through the implementation of a "superblock" or similar concept in the downtown that focuses on creating car-light realms.



### Environmental Justice in this Element:

- Reduces single-occupant vehicle trips to reduce air pollution that causes acute and chronic illnesses in equity priority communities.
- Prioritizes new transportation amenities in equity priority communities based on community input and data analysis.
- Recommends safety improvements near transit stops and supports collaboration with transit agencies to improve transit services for residents who cannot drive or do not have access to a car.



### Community Engagement in this Element:

- Ensures that the City will involve the community early in the process so that future improvements in neighborhoods reflect community input.
- Engages seniors, students, transit users, community organizations, and residents of equity priority communities to provide input on solutions for different users.





## MULTIMODAL TRANSPORTATION NETWORK

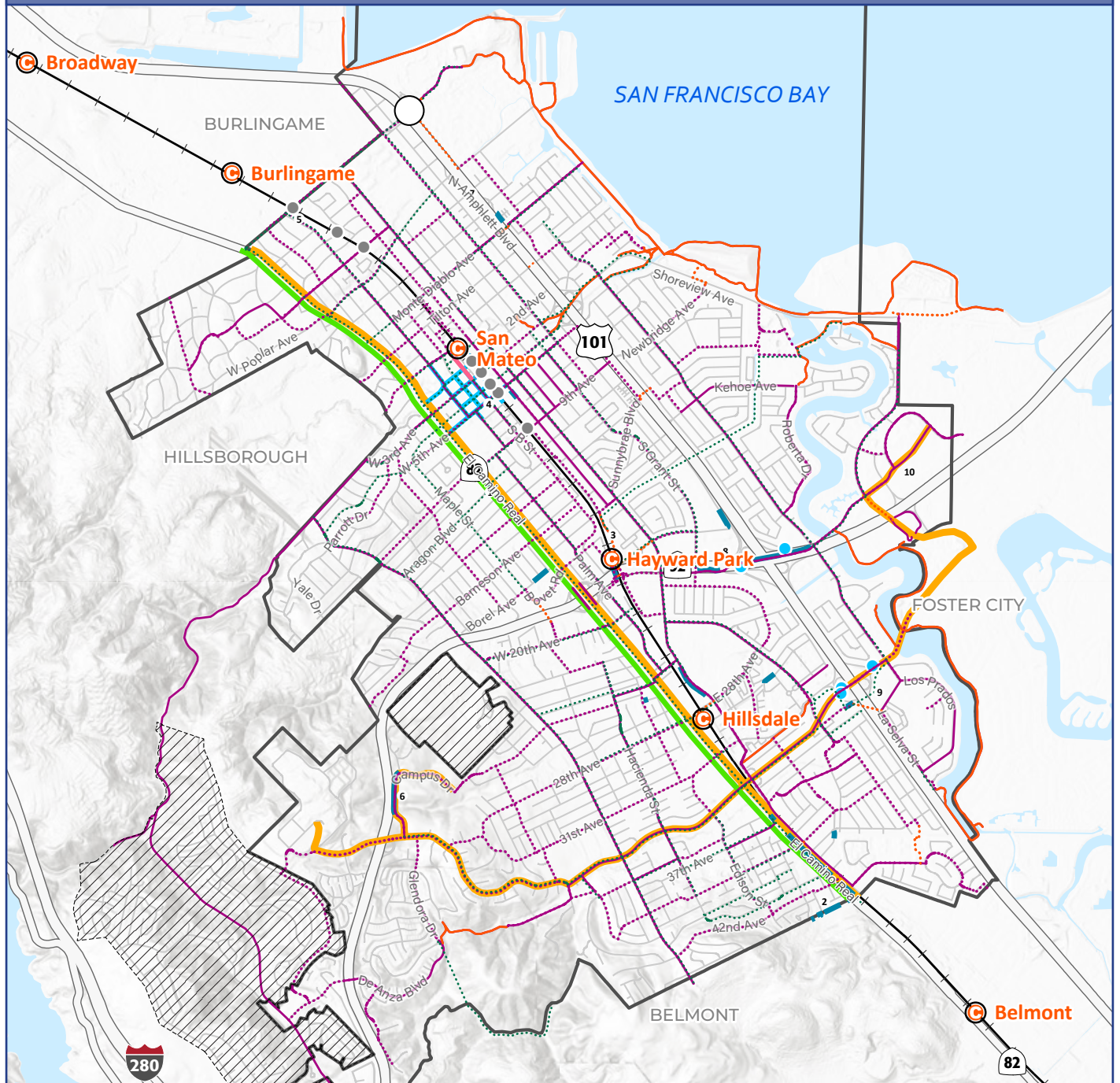
In transportation planning, “modes” refer to different ways of getting around: walking, bicycling, riding transit, and driving. A “multimodal” transportation network accommodates many different modes of transportation, while embracing complete streets principles. A complete street includes safety improvements that benefit all users (i.e., drivers, pedestrians, and bicyclists) and incorporates green infrastructure elements to improve stormwater quality. By increasing travel options that don’t rely solely on driving, GHG emissions and congestion from the transportation system can be reduced. Figure C-1 represents possible options for the 2040 Circulation Network; while the identified pedestrian, bicycle, and transit improvements may change over the lifespan of the Strive San Mateo General Plan 2040, the goal will be to complete travel gaps and maintain and improve the transportation network as the city grows.

Achievement of a multimodal transportation network requires both big-picture policy direction and focused policies and actions for infrastructure improvements. The policies and actions in this section provide a high-level approach to attain a multimodal network, with subsequent sections focused on the programmatic infrastructure policies, including those focused on biking, pedestrians, and transit use, to support such a network. In addition to this Circulation Element, the Land Use Element includes Action LU 5.3 to implement multi-modal improvements along El Camino Real.

Recognizing the importance of improving the safety of the multimodal transportation network, this element also includes a Vision Zero policy. Vision Zero is based on the five elements of a Safe Systems Approach advanced by the Federal Highway Administration to eliminate traffic fatalities and serious injuries on the roadways: safe road users, safe vehicles, safe speeds, safe roads, and post-crash care.



Figure C-1 2040 Circulation Scenario (Specific improvements may change)



### Line Improvements

- Transit Improvements
- El Camino Real Bikeway, Public Realm & BRT Improvements
- 2012 Proposed Pedestrian Priority Network
- Existing Bikeways
- Proposed Bikeways
- Existing Shared Bike and Ped Path
- Proposed Shared Bike and Ped Path
- Pedestrian Improvements, Diverted Traffic
- Missing Sidewalks

### Crossing Improvements

- Proposed Peninsula Interchange Project
- Proposed Pedestrian Crossing Improvements
- Current Caltrain At-Grade Crossings

- City Limits
- Sphere of Influence
- C Caltrain Station
- Existing Pedestrian Mall (Street Closure)



00 0.25 .5 1 Miles

Source ESRI, 2022; PlaceWorks, 2022.

## TRANSPORTATION INFRASTRUCTURE FUNDING

San Mateo uses a variety of federal, State, regional, and local sources of funding for transportation infrastructure. While these funding sources fluctuate over time, they have proven to be reasonably reliable. Different sources can be used for different types of projects, and many sources are restricted to specific uses. For example:

- Federal sources, like the Better Utilizing Investments to Leverage Development (BUILD) Transportation Discretionary Grants and the Fixing America's Surface Transportation (FAST) Act, can be used for roadway improvements, bridges, trails, and bicycle facilities.
- Funding from the California High Speed Rail Authority and the San Mateo County Transportation Authority (SMCTA) was used for Caltrain grade separation projects.
- Measure S, a local quarter-cent sales tax, can be used to fund pavement maintenance.

Individual transportation plans, such as the Bicycle Master Plan and the Pedestrian Master Plan, include detailed sections on costs and potential funding sources for the specific types of projects described.

## GOALS, POLICIES, AND ACTIONS

**GOAL C-1** Design and implement a multimodal transportation system that prioritizes walking, bicycling, and transit, and is sustainable, safe, and accessible for all users; connects the community using all modes of transportation; and reduces vehicle miles traveled (VMT) per capita.

### POLICIES



**Policy C 1.1 Sustainable Transportation.** Reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions from transportation by increasing mode share options for sustainable travel modes, such as walking, bicycling, and public transit.



**Policy C 1.2 Complete Streets.** Apply complete streets design standards to future projects in the public right-of-way and on private property. Complete streets are streets designed to facilitate safe, comfortable, and efficient travel for all users regardless of age or ability or whether they are walking, bicycling, taking transit, or driving, and should include landscaping and shade trees as well as green streets stormwater infrastructure to reduce runoff and pollution.

**Policy C 1.3 Vision Zero.** Use a safe systems approach for transportation planning, street design, operations, emergency response, and maintenance that proactively identifies opportunities to improve safety where conflicts between users exist to eliminate traffic fatalities and serious injuries in our roadways.



**Policy C 1.4 Prioritize Pedestrian and Bicycle Mobility Needs.** Prioritize local pedestrian and bicycle projects that enhance mobility, connectivity, and safety when designing roadway and intersection improvements.



**Policy C 1.5 El Camino Real.** Facilitate efficient travel and pedestrian safety along El Camino Real.



**Policy C 1.6 Transit-Oriented Development.** Increase access to transit and sustainable transportation options by encouraging high-density, mixed-use transit-oriented development near the City's Caltrain stations and transit corridors.



**Policy C 1.7 Equitable Multimodal Network.** Prioritize new amenities, programs, and multimodal projects, developed based on community input and data analysis, in San Mateo's equity priority communities.

**Policy C 1.8 New Development Fair Share.** Require new developments to pay a transportation impact fee to mitigate cumulative transportation impacts.

**Policy C 1.9 Dedication of Right-of-Way for Transportation Improvements.** Require dedication of needed right-of-way for transportation improvements identified in adopted City plans, including pedestrian facilities, bikeways, and trails.



**Policy C 1.10 Inclusive Outreach.** Involve the community in the City's efforts to design and implement a multimodal transportation system that is sustainable, safe, and accessible for all users. Use outreach and engagement methods that encourage broad representation and are culturally sensitive, particularly for equity priority communities.

## ACTIONS

**Action C 1.11 Complete Streets Plan.** Complete and implement the Complete Streets Plan to improve the City's circulation network to accommodate the needs of street users of all ages and abilities.

**Action C 1.12 Vision Zero Plan.** Complete and regularly update a plan that uses a safe systems approach to work towards Vision Zero and identifies specific citywide changes to policies, practices, funding, and other action items that will reduce speeding, collisions, and collision severity.



**Action C 1.13 El Camino Real Improvements.** Collaborate with Caltrans, SamTrans, and other partners to support accommodating higher-capacity and frequency travel along El Camino Real, Bus Rapid Transit, and other modes of alternative transportation.



**Action C 1.14 Transit-Oriented Development Pedestrian Access Plan.** Coordinate with interagency partners and community stakeholders to seek funding opportunities to design, construct, and build the priority projects identified in the Transit-Oriented Development Pedestrian Access Plan.



**Action C 1.15 Safe Routes for Seniors.** Develop a "safe routes for seniors" program to promote active transportation connections for seniors in collaboration with seniors' organizations. Prioritize improvements for seniors in equity priority communities.

**Action C 1.16 Residential Speed Limits.** Evaluate opportunities to reduce speed limits on residential streets to 20 miles per hour.



- Action C 1.17 Data-Driven Approach to Project Design and Prioritization.** Inform the prioritization of improvement projects through the consistent collection and analysis of modal activity data that reveals where the highest concentration of pedestrian, bicycle, and transit trips occur, and study routes and places people would like to access but are currently unable to because of limitations in pedestrian, bicycle, and transit infrastructure.
- Action C 1.18 Safety Education.** Pursue safety education to increase awareness for all street users.
- Action C 1.19 Transportation Funding.** Regularly update adopted City master plans to secure reliable funding for transportation infrastructure projects identified in these plans.
- Action C 1.20 Transportation Fees.** Adopt and maintain fees and fiscal policies to fund circulation improvements and programs equitably and achieve operational goals.
- Action C 1.21 Performance and Monitoring.** Monitor the City's mode split progress on reducing VMT and reducing GHG emissions from VMT, as data is available.

## TRANSPORTATION DEMAND MANAGEMENT

Transportation Demand Management (TDM) is an approach that promotes the use of modes other than driving alone, using a multimodal transportation network that provides safe and accessible options for travelers. TDM programs help the City achieve its sustainability and environmental justice goals by reducing the amount of GHG emissions from vehicle trips. These programs have successfully expanded access to other transportation modes and reduced car trips in specific plan areas near the Hillsdale and Hayward Park Caltrain stations and from recent development projects. Examples of TDM strategies include providing free or subsidized transit passes for employees or residents, offering carshare discounts, offering on-site bicycle parking and repair stations, shuttle services, and other bicycle and pedestrian amenities.

San Mateo will continue to require and expand the use of TDM strategies by developing a citywide TDM ordinance, working to secure funding for new TDM programs, and educating residents, developers, employers, and employees about transportation options and incentive programs. The citywide ordinance will establish trip-reduction requirements to be met by development, include measures to consider for reaching these goals, and consider options if projects fall short of the trip-reduction requirements. Through implementation of this ordinance, the City can shift trips from single-occupancy vehicle to multiple modes, using the multimodal circulation network envisioned in this element.



## GOALS, POLICIES, AND ACTIONS

**GOAL C-2** Use transportation demand management (TDM) to reduce the number and length of single-occupancy vehicle trips through policy, zoning strategies, and targeted programs and incentives.

### POLICY



**Policy C 2.1 TDM Requirements.** Require new or existing developments that meet specific size, capacity, and/or context conditions to implement TDM strategies.

### ACTIONS

**Action C 2.2 Implement TDM Ordinance.** Develop and implement a citywide TDM ordinance for new developments with tiered trip reduction and VMT reduction targets and monitoring that are consistent with the targets in their relevant area plans. Reduce parking requirements for projects that include TDM measures.

**Action C 2.3 Education and Outreach.** Pursue education for developers and employees about programs and strategies to reduce VMT, parking demand, and the resulting benefits.

**Action C 2.4 Leverage TDM Partnership Opportunities.** Work with regional partners to identify and fund TDM strategies that can be implemented at new and existing developments.

**Action C 2.5 Facilitate TDM Services.** Facilitate the provision of TDM services to employees and residents through development agreements, Transportation Management Associations, and coordination with regional partners.

**Action C 2.6 Travel to Schools.** Reduce school-related VMT and support student health by collaborating with private and public partners to increase the number of students walking or bicycling to school through expanded implementation of Safe Routes to School, including educating students and the community about the benefits of walking and bicycling and making physical improvements to streets and neighborhoods that make walking and bicycling safer. Prioritize school travel safety improvements in equity priority communities.

**Action C 2.7 New Development Shuttle Services.** Encourage new developments to provide shuttle services as an option to fulfill TDM requirements. Shuttles should serve activity centers, such as the College of San Mateo, Caltrain stations, downtown, the Hillsdale Shopping Center, or other areas and should accommodate the needs and schedules of all riders, including service workers.

**Action C 2.8 Unbundled Parking.** Encourage residential developments to unbundle the costs of providing dedicated parking spaces. Encourage additional parking capacity created by unbundling to be reallocated as shared or public parking spaces.





## PEDESTRIAN NETWORK

A safe and easy-to-navigate pedestrian network with connections to transit, schools, commercial areas, and parks and recreation facilities provides a healthier and more sustainable way to travel. Figure C-1 shows a representation of San Mateo’s 2040 Circulation Network, which includes the existing and planned pedestrian network from the Pedestrian Master Plan. The future pedestrian network will include improvements from other adopted or future City plans, such as an updated Pedestrian Master Plan, the Transit-Oriented Development Pedestrian Access Plan, and the Complete Streets Plan.

Nearly every street in San Mateo has a sidewalk, with some exceptions in the single-family neighborhoods of San Mateo Park and Sugarloaf. Downtown includes a permanent pedestrian mall along B Street between 1st and 3rd Avenues, which is a pedestrian-only zone with space for outdoor dining and special events in the public right-of-way. Moving forward, the City plans to increase car-light spaces in the downtown by implementing elements of a “superblock” design that prioritizes pedestrian spaces. The City also plans for pedestrian improvements through the Safe Routes to School program, which encourages students and families to travel to school by means other than a car.

The City uses a data-driven approach to focus pedestrian safety improvements on the areas with the greatest need. For example, the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) citywide assessment evaluated City facilities, right-of-ways, and programs to identify and prioritize measures to remediate ADA deficiencies. A similar approach was undertaken to identify pedestrian improvements needed to support safe walking routes for seniors. The City’s Age Friendly Action Plan used public data to identify likely walking routes for older adults and whether sidewalk improvements were needed to improve these routes.

While this element establishes the big-picture pedestrian policy framework for San Mateo, the City has two completed implementation plans that identify projects and policies to create a more walkable future:

- The San Mateo Pedestrian Master Plan (PMP) includes a list of priority pedestrian infrastructure recommendations for corridors and intersections throughout the city. The PMP introduces a new Greenway Pedestrian Corridor Network, a pedestrian-friendly network of streets that are intended to improve pedestrian connections to neighborhood destinations, transit, and recreational opportunities. Improving the pedestrian network for all abilities and ages is one of the PMP’s primary objectives.
- The 2022 Transit Oriented Development (TOD) Pedestrian Access Plan provides a roadmap to enhance pedestrian safety and create comfortable walking routes to transit for all ages and abilities. The plan focuses on improving conditions for pedestrians around the city’s three Caltrain stations and along El Camino Real.

# GOALS, POLICIES, AND ACTIONS

**GOAL C-3** Build and maintain a safe, connected, and equitable pedestrian network that provides access to community destinations, such as employment centers, transit, schools, shopping, and recreation.

## POLICIES



**Policy C 3.1 Pedestrian Network.** Create and maintain a safe, walkable environment in San Mateo to increase the number of pedestrians. Maintain an updated recommended pedestrian network for implementation. Encourage “superblock” or similar design in certain nodes of the city, such as the downtown, that allows vehicle access at the periphery and limits cut-through vehicles to create pedestrian-focused, car-light spaces.



**Policy C 3.2 Pedestrian Enhancements with New Development.** Require new development projects to provide sidewalks and pedestrian ramps and to repair or replace damaged sidewalks, in addition to right-of-way improvements identified in adopted City master plans. Encourage new developments to include pedestrian-oriented design to facilitate pedestrian path of travel.



**Policy C 3.3 Right-of-Way Improvements.** Require new developments to construct or contribute to improvements that enhance the pedestrian experience, including human-scale lighting, streetscaping, and accessible sidewalks adjacent to the site.

## ACTIONS

**Action C 3.4 Implement Pedestrian Improvements.** Prioritize implementation of goals, programs, and projects in the City’s adopted plans that improve the comfort, safety, and connectivity of the pedestrian network.

**Action C 3.5 Pedestrian Trails and Routes Awareness.** Increase awareness of existing trails and routes by working with outside agencies and developers to promote these amenities to residents. Continue collaborating with the County on development of the trail network.

**Action C 3.6 Access for Users of All Ages and Abilities.** Implement the ADA Transition Plan and maintain accessible streets and sidewalks. Use ADA requirements when implementing design standards.

**Action C 3.7 Pedestrian Connectivity.** Incorporate design for pedestrian connectivity across intersections in transportation projects to improve visibility at crosswalks for pedestrians and provide safe interaction with other modes. Design improvements should focus on increasing sight lines and removing conflicts at crosswalks.

**Action C 3.8 Safe Routes to School.** Fund and implement continuous Safe Routes to School engagement and improvements with San Mateo elementary, middle, and high schools, and provide support to increase number of students walking and bicycling to school.

**Action C 3.9 Downtown Pedestrian Mall.** Complete design and fund improvements to fully transition B Street between 1st Street and 3rd Street into a pedestrian mall.

## BICYCLES AND MICROMOBILITY NETWORK

Biking or traveling by other micromobility devices is an efficient, healthy, and sustainable mode of travel. Micromobility devices are small, lightweight, and typically low-speed, such as bicycles, electric-assisted or electric bicycles and scooters, hoverboards, and skateboards. Infrastructure supporting bicycling and micromobility devices complements the pedestrian network, and it is an important component of the city's multimodal transportation system.

Bicycles and micromobility devices allow people to reach destinations that they might otherwise drive to, and are well-suited for shorter trips that comprise the majority of San Mateans' transportation needs. They also help travelers complete their first- and last-mile transit connections, closing a travel gap that many people find too far to walk because of time constraints, safety concerns, and mobility issues. San Mateo's existing bicycle network provides some connections to destinations within the city and to neighboring city bikeway networks. The City's Bicycle Master Plan describes the existing and proposed bikeway network in more detail and includes programs and policies to help implement the goals outlined in the plan. In implementing the Bicycle Master Plan, the City will continue to build a safe and efficient bicycle and micromobility network.

The San Mateo bicycle network contains six classifications of existing and planned bicycle facilities as described herein. The classifications are described in order of the level of separation between bicyclists and motorists. Shared-use paths offer the most separation, while bicycle routes would require bicyclists to ride alongside motorists.

- **Shared-use paths (Class I):** Off-road pathways designed for people walking, biking, and rolling (e.g., skateboard or scooter).
- **Separated bike lanes (Class IV):** A designated lane separated from vehicular traffic by a buffer with vertical protection (e.g., flexible posts, planters, parked vehicles, curbs).
- **Buffered bike lanes (Class II):** A designated bicycle lane adjacent to vehicular traffic separated by a striped buffer area on the pavement.
- **Standard bike lanes (Class I):** A designated bicycle lane directly adjacent to vehicular traffic.
- **Bicycle boulevards (Class III):** Bicyclists share a lane with vehicular traffic and are identified with bicycle signage and pavement markings to increase driver awareness of bicyclists and aid bicyclists with navigation; however, bicycle boulevards include traffic-calming treatments and are solely implemented on low-speed (i.e., less than 25 miles per hour) and low-volume (i.e., less than 3,000 vehicles per day) streets to ensure they are low-stress facilities.
- **Bicycle routes (Class III):** Bicyclists share the lane with vehicular traffic and are identified with bicycle signage and pavement markings to increase driver awareness of bicyclists and aid bicyclists with navigation. The City is phasing out this type of route within the bicycle network and upgrading to other facility types.



## GOALS, POLICIES, AND ACTIONS

**GOAL C-4** Build and maintain a safe, connected, and equitable bicycle and micromobility network that provides access to community destinations, such as employment centers, transit, schools, shopping, and recreation.

### POLICIES



**Policy C 4.1** **Bicycle Network.** Create and maintain a bicycle-friendly environment in San Mateo and increase the number of people who choose to bicycle.



**Policy C 4.2** **Bicycle Master Plan.** Maintain an updated recommended bicycle network for implementation in the adopted Bicycle Master Plan and related City plans.



**Policy C 4.3** **First- and Last-Mile Connections.** Encourage and facilitate provision of bicycle parking and shared mobility options at transit centers and other community destinations to provide first- and last-mile connections.

**Policy C 4.4** **Bicycle-Related Technology.** Explore ways to use technology to improve bicycle safety and connectivity.



**Policy C 4.5** **Bicycle and Shared Mobility-Related Technology.** Explore ways to use technology to improve bicycle and shared mobility safety and connectivity.



**Policy C 4.6** **Bicycle Improvements.** Require new developments to construct or contribute to improvements that enhance the cyclist experience, including bicycle lanes.



**Policy C 4.7** **Coordination with Other City Projects.** Maximize opportunities to implement bicycle facilities through other City of San Mateo projects.



**Policy C 4.8** **Interjurisdiction Coordination.** Continue to coordinate with adjacent jurisdictions and regional partners in the development of connected bicycle and pedestrian facilities and regional trails, as identified in adopted City plans.

### ACTIONS

**Action C 4.9** **Bicycle Master Plan Implementation.** Implement the Bicycle Master Plan's recommended programs and projects to create and maintain a fully connected, safe, and logical bikeway network and coordinate with the countywide system. Update the Bicycle Master Plan and related adopted City plans to reflect future bicycle and micromobility facility needs to support the City's circulation network.

**Action C 4.10** **Paving Coordination.** Coordinate and fund the implementation of bicycle facilities and pedestrian improvements identified in the Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plans with the City's paving program.



- Action C 4.11 Connectivity Across Freeway Barriers.** Conduct feasibility studies and design alternatives for overcrossings and undercrossings at US Highway 101 and State Route 92 to facilitate connectivity across major barriers.
- Action C 4.12 Bay Trail.** Identify State and County programs to maintain safe pedestrian and bicycle access to and extension of the San Francisco Bay Trail through coordination with neighboring jurisdictions.
- Action C 4.13 Crystal Springs.** Pursue safe pedestrian and bicycle access to San Francisco Water District lands via Crystal Springs Road through coordination with the Town of Hillsborough and with State and County assistance.
- Action C 4.14 Bicycle Detection Devices.** Install signal modifications on existing and planned bikeways to detect bicyclists and micromobility users' presence at intersections and facilitate their safe movement through the intersection.
- Action C 4.15 Increased Bicycle Capacity on Caltrain and SamTrans.** Coordinate with Caltrain and SamTrans to support/increase bicycle capacity on transit vehicles and to provide an adequate supply of secure covered bicycle and micromobility parking at Caltrain stations, transit centers, and major bus stops.







## TRANSIT SERVICES

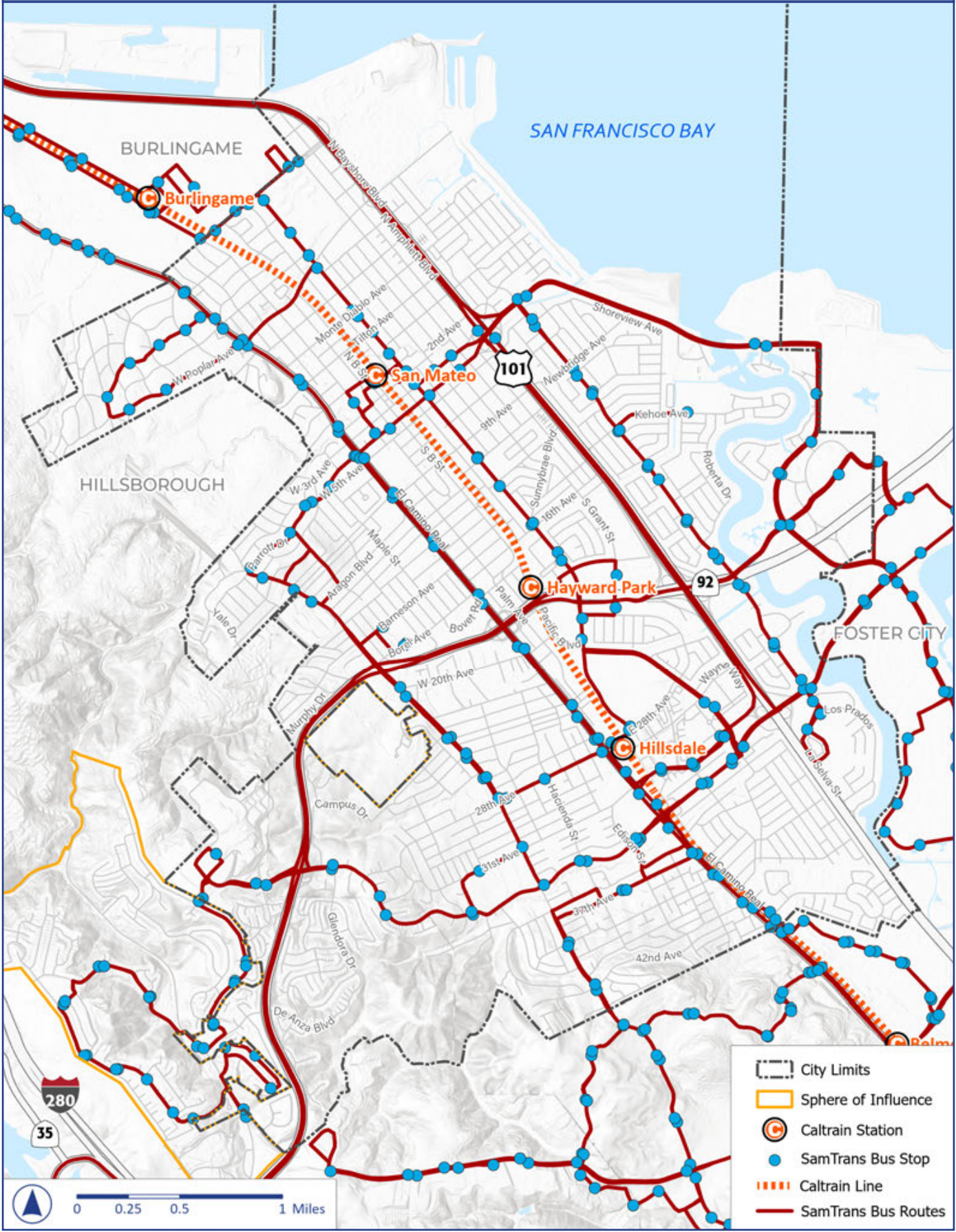
Public transit plays an important role in the multimodal transportation network by providing an efficient and affordable transportation option, offering equitable, economic, and community health benefits. Transit providers' primary objectives are to increase mobility options, reduce congestion, improve the environment by reducing GHG emissions, and contribute to the region's economic success by connecting workers, visitors, and other travelers to their destinations. Transit service is most successful in reaching these goals when there is a land use pattern focusing housing and jobs near transit, as the General Plan Land Use Map (Figure LU-1 in the Land Use Element) aims to do.

Local transit services are primarily provided by Caltrain, a commuter rail system, and SamTrans, a public bus service. Additional shuttle services are funded by various agencies and private companies that offer first- and last-mile connections from Caltrain stations. Figure C-2 shows the Caltrain stations and SamTrans bus stops and routes within San Mateo as of 2023.

Caltrain provides multiple connections to other transit operators around the Bay Area, enabling travelers to reach regional destinations. In San Mateo, Caltrain has three stations: San Mateo Station, Hayward Park Station, and Hillsdale Station, of which, the Hillsdale Station has express service (i.e., Baby Bullet). To improve commuter rail service, Caltrain adopted the Caltrain 2040 Long Range Service Vision to guide the long-range development of rail service. The Vision plans for a future with substantially expanded rail service and new regional and mega-regional connections and includes a business plan to work towards the vision. As an immediate effort to improve service, Caltrain is working on the Peninsula Corridor Electrification Project, which will provide increased service throughout the network and provide the infrastructure needed for High-Speed Rail.

There are multiple SamTrans bus routes that operate within and through the City Limits. These routes connect to Caltrain and Bay Area Rapid Transit (BART) stations, and local and regional destinations, such as the San Mateo Central Park, Downtown, Hillsdale Shopping Center, and San Francisco International Airport. SamTrans' long-range service plan, called ReImagine SamTrans, plans for operational improvements such as increased bus frequency and new routes and connections, including enhanced transit access on the El Camino Real corridor.

Figure C-2 Transit Routes



Source: ESRI, 2022; PlaceWorks, 2023.  
Note: This map is included for informational purposes and is not adopted as part of this General Plan.





Although the City does not directly provide transit service, there are many things the City can do to make it easier, safer, and more appealing to use transit in San Mateo. The City's Complete Streets Plan includes policy guidance and proposes improvements for pedestrian, bicycle, and micromobility connections to transit. Further, the Transit-Oriented Development Pedestrian Access Plan identifies specific improvements to enhance pedestrian access to the City's current transit stations. Creating a circulation system that improves access to transit centers and stops, requiring new development projects to include transit supportive features, and working collaboratively with the transit providers to improve the system will bolster transit service in the community.

The City can also support transit providers to make improvements that would encourage ridership, such as:

- Transit priority treatments, such as signal priority, on high-frequency transit corridors.
- Extended hours to provide service for shift workers.
- Free Clipper cards to youth/students.
- Bus rapid transit (BRT), on-demand transit, or microtransit services in San Mateo.
- Caltrain modernization, electrification, transit experience improvements, and increased service frequency.
- Implementation of Caltrain's business plan, including increased service to San Mateo's three stations.
- Caltrain station access improvements such as sidewalks and bikeways near each station that are designed to provide safe and convenient access to and from transit.
- Regional transit integration and expansion to improve seamless access to BART, High-Speed Rail, and other regional transit systems.

## GOALS, POLICIES, AND ACTIONS

**GOAL C-5** Make transit a viable transportation option for the community by supporting frequent, reliable, cost-efficient, and connected service.

### POLICIES



**Policy C 5.1** **Transit Ridership.** Support SamTrans and Caltrain in their efforts to increase transit ridership.



**Policy C 5.2** **Caltrain.** Support Caltrain as a critical transit service in the city and Peninsula.



**Policy C 5.3** **California High-Speed Rail.** Support and facilitate local and regional efforts to implement High-Speed Rail. Work to provide multimodal connections between San Mateo and planned High-Speed Rail stations.

**Policy C 5.4** **Safety at At-Grade Rail Crossings.** Eliminate existing at-grade rail crossings to improve safety and local multimodal circulation.



**Policy C 5.5** **Transit Improvements.** Support implementation of transit improvements by local and regional transit providers.



**Policy C 5.6** **Transit Safety.** Prioritize improvements to increase safety, access, and comfort at transit centers and bus stops in equity priority communities, along commercial corridors, and in dense, mixed-use neighborhoods.



**Policy C 5.7** **Transit Access in New Developments.** Require new development projects to incorporate design elements that facilitate or improve access to public transit.

**Policy C 5.8** **Transit Education.** Educate the public about the benefits of transit use.

### ACTIONS

**Action C 5.9** **Grade Separation Study.** Conduct a grade separation feasibility study for all at-grade rail crossings in San Mateo. Identify funding to complete these grade-crossing improvements.



**Action C 5.10** **Transit Experience Improvements.** Prioritize installing new transit shelters and benches or other seating and an energy-efficient street lighting program at transit stops in equity priority communities and areas that improve transit access, safety, and experience.



**Action C 5.11** **Shuttle Programs.** Continue to support public shuttle programs connecting to Caltrain stations. Work to expand public awareness and access to shuttles and expand shuttle service. Support the implementation of publicly accessible private shuttles.

## ROADWAY NETWORK IMPROVEMENTS

A well-planned roadway network is key to supporting safe and efficient travel for all users and accomplishing the transition to a multimodal system, as described throughout this element. Different modes of transportation have different infrastructure needs; by prioritizing improvements that support multiple modes, the City can meet the needs of multiple users. For example, adding bicycle lanes can make bicycling safer and more convenient, encouraging more people to bike instead of drive while also reducing traffic congestion for those who do drive. Another example is lowering vehicle speeds and installing traffic-calming measures in residential neighborhoods improves safety for all roadway users, making walking and bicycling more viable transportation options.

To identify future improvements needed to support the shift to a truly multimodal roadway network, the City will evaluate and consider adopting a Multimodal Level of Service (MLOS) standard or other transportation metric. MLOS is a rating system used to evaluate roadway operation efficiency for vehicles, pedestrians, bicyclists, transit, and other roadway users in place of Level of Service standards that consider vehicles only.

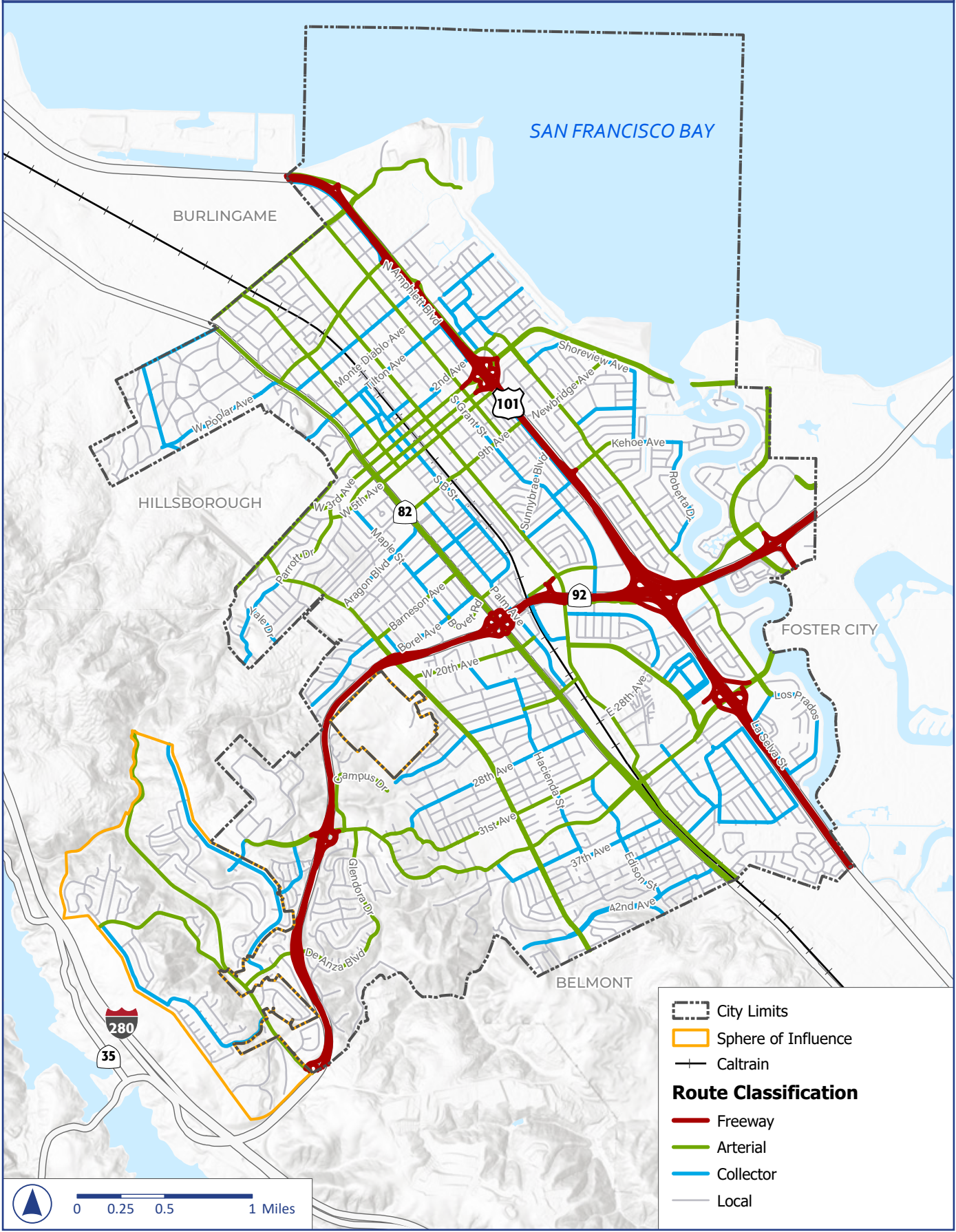
Decisions about appropriate improvements are also made based on the role of a roadway within the city's network. The City uses roadway classifications to define the function of various street types in the transportation network, monitor performance, track multimodal use, and plan for improvements needed to accommodate changes in traffic over the life of the Strive San Mateo General Plan 2040. Roadway improvements may include traffic signal installation, signal timing adjustments for different modes, and upgrading traffic signals to give priority to emergency vehicles. Some funding sources for roadway maintenance and improvements can only be used for specific roadway classifications. Figure C-3 shows the roadway classifications in San Mateo:

- **Local Streets and Alleyways.** Local streets and alleyways make up the majority of the roadway system and typically have lower speeds and vehicular traffic volumes.
- **Collectors.** Collectors link neighborhoods together and allow travelers to reach places outside of their neighborhoods. They have higher speeds than local streets and can handle more traffic volume. Collectors are important segments of San Mateo's existing and proposed bikeway network.
- **Arterials.** Arterial streets connect the regional roadway network with collectors. Most intersections along arterials are signalized, often with a coordinated and interconnected signal system. Compared to collectors, arterials have higher capacity to accommodate traffic volumes, and they provide for longer, continuous movement throughout the city.
- **Freeways.** Freeways are high-speed roadways without intersections that allow users to reach destinations outside of the city, either by car or transit. US Highway 101 and State Route 92 run through the city, while Interstate 280 is just west of the City Limits.

In addition to planning and building physical improvements to the roadway network, the City is also responsible for maintaining streets, bridges, bicycle paths, signage, lighting, sidewalks, and other transportation facilities so that all users can travel safely and efficiently. Preventative maintenance of roadways and infrastructure keeps costs lower in the long term, and results in accessible, safe, and easy to navigate surfaces that improve conditions for motorists, bicyclists, and pedestrians.



Figure C-3 Street Classification



Source: ESRI, 2022; PlaceWorks, 2023.  
 Note: This map is included for informational purposes and is not adopted as part of this General Plan.



Roadway improvements and congestion reduction in San Mateo require a collaborative approach because the roadway network is regulated by multiple entities with roles that sometimes overlap. For example, US Highway 101, State Route 92, and El Camino Real (State Route 82) are all Caltrans facilities that are not controlled by the City. At the regional level, the City/County Association of Governments of San Mateo County (C/CAG), the Congestion Management Agency for the County, is responsible for developing and updating a variety of transportation plans and programs while the San Mateo County Transportation Authority (SMCTA) is an independent agency that administers funding generated by the voter-approved countywide transportation sales tax. At the local level, the City of San Mateo Public Works Department operates, maintains, and improves City-owned infrastructure, including roadways, bicycle facilities, and pedestrian facilities.

## GOALS, POLICIES, AND ACTIONS

**GOAL C-6** Achieve a transportation system that prioritizes user safety, accommodates future growth, reduces VMT per capita, and maintains efficient and safe operations for all modes and all residents.

### POLICIES

- Policy C 6.1 Roadway Operations.** Maintain acceptable roadway operations for all intersections and all modes within the city.
- Policy C 6.2 Circulation Improvement Plan.** Maintain a transportation network that will accommodate future growth, reduce VMT per capita, and equitably implement complete streets.
- Policy C 6.3 Local Transportation Analysis.** Require site-specific transportation impact analysis following the City's adopted Transportation Impact Analysis (TIA) Policy for development projects where there may be an adverse condition or effect on the roadway system.

- Policy C 6.4 Operations Analysis for Development Projects.** Require new development to determine the need for new or modified circulation improvements, operations, or alignments where developments identify operational deficiencies that were not previously identified in a transportation impact fee study. Require development applicants to prepare an analysis to determine the need for modifications, such as signalization, turn restrictions, roundabouts, etc. Require applicants to fund identified off-site improvements if warranted, as determined by the appropriate transportation analysis, and as approved by City staff.
- Policy C 6.5 Neighborhood Traffic.** Implement traffic-calming measures on residential streets to reduce the volume of pass-through traffic and vehicular speeds.
- Policy C 6.6 Truck Routes.** Maintain and update the truck route network to use roadways that are adequately designed for truck usage and minimize potential conflicts with other transportation modes.
- Policy C 6.7 Capital Improvement Program.** Prioritize improvements that increase person throughput in project prioritization to reduce VMT.
- Policy C 6.8 Emergency Signal Preemption.** Require new and upgraded signals to include preemption for emergency vehicles to maintain and enhance emergency response times.

## ACTIONS

- Action C 6.9 Network Operations Standard.** Evaluate and adopt an operational metric for all roadway users that accounts for the safe, equitable, and efficient roadway access.
- Action C 6.10 Prioritization and Timing of Roadway Improvements.** Revise the Capital Improvement Program (CIP) prioritization system to include additional criteria, such as: potential to reduce vehicle miles traveled (VMT) per capita; proximity to high-injury locations identified in the Local Roads Safety Plan; eligibility and availability of grant or other funding source; benefit or harm to equity priority communities; and correlation with the distribution and pace of development, reflecting the degree of need for mitigation.
- Action C 6.11 Congestion Management.** Work with neighboring agencies and regional partners, such as the City/County Association of Governments of San Mateo County (C/CAG), to implement traffic management strategies and technologies, such as signal coordination, to manage local traffic congestion.





## PARKING AND CURBSIDE MANAGEMENT

Driving is part of a multimodal transportation network, which requires consideration of vehicle parking. Efficient management of parking is important to support economic growth, environmental sustainability, and transportation equity. Many San Mateo residents currently drive to their destinations, which leads to demand for vehicle parking. However, parking requires valuable real estate, whether on-street, off-street, or at the curb, and making parking abundant and readily available may encourage additional vehicle trips. As the competing demands for land increase, the City is exploring strategies that manage the curbside and leverage innovative tools and technologies that support a more sustainable and equitable parking system to more fully support the multimodal network.

On-street parking is often in high demand by motorists who prefer to park near their destination. The on-street public right-of-way has competing priorities throughout the city, necessitating decisions about how to best allocate this limited space for vehicle circulation, parking, bicycling, pedestrians, parklets, and loading. Effective curb management strategies, such as maintaining flexible curb space that can be easily used for multiple purposes, can help the City meet these future needs for this critical right-of-way.

New development projects evaluate and provide parking that is appropriate for all travel modes, and the City operates public off-street parking structures within the Downtown core. Space or structures for parking add significant cost to new development, which translates into higher rents for residents and businesses, and also encourages driving. In some cases, sharing parking resources can help to reduce both the amount of parking provided on-site as well as the cost of building. Provision of parking at levels that meet needs without inducing additional trips or hindering development is a key part of the City's future multimodal network.

Parking, especially structured parking, is very expensive to build and is a significant factor in the cost of new development. As one strategy to reduce the cost of building needed new housing, California has explored State laws that limit local governments' ability to require parking as part of new development. For example, in 2022, California passed Assembly Bill (AB) 2097, which prohibits minimum parking requirements for most development projects within a half-mile radius of a major transit stop. As the State continues to grapple with solutions to California's housing crisis, it is possible that there could be additional future legislation that affects parking requirements and regulations in San Mateo.



## GOALS, POLICIES, AND ACTIONS

**GOAL C-7** Use parking, enforcement, and curb management strategies to effectively administer parking supply and maximize use of public assets.

### POLICIES



**Policy C 7.1** **Parking Management.** Manage parking through appropriate pricing, enforcement, and other strategies to support economic growth and vitality, transportation equity, and environmental sustainability. Ensure that the available parking supply is used at levels that meet ongoing needs without inducing additional demand or hindering future development.



**Policy C 7.2** **Shared Parking.** Encourage new and existing developments, especially those in mixed-use districts, to share parking between uses to maximize the existing parking supply, minimize the amount of new parking construction, and encourage “park once” behavior in commercial areas.

**Policy C 7.3** **Public Parking.** Maximize opportunities to expand the availability of existing parking by supporting the use of public/shared parking at private developments, discouraging reserved parking at new developments, providing incentives for developments to include shared/public parking, and allowing developers to fund public parking in-lieu of meeting parking demand/requirements on-site.



**Policy C 7.4** **Bicycle Parking.** Require the provision of bicycle parking as part of new private developments.

**Policy C 7.5** **Curbside Management.** Manage the supply and use of the curb to maintain an optimal balance between mobility, storage, placemaking, and loading uses allowing for flexibility for adaptive re-use, safety improvements, and activation of curb space whenever possible.

**Policy C 7.6** **Loading for New Development.** Require adequate loading to meet the needs of new development, including evaluation of shared use of loading zones.

### ACTIONS

**Action C 7.7** **Parking Requirements.** Evaluate options to amend minimum parking requirements, consistent with State and regional policy, to provide parking appropriate to the context of the development and support the multimodal transportation network, such as parking maximums or parking demand analyses.

**Action C 7.8** **Parking Management Strategies.** Deploy enhanced parking management strategies, parking enforcement, and evaluate dynamic parking pricing strategies that fluctuate based on peak parking and/or district-level parking demands.

- Action C 7.9 Curbside Management Strategies.** Evaluate and implement curb management strategies, such as incentivizing or discouraging certain types of trips, mode choices, and behaviors in favor of broader mobility goals.
- Action C 7.10 Emerging Technology for Curbside Management.** Evaluate and implement performance monitoring and evaluation systems, such as digitization of curbside assets, to dynamically manage evolving curbside demands.
- Action C 7.11 Truck Loading.** Evaluate and implement ways to reduce conflicts between truck loading and pedestrian, bicycle, and transit networks.
- Action C 7.12 Public Bicycle Parking.** Install safe, useful, and convenient short- and long-term bicycle parking facilities in the public right-of-way or near key destinations, City facilities, and transit facilities.
- Action C 7.13 Mechanical Parking Lift.** Adopt and maintain a code or policy that sets standards for mechanical parking lift systems.

## FUTURE MOBILITY AND TECHNOLOGY

Transportation technology is an important component in transportation network management today. Intelligent transportation systems allow for improved emergency response times, congestion relief, and safety benefits for all users. Active network management can share real-time information with roadway users to help inform their travel patterns. Technology will continue to be important to help manage future increased demand on the City's transportation network.

Additionally, advancement in mobility technologies and services is fueling rapid changes in travel behavior, transportation options, and land use. Future transportation technologies, such as autonomous vehicles (AVs), electric-assist bicycles and scooters, shared mobility options, micromobility devices, ride sharing, advancements in transit operations, and other transportation innovations, will greatly impact the future of mobility by:

- Expanding public transit service and connections to transit
- Affecting whether and how often people drive
- Increasing or decreasing VMT
- Changing how deliveries are made and how goods travel along the transportation network.

As new transportation innovations emerge, the City will work to ensure equitable deployment and responsive transportation solutions to accommodate technology that supports the multimodal goals in this element. At a regional level, the City will continue collaborating with Caltrain and SamTrans to improve transit operations in San Mateo as new technologies come online.



## GOALS, POLICIES, AND ACTIONS

**GOAL C-8** Build a values-driven regulatory, management, and partnership framework that flexibly encourages emerging transportation technologies in service of City and community goals.

### POLICIES



**Policy C 8.1 Emerging Technologies.** Monitor, evaluate, test, and implement new technologies that expand options for safe and efficient trip making.



**Policy C 8.2 Equitable Mobility Options.** Ensure that the needs and perspectives of residents of equity priority communities as well as those who speak limited English, and low-income, senior, and disabled travelers are considered in the design, deployment, and management of new mobility services and technologies.

**Policy C 8.3 Mobility Data.** Leverage mobility data to support new policies, investments, and programmatic actions in service of City goals.

### ACTIONS

**Action C 8.4 Umbrella Regulations for Modern Mobility.** Develop comprehensive regulations and infrastructure standards that are not exclusive to specific service providers and that support a spectrum of digital information, micromobility services, and emerging technologies, such as autonomous vehicles.



**Action C 8.5 Strategic Partnerships and Pilots.** Create strategic partnerships and pilots with shared mobility service providers and community organizations that increase mobility options for residents.

- Action C 8.6 Future-Ready Infrastructure.** Establish public realm policies and tools that reflect San Mateo’s goals and priorities in the design and management of streets, curbs, sidewalks, and parking facilities to account for emerging mobility trends and changes in demand over time.
- Action C 8.7 Equitable Mobility Technology.** Develop an equitable mobility policy, including a data-sharing policy, for vendors to ensure equitable deployment of emerging mobility options with consideration of residents who may be digitally challenged.
- Action C 8.8 Intelligent Transportation Systems.** Evaluate and deploy Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS) measures to efficiently manage traffic operations and incident response, enhance transit service efficiency, and better detect and prioritize the travel and safety of people walking and biking.





# CHAPTER 5

## Community Design and Historic Resources Element









# COMMUNITY DESIGN AND HISTORIC RESOURCES ELEMENT

## INTRODUCTION

The Community Design and Historic Resources Element sets the policy framework for San Mateo's physical form, which is shaped first by nature and then by human factors. The natural context that has shaped the community and its history includes the city's topography, sloping from the undeveloped foothills to the San Francisco Bay, as well as the urban forest. Human factors in San Mateo's community design includes the architecture of historic and new buildings, the public spaces where people gather, gateways or entrances to the city, street trees lining neighborhoods, and art decorating public spaces. Urban design distinguishes the characteristics of specific areas, like residential neighborhoods and shopping districts, through differences in landscaping, building size and orientation, and treatment of access, entryways, and parking. Archaeological resources and cultural resources that are culturally significant to Native American tribes also serve as important connections to the city's rich history.

This element includes goals, policies, and actions focused on improving the city's urban tree canopy, enhancing the visual and architectural character of mixed-use and commercial areas, and encouraging the design of residential buildings that complement the neighborhood's visual and architectural character. It also includes guidance for the preservation of historic, archaeological, and cultural resources that help maintain San Mateo's unique identity. This element encourages new mixed-use and commercial development that respects the scale and rhythm of the surrounding buildings and provides human-scale design that cultivates pedestrian activity.

The Community Design and Historic Resources Element addresses the following:

- Natural Setting and the Urban Forest
- Archaeological and Paleontological Resources and Tribal Cultural Resources
- Historic Resources
- City Placemaking
  - » Sustainable Design
  - » Gateways
  - » Corridors
  - » Public Art
- Elements of Design
  - » Residential Neighborhoods
  - » Mixed-Use and Commercial Areas



## RELEVANCE TO GENERAL PLAN THEMES



### Sustainability in this Element:

- Encourages sustainable design features and elements into the design of new buildings.
- Supports new development that respects and responds to the natural topography of San Mateo and minimizes grading.
- Promotes the preservation of protected heritage trees and requires tree planting for new developments, which helps sequester carbon from the atmosphere.
- Supports the preservation of historic resources by retaining existing buildings, which reduces the consumption of new construction materials, uses less energy, and sends less waste to landfills.



### Environmental Justice in this Element:

- Adds climate-adapted trees in neighborhoods with less street tree canopy.
- Explores funding sources and other forms of City support for low-income homeowners to plant and/or replace trees on their properties.



### Community Engagement in this Element:

- Collaborates with Native American representatives to identify locations of importance to Native Americans, including archaeological sites, sacred sites, traditional cultural properties, and other types of tribal cultural resources.
- Increases public appreciation of historic resources by supporting groups and organizations who provide neighborhood workshops, public presentations, interpretive signage, and walking tours.
- Supports community involvement in the City's efforts to develop and maintain an attractive urban fabric that reflects San Mateo's unique visual and architectural character.
- Encourages the use of outreach and engagement methods that include broad representation and are culturally sensitive.





## NATURAL SETTING AND THE URBAN FOREST

The natural setting of San Mateo is the foundation of its unique character and sense of place. San Mateo is set between two dominant physical features: San Francisco Bay and the ridge of hills along the western border. The city has developed between these two natural features following early transportation corridors, and the bay and western hills remain important natural views from many places in the city. Other key natural features of San Mateo include Coyote Point County Park, the Marina Lagoon, San Mateo Creek, and Laurelwood/Sugarloaf Park. The city also has a 3-mile length of shoreline along the San Francisco Bay, which includes a scenic vista point at Seal Point Park. San Mateo County's General Plan also designates the area surrounding Interstate (I-) 280 as a scenic corridor.

The City's urban forest—including both public and privately owned trees—is also a key part of the community's identity and quality of life. Trees contribute to the visual character of a neighborhood and can improve the aesthetics in commercial areas. Regular spacing of trees that are similar in form and texture provides order and coherence and gives scale to the street. A canopy of branches and leaves creates a sense of enclosure and comfort and provides shade, which will be increasingly important not only for aesthetics but for reducing building energy use and the urban heat island effect in a warming climate. While some city streets, such as Aragon Boulevard between El Camino Real and Maple Street, are lined with trees, the tree canopy is sparse in other areas.

This section provides policy direction for preserving and enhancing San Mateo's natural setting, minimizing the impact of hillside development, and protecting and improving the urban tree canopy. Goals and policies focused on access to nature and open space lands, natural resources, and parks and recreation can be found in the Conservation, Open Space, and Recreation Element. Strategies to combat climate change are further discussed in the Land Use Element and in the City's Climate Action Plan.



## GOALS, POLICIES, AND ACTIONS

**GOAL CD-1** Preserve and enhance San Mateo’s natural setting as an irreplaceable asset that is the physical foundation of the community.

### POLICIES



**Policy CD 1.1** **Respect for the Landscape.** Encourage new development to respect and respond to the natural topography of San Mateo.

**Policy CD 1.2** **Preservation of Natural Views.** Preserve and enhance, to the extent feasible, publicly accessible views to the undeveloped foothills and the San Francisco Bay through the design of new development.

**Policy CD 1.3** **Scenic Corridors.** Require new development adjacent to designated scenic corridors within San Mateo County’s General Plan to protect and enhance the visual character of these corridors.

**GOAL CD-2** Minimize the impact of hillside development on the natural environment and public safety.

### POLICIES

**Policy CD 2.1** **Hillside Development Principles.** Require hillside development to minimize impacts by preserving the existing topography, limiting grading or cuts and fills, clustering development, and identifying opportunities for restoration or re-wilding. Limit development on steep hillsides with a 30 percent or higher slope.

**Policy CD 2.2** **Minimal Impacts.** Require new development to preserve natural topographic forms and to minimize adverse impacts on vegetation, water, soil stability, and wildlife resources.

**GOAL CD-3** Protect heritage trees, street trees, and tree stands and maintain the health and condition of San Mateo’s urban forest.

### POLICIES



**Policy CD 3.1** **Tree Preservation.** Continue to preserve heritage and street trees throughout San Mateo, where feasible.



**Policy CD 3.2 Replacement Planting.** Require appropriate replacement planting or payment of an in-lieu fee when protected trees on public or private property are removed.



**Policy CD 3.3 Tree Protection During Construction.** Require the protection of trees during construction activity; require that landscaping, buildings, and other improvements adjacent to trees be designed and maintained to be consistent with the continued health of the tree.



**Policy CD 3.4 Public Awareness.** Pursue public awareness and education programs concerning the identification, care, and regulation of trees.



**Policy CD 3.5 Tree Maintenance.** Preserve and regularly maintain existing City-owned heritage and street trees to keep them in a safe and healthy condition.



**Policy CD 3.6 New Development Street Trees.** Require street tree planting where feasible as a condition of all new developments.



**Policy CD 3.7 Street Tree Equity.** Plant new street trees to increase the tree canopy throughout the city, especially in gateway areas and in tree-deficient neighborhoods; encourage neighborhood participation in tree planting programs.



**Policy CD 3.8 Tree Stand Retention.** Preserve the visual character of stands or groves of trees in the design of new or modified projects, where feasible.

## ACTIONS



**Action CD 3.9 Urban Tree Canopy.** Identify neighborhoods with less street tree canopy and adopt programs to plant climate-adapted trees within the public right-of-way, especially in equity priority communities and areas with a high heat index.



**Action CD 3.10 Tree Planting Funding.** Identify funding sources for tree planting programs for private, residential property on an annual basis.



**Action CD 3.11 Tree Support for Low-Income Homeowners.** Explore funding sources and other forms of City support for low-income homeowners to plant and/or replace trees on their property.



## ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND PALEONTOLOGICAL RESOURCES AND TRIBAL CULTURAL RESOURCES

Archaeological and cultural artifacts are treasures that help to preserve the city's complex history for future generations. The Costanoan people, commonly referred to as Ohlone people, are estimated to have been some of the earliest inhabitants in the area between 5,000 and 7,000 years ago. It is estimated that in 1770, the Ohlone of the Bay Area numbered around 10,000. Forty years later, by about 1810, much of the native population and much of the traditional culture of these people had been destroyed in the face of relentless European encroachment and its devastating impacts – disease, warfare, displacement, and the California mission system. The City acknowledges its history as indigenous land as well as the rich living tribal culture in the Bay Area and strives to protect resources that are culturally significant to present-day Native American tribes through consultation and collaborative relationship-building. Grading and construction in the modern era have eliminated most aboveground record of the region's indigenous inhabitants, but records of these communities may remain undisturbed underground.

Paleontological resources (fossils) are the remains and/or traces of prehistoric plant and animal life exclusive of human remains or artifacts. Fossil remains, such as bones, teeth, shells, and wood are often found in the geologic deposits (rock formations) in which they were originally buried. Due to the scientific and educational value of paleontological resources, they are protected under federal and State law. This section provides policy direction for protecting archaeological, paleontological, and cultural resources. Policy direction for the protection of historic resources can be found under Goal CD-5 of this element.

## GOALS, POLICIES, AND ACTIONS

**GOAL CD-4** Protect archaeological and paleontological resources and resources that are culturally significant to Native American tribes and acknowledge San Mateo's past as indigenous land. Encourage development projects to recognize historical tribal lands.

### POLICIES

**Policy CD 4.1 Archaeological Resource Protection.** Preserve, to the maximum extent feasible, archaeological sites with significant cultural, historical, or sociological merit for present-day residents or Native American tribes.

**Policy CD 4.2 Tribal Cultural Resources.** Preserve areas that have identifiable and important tribal cultural resources and comply with appropriate State and federal standards to evaluate and mitigate impacts to cultural resources, including tribal, historic, archaeological, and paleontological resources.





**Policy CD 4.3 Tribal Consultation.** Consult with Native American representatives, including through early coordination, to identify locations of importance to Native Americans, including archaeological sites, sacred sites, traditional cultural properties, and other types of tribal cultural resources. Respect tribal concerns if a tribe has a religious prohibition against revealing information about specific practices or locations.



**Policy CD 4.4 Potential Archaeological Impacts.** Consistent with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), prior to construction, consult the California Archaeological Inventory Northwest Information Center for project-specific reviews to evaluate the potential for impact on archaeological resources and determine whether or not further study is warranted.

**Policy CD 4.5 On-Site Mitigation.** If development could affect a tribal cultural resource or archaeological resource, require the developer to contact an appropriate tribal representative to train construction workers on appropriate avoidance and minimization measures, requirements for confidentiality and culturally appropriate treatment, other applicable regulations, and consequences of violating State laws and regulations.

**Policy CD 4.6 Paleontological Resource Protection.** Prohibit the damage or destruction of paleontological resources, including prehistorically significant fossils, ruins, monuments, or objects of antiquity, that could potentially be caused by future development.

## ACTIONS

**Action CD 4.7 Preconstruction Investigations.** Consistent with CEQA, establish specific procedures for preconstruction investigation of high- and medium-sensitivity sites identified in the 1983 Chavez investigation, unless superseded by more recent investigations, to assist property owners, developers, and the City in making decisions when archaeological resources may be affected.

**Action CD 4.8 Archaeological Sensitivity Data.** Update and maintain the City's data on areas with high archaeological sensitivity.

**Action CD 4.9 Paleontological Resource Mitigation Protocol.** Prepare a list of protocols in accordance with Society of Vertebrate Paleontology standards that protect or mitigate impacts to paleontological resources, including requiring grading and construction projects to cease activity when a paleontological resource is discovered so it can be safely removed.

## HISTORIC RESOURCES

Spanish exploration of San Mateo began in the 1770s, but European settlement of this area started around 1793 when the San Mateo area became an asistencia, or outpost, for Mission Dolores. After Mexican independence from Spain in 1822, the missions were divided into large land grants. Rancho San Mateo and Rancho de las Pulgas encompassed what became San Mateo.

By the end of the Mexican-American War in 1848, California had become a territory of the United States and obtained statehood two years later. The small village of San Mateo began to develop at the juncture of several stagecoach lines, established in the late 1840s and 1850s, and the San Francisco and San Jose Railroad, which began servicing the community in 1864. San Mateo became a popular destination for tourists visiting Crystal Springs Canyon and for wealthy San Franciscan families, who constructed lavish mansions. The commercial downtown developed around the intersection of the railroad station and B Street, and schools, utilities, and other public services were established to support the growing population. In 1894, an overwhelming majority of residents voted to incorporate the town of San Mateo.

From the late nineteenth century through the 1930s, numerous residential neighborhoods were established throughout San Mateo, particularly as former estates were sold and subdivided. These include subdivisions in the Central neighborhood in the late nineteenth century, and the San Mateo Park, San Mateo Heights, and Hayward's Addition subdivisions in the early 1900s. Residential development intensified following the 1906 earthquake and fires, with new development concentrated in the Hayward Park, East San Mateo, and North Central neighborhoods. Other notable developments included the Glazenwood neighborhood in the 1920s and the Baywood and Aragon neighborhoods in the 1930s.

As San Mateo's population evolved, it expanded from a town to an established community in the early twentieth century. Large numbers of Irish immigrants arrived in the 1860s and were followed by the first Chinese and Japanese immigrants the following decade. Chinese residents initially formed a small Chinatown at B Street and Second Avenue and later at Claremont Street and First Avenue around 1900.



Chinese residents continued to live in small clusters in the downtown area well into the 1940s. Japanese immigrants who arrived in San Mateo found employment as domestic workers and at the local salt plant; they also opened small businesses in the burgeoning downtown and became successful gardeners as part of the Peninsula's flower industry. By the turn of the twentieth century, they made up the largest Japanese community in the county. Following World War II, development increased significantly in San Mateo. Significant postwar development included the construction of the Hillsdale shopping center and large-scale residential tract developments west of El Camino Real.

This history is represented in the almost 200 historic resources and two historic districts as identified in the 1989 Historic Building Survey. Approximately 37 of these structures are individually eligible for the National Register of Historic Places. They range from historic buildings in the downtown to single-family homes from the late nineteenth century. In addition, there are six historic resources listed on the National Register of Historic Places and six historic resources on the State Register of Historic Places, as shown in Table CD-1.

State and federal laws and programs help to protect historic and archaeological resources, including the California Historical Building Code, which preserves California's architectural heritage by ensuring historic buildings are maintained and rehabilitated in accordance with historically sensitive construction techniques. In addition, the Mills Act, enacted in 1976, provides a property tax incentive to owners of qualified, owner-occupied, historical properties to maintain and preserve the historic property in accordance with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties.

This section provides policy direction for the preservation of historic resources. Goals and policies focused on protecting archaeological and resources that are culturally significant to Native American tribes can be found under Goal CD-4 of this element.

**Table CD-1 National Register and State Register of Historic Places in San Mateo**

Historic Resource Name	Location	National Register	State Register	Year of Construction
Ernest Coxhead House	37 East Santa Inez Avenue	X	X	1891
Vollers House	353 North Claremont Street	X		1891
Hotel St. Matthew	215-229 Second Avenue	X	X	Early 1900
Eugene De Sabla J. Jr. Teahouse and Tea Garden	70 De Sabla Road	X	X	1907
National Bank of San Mateo	164 South B Street	X	X	1924
US Post Main Office – San Mateo	210 South Ellsworth Street	X	X	1935
Baywood Elementary School	600 Alameda de las Pulgas		X	1939

## GOALS, POLICIES, AND ACTIONS

**GOAL CD-5** Preserve historic and culturally important resources to maintain San Mateo's special identity and continuity with the past.

### POLICIES

**Policy CD 5.1 Historic Preservation.** Identify and preserve historic resources, including individual properties, districts, and sites to maintain San Mateo's sense of place and special identity, and to enrich our understanding of the city's history and continuity with the past.

**Policy CD 5.2 Historic Resources Preservation.** Actively identify and preserve concentrations of historic resources, which convey the flavor of local historical periods, are culturally significant, or provide an atmosphere of exceptional architectural interest or integrity, when they meet national, State, or local criteria.

**Policy CD 5.3 Historic Resources Definition.** Define historic resources as buildings, structures, sites, and districts that are listed in or determined to be eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places and/or California Register of Historical Resources, designated resources in the 1989 Historic Building Survey Report, and resources found to be eligible through documentation in a historic resources report.



**Policy CD 5.4 Public Awareness.** Foster public awareness and appreciation of the City's historic resources and educate the community about how to preserve and improve these resources. Increase public appreciation by supporting groups and organizations that provide neighborhood workshops, public presentations, interpretive signage, and walking tours.

**Policy CD 5.5 Historic Resources Renovation and Rehabilitation.** Promote the renovation and rehabilitation of historic resources that conforms to the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation and Guidelines for Rehabilitating Historic Structures and the California Historical Building Code and prioritize historic structures for available rehabilitation funds.

**Policy CD 5.6 Historic Preservation Funding.** Pursue and promote historic preservation funding sources to incentivize the protection of historic resources, such as the California Mills Act Property Tax Abatement Program, Federal and State Historic Preservation Tax Incentives Program, and State Historic Rehabilitation Tax Credit Program.

**Policy CD 5.7 Demolition Alternatives.** Require an applicant to submit alternatives to preserve a historic resource as part of any planning application that proposes full demolition. Implement preservation methods unless health and safety requirements cannot be met or the City Council makes a finding explaining the specific reasons why the social, economic, legal, technical, or other beneficial aspects of the proposed demolition outweigh the unavoidable adverse impacts to the historic resource. If a designated historic resource cannot be preserved, require City approval before the demolition of a historic resource.



## ACTIONS

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- Action CD 5.8 Historic Resources Context Statements.** Prepare a citywide historic context statement to guide future historic resource survey efforts to identify individually eligible resources and historic districts. If a neighborhood is identified as a historic district, prepare a more detailed historic context statement for that individual neighborhood.
- Action CD 5.9 Historic Resources Survey.** Establish and maintain an inventory of architecturally, culturally, and historically significant buildings, structures, sites, and districts. Proactively maintain an up-to-date historic resources inventory by seeking funding opportunities to update the historic survey. Prepare neighborhood-specific historic context statements prior to updating the historic resources survey.
- Action CD 5.10 Historic Preservation Ordinance.** Update the City's Historic Preservation Ordinance to create a framework for the designation of historic resources and districts, establish review and permitting procedures for historic alterations, demolitions or relocations, be consistent with federal and State standards and guidelines, and align with the other goals and policies outlined in this Element.
- Action CD 5.11 Preservation Incentives.** Explore the option to create incentives to preserve historic and cultural resources, such as reducing parking and other prescriptive requirements, allowing adaptive reuse, or establishing a transfer of development rights program.
- Action CD 5.12 Historic Resources Design Standards.** Create objective design standards for alterations to historic resources and new development adjacent to historic resources within historic districts. Use the Secretary of the Interior's Standards as the basis for these objective design standards to ensure projects have a contextual relationship with land uses and patterns; spatial organization; visual relationships; cultural and historic values; and the height, massing, design, and materials of historic resources.
- Action CD 5.13 Certified Local Government.** Explore the feasibility of becoming a Certified Local Government (CLG) to become eligible for federal grant funds and technical assistance in support of historic resource preservation efforts.

## CITY PLACEMAKING

San Mateo's image and unique identity is composed of distinct residential neighborhoods, major open spaces, key views and gateways, major corridors, distinct shopping areas, train stations, landscaping, and the spatial arrangement of buildings and architectural styles. Public art can be found throughout the city, from murals and mosaics to interactive sculpture to temporary installations. The city's vibrant downtown, popular Hillsdale Shopping Center, and active dining scene also contribute to the city's image, create a sense of place for residents, and attract visitors from outside of the city.

### Sustainable Design

Since many goals and policies throughout the Strive San Mateo General Plan 2040 promote San Mateo as a sustainable city, it is important to recognize that site layout and the design of buildings are major factors in meeting the objectives of sustainable design. Sustainability starts in the early design stages of a development, and the Land Use Element includes a number of policies and actions to ensure that features like walkability, transit access, and open space are integrated into new development. High-efficiency heating and cooling equipment and appliances can reduce water use, maximize energy efficiency, and improve indoor air quality, and are called for in the Public Services and Facilities Element. Drought-tolerant landscaping and the use of pervious paving materials can also reduce water waste and runoff into the bay, as noted in the Conservation, Open Space, and Recreation Element. This Community Design and Historic Resources Element focuses on locating and orienting structures on a site to take full advantage of solar access and shading, and to preserve natural resources, such as mature vegetation.

### Gateways

Gateways are the key locations where people enter and leave the city, distinct districts, and neighborhoods. They act as a point of distinction between different areas and contribute to a sense of arrival to one place from another. Gateways into and within San Mateo include El Camino Real as it crosses the north and south borders of the city, entrances from US Highway 101 and State Route (SR-) 92, or Third Avenue at the edge of downtown. As gateways convey a sense of arrival and provide initial and lasting impressions, they should be attractive and identifiable. Gateways can express a pleasant welcome through architectural features, landscaping, and art. Signage can also help define city gateways uniformly.

### Corridors

Corridors are the way residents and visitors most commonly see the city as they move through it. A well-designed corridor should connect to important destinations, provide a sense of orientation, be attractive, and project a positive image of the city. It should provide appropriate street width for neighborhood character, adequate lighting, accommodation for pedestrians and bicycles, and public spaces for gathering. Heights, setbacks of buildings, and the color and texture of paving materials should also be considered in corridor design.

Major corridors in the city include El Camino Real, US Highway 101, and the railroad. In addition to this element, the City's El Camino Real Master Plan also provides direction for enhancements to El Camino Real from SR-92 to the Belmont border, which will further its role as an important community corridor that supports a vibrant mixed-use community.



## Public Art

Public art helps create an inviting atmosphere for gathering, fosters economic development, and contributes to vital public spaces. San Mateo’s Art In Public Places program recognizes that cultural and artistic resources enhance the quality of life for individuals living, working, and visiting the city. The program requires new commercial and multifamily residential projects valued over a certain amount to provide publicly visible art or pay an in-lieu art fee. Since its adoption, the program has resulted in new art installations throughout the city.

This section provides policy direction for developing and maintaining the city’s vibrant image. See the Land Use Element for guidance on different types and locations of future development; the Circulation Element for discussion of roadways, bike paths, sidewalks, and other transportation infrastructure; the Public Facilities and Services Element regarding utility undergrounding; and the Open Space, Conservation, and Recreation Element on the importance of parks and open space as integral parts of the community.

## GOALS, POLICIES, AND ACTIONS

**GOAL CD-6** Develop and maintain an attractive urban fabric that reflects San Mateo’s unique visual and architectural character.

## POLICIES

**Policy CD 6.1 Community Cohesion.** Design new private development, streets, and public spaces to enhance social connection by providing human-scale street-fronting uses and community spaces, as appropriate.

**Policy CD 6.2 Gateways.** Develop gateways that visually announce key entrances to San Mateo by maintaining or establishing distinctive architectural, art, or landscape features.



**Policy CD 6.3 Sustainable Design.** Encourage integration of sustainable design features and elements into the design of new buildings, including locating and orienting buildings to access solar exposure, preserving mature vegetation to the extent feasible, and using green building materials.

**Policy CD 6.4 El Camino Real (SR-82) Corridor.** Strive to make El Camino Real a destination, not just a corridor for people to pass through, by encouraging improvements to the public right-of-way and private properties along El Camino Real that will make the corridor safer and more attractive for all users. Examples of such improvements include redesigned transit stops, an improved pedestrian realm, and updated/improved building façades. Incorporate the Guiding Principles of the Grand Boulevard Initiative into future plans for the El Camino Real corridor in San Mateo.

**Policy CD 6.5 US Highway 101 Frontage.** Encourage upgrading of the appearance of US Highway 101 and properties adjacent to the freeway through design treatment, screening, and right-of-way landscaping.

**Policy CD 6.6 Signage.** Maintain signage controls that appropriately regulate the design, size, type, illumination, and quantity of signs visible from corridors and create consistent signage that reinforces San Mateo's unique identity.

**Policy CD 6.7 Public Open Space Design.** Seek opportunities to establish public open spaces in new developments and new public buildings, and promote innovative and creative designs to create exceptional, unique, and functional spaces. Require signage that clearly delineates these spaces as publicly accessible.

**Policy CD 6.8 Public Art.** Continue to require public art as part of new development and ensure the art is visible and accessible to the public. Support public art as a resource that enhances the quality of life for individuals living in, working in, and visiting the city, improves the quality of the urban environment, and increases property values.



**Policy CD 6.9 Inclusive Outreach.** Involve the community in the City's efforts to develop and maintain an attractive urban fabric that reflects San Mateo's unique visual and architectural character. Use outreach and engagement methods that include broad representation and are culturally sensitive, particularly for equity priority communities. Communicate clearly how and at what stages members of the public can provide input for development projects under review.



**Policy CD 6.10 Nighttime Lighting.** Require nighttime lighting to be energy efficient, be designed to minimize light pollution and light spillage to adjacent properties, while protecting public safety.

## ACTION

**Action CD 6.11 Brand Identity Package.** Develop a brand identity package for the City.



## ELEMENTS OF DESIGN

Site design and the architectural style of buildings contribute to the look and feel of a city. The orientation of buildings, the massing and scale of the building, and other design elements can improve the visual aesthetic of an area. Buildings can be oriented to take advantage of surroundings such as fronting sidewalks in commercial districts, capturing scenic views, and/or minimizing environmental impacts such as flooding, wind, shadows, etc. Massing refers to the height, width, and shape of a building. Scale is the relative size of the building overall as well as the elements that make up the façade. Building materials, lighting, landscaping, and outdoor spaces also contribute to the overall appearance and experience of a site. The design choices for buildings vary depending on the area. For example, the design elements for an active mixed-use downtown, auto-oriented shopping center, office park, or residential neighborhood will be different.

Outside of this General Plan, other City regulations and plans also influence the design and architecture of new development. The Zoning Code adds more detail on allowed uses of land and buildings, the density of development and population, the height and bulk of structures, parking provisions, open space requirements, landscaping standards, and other design requirements. The Multifamily and Mixed-Use Objective Design Standards (ODS) provide clear and specific requirements for everything larger than a single-family home. Specific Plans guide infill development in several areas, including Bay Meadows and near the Hayward Park and Hillsdale Caltrain stations, and tend to allow greater flexibility in design than in areas not covered by Specific Plans. Throughout the city, projects that require a higher level of review must submit a Planning Application to ensure consistency with the General Plan and any applicable community or specific plans.

Streetscaping and other public landscaping also shapes the look and feel of San Mateo. The City's Department of Public Works has detailed engineering standards that work in combination with the Municipal Code and adopted plans to establish objective design standards within the public right-of-way.

### Residential Neighborhoods

Each neighborhood in San Mateo is a reminder of the unique blend of architectural styles, building materials, scale, and street patterns that were typical at the time of its development. The shape of a house, its placement on the lot, its arrangement of doors and windows, its roof style, and its architectural style all make up the character of a building and contribute to the collective appearance of the neighborhood. In every community, residential neighborhoods grow and evolve while balancing the continuity and consistency of existing physical characteristics through the appropriate design of new development.



This section provides policy direction for the design of residential neighborhoods, and mixed-use and commercial areas. The Land Use Element includes additional goals and policies for shopping areas in transition and three focused planning areas in the city: Downtown, El Camino Real Corridor, and the Hillsdale Station Area. For additional policy direction on sustainability, see the Climate Change and Land Use section of the Land Use Element.

## GOALS, POLICIES, AND ACTIONS

**GOAL CD-7** Balance the growth and evolution of residential neighborhoods with the need to maintain and enhance their existing characteristics and physical qualities through the appropriate design of new development.

### POLICIES

- Policy CD 7.1 Low-Density Residential Development.** Require new homes in the Low- and Very Low-Density residential designations, including single-family dwellings, duplexes, triplexes, four-plexes, and accessory dwelling units (ADUs) to be consistent with objective design standards as outlined in the City's Residential Design Standards.
- Policy CD 7.2 Single-Family Design.** Encourage single-family additions and new dwellings that address the preservation and enhancement of neighborhood visual and architectural character through context-sensitive building scale, materials, architectural style and details, and privacy.
- Policy CD 7.3 Multifamily Design.** Encourage architectural design of new multifamily developments that enhances a neighborhood's visual and architectural character by providing context-sensitive building and pedestrian-scale elements, high-quality materials and construction, open space, and resident amenities.
- Policy CD 7.4 Multifamily Parking.** Require new multifamily developments to design and site parking to avoid blank, ground-floor walls and to screen views of parking from the street.
- Policy CD 7.5 Multifamily Open Space.** Require that a portion of required open space for new multifamily projects be useable for passive or active recreation.

### ACTION

- Action CD 7.6 Objective Design Standards.** Develop and adopt objective design standards that clearly outline the City's design expectations for new single-family and multifamily projects.

## Mixed-Use and Commercial Areas

This element aims to improve the visual and architectural character, livability, and vitality of mixed-use and commercial areas in San Mateo. It supports human-scale design that cultivates pedestrian activity in commercial and mixed-use areas by providing adequate sidewalk widths; activating ground-floor street façades with windows, plantings, and awnings; using high-quality construction materials; and including human-scale details and architectural features. New mixed-use and commercial development that respect the scale and rhythm of surrounding buildings, including by providing breaks in the building face at spacings common to buildings in the area and by stepping back upper floors, feels more appealing and welcoming to visitors. Sidewalk and pedestrian mall outdoor dining and parklets, the outdoor display of goods for retail uses, and public seating areas can add visual interest and activity to commercial and mixed-use areas.



## GOALS, POLICIES, AND ACTIONS

**GOAL CD-8** Improve the visual and architectural character, livability, and vitality of mixed-use and commercial areas.

### POLICIES

- Policy CD 8.1 Objective Design Standards.** Provide clear, objective, and quantifiable design standards to guide new mixed-use and commercial development.
- Policy CD 8.2 Human-Scale Design.** Cultivate pedestrian activity in commercial and mixed-use areas by providing adequate sidewalk widths, activating ground-floor street façades with active uses, windows, plantings, and awnings, using high-quality construction materials, and including human-scale details and architectural features.
- Policy CD 8.3 Respect Existing Scale and Rhythm.** Encourage new mixed-use and commercial development to respect the scale and rhythm of surrounding buildings, including by providing breaks in the building face at spacings common to buildings in the area and by stepping back upper floors.
- Policy CD 8.4 Commercial Parking.** Encourage commercial projects to provide required parking underground to minimize the amount of ground-floor area dedicated to parking. When parking is at grade, it should be located towards the rear of a parcel, away from active street frontages and public spaces.
- Policy CD 8.5 Outdoor Display and Eating.** Support sidewalk and pedestrian mall outdoor dining and parklets, the outdoor display of goods for retail uses, and public seating areas to add visual interest and activity to commercial and mixed-use areas.

### ACTIONS

- Action CD 8.6 Objective Design Standards.** Develop and adopt objective design standards for new mixed-use and commercial development to provide a clear understanding of the City's expectation for new project design, including pedestrian-friendly design.
- Action CD 8.7 Commercial Development Adjacent to Residential.** Develop and adopt objective design standards that define and require appropriate design transitions from commercial to residential zones.





# CHAPTER 6

## Conservation, Open Space, and Recreation Element









# CONSERVATION, OPEN SPACE, AND RECREATION ELEMENT

## INTRODUCTION

The Conservation, Open Space, and Recreation Element provides the policy framework for the development, management, and preservation of San Mateo's natural and recreational resources.

San Mateo is home to a variety of natural resources, open spaces, and parks and recreational facilities that are cherished by the San Mateo community. The city's air quality and open spaces, creeks, and wetlands provide habitats for plants and animals, natural infrastructure that supports resilience, and access to nature that offers social, physical, and mental health benefits. The City's system of parks and recreation programs and facilities promotes a healthy and active lifestyle and lifelong learning.

The Conservation, Open Space, and Recreation Element combines the State-mandated elements for Open Space and Conservation given the interrelatedness of the two. It contains the following topics:

- Natural Resources
- Access to Nature and Preservation of Open Space
- Creeks and Riparian Areas
- Air Quality
- Parks and Recreation



## RELEVANCE TO GENERAL PLAN THEMES



### Sustainability in this Element:

- Protects the City's natural resources from development, including wetlands, riparian habitats, and other sensitive natural communities.
- Manages public access to the City's natural resources to balance connections to nature and disturbance to habitats.
- Affirms that all San Mateo residents should be able to breathe safe, clean air.
- Guides park and recreation management using environmentally, socially, and economically sustainable practices.



### Environmental Justice in this Element:

- Prioritizes preservation, restoration, rewilding, and enhancement of natural landscapes in or near equity priority communities.
- Establishes mitigation requirements for construction activities or new developments that could be a source of toxic air contaminants (TACs).
- Prioritizes rehabilitation of parks and recreation facilities in equity priority communities.



### Community Engagement in this Element:

- Fosters appreciation and awareness for natural conservation opportunities through enhanced programs and public outreach.
- Cultivates opportunities for community engagement through the City's park and recreation programs.
- Provides experiences for all community members, including children, youth, and aging adults to promote personal enrichment and lifelong learning.







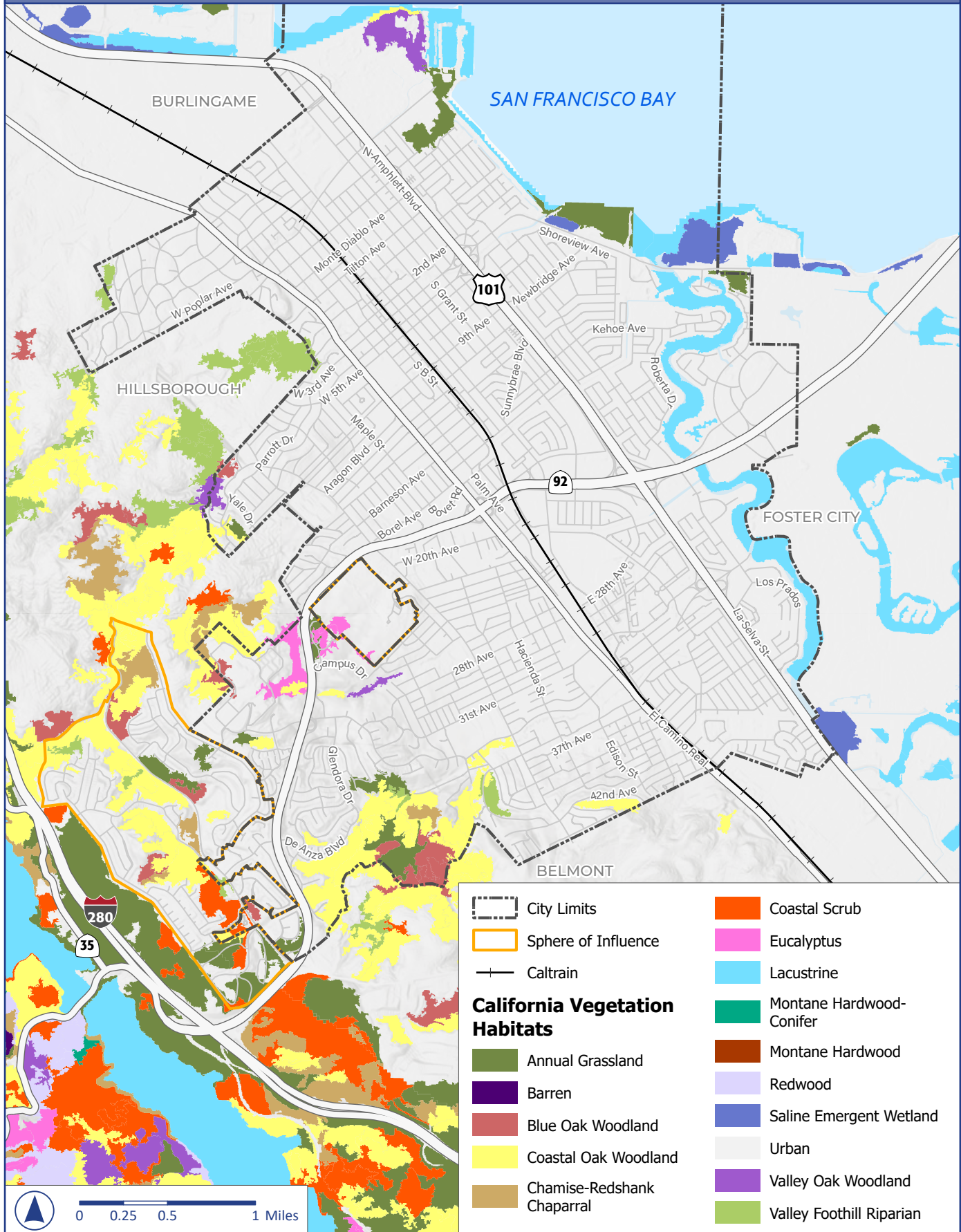
## NATURAL RESOURCES

Natural resources are abundant in and around San Mateo. These diverse open spaces comprise an integrated natural network supporting the city's livability and resiliency and are important recreational and scenic resources highly valued by the community. The City's natural environment is part of the broader San Francisco Bay Area ecosystem. The San Francisco Bay and Delta form the largest estuary on the Pacific Coast, encompassing approximately 1,600 square miles of waterways and is the outlet for over 40 percent of California's fresh water. The marshes and mudflats of the San Francisco Bay provide important feeding and roosting habitat for migrating waterfowl along the Pacific Flyway.

Natural features that define San Mateo's local setting include the city's three-mile length of shoreline and marshes along the San Francisco Bay, Coyote Point County Park, the Marina Lagoon, San Mateo Creek, and a number of smaller creeks, Sugarloaf Mountain, and hillsides to the west. These natural areas host biological communities that are home to many plant and animal habitats and serve as wildlife corridors. Riparian and wetland habitats in and around San Mateo are recognized and protected sensitive habitats under the jurisdiction of the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) and the US Army Corps of Engineers (USACE). Figure COS-1 shows the sensitive vegetation habitats within San Mateo.

This section provides policy direction for protecting and enhancing the City's natural resources. Goals and policies focused on preserving and enhancing San Mateo's natural setting, minimizing the impact of hillside development, and protecting and improving the city's urban tree canopy can be found in the Community Design and Historic Resources Element.

Figure COS-1 Vegetation Habitats



Source: USDA, 2013; ESRI, 2022; PlaceWorks, 2023.

Note: This map is included for informational purposes and is not adopted as part of this General Plan.

## GOALS, POLICIES, AND ACTIONS

**GOAL COS-1** Protect and enhance the City’s natural resource areas that provide plant and animal habitat and benefit human and ecological health and resilience.

### POLICIES



**Policy COS 1.1 Sensitive Natural Communities.** Protect riparian habitat and other sensitive natural communities. When an opportunity arises, restore natural resources, including wetlands.



**Policy COS 1.2 Interjurisdictional Coordination.** Coordinate with adjacent jurisdictions and regional, State, and federal agencies to protect critical wildlife habitat, including by participating in comprehensive habitat management programs.



**Policy COS 1.3 Site Evaluations.** Require independent professional evaluation of sites for any public or private development within known or potential habitat of species designated by State and federal agencies as rare, threatened, or endangered.

The site evaluation shall determine the presence/absence of these special-status plant and animal species on the site. The surveys associated with the evaluation shall be conducted for proper identification of the species. The evaluation shall consider the potential for significant impacts on special-status plant and animal species and shall include feasible mitigation measures to mitigate such impacts to the satisfaction of the City and appropriate governmental agencies (e.g., US Fish and Wildlife Service and California Department of Fish and Wildlife). The City shall require adequate mitigation measures for ensuring the protection of sensitive resources and achieving “no net loss” of sensitive habitat acreage, values, and functions.

In lieu of the site evaluation, presence of special-status plant and animal species may be assumed, and the City may require “no net loss” mitigation of sensitive habitat acreage be applied to the satisfaction of the City and appropriate governmental agencies.

**Policy COS 1.4 Avoidance of Nesting Birds.** Native bird nests in active use should be avoided in compliance with State and federal regulations. For new development sites where nesting birds may be present, vegetation clearing and construction should be initiated outside the bird nesting season (March 1 through August 31) or preconstruction surveys should be conducted by a qualified biologist in advance of any disturbance. If active nests are encountered, appropriate buffer zones should be established based on recommendations by the qualified biologist and remain in place until any young birds have successfully left the nest.

**Policy COS 1.5 Surveys for Sensitive Natural Communities.** Require that sites with suitable natural habitat, including creek corridors through urbanized areas, be surveyed for the presence or absence of sensitive natural communities prior to development approval. Such surveys should be conducted by a qualified biologist and occur prior to development-related vegetation removal or other habitat modifications.

**Policy COS 1.6 Surveys for Regulated Waters.** Require that sites with suitable natural habitat, including creek corridors through urbanized areas, be surveyed for the presence or absence of regulated waters prior to development approval. Such surveys should be conducted by a qualified wetland specialist and occur prior to development-related vegetation removal or other habitat modifications.

**Policy COS 1.7 Surveys for Wildlife Movement Corridors.** Require that sites with suitable natural habitat, including creek corridors through urbanized areas, be surveyed for the presence or absence of important wildlife corridors prior to development approval. Such surveys should be conducted by a qualified biologist and occur prior to development-related vegetation removal or other habitat modifications.



**Policy COS 1.8 Development Near Wetlands or Water.** Avoid wetlands development where feasible (as defined under California Environmental Quality Act [CEQA] Guidelines, Section 15364). Restrict or modify proposed development in areas that contain wetlands or waters to ensure the continued health and survival of special-status species and sensitive habitat areas. Development projects shall be designed to avoid impacts on sensitive resources, or to adequately mitigate impacts by providing on-site or off-site replacement at a higher ratio. Project design modification should include adequate avoidance measures, such as the use of setbacks, buffers, and water quality, drainage-control features, or other measures to ensure that no net loss of wetland acreage, function, water quality protection, and habitat value occurs. This may include the use of setbacks, buffers, and water quality, drainage-control features, or other measures to maintain existing habitat and hydrologic functions of retained wetlands and waters of the US.



**Policy COS 1.9 Wetland Development Mitigation.** If an applicant has demonstrated that wetlands avoidance is not feasible, provide replacement habitat on-site through restoration and/or habitat creation to ensure no net loss of wetland acreage, function, water quality protection, and habitat value. Allow restoration of wetlands off-site only when an applicant has demonstrated that on-site restoration is not feasible. Off-site wetland mitigation should consist of the same habitat type as the wetland area that would be lost.

**Policy COS 1.10 Wetland Access Design.** Design public access to avoid or minimize disturbance to sensitive resources, including necessary setback/buffer areas, while facilitating public use, enjoyment, and appreciation of wetlands.

**Policy COS 1.11 Marina Lagoon Island.** Maintain Marina Lagoon Island as a bird nesting and breeding site.

**Policy COS 1.12 Reduced Risk of Bird Collision.** Require that taller structures be designed to minimize the potential risk of bird collisions using input from the latest bird-safe design guidelines and best management practice strategies to reduce bird strikes.

## ACTION

**Action COS 1.13 Environmental Review.** Review the environmental documents for projects adjacent to City boundaries regarding impacts and mitigation to species and habitat.



## ACCESS TO NATURE AND PRESERVATION OF OPEN SPACE

Spending time in nature is known to have positive social, physical, and mental health benefits. Ensuring that the City's natural resources, including open space areas, are accessible is critical for maintaining the quality of life in San Mateo for city residents and visitors. Preserving open space is also essential for maintaining the uniqueness of San Mateo and the ecological health of its environment.

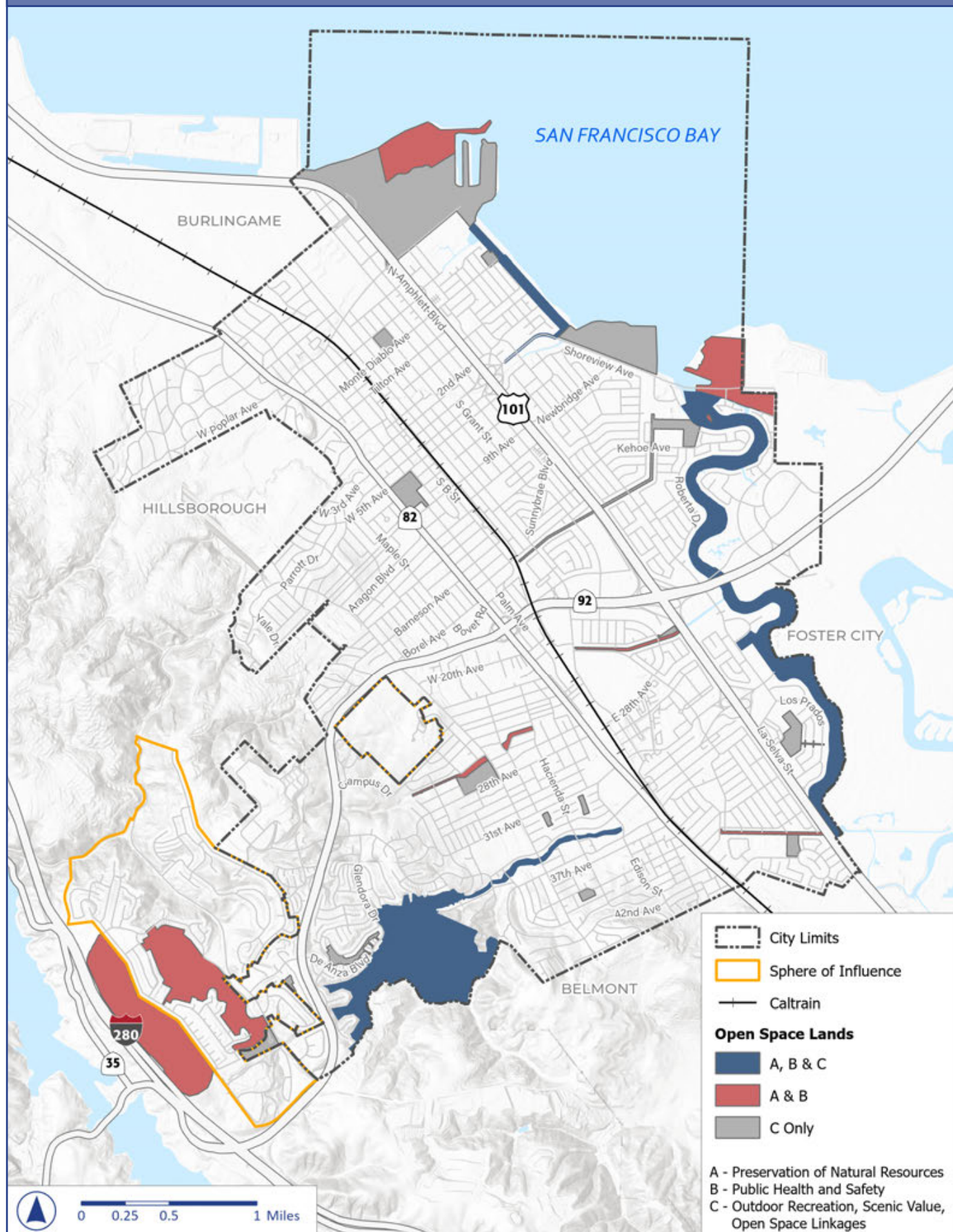
Figure COS-2 illustrates the type and nature of open space land in the City of San Mateo as defined by State law. "Open space land" is any parcel or area of land or water that is essentially unimproved and devoted to an open-space use, as defined in this section, and that is designated on a local, regional, or State open-space plan as any of the following:



- **Open Space for Natural Resources.** This includes areas required for plant and animal habitat or for ecological and scientific study. In San Mateo, these open spaces include areas such as the Bay Marshes, creeks, private open spaces, and Sugarloaf Mountain.
- **Open Space for Outdoor Recreation.** This includes parks and areas of scenic and cultural value, stream banks, trails, and other links between open spaces. In San Mateo, these open spaces include Marina Lagoon, Seal Point, Sugarloaf Mountain, designated private land reserves, and a variety of park sites.
- **Open Space for Public Health and Safety.** This includes areas that require special management because of hazardous conditions, such as unstable soils, fire risk, fault zones, or flood. In San Mateo, these open spaces include portions of the shoreline, Sugarloaf Mountain, and San Mateo Creek.
- **Open Space for Tribal Resources.** This includes protected tribal resources as described in Sections 5097.9 and 5097.993 of the Public Resources Code, which includes Native American historic, cultural, or sacred sites. San Mateo does not have any protected open space tribal resource areas, but it is possible that tribal resources may exist in open spaces.
- **Open Space for Managed Production of Resources.** This includes forest and agricultural lands, water bodies important to the management of commercial fisheries, and mineral deposits. San Mateo does not have any such areas.
- **Open Space for Military Support.** This includes areas in support of military installations, such as areas adjacent to military installations, military training routes, and underlying restricted airspace. San Mateo does not include any open space areas for military support.

This section provides policy direction for access to nature and the preservation of open space. Goals and policies focused on access to parks, recreation, and facilities can be found under Goals COS-5 and COS-6 of this element.

Figure COS-2 Open Space Lands



Source: ESRI, 2022; City of San Mateo Parks and Recreation, 2023; PlaceWorks, 2023.

Note: This map is included for informational purposes and is not adopted as part of this General Plan.

## GOALS, POLICIES, AND ACTIONS

**GOAL COS-2** Ensure that current and future generations will enjoy the environmental, social, health, and economic benefits derived from access to our urban forest, parks, and open spaces.

### POLICIES



**Policy COS 2.1 Preservation of Open Space.** Preserve, protect, and enhance open space areas in San Mateo that provide health benefits and access to nature for all residents.



**Policy COS 2.2 Sustainable Access.** Continue to design and manage public access to the City's natural resources, including open space areas, in a way that promotes public health and connection to nature while avoiding or minimizing disturbance and sustaining these resources into the future.



**Policy COS 2.3 Equitable Conservation.** Prioritize preservation, restoration, rewilding, and enhancement of natural landscapes in or near underserved communities for their role in improving air quality and community health.



**Policy COS 2.4 Shoreline Interpretive Opportunities.** Promote public awareness of the value and care of the shoreline for habitat values, water quality, and safety through on-site interpretive programs or outdoor displays that are in character with the adjacent open spaces.

**Policy COS 2.5 Marina Lagoon and Shoreline Public Access.** New development having frontage on Marina Lagoon shall provide and retain public access to provide a connection to the Marina Lagoon.



**Policy COS 2.6 Sugarloaf Mountain Management.** Improve, maintain, and manage the natural qualities and habitat of Sugarloaf Mountain and Laurelwood Park, including management of public access, study, recreation, and wildland fire hazards.



**Policy COS 2.7 Sugarloaf Mountain Interpretive Opportunities.** Promote public awareness of the value and care of Sugarloaf Mountain through on-site interpretive programs or displays that are in character with the open space, consistent with the adopted management plan.

### ACTIONS

**Action COS 2.8 Improvements to Bayfront Nature Area.** Review plans for the remaining uncompleted portions of Shoreline Park, including the Bayfront Nature Area, Bay Marshes, and J. Hart Clinton Drive to ensure they reflect current environmental and programmatic needs.

**Action COS 2.9 Volunteer Program.** Focus volunteer resources on restoring native habitat around the city, especially in the creeks, where feasible.





## CREEKS AND RIPARIAN AREAS

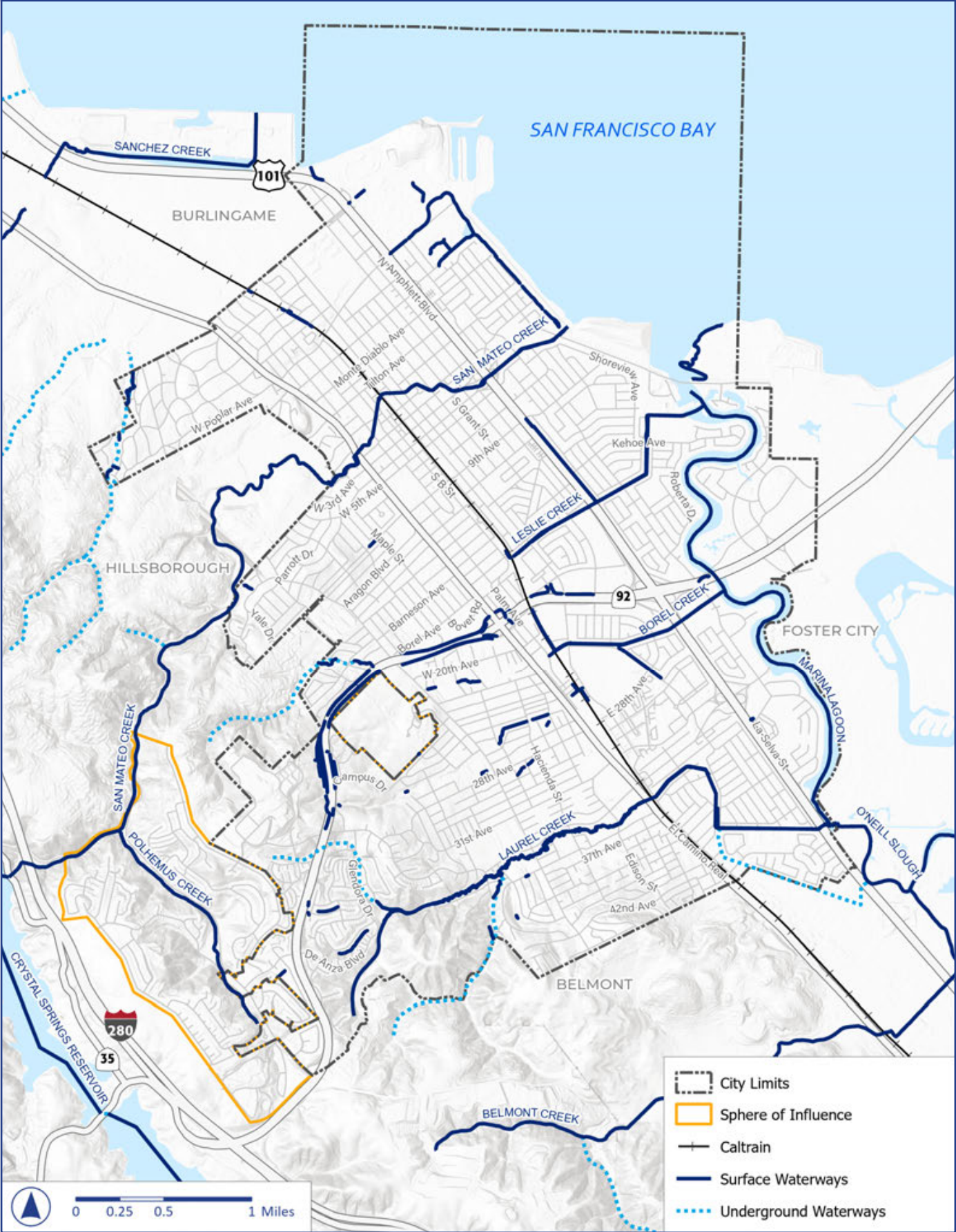
San Mateo has many waterways and riparian areas that offer immense biological benefits. They provide valuable natural habitats for wildlife and fauna, are a part of the city's hydrologic system, and serve as groundwater recharge areas and wildlife corridors. Some of the city's prominent waterways include the Marina Lagoon (formally Seal Slough), San Mateo Creek, Polhemus Creek, and Laurel Creek. Other waterways in the city include Leslie Creek, Borel Creek, and the Marina Lagoon. Figure COS-3 shows waterways in San Mateo, including underground waterways.

While the creeks and riparian areas serve important ecological functions, they are also susceptible to stormwater runoff and pollution. The City strives to protect and improve the system of creeks so wildlife habitats can continue to thrive, current and future generations can continue to enjoy them, and the city's hydrologic system is more resilient to flooding and sea level rise.

This section provides policy direction for protecting and enhancing creeks. Goals and policies focused on water supply and flood-control infrastructure can be found in the Public Services and Facilities Element, and policies and actions to protect against flooding and sea level rise are in the Safety Element.



Figure COS-3 Waterways



Source: USGS and City of San Mateo Public Works; ESRI, 2022; PlaceWorks, 2023.

## GOALS, POLICIES, AND ACTIONS

**GOAL COS-3** Protect and improve San Mateo's creeks as valuable habitat and components of human and environmental health.

### POLICIES



**Policy COS 3.1 Aesthetic and Habitat Values – Public Creeks.** Preserve and enhance the aesthetic and habitat values of creeks, such as San Mateo, Laurel, and Beresford Creeks, and other City-owned channels in all activities affecting these creeks, including revegetation, rewilding, erosion control, and adequate setbacks for structures.



**Policy COS 3.2 Aesthetic and Habitat Values – Private Creeks.** Encourage preservation and enhance the aesthetic and habitat values of privately owned sections of all other creeks and channels, shown in Figure COS-3.

**Policy COS 3.3 Groundwater Protection.** Support the County of San Mateo's efforts to protect the quality and quantity of groundwater resources in the city.



**Policy COS 3.4 Groundwater Infiltration.** Protect existing open spaces, natural habitat, floodplains, and wetland areas that allow for percolation and infiltration of stormwater runoff to slow and reduce the flow of runoff and improve water quality and identify areas to protect when considering new development.



**Policy COS 3.5 Preservation of Beneficial Uses.** Manage Marina Lagoon to balance and enhance its beneficial uses. Manage other water bodies to allow for limited nearby recreation, such as picnicking, hiking, boating, sightseeing, and interpretive study.



## AIR QUALITY

Clean and safe air is essential to the health of everyone in San Mateo. While San Mateo benefits from fresh air that blows in from the bay and the Pacific Ocean, air quality remains a concern due to the serious and lifelong health impacts of exposure to air pollution. “Mobile sources,” including cars and trucks along US Highway 101 and State Route (SR-) 92, are a significant source of air pollution in San Mateo. While San Mateo and its neighbors do not include much heavy industry, smaller “stationary sources,” like gas stations and dry cleaners, also emit pollutants. Finally, natural sources, such as windblown dust and wildfire smoke from other parts of the state, can have drastic effects on air quality in San Mateo.

San Mateo neighborhoods do not have equal access to safe and clean air. For example, neighborhoods along US Highway 101, and around the US Highway 101/SR-92 interchange, are exposed to significantly more diesel particulate matter than neighborhoods in the hills or along the bay. These tiny particles, emitted by diesel engines in trucks, buses, and other heavy equipment, are particularly harmful because they are breathed deep into our lungs, and are known to increase cancer risk, asthma attacks, and chronic heart and lung disease. Improving air quality and health outcomes in equity priority communities is a theme throughout this General Plan.

This section provides policy direction on improving air quality throughout San Mateo. Some of the policies support mitigation measures focused on lessening air quality impacts, as identified in the General Plan 2040 Environmental Impact Report (EIR). Those policies that also serve as mitigation for air quality impacts are detailed, specific, and quantitative to meet the requirements of State environmental law.

## GOALS, POLICIES, AND ACTIONS

**GOAL COS-4** Goals, policies, and actions focused on equity priority communities can be found throughout the General Plan. The Land Use Element also includes goals and policies on environmental justice under Goal LU-8. All San Mateo residents should have the ability to breathe safe, clean air.

### POLICIES



**Policy COS 4.1 Air Quality Thresholds.** Use thresholds of significance that match or are more stringent than the air quality thresholds of significance identified in the current Bay Area Air Quality Management District (BAAQMD) Air Quality Guidelines when evaluating air quality impacts of projects.



**Policy COS 4.2 Health Risk Assessment.** Require new development not exempt from CEQA that includes sensitive receptors to prepare Health Risk Assessments. Identify appropriate mitigation, based on the findings of the Health Risk Assessment, to reduce health risks from major sources of toxic air pollution, such as high-volume roadways, stationary sources, permitted sources from BAAQMD, and warehousing.





**Policy COS 4.3 BAAQMD Planning for Healthy Places.** Require new development to adhere to BAAQMD's Planning for Healthy Places guidance when local conditions warrant.



**Policy COS 4.4 Activity Near Sensitive Receptors.** Comply with State regulations that prohibit nonessential idling of vehicles near sensitive receptors, such as the requirements outlined in Title 13 of the California Code of Regulations (CCR).



**Policy COS 4.5 Odors.** When proposed development generating odors is proposed near residences or sensitive receptors, either adequate buffer distances shall be provided (based on recommendations and requirements of the California Air Resources Board [CARB] and BAAQMD), or filters or other equipment/solutions shall be provided to reduce the potential exposure to acceptable levels. Potential mitigation associated with this policy requirement will be coordinated with any required permit conditions from BAAQMD.

When new residential or other sensitive receptors are proposed near existing sources of odors, either adequate buffer distances shall be provided (based on recommendations and requirements of CARB and BAAQMD), or filters or other equipment/solutions shall be provided to reduce the potential exposure to acceptable levels.



**Policy COS 4.6 Toxic Air Contaminants.** Require that when new development that would be a source of toxic air contaminants (TACs) is proposed near residences or sensitive receptors, either adequate buffer distances shall be provided (based on recommendations and requirements of CARB and BAAQMD), or filters or other equipment/solutions shall be provided to reduce the potential exposure to acceptable levels.

When new residential or other sensitive receptors are proposed near existing sources of TACs, either adequate buffer distances shall be provided (based on recommendations and requirements of CARB and BAAQMD), or filters or other equipment/solutions shall be provided to the source to reduce the potential exposure to acceptable levels.



**Policy COS 4.7 Air Quality Construction Impacts.** Require new construction and grading activities to mitigate air quality impacts generated during construction activities in compliance with BAAQMD's regulations and guidelines on construction activity impacts.



**Policy COS 4.8 Truck Facilities.** Require new development, when applicable, to provide adequate truck parking loading space, and generators for refrigerated trucks to prevent idling during truck operation.



**Policy COS 4.9 Air Pollution Exposure.** For new development that is located within 1,000 feet from US Highway 101 and State Route 92, require installation of enhanced ventilation systems and other strategies to protect people from respiratory, heart, and other health effects associated with breathing polluted air.

## ACTIONS



**Action COS 4.10 Air Quality Improvement.** Support and partner with Bay Area Air Quality Management District (BAAQMD) in monitoring, education, permitting, enforcement, grants programs, or other efforts to improve air quality issues and health outcomes for all.



**Action COS 4.11 Clean Air Refuges.** Develop and implement a plan to provide clean air refuges during times when outdoor air quality is unhealthy. Explore the feasibility of participating in State grant programs to fund retrofits of ventilation systems at public buildings to provide refuge for residents during periods of unhealthy air quality caused by excessive smoke from wildfires.

## PARKS AND RECREATION

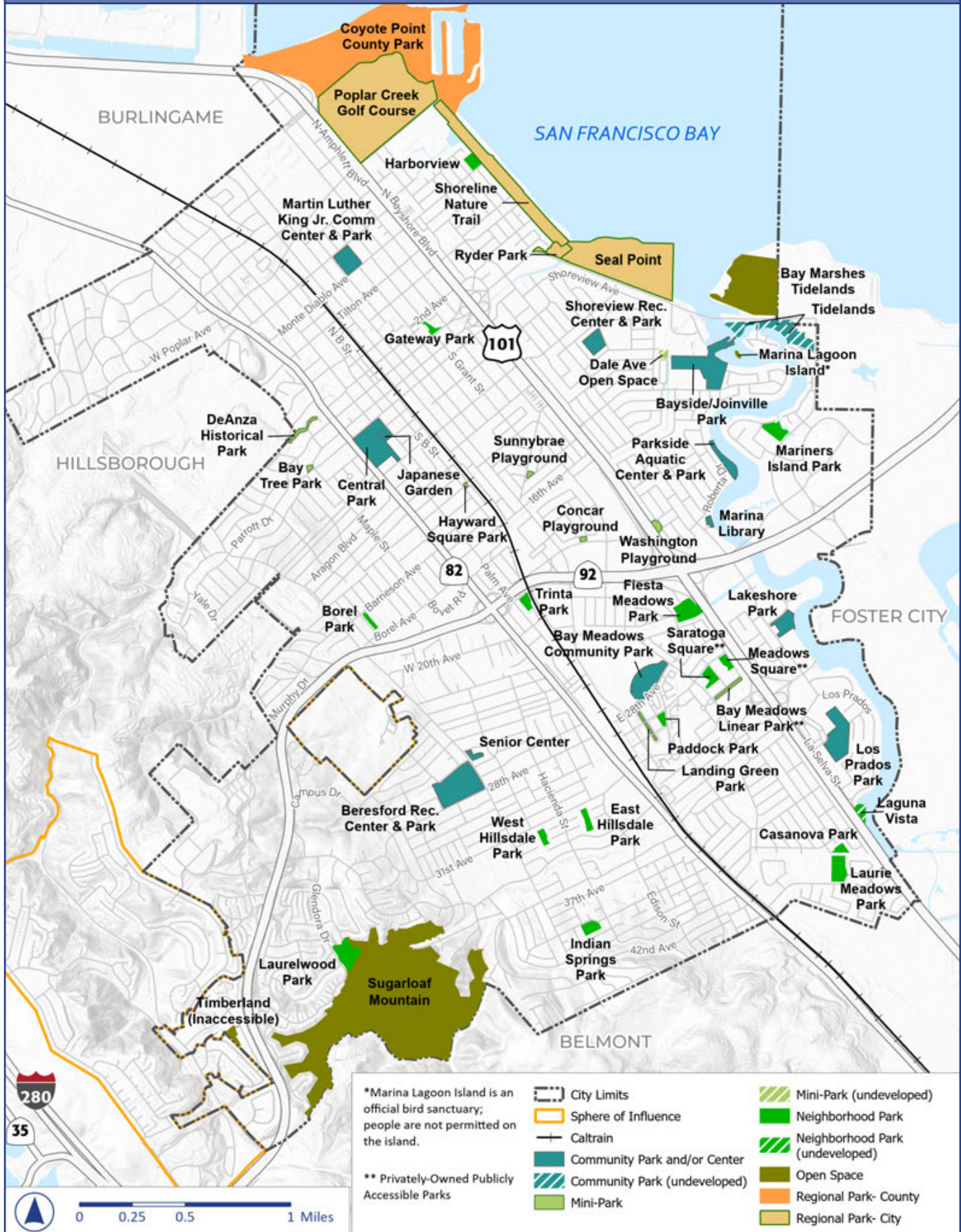
The City of San Mateo has a variety of parks and recreational facilities that provide community members with access to nature, encourages healthy lifestyles, and support a mixture of active and passive recreation opportunities. The City's park system includes more than a dozen neighborhood parks, nine community parks, six recreation/community centers, two pools, the Shoreline regional park system, several small "mini" parks, and an estuary lagoon for boating. Within the City Limits, the County of San Mateo owns and operates the 155-acre Coyote Point Recreation Area. Combined, the San Mateo community has access to approximately 795 acres of parks and open space, or 7.36 acres per every 1,000 residents. Figure COS-4 depicts the location of the parks and open spaces within San Mateo and Figure COS-5 shows a one-third-mile radius around each park and open space area. As shown in Figure COS-4, Marina Lagoon Island is a bird breeding and nesting site, which means people are not permitted on the island.

San Mateo offers many recreation facilities and programs for its members, guided by the Recreation Facilities Strategic Plan. The City's facilities include six recreation/community centers, two pools, and the 18-hole Poplar Creek Golf Course. People of all ages participate in the City's extensive menu of community activities, which includes youth and family aquatics, children's summer camps, adult fitness programs, teen programs, and interactive classes for older adults and seniors. Throughout the year, the City hosts special community events to foster community engagement and provide family friendly fun for San Mateo residents.

This section provides policy direction for parks, recreational programs, and facilities in San Mateo. Goals and policies focused on access to nature and the preservation of open space can be found under Goal COS-2 of this element. Other City services and facilities are addressed in the Public Services and Facilities Element, and expectations for the integration of parks and open spaces into new development are found in the Land Use Element.



Figure COS-4 Public Parks and Recreation Sites

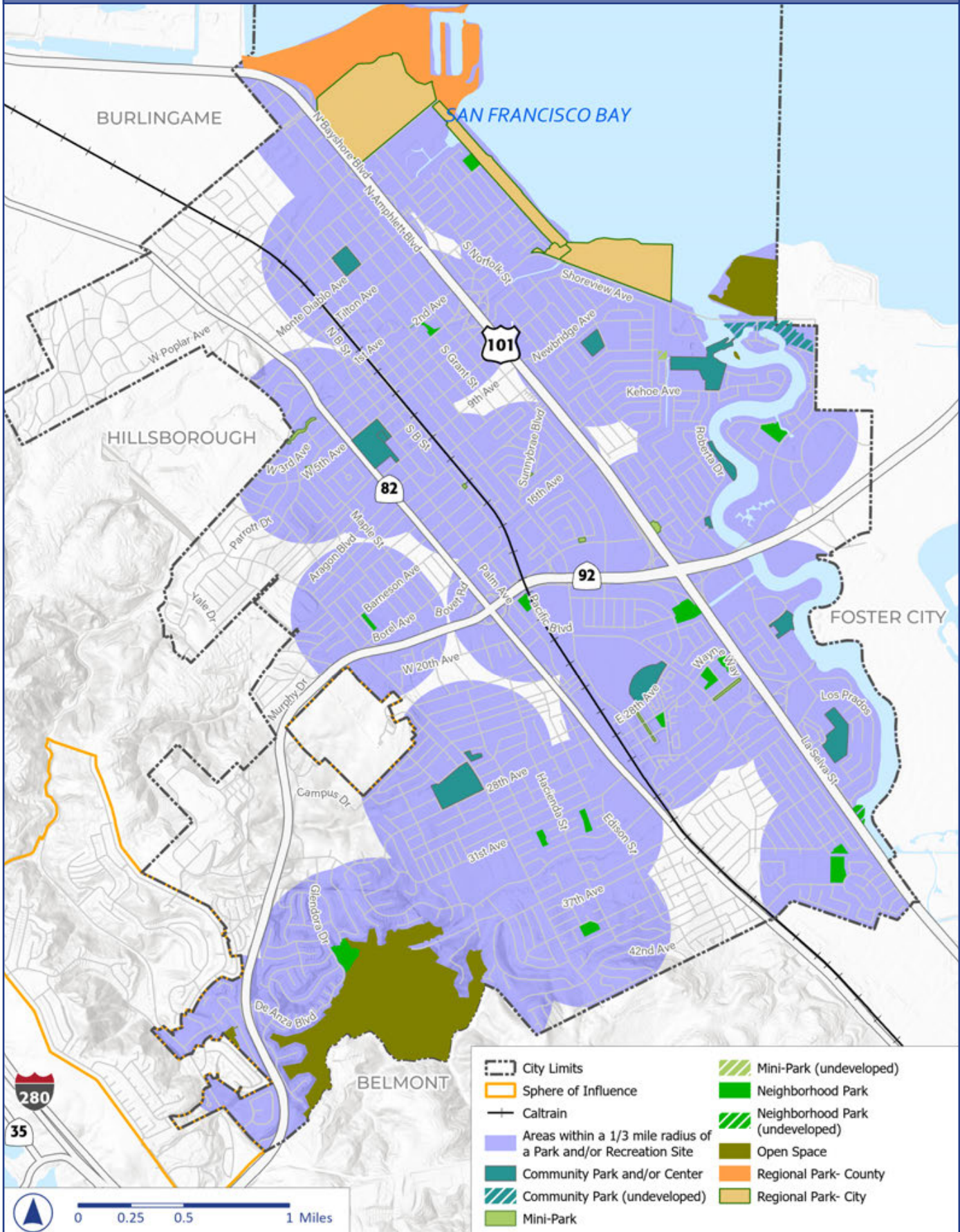


Source: ESRI, 2022; PlaceWorks, 2023.

Note: This map is included for informational purposes and is not adopted as part of this General Plan.



Figure COS-5 Public Parks and Recreation Sites Service Radius



Source: ESRI, 2022; PlaceWorks, 2023.

Note: This map is included for informational purposes and is not adopted as part of this General Plan.

## GOALS, POLICIES, AND ACTIONS

**GOAL COS-5** Provide a comprehensive system of park and recreation programs and facilities based on the needs of the city's residents to encourage healthy lifestyles and ensure access for all.

### POLICIES

**Policy COS 5.1 Active and Healthy Lifestyles.** Maintain and expand programs that promote active and healthy lifestyles and incorporate health and wellness practices into everyday life, such as healthy eating and nutrition education programs, water safety and swim programs, walking and bicycling as a mode of healthy transportation, and youth fitness activities.



**Policy COS 5.2 Creating Community.** Cultivate opportunities to come together as a community, celebrate our heritage, cultures, and milestones, and have social supports available, which are key to creating a sense of community and building community resilience.



**Policy COS 5.3 Creative Outlets.** Provide skill development and performance opportunities within each of the major art forms with an emphasis on promoting lifelong enjoyment to nurture creative discovery.

**Policy COS 5.4 Enrichment and Lifelong Learning.** Provide a wide array of enriching and lifelong learning opportunities that provide mental stimulation, self-improvement, exploration, educational opportunities, and skills that can be applied at home or business.



**Policy COS 5.5 Parks as Learning Environments.** Enhance the role of parks as learning environments by providing interpretive opportunities to community organizations and at City-operated facilities to increase public awareness of their unique cultural, historical, and environmental characteristics.



**Policy COS 5.6 Child and Youth Development.** Provide preschool through teenage youth with a variety of experiences that nurture individuality, spark imagination, encourage active recreation, and build the skills needed to ensure success in the next stage of development.



**Policy COS 5.7 Aging Adults.** Promote policies, programs, services, and public infrastructure improvements through either direct City provision or through collaborative partnerships with other agencies to ensure that older adults can age in place while feeling valued and supported.



**Policy COS 5.8 Community-Led Activity Initiatives.** Work with local community groups and San Mateo County Health to initiate walking, hiking, cycling, and other recreation clubs and activities to increase participation, safety, and social cohesion.



**Policy COS 5.9 Conservation and Nature Awareness.** Increase public awareness of the importance of and appreciation for conservation opportunities and the value of connecting children to nature with enhanced programs and public outreach.



**Policy COS 5.10 Community Gardens.** Support community gardens on sites with quasi-public uses and on publicly owned land, such as City parks or facilities, or as part of new private development, where feasible and appropriate.



**Policy COS 5.11 Central Park.** Promote Central Park's character as the City's signature park and community gathering place.

## ACTION

**Action COS 5.12 Coordination with Education Providers.** Coordinate with education providers, including local school districts, the College of San Mateo, and the San Mateo Public Library, to identify appropriate service targets and provide activities within those identified targets.

**GOAL COS-6** Provide equitable and convenient access to parks, recreational programs, and facilities so that all residents experience the physical and mental health benefits of parks and open space.

## POLICIES



**Policy COS 6.1 Accessible Facilities.** Continue to provide general park facilities that are free and open to the public, except for reservations of specific facilities by groups or individuals, or for facilities that traditionally charge fees (e.g., Golf Course, Marina Lagoon boat access). Address the lack of access to recreational facilities for neighborhoods east of El Camino Real, especially east of US Highway 101.

**Policy COS 6.2 Recreation Fee Assistance.** Continue to provide program fee assistance to qualifying families and older adults consistent with the Park and Recreation Commission-endorsed administrative policy for fee assistance.

**Policy COS 6.3 Privately Owned Public Spaces.** Require privately owned publicly accessible open space to be designed in a way that is welcoming for all, including public access signage and minimal physical or visual barriers, to ensure that the space is open and available to the community.

**Policy COS 6.4 Equitable Access Analysis.** When developing park master plans, include an equitable access analysis to identify deficiencies and potential solutions to address deficiencies found in the analysis.

## ACTIONS

**Action COS 6.5 Customer Service.** Adopt policies and practices that create satisfied customers and develop life-long relationships with our users.

**Action COS 6.6 Inclusion and Accessibility.** Create policies, programs, and facility designs that are age-integrated, inclusive, respectful, and supportive for all members of the community. Expand cultural awareness and appreciation through culturally relevant programs and special events.

**Action COS 6.7 Privately Owned Public Spaces Inventory.** Develop and maintain a list of all publicly accessible private open space in the city.



**Action COS 6.8 Resident Input.** Solicit a broad spectrum of resident input for major park improvements or park master plans. Conduct multilingual and culturally sensitive outreach to ensure all voices are included in park planning efforts and that San Mateo's parks reflect the diversity of the community.



**Action COS 6.9 Public Information.** Communicate through diverse channels and in multiple languages the benefits and value park and recreation services bring in making San Mateo a more livable, economically viable, and socially responsible community.

**Action COS 6.10 Technology Innovation.** Identify and incorporate technology innovations as an ongoing strategy to better serve the public, e.g., virtual trail maps, digitalized park signage, virtual programming.

**GOAL COS-7** Provide the appropriate mix of parks and facilities that balances the needs of active and passive facilities, allows formal and informal uses, is accessible for all residents, and meets existing and future recreation needs.

## POLICIES

**Policy COS 7.1 Facility Standards.** Use the Park and Recreation Facility Standards to assess the adequacy of existing facilities; to design, develop, and redevelop sites; and to acquire or accept new sites.

**Policy COS 7.2 Acreage Standards.** Acquire or accept for dedication two acres of neighborhood and community parks per 1,000 residents.

**Policy COS 7.3 Walkable Parks and Amenities.** Provide accessible public park or other recreational opportunities that are within approximately one-third of a mile (a 15-minute walk) of residents without travel over significant barriers. Ideally, one or more of the following amenities should be available: multipurpose turf area, children's play area with preschool and youth apparatus, seating areas, picnic areas, a multiuse court, and an opportunity for passive enjoyment of an aesthetically landscaped space.

**Policy COS 7.4 Passive Recreation.** Support efforts to create a passive recreation system that connects parks and nodes in the city to increase connectivity on select public rights-of-way for pedestrians.

**Policy COS 7.5 Active-Use Facilities.** Provide sufficient active-use facilities to support current needs and future trends, including, but not limited to, multiuse athletic turf areas; court games; action sports, e.g., bicycling; and a system of pedestrian and bicycle trails that will provide inter-connectivity between parks.

**Policy COS 7.6 Master Planning.** Continue to prepare and maintain master plans for all undeveloped parks and for those parks over two acres prior to development or major redevelopment. Allow interim uses if such uses will not adversely impact or limit potential permanent uses.

**Policy COS 7.7 Rehabilitation or Purchase of School Sites.** Consider contributions towards rehabilitation or the purchase of recreational facilities on surplus school sites based on an evaluation of their value as community recreation resources.

## ACTIONS

**Action COS 7.8 Regional Facilities.** Explore the feasibility of developing regional recreational and sports complexes with neighboring cities.

**Action COS 7.9 Bay Meadows Community Park.** Complete the master planning for Bay Meadows Community Park to reflect its value as a city-wide asset that can address one or more identified facility deficiencies.

**GOAL COS-8** Plan and develop well-designed parks and recreation facilities compatible with surrounding uses that promote accessibility, efficient use, and practical maintenance.

## POLICIES

**Policy COS 8.1 Rehabilitation Priorities.** Prioritize parks and recreation facilities projects that rehabilitate facilities that have become or will become costly to maintain, only marginally usable, meet the highest community needs, provide significant benefits in relation to costs, or are in equity priority communities.

**Policy COS 8.2 Park Preservation.** Preserve existing parklands, open spaces, and the golf course for open space, habitat, and recreational use.

**Policy COS 8.3 Shared Use.** Encourage schools to make their facilities available for City and community-sponsored activities to the greatest extent possible and encourage school agencies to adopt reasonable user fees and operating practices that allow improved community access.

**Policy COS 8.4 Optimum Cost-Effectiveness.** Proactively maintain and upgrade park infrastructure to optimize its cost-effectiveness and value in meeting community recreation needs.



**Policy COS 8.5 Sustainability Practices.** Operate park and recreation facilities using environmentally, socially, and economically sustainable management and operating practices that proactively reverse the impacts of climate change or better prepare for its effects.

**Policy COS 8.6 Maintenance Standards.** Maintain the park system by a set of maintenance standards that reflects community values; maintains, promotes, and optimizes positive use; reduces wildfire risk; and ensures that equipment and facilities are maintained in a safe condition.



**Policy COS 8.7 Environmentally Sound Park Operations.** Use native and drought-tolerant plant species, efficient irrigation systems, reclaimed water, and sustainable management practices. Expand efforts to improve recycling opportunities in all parks and implement trash-reduction measures, especially during large community events.

**Policy COS 8.8 San Mateo City Parks and Recreation Foundation.** Continue to support the San Mateo City Parks and Recreation Foundation efforts to expand non-city resource opportunities, such as funding and volunteers, in support of park development, improvements, and maintenance.

## ACTIONS

**Action COS 8.9 Recreation Facility Infrastructure.** Implement the highest-priority improvements identified from the Recreation Facilities Master Plan with special focus on improvements that address safety and accessibility, geographic equity, childcare, aquatics, and multigenerational programming.

**Action COS 8.10 Design Principles and Park Image.** Establish design principles for all new or renovated parks to maximize productivity, efficiency, and community value, including adding the potential for flexible use for emergency shelters and disaster response. Develop an image plan that includes the effective use of signage, color, lighting, and plant material that meets both aesthetic and maintenance needs.

**Action COS 8.11 Maximized Park Assets.** Review and update the Asset Management Plan to identify the highest and best use of undeveloped parcels or underutilized areas within existing parks to ensure they are best positioned to meet current and future needs.

**Action COS 8.12 Strategic Community Partnerships.** Develop and maintain positive partnership relations with schools, businesses, community groups, and civic organizations for park access, maintenance, and enhancement to maximize resources, eliminate duplication of effort, and reach common goals.

**Action COS 8.13 Neighborhood-Supported Projects.** Increase efforts to seek neighborhood support for enhancement and beautification projects as the City's fiscal resources become constrained. Prioritize enhancement and beautification efforts in equity priority communities.

**Action COS 8.14 School Facility Access.** Partner with local school districts to explore ways to expand public access to school facilities, including gymnasiums and swimming pools.





**GOAL COS-9** Provide stable and adequate operational and capital funding for the parks and recreation system.

## POLICIES

- Policy COS 9.1 Program Fees and Cost Recovery.** Maintain and periodically update program fees to recover costs.
- Policy COS 9.2 Maintenance and Operating Costs.** Consider long-term maintenance and operating costs in acquisition, development, and redevelopment decisions.
- Policy COS 9.3 Park Equipment and Maintenance.** Phase out the use of gas-powered equipment and increase the use of more environmentally friendly fertilization options in City parks and facilities over time.
- Policy COS 9.4 Parks and Facilities in Major Projects.** Factor park and facility maintenance and operating costs into park master plans or major facility upgrades.
- Policy COS 9.5 Development Fees.** Assess appropriate fees and taxes to ensure that new development contributes proportional funding to compensate for its impacts on recreation facilities and services.
- Policy COS 9.6 Cooperative Service Delivery.** Use opportunities for cooperative acquisition, development, operation, and programming with private organizations or other public agencies that will provide more effective or efficient service delivery.

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# CHAPTER 7

## Public Services and Facilities Element







CITY OF SAN MATEO  
City Hall



# PUBLIC SERVICES AND FACILITIES ELEMENT

## INTRODUCTION

Public services and facilities contribute to San Mateo's high quality of life. The City of San Mateo is committed to ensuring our community is safe and has adequate and equitable infrastructure and services. The Public Services and Facilities Element is not one of the required elements for a General Plan. However, the City understands the importance of public services and facilities, and the goals, policies, and actions in this element work to maintain and enhance these services as our community changes. This element covers the following topics:

- Community safety
- Water supply
- Wastewater and flood-control infrastructure
- Energy and telecommunications infrastructure
- Public facilities
- Child care and schools
- Healthcare and social services
- Solid waste

## RELEVANCE TO GENERAL PLAN THEMES



### Sustainability in this Element:

- Manages wastewater and stormwater to protect water quality in our waterways.
- Supports a resilient building stock that reduces or eliminates carbon emissions.
- Maintains the quality of public services as the city grows.
- Supports solid waste reduction and recycling.
- Supports plans for water management and conservation.



### Environmental Justice in this Element:

- Provides for the equitable distribution of public services and facilities throughout the city so that everyone, including vulnerable residents such as children, low-income households, and seniors, can continue to thrive in San Mateo.
- Supports efforts to explore creative options such as reduced permit fees, reduced impact fees, and tax incentives to provide better healthcare services in equity priority communities.
- Commits to code enforcement that advances equity.



### Community Engagement in this Element:

- Continues to support public facilities, such as libraries, schools, and child care centers that engage with the community and help them discover, enjoy, connect, and learn in an ever-changing world.
- Ensures that the San Mateo community is informed about potential public services and facilities improvements in their neighborhood by applying outreach and engagement strategies that encourage broad representation and are culturally sensitive.



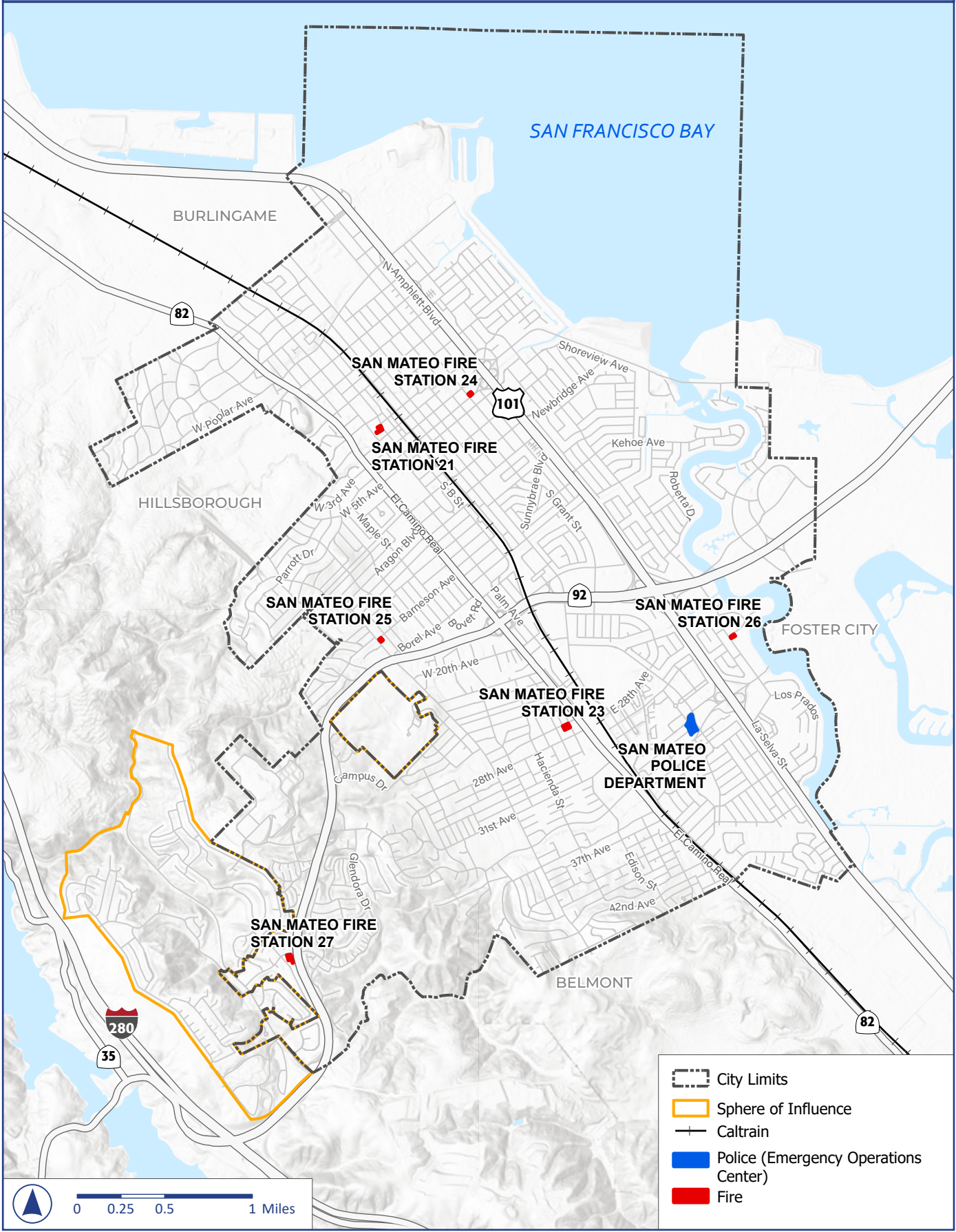
## COMMUNITY SAFETY

Community safety services, such as law enforcement, fire personnel, and Emergency Medical Service (EMS) Readiness are vital to protecting the community's health, safety, and welfare. The San Mateo Police Department (SMPD) is a 24/7 comprehensive community policing department that provides many types of services, including responding to crime, enforcing traffic and parking regulations, and working with the city's youth on education and community-building programs. Fire services are provided by the San Mateo Consolidated Fire Department (SMC Fire), a separate agency that serves San Mateo, Belmont, and Foster City. SMC Fire's goals are to meet the State fire protection requirements for all land uses. There are six fire stations in San Mateo, each of which has one fire engine staffed by one Fire Captain and two Firefighters/Engineers. Figure PSF-1 shows the police and fire stations in San Mateo.

The City works with the San Mateo County EMS to respond to medical emergency needs. The County's EMS system is a public/private partnership between a private consulting service that offers ambulance service and paramedic first response, fire service agencies in San Mateo County, and the County Health Services Department's EMS office.

While community safety services are invaluable to San Mateo, the City also recognizes and understands that code enforcement to address safety issues has the potential to both benefit and harm low-income households. The City believes and will work towards a future where code enforcement is used to advance equity, while still continuing to provide high-quality service to the community.

Figure PSF-1 Fire and Police Services



Source: City of San Mateo, 2022; ESRI, 2022; PlaceWorks, 2023.  
Note: This map is included for informational purposes and is not adopted as part of this General Plan.

## GOALS, POLICIES, AND ACTIONS

**GOAL PSF-1** Protect the community’s health, safety, and welfare by maintaining adequate police, fire, and life safety protection.

### POLICIES

**Policy PSF 1.1 Effective Police and Fire Services.** Maintain facilities, equipment, and personnel to provide an effective police force and fire protection to serve existing and future population and employment, as identified in the Land Use Element.

**Policy PSF 1.2 Police Station.** Provide police station facilities to meet the facility requirements through 2040. Distribute, locate, and design police support facilities (i.e., substations) as needed to maximize effectiveness, use, accessibility for police personnel, and community interaction.

**Policy PSF 1.3 Fire Stations.** Coordinate with and support San Mateo Consolidated Fire Department (SMC Fire) to maintain a high level of service by modernizing fire stations, as needed. Provide new stations and improvements to existing stations and training facilities to meet equipment, staffing, and training requirements, as well as Essential Services Building Requirements.

**Policy PSF 1.4 Fire Inspections.** Coordinate with and support SMC Fire to maintain fire inspection staffing levels to meet existing needs and the projected 2040 population, employment and development, and inspections mandated by other governmental agencies, consistent with the City’s Building Security Code.

**Policy PSF 1.5 Maintenance and Replacement.** Coordinate with and support SMC Fire to provide fire apparatus replacement and maintenance programs to achieve a high state of readiness.

**Policy PSF 1.6 Emergency Medical Service (EMS) Readiness.** Maintain the highest level of Emergency Medical Service (EMS) readiness and response capabilities possible by encouraging interagency medical drills and exercises where hospital personnel work with emergency responders in the field and with Emergency Operation Centers and by encouraging citizens to become trained in basic medical triage and first aid through the Community Emergency Response Team (CERT).



**Policy PSF 1.7 Equitable Code Enforcement.** Continue to use code enforcement to equitably enforce the City’s property maintenance codes to ensure that all residents, specifically those living in equity priority communities, have safe and sanitary living conditions.



## WATER SUPPLY

San Mateo receives water from two primary providers: the California Water Company (Cal Water) and Estero Municipal Improvement District (EMID). Cal Water's Mid-Peninsula District, which includes the City of San Carlos, serves the majority of San Mateo, while EMID provides services to the bayside portions of San Mateo east of Seal Slough and Foster City.

Cal Water and EMID distribute and sell water directly to consumers; however, both agencies receive their water supply from the San Francisco Regional Water System (SF RWS) operated by the San Francisco Public Utilities Commission (SFPUC). Most of San Mateo's current water supply comes from Hetch Hetchy reservoir and the Tuolumne River watershed in the Sierras, while the remaining supply comes from the Alameda Creek and San Mateo County watersheds. Figure PSF-2 identifies the watersheds in San Mateo.

Given that drought will be a persistent challenge in California and could affect future water supply, the City will continue to require water conservation and support alternatives to the current water supply to increase the resilience of this critical resource. In addition, the City will continue to explore strategies to increase the water supply such as the SF-Peninsula Regional PureWater project that would turn wastewater from San Mateo and other areas into drinking water.

This section focuses on policy direction for water supply and flood-control infrastructure. Policy direction for protecting and enhancing the city's waterways can be found in the Conservation, Open Space, and Recreation Element, and policies and actions to protect the community from flooding and sea level rise are in the Safety Element.

## GOALS, POLICIES, AND ACTIONS

**GOAL PSF-2** Support access to a safe, sustainable, and resilient supply of water for San Mateo.

### POLICIES



**Policy PSF 2.1 Supplemental Water Sources.** Support efforts by California Water Service, Estero Municipal Improvement District, and adjacent jurisdictions to develop supplemental and resilient water sources.

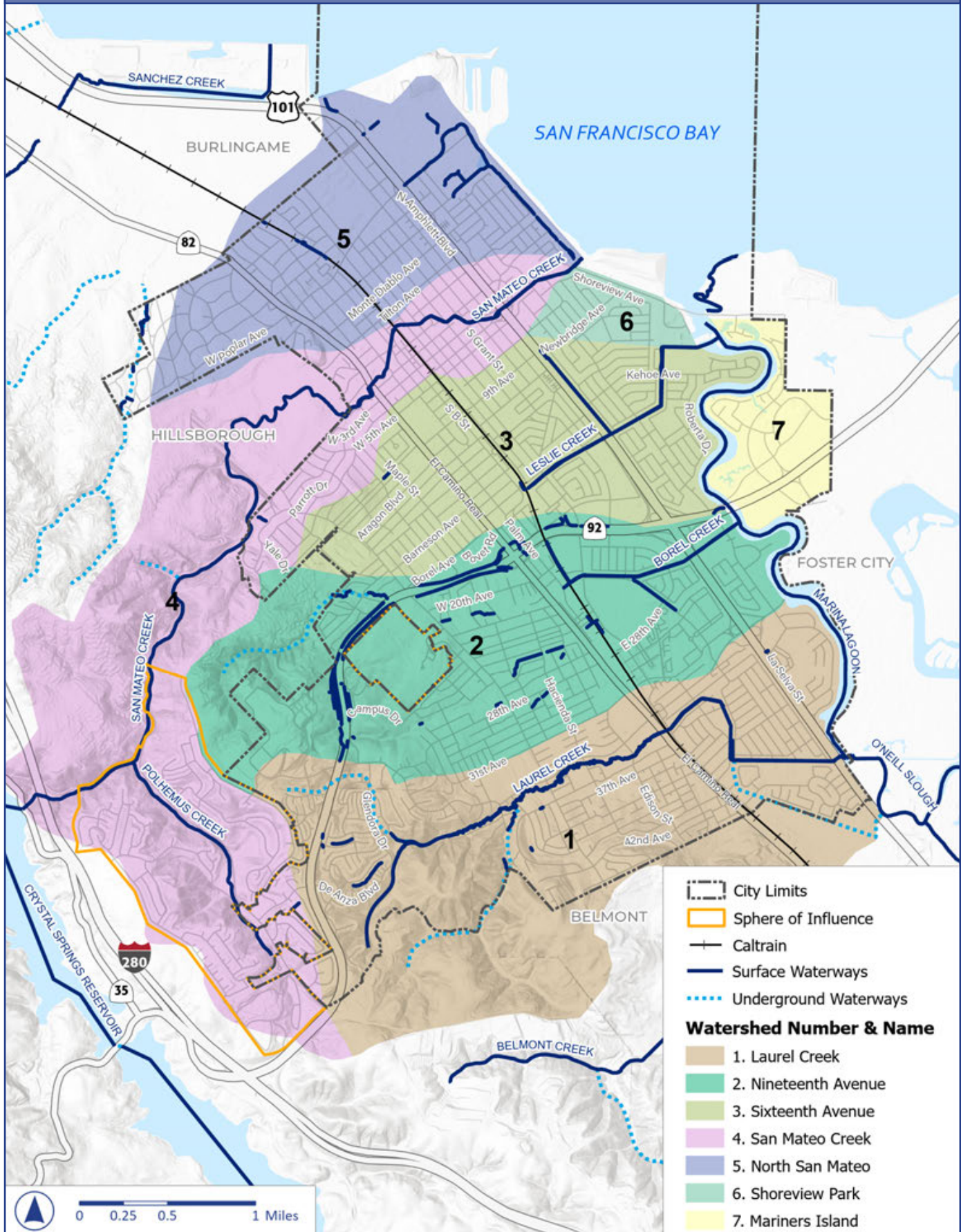


**Policy PSF 2.2 Water Supply Planning.** Coordinate with Cal Water and Estero Municipal Improvement District upon each update of their respective Urban Water Management Plans to ensure there is an adequate and sustainable water supply for current and future development.



**Policy PSF 2.3 Water Conservation.** Work with California Water Service, Estero Municipal Improvement District, Bay Area Water Supply Conservation Agency, and other mid-peninsula cities to support local, regional, and statewide water conservation efforts. Encourage all properties to convert to water-efficient landscaping.

Figure PSF-2 Watershed Areas



Source: City of San Mateo, 2022; USGS; ESRI, 2022; PlaceWorks, 2023.

Note: This map is included for informational purposes and is not adopted as part of this General Plan.

- Policy PSF 2.4 Water Supply for New Development.** Require applicants to provide will-serve letters from water purveyors prior to issuing building permits for new development to demonstrate that water supply is available.
- Policy PSF 2.5 Water-Conserving Fixture Retrofits.** Require that all residences and commercial properties that apply for a building permit for alternations or renovations provide proof of water-conserving plumbing fixtures.
- Policy PSF 2.6 Water Offset Requirements.** Require all new development or redevelopment projects to comply with the water conservation and offset policies and requirements imposed by California Water Service or Estero Municipal Improvement District, depending on the water service area in which the project is located.
- Policy PSF 2.7 Water Shortage Plans.** Coordinate with California Water Service and Estero Municipal Improvement District to conduct community outreach and take other steps to ensure compliance with their Water Shortage Contingency Plans during water shortages, such as a drought or supply interruption.
-  **Policy PSF 2.8 Water Efficiency.** Support increased water efficiency in all new development and existing building stock.

## ACTIONS

- Action PSF 2.9 Recycled Water.** Continue working with California Water Service, the San Francisco Public Utilities Commission, the Bay Area Water Supply & Conservation Agency, the City of Redwood City, and Silicon Valley Clean Water to develop an advanced water purification facility that treats wastewater from the San Mateo wastewater treatment plant to tertiary treatment standards.
- Action PSF 2.10 Water-Reduction Strategies.** Work with California Water Service, Estero Municipal Improvement District, Bay Area Water Supply Conservation Agency, and other mid-peninsula cities to promote water-reduction strategies and to create an outreach program that will help inform residents and businesses of increased costs, the need for conservation efforts, and available incentives and rebates.
- Action PSF 2.11 Water Purification Facility.** Continue working with California Water Service, the San Francisco Public Utilities Commission, the Bay Area Water Supply & Conservation Agency, the City of Redwood City, and Silicon Valley Clean Water to develop an advanced water purification facility that treats wastewater from the San Mateo wastewater treatment plan to tertiary treatment standards.
- Action PSF 2.12 Water Usage.** Work with Cal Water to collect and track water use by land use type and make this information available to the community.





## WASTEWATER AND FLOOD-CONTROL INFRASTRUCTURE

### Wastewater

Wastewater is produced by using sinks, flushing the toilet, showering, and doing laundry. Commercial services, industrial facilities, and other sources also create wastewater as a part of their normal business operations.

The City of San Mateo maintains wastewater infrastructure through the Department of Public Works. The City's wastewater system treats wastewater to create a healthy and sanitary environment. The City's wastewater system is made up of over 200 miles of sanitary sewer lines, more than 5,000 manholes, and dozens of sewer lift stations. A majority of the wastewater system is over 60 years old, and the City is in the process of upgrading the aging infrastructure. The Sewer System Management Plan, Integrated Wastewater Master Plan, and Clean Water Program are some of the key documents that will guide San Mateo with this effort.

This system moves the wastewater from where it is generated to the San Mateo Wastewater Treatment Plant, where the wastewater gets treated and eventually discharged into the San Francisco Bay. The wastewater treatment plant is jointly owned by the City of San Mateo, City of Foster City, and Estero Municipal Improvement District (EMID), and it serves more than 150,000 people and businesses at an average flow of 10 million gallons each day. Because of its location along the San Francisco Bay shore, upgrades to the wastewater treatment plant have been designed to anticipate and be resilient to impacts from rising sea levels.



## Flood-Control Infrastructure

The city encompasses seven major drainages, both artificial and natural, between the Santa Cruz Mountains and San Francisco Bay along the eastern side of the San Francisco Peninsula. Major watersheds include the North Shoreview District, San Mateo Creek, East Third Avenue, 16th Avenue Drain, 19th Avenue Drain, Laurel Creek, and Mariners Island. The City maintains the Laurel Creek Dam, has 80 miles of storm drain lines, and 10 pump stations that all discharge to San Francisco Bay. The city is also protected against high tides and wind-generated waves from San Francisco Bay through a three-mile bayfront levee system.



The Marina Lagoon is a 1,400-acre-foot water storage facility that was created from remnants of O’Neill Slough and Seal Slough and was dredged and leveed to provide flood protection and recreational opportunities. The lagoon captures water flowing from the 16th Avenue Drainage Channel, 19th Avenue Drainage Channel, and Laurel Creek. The three tributaries provide a source of freshwater runoff during the winter. Circulation and water quality in the Marina Lagoon are enhanced by allowing bay water from Belmont Slough to flow into the lagoon at the O’Neil Tide Gate.

The 2004 San Mateo Storm Drain Master Plan provides an assessment of capital improvement projects needed for flood protection. San Mateo’s flood-control infrastructure will continue to play a key role in protecting the community from both sea level rise and extreme storm events as the climate changes.

## GOALS, POLICIES, AND ACTIONS

**GOAL PSF-3** Maintain sewer, storm drainage, and flood-control facilities adequate to serve existing needs, projected population, and employment growth and that provide protection from climate change risk.

### POLICIES

**Policy PSF 3.1 Sewer System.** Provide a sewer system that safely and efficiently conveys sewage to the wastewater treatment plant. Implement the Sewer System Management Plan to ensure proper maintenance, operations, and management of all parts of the wastewater collection system.

**Policy PSF 3.2 Sewer Requirements for New Development.** Require new multifamily and commercial developments to evaluate the main sewer lines in the project vicinity, which will be used by the new development and make any improvements necessary to convey the additional sewage flows.

**Policy PSF 3.3 Sewer Overflow Reduction.** Eliminate sanitary sewer overflows, which create a public health hazard for residents and compromises the water quality of the city's creeks, Marina Lagoon, and San Francisco Bay.

**Policy PSF 3.4 Wastewater Treatment Plant.** Operate, upgrade, and maintain the Wastewater Treatment Plant to ensure ongoing wastewater treatment in compliance with regulatory requirements.

**Policy PSF 3.5 Interagency Coordination for Wastewater Planning.** Coordinate future planning of the sewer collection and wastewater treatment plant with the other users of the systems, including the Estero Municipal Improvement District (City of Foster City), the Crystal Springs County Sanitation District, Town of Hillsborough, and City of Belmont.

**Policy PSF 3.6 Stormwater System.** Operate, upgrade, and maintain a stormwater drainage and flood-control system that safely and efficiently conveys runoff to prevent flooding and protect life and property; minimizes pollutants discharging to creeks and San Francisco Bay; manages stormwater as a resource and not a waste; and protects against the impacts of climate change.



**Policy PSF 3.7 Water Quality Standards.** Manage City creeks, channels, and the Marina Lagoon to meet applicable State and federal water quality standards. Protect and restore creeks to a level acceptable for healthy marine and bird habitat.

**Policy PSF 3.8 Stormwater Pollution Prevention.** In accordance with requirements in the Municipal Regional Stormwater Permit, implement programs, plans, and policies to ensure pollutants are minimized in stormwater runoff.



**Policy PSF 3.9 Low-Impact Development.** Minimize stormwater runoff and pollution by encouraging low-impact design (LID) features, such as pervious parking surfaces, bioswales, and filter strips in new development.



**Policy PSF 3.10 New Creekside Development Requirements.** Require that new creekside development protect and improve setbacks, banks, and waterways adjacent to the development projects to increase flood protection and enhance riparian vegetation and water quality. Prevent erosion of creek banks.

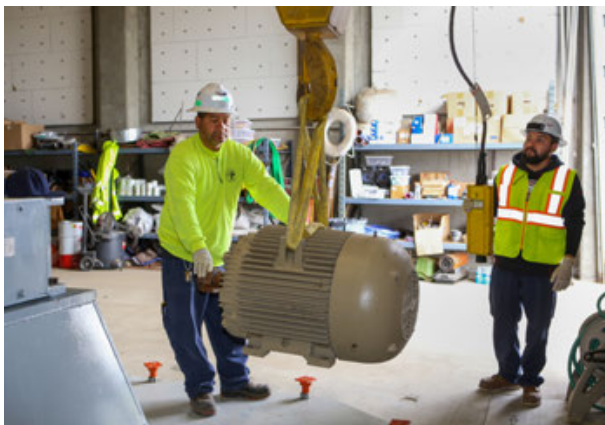


**Policy PSF 3.11 Hydrologic Impacts of Creek Alteration.** Ensure that improvements to creeks and other waterways do not cause adverse hydrologic impacts, adversely affect adjacent properties, or significantly increase the volume or velocity of flow of the subject creek.

**Policy PSF 3.12 Levee System.** Continue to assess, maintain, and upgrade the City's levee system. Collaborate with the Federal Emergency Management Agency, OneShoreline, and neighboring agencies to ensure adequate flood control and sea level rise protection.

## ACTIONS

- Action PSF 3.13 City Infrastructure Studies and Master Plans.** Develop and coordinate studies and master plans to assess infrastructure and to develop a Capital Improvement Program for necessary improvements. Incorporate climate change risks, such as the impacts of droughts, increasing storm events, sea level rise, and groundwater changes in the planning process.
- Action PSF 3.14 Stormwater Treatment.** Continue to participate in the San Mateo Countywide Stormwater Pollution Prevention Program to ensure compliance with the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit to prevent water pollution from point and non-point sources.
- Action PSF 3.15 Green Infrastructure.** Implement the City’s Green Infrastructure Plan to gradually shift from a traditional stormwater conveyance system (“gray”) to a more natural system that incorporates plants and soils to mimic watershed processes, capture and clean stormwater, reduce runoff, increase infiltration, and create healthier environments (“green”).
- Action PSF 3.16 Stormwater Pollution Prevention Education.** Partner with other agencies and organizations, such as Flows to Bay, to help inform residents and businesses of ways to protect water quality and prevent stormwater pollution.
- Action PSF 3.17 Stormwater Requirements for Development.** In accordance with State regulatory mandates, require applicable new and redevelopment projects to incorporate site design, source control, treatment, and hydromodification management measures to minimize stormwater runoff volumes and associated pollutants. Stormwater management via green infrastructure systems shall be prioritized.
- Action PSF 3.18 Incentives for Low-Impact Development.** Develop and implement incentives to encourage applicants to include low-impact design features in new development.



# ENERGY AND TELECOMMUNICATIONS INFRASTRUCTURE

## Energy

In San Mateo, energy mostly comes from electricity and natural gas. Pacific Gas and Electric Company (PG&E) and Peninsula Clean Energy (PCE) provide electrical services. PCE purchases electricity that is produced from renewable energy sources and works with PG&E to distribute the electricity to consumers in San Mateo. PG&E is the sole provider and distributor of natural gas services.

Because electric utilities serving San Mateo offer clean electricity options, much of San Mateo's electricity already comes from carbon-free sources. Residents and businesses in PCE's service area, including San Mateo, are automatically enrolled in PCE's ECOplus service, which is distributed to customers through PG&E's existing grid infrastructure. Both PCE and PG&E are required by State law to accelerate the deployment of renewable energy to achieve a standard of at least 60 percent renewable electricity by 2030 and 100 percent electricity from carbon-free sources by the end of 2045. Increasing the amount of locally distributed energy resources from renewable sources, such as rooftop solar energy systems, will reduce the cost of electricity for residents and businesses and enhance the local economy. The City is also pursuing policies and building code changes that will require new and existing buildings to use all-electric energy sources and eliminate natural gas as an energy source. By expanding on-site electricity generation and storage, San Mateo will reduce greenhouse gas emissions and become more resilient to grid failures and power disruptions.

Additional policies and actions that connect energy use and climate change are in the Land Use Element.

## Telecommunications

Telecommunications services, which include wireless internet, cell phone and wireline telephone, cable television, and satellite television, are offered by multiple service providers in the City of San Mateo. Mobile telephone service and wireless internet service is offered by multiple companies, which gives San Mateo residents and businesses a variety of options when choosing a mobile telephone and/or internet service provider.

The backbone of wireless networks consists of long-haul fiberoptic cables that connect major internet hubs over long distances. In San Mateo County, long-haul fiberoptic cables run north to south throughout the county. These networks can be expanded using small cell facilities, which are single small antennae placed on existing utility poles or streetlights along with small pole-mounted radios and other accessory equipment. They help wireless service providers meet the growing demand for wireless services. In general, as of 2019, residential and commercial broadband service levels in San Mateo are consistent with San Francisco Bay Area averages, according to the California Broadband Mapping Program.

## Utility Undergrounding

Undergrounding electrical lines and telecommunications infrastructure helps improve safety and community aesthetics with the added benefits of a more reliable utility and increased property values.



Placing electrical lines underground reduces wildfire risks by eliminating the potential for live electrical wires to ignite fires. Utilities placed underground are also protected from wind and storm events that often disrupt service. Personal safety is also improved by removing the potential for live-wire contact injuries and reducing collision points for automobiles and people, especially those with vision or mobility disabilities, through the removal of utility poles. Although there are many benefits to utility undergrounding, the primary disadvantage is it is more costly to underground utilities compared to the traditional overhead configuration. The City will continue to require private developers to underground utility service connections for new development and underground existing overhead lines when justifiable. The City will also continue to work with PG&E and other utility providers to underground new and existing overhead infrastructure as opportunities arise and funding permits.

## GOALS, POLICIES, AND ACTIONS

**GOAL PSF-4** Promote the development of a clean energy supply, energy-efficient technology, and telecommunications facilities that benefit all members of the community.

### POLICIES



**Policy PSF 4.1 Clean Energy.** Support the advancement of a carbon-neutral energy supply.



**Policy PSF 4.2 Energy Conservation.** Support efforts to reduce per-capita energy use.

**Policy PSF 4.3 Building Electrification.** Require electrification for new building stock and reduce fossil fuel usage for existing building stock at the time of building alteration.



**Policy PSF 4.4 Energy Resilience.** Require new development projects to incorporate energy-efficiency measures, electric equipment, solar energy systems, and battery storage into their projects (Building Integrated Photo-Voltaic/BIPV) and encourage existing development to incorporate solar energy systems and battery storage.



**Policy PSF 4.5 Grid Resilience.** Support PG&E's efforts to improve grid resilience and capacity to meet increased electrical demand.



**Policy PSF 4.6 Renewable Energy Neighborhood Microgrids.** Encourage the establishment of renewable energy neighborhood microgrids to support resilience.

**Policy PSF 4.7 Service Improvement and Expansion.** Seek to ensure adequate energy and communication systems to serve existing and future needs while minimizing impacts on existing and future residents by requiring new development to underground power lines and provide underground connections, when feasible, and prioritizing cellular coverage for all areas of the city while appropriately minimizing visual impacts of cellular facilities, antennas, and equipment shelters.

**Policy PSF 4.8 Access and Availability.** Work with service providers to support access to and availability of a wide range of state-of-the-art telecommunication systems and services for households, businesses, institutions, and public agencies in San Mateo.

**Policy PSF 4.9 Coordinate Infrastructure Improvements.** Combine, to the extent possible, upgrades and repairs to public infrastructure, such as roadways with utility needs, broadband upgrades, bicycle and pedestrian improvements, and levees.

**Policy PSF 4.10 Private Utility Undergrounding.** Require new private development to underground service connections onto private property.

**Policy PSF 4.11 Public Wi-Fi.** Provide high-speed internet access to the public at all City facilities.

## ACTIONS

**Action PSF 4.12 Dig Once.** Establish a “dig once” policy, coordinating utility and roadway construction to avoid digging up the right-of-way multiple times, to reduce costs and impacts on the public right-of-way. The policy shall apply to infrastructure, utilities, and broadband whenever possible.

**Action PSF 4.13 Utility Network Undergrounding.** Underground existing electrical and communication transmission and distribution lines in the public right-of-way as funds permit.

**Action PSF 4.14 Utility Undergrounding Requirements.** Amend the San Mateo Municipal Code to require new private development to underground utilities and service connections on and adjacent to the site and to install and maintain signs, streetlights, and street landscaping adjacent to sidewalks.



**Action PSF 4.15 Renewable Energy.** Increase new annual installations of solar or renewable energy systems. Partner with Peninsula Clean Energy to study and implement a sustainable and resilient system that can be used as a pilot program for locally generated power not reliant on outside power sources.



**Action PSF 4.16 Solar Energy.** Promote local partnerships and rebate opportunities that make solar and battery storage simpler and more affordable while ensuring that the permit process is quick and inexpensive.



## PUBLIC FACILITIES

San Mateo’s public facilities provide a range of community services that support and enrich the lives of the city’s residents. The San Mateo Public Library operates three physical libraries that have services, programs, and resources for members of all ages, such as Project Read – an adult literacy program, activities for teens, and a Job Seekers Center. It also has an eLibrary that allows users to borrow digital copies of printed material. Other public facilities include City Hall, the Corporation Yard, and the Senior Center and the Martin Luther King Jr. Community Center. The City is proud to provide these services and facilities for its residents, and it will continue to ensure that all San Mateo residents, particularly those in vulnerable communities such as youths, low-income households, and seniors have access to well-maintained facilities that serve their needs.

The San Mateo County Events Center is a public facility within the city, but it is owned and operated by the County. The Events Center covers 48 acres and includes a park, outdoor space, and 195,000 square feet of meeting space for trade events, corporate meetings, sporting events, festivals, etc.

For background information and policies about the City’s park and recreation facilities and programs, please refer to the Conservation and Open Space Element.

## GOALS, POLICIES, AND ACTIONS

**GOAL PSF-5** Maintain and develop public facilities, and ensure they are equitably available to all current and future members of the community.

### POLICIES



**Policy PSF 5.1 Equitable Facilities.** Ensure that all San Mateo residents and employees have access to well-maintained facilities that meet community service needs. Encourage the development of facilities and services for vulnerable communities, such as children, low-income households, and seniors, in a variety of settings.

**Policy PSF 5.2 Joint Use.** Encourage joint use and public-private partnerships where feasible.

**Policy PSF 5.3 City Hall.** Consider upgrading or expanding City Hall to ensure sufficient space is available and consider establishment of a downtown facility or civic campus to support City staffing and service needs through the year 2040 and beyond.



**Policy PSF 5.4 Library Resources and Services.** Continue to maintain a comprehensive collection of resources and services to help the community discover, enjoy, connect, and learn in an ever-changing world. Continue to offer quality library services and programs to a diverse community promoting literacy and lifelong learning. Maintain a materials budget, staffing, and service hours for the City's library system that are adequate to meet the community needs and meet the continuing changes in information technology.

**Policy PSF 5.5 Library Facilities.** Maintain capital investment for essential repairs and space-enhancements to meet current and future needs of library patrons and community organizations.

**Policy PSF 5.6 Cultural and Entertainment Facilities.** Encourage the establishment of cultural and entertainment facilities in the downtown core and allow these types of uses to fulfill retail frontage requirements.

**Policy PSF 5.7 Incentives for Public Facilities.** Provide incentives to developers to encourage space for public facilities in new development.



**Policy PSF 5.8 Martin Luther King Jr. Community Center.** Improve and maintain the Martin Luther King Jr. Community Center as an important neighborhood-serving community and recreational facility in the North Central Equity Priority Community.

**Policy PSF 5.9 Corporation Yard.** Maintain corporation yard facilities with functions such as vehicle repair facilities, equipment and material storage, and administrative office space to support City operational needs.

**Policy PSF 5.10 San Mateo County Events Center.** Promote the physical and aesthetic improvement of the San Mateo County Events Center.



**Policy PSF 5.11 Inclusive Outreach.** Notify the community of potential public services and facilities improvements in their neighborhood. Use outreach and engagement methods that encourage broad representation and are culturally sensitive, particularly for equity priority communities.



## CHILD CARE AND SCHOOLS

Although the City doesn't have direct control over educational institutions, it can support local schools through efforts like coordinating on construction and improvements, calming traffic along student travel routes, and communicating about major projects and planned growth to help all parties adequately prepare for the future.

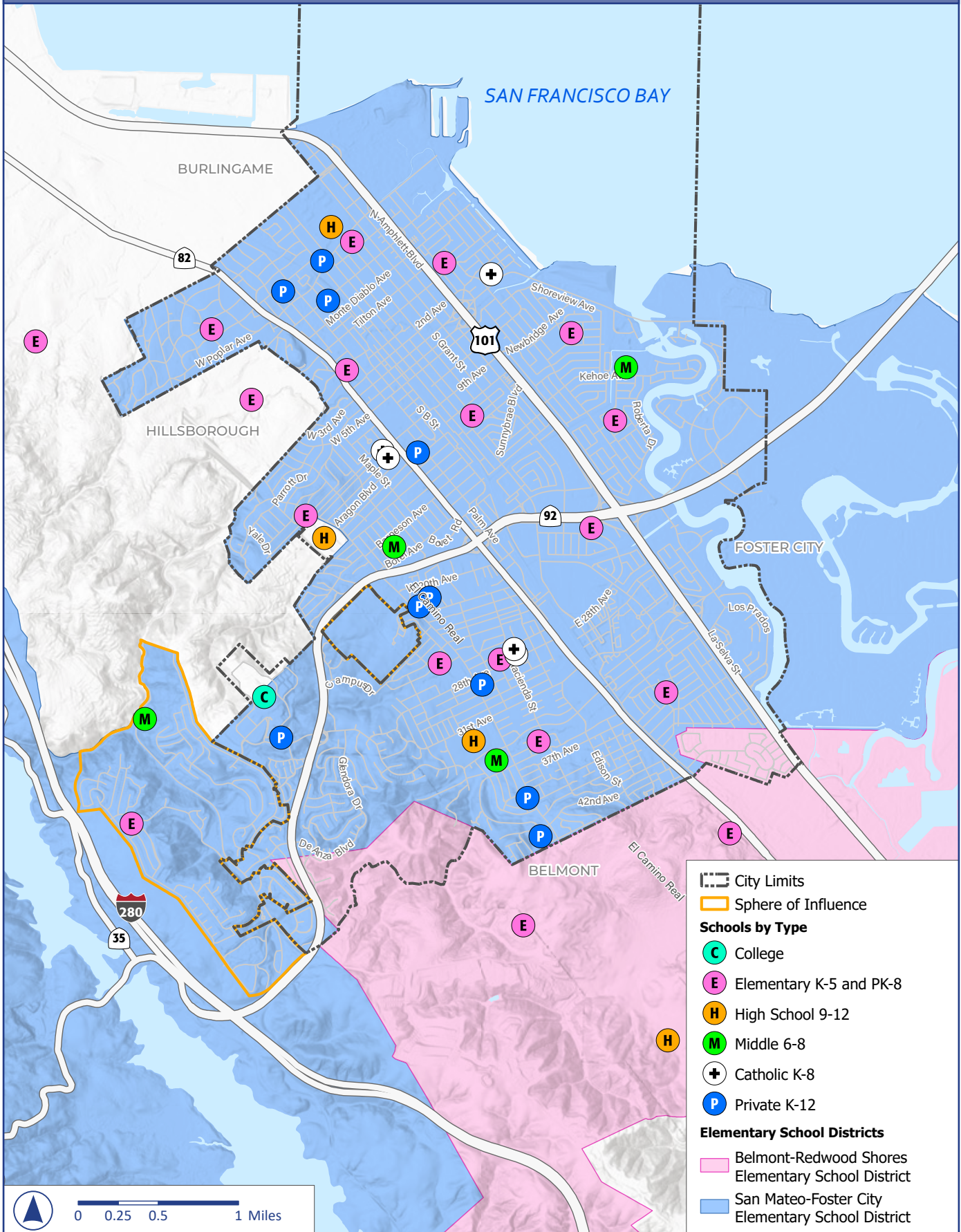
Within the City Limits, there are four public school districts with 19 public elementary, middle, and high schools; the College of San Mateo; and multiple K-12 private schools. A majority of the public school students in San Mateo attend elementary and middle schools through the San Mateo-Foster City School District, and high school through the San Mateo Union High School District, as shown in Figures PSF-3 and PSF-4. Public school students in southern portions of the city adjacent to Belmont are within the Belmont-Redwood Shores Elementary School District and the Sequoia Union High School District. All four public school districts are highly ranked for their quality of education when compared to districts across the San Francisco Bay Area.

The San Mateo County Community College District (SMCCCD) operates the College of San Mateo, a community college that offers associate degrees and certificate programs. These include the Associate in Arts Degree for Transfer (AA-T) and Associate in Science Degree for Transfer (AS-T), which offer guaranteed admission to the California State University system.

Child care facilities are important components of the city's infrastructure. However, working families have historically struggled to find child care services in San Mateo. Affordable and high-quality child care services that are equitably distributed throughout the city allow parents, grandparents, and guardians to work and contribute to the local economy. The City is committed to increasing child care facilities within its City Limits. In 2004, the City adopted a Child Care Development Fee for new residential and commercial development to fund child care facilities. Recognizing the ongoing need to address this challenge, the City will continue to collaborate with child care providers, employers, young families, and other stakeholders and support policies to provide more child care facilities in San Mateo.



Figure PSF-3 School Sites and Elementary School Districts

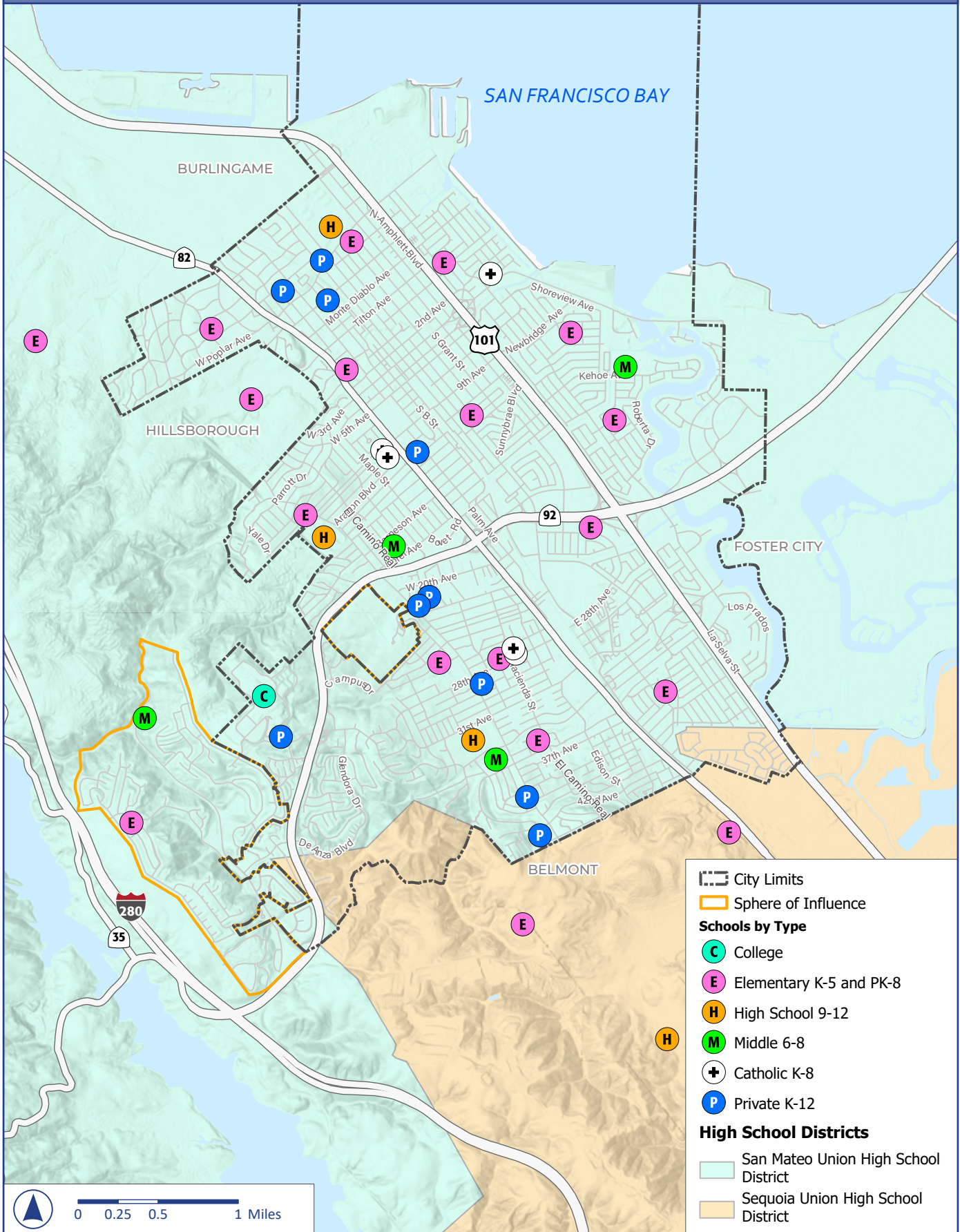


Source: City of San Mateo, 2022; ESRI, 2022; PlaceWorks, 2023.

Note: This map is included for informational purposes and is not adopted as part of this General Plan.



Figure PSF-4 School Sites and High School Districts



Source: City of San Mateo, 2022; ESRI, 2022; PlaceWorks, 2023.

Note: This map is included for informational purposes and is not adopted as part of this General Plan.

## GOALS, POLICIES, AND ACTIONS

**GOAL PSF-6** Foster the healthy development and education of children of all abilities, incomes, and backgrounds.

### POLICIES

- Policy PSF 6.1 School Assistance.** Support efforts by the school district to maintain facilities, equipment, and personnel to provide quality public education to students in San Mateo.
- Policy PSF 6.2 Child Care Needs.** Support the provision of child-care programs and facilities to meet the needs of children of all abilities, incomes, and backgrounds through 2040.
- Policy PSF 6.3 Provision of Child Care.** Encourage public and private agencies and employers to provide child-care services and facilities.
- Policy PSF 6.4 Child Care Centers at Public and Quasi-Public Facilities.** Encourage retention of existing child care centers and support programs at public and private school sites and other quasi-institutional facilities because of their suitability for such uses and proximity to adjacent residential neighborhoods.
- Policy PSF 6.5 Child Care Centers in Residential and Employment Areas.** Encourage child care centers in residential neighborhoods where they meet City standards and at employment centers.

### ACTIONS

- Action PSF 6.6 School District Coordination.** Maintain effective, collaborative relationships with all local school districts.
- Action PSF 6.7 Child Care and New Construction.** Encourage new residential and nonresidential development to include space for child care by taking the following actions:
- Provide incentives for inclusion of space for a child care center in a new development.
  - Promote child care to developers as an amenity favored by the City.
  - Continue to implement the developer impact fee for funding child care facilities.





## HEALTHCARE AND SOCIAL SERVICES

### Healthcare

Healthcare facilities in San Mateo, such as hospitals, clinics, and pharmacies, and social services in neighborhoods help to create a healthier city where residents can take care of their physical and mental health and social welfare. In San Mateo, two of the biggest healthcare providers are the San Mateo County Hospital, a public hospital operated by the San Mateo County Health Department, and Mills Health Center, a healthcare facility that is part of Sutter Health's Mills-Peninsula Medical Center. These facilities provide community members access to a diverse range of care, including primary care, emergency services, dental care, cancer services, behavior health care, mental illness, gynecology and women's health, and more.

### Social Services

The City of San Mateo does not directly provide social services but does have partnerships with and provide finance assistance to agencies and community-based organizations to provide social services to residents who need support.

The San Mateo County Department of Human Services has offices across the San Francisco Peninsula where community members can receive assistance to participate in State and federal social welfare programs.

Community Health Advocates, a statewide nonprofit, collaborates with the City of San Mateo to provide insurance counseling and advocacy for Medicare recipients. Social Vocational Services (SVS), another California-wide nonprofit, has a local office in the city where community members with development/intellectual differences can participate in unique programs that are tailored to their needs. Locally based nonprofit organizations, such as Peninsula Family Services and Samaritan House San Mateo, support children, families, older adults, and community members in need with a variety of social services programs that not only enrich the individuals but also contribute to a better community.

## GOALS, POLICIES, AND ACTIONS

**GOAL PSF-7** Support access for all residents to healthcare facilities, social services, and other important community health amenities.

### POLICIES

- Policy PSF 7.1 San Mateo County Hospital.** Encourage the County to maintain County Hospital services in the city to provide access to medical care for all residents.
- Policy PSF 7.2 Mills Health Center.** Support the Mills Health Center remaining in San Mateo and encourage the continued provision and expansion of high-quality medical care services.
- Policy PSF 7.3 Health Centers.** Support the development of healthcare centers and the County's efforts to provide mobile clinics that are dispersed throughout the city. Avoid the concentration of health centers in any one neighborhood.
- Policy PSF 7.4 Social Services.** Support the provision of social services. Balance the need for social services in each neighborhood while ensuring that services are dispersed throughout the city and not concentrated in any one neighborhood.
- Policy PSF 7.5 Vulnerable Populations.** Support local religious institutions, nonprofit organizations, and community-based organizations in providing services and facilities for vulnerable populations.

### ACTIONS

- Action PSF 7.6 Community Healthcare Facilities.** Evaluate options to support existing and potential community healthcare facilities in equity priority communities through a variety of mechanisms, such as reduced permit fees and reduced impact fees. (Environmental Justice)
- Action PSF 7.7 Incentives for Support Services.** Study and, as feasible, implement economic incentives to encourage and sustain the development of support service uses, particularly in equity priority communities.

## SOLID WASTE

The City contracts with a private waste management company to provide residential and commercial solid waste collection, composting, and recycling services to San Mateo. Solid waste is transferred to the Shoreway Environmental Center in San Carlos where recyclable materials are sorted and separated. The remaining solid waste is disposed of at the Los Trancos Canyon (Ox Mountain) landfill in Half Moon Bay.

Solid waste in landfills emits methane, a powerful greenhouse gas, as it decomposes. Efforts to divert waste away from landfills helps reduce greenhouse gas emissions and raises awareness of our individual impact on the environment. Educational campaigns to repair, reduce, reuse, and recycle have helped reduce trash generation. In addition, State laws requiring many kinds of solid waste to be diverted from landfills have also significantly decreased the amount of trash that ends up in a landfill. Between 2015 and 2022, the City achieved a diversion rate of 73 percent. This means that close to three-quarters of all debris produced in the city is sent to recycling, composting, or alternative fuel centers instead of the landfill. The City aims to continue to increase this diversion rate over the life of this General Plan through ongoing active leadership to reduce trash and increase source reduction, recycling, and composting.

## GOALS, POLICIES, AND ACTIONS

**GOAL PSF-8** Reduce the generation of solid waste and increase the diversion of waste from landfills.

### POLICIES



**Policy PSF 8.1 Solid Waste Disposal.** Support waste reduction and diversion programs to reduce solid waste materials in landfill areas in accordance with State requirements.



**Policy PSF 8.2 Recycling.** Support programs to recycle solid waste and require provisions for on-site recycling in new development, in compliance with State requirements.



**Policy PSF 8.3 Composting.** Maintain the curbside composting program and expand composting of organics in accordance with State requirements.

### ACTION



**Action PSF 8.4 Waste Reduction.** Reduce waste sent to landfills by San Mateo's residents, businesses, and visitors, as required by State law and San Mateo Municipal Code, by mandating recycling and compost programs, setting aggressive waste-reduction goals for all development, and implementing appropriate solid waste rates to recover cost of services provided. Supportive actions for waste reduction are detailed in the Climate Action Plan.

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# CHAPTER 8

## Safety Element









# SAFETY ELEMENT

## INTRODUCTION

General Plans in California must identify and address potential natural and human-caused hazards that could affect the City of San Mateo's residents, businesses, visitors, environment, and services. The framework established by the Safety Element anticipates these hazards and prepares the community to reduce exposure to these risks. San Mateo is at risk from a number of natural and human-caused hazards. Climate change is likely to make many of these hazards more damaging for people, buildings and structures, ecosystems, and other important community assets.

The Safety Element does not exist in a vacuum but is instead one of several plans that address public health, safety, and related topics, including the Local Hazard Mitigation Plan, the Emergency Operations Plan, and the Climate Action Plan. The Safety Element must be consistent with these other plans to minimize conflicts between documents and ensure the City has a unified strategy to address safety and hazard issues.

The City of San Mateo is committed to the preservation of life, property, and the environment during emergencies. The City implements the most recent version of the San Mateo County Multi-Jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan (MJHMP), which assesses risks from natural and human-caused hazards, including risks to people and facilities, and identifies mitigation actions to reduce or eliminate hazard risks in the county. The MJHMP for the County of San Mateo planning area, which includes the City of San Mateo, was developed in accordance with the Disaster Mitigation Act of 2000 and followed the Federal Emergency Management Agency's (FEMA's) 2011 Local Hazard Mitigation Plan guidance. The MJHMP incorporates a process where hazards are identified and profiled, the people and facilities at risk are identified, and mitigation actions are developed to reduce or eliminate hazard risk. The implementation of these mitigation actions, which include both short-term and long-term strategies, involve planning, policy changes, programs, projects, and other activities. The MJHMP can be found on the City of San Mateo's website and at <https://www.smcgov.org/ceo/2021-multijurisdictional-lhmp>. The current MJHMP, certified by FEMA, is incorporated into this Safety Element by reference, as permitted by the California Government Code.

The focus of this element is on increasing resilience throughout the city and reducing the risk of hazards. This element is organized around six key topics that are important to the San Mateo community.

- Emergency Readiness and Emergency Operations
- Geologic and Seismic Hazards
- Flood Hazards
- Sea Level Rise
- Wildfire Hazards
- Hazardous Materials



## RELEVANCE TO GENERAL PLAN THEMES



### Sustainability in this Element:

- Ensures the maintenance of City-owned trees that will provide relief from extreme heat, reduce energy use, and sequester greenhouse gas emissions.
- Encourages the use of natural systems to protect the community against sea level rise, which will provide shoreline habitat and capture greenhouse gas emissions.
- Ensures the cleanup of hazardous materials contaminated sites.



### Environmental Justice in this Element:

- Focuses emergency readiness activities in equity priority communities and most vulnerable areas of the city.
- Prioritizes locating critical facilities and resilient infrastructure outside of hazard-prone areas.
- Expands and increases resiliency of existing community facilities to better serve neighborhoods that are currently underserved.
- Provides emergency preparedness and public safety education for equity priority communities in formats and languages consistent with the demographics of the city.



### Community Engagement in this Element:

- Informs the community about safe and effective evacuation through notifications.
- Ensures inclusive outreach about potential hazards affecting neighborhoods, fire-safe education, and overall public safety.
- Supports Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) training in collaboration with San Mateo Consolidated Fire Department (SMC Fire).





## EMERGENCY READINESS AND EMERGENCY OPERATIONS

Emergency preparedness activities in the city are conducted through SMC Fire. The SMC Fire Chief coordinates with the City Manager to prepare for and respond to acute events like heat emergencies, wildfires, and flooding. This department, along with the City Manager, is responsible for the operation of the City's Emergency Operations Center, which coordinates the City's emergency planning, training, response, and recovery efforts for emergencies such as fires, floods, earthquakes, acts of terrorism, public safety power shutoff (PSPS) events, extreme weather events, and pandemics. SMC Fire also provides the public with access to a CERT training program to help residents be prepared for disasters.

San Mateo uses the San Mateo County Alert Notification System (SMC Alert) and, other notification systems, to reach the community and distribute emergency information and instructions before, during, and after a disaster. Notifications are provided through telephone calls, text messages, email notifications, and various social media platforms. Other emergency alert systems include the national Emergency Alert Systems (EAS), the California Governor's Office of Emergency Services (CalOES)-operated Emergency Digital Information System (EDIS). These systems are available in multiple languages.

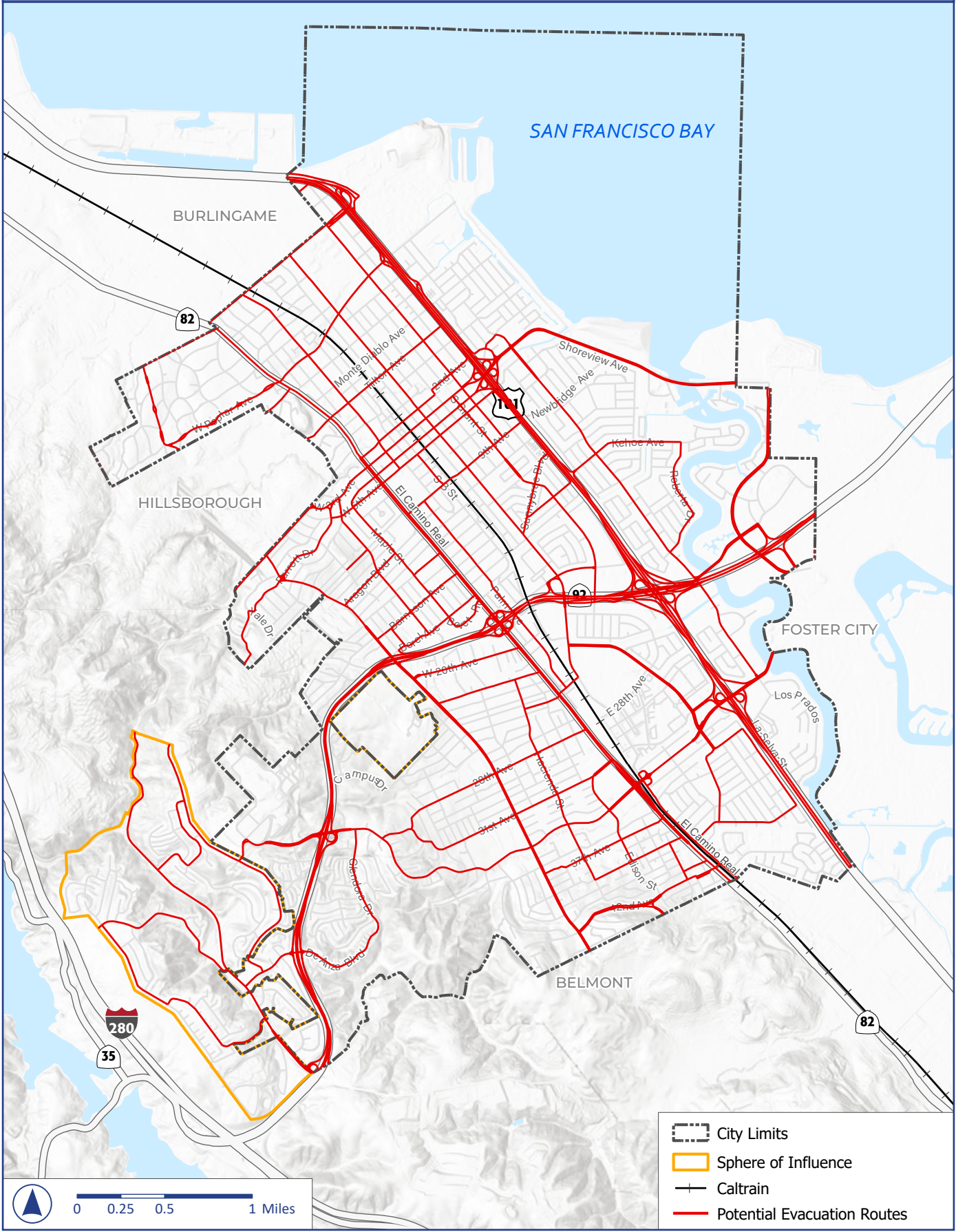
The City participates in the California Master Mutual-Aid Agreement, which is designed to ensure that adequate resources, facilities, and other support are provided to jurisdictions whenever their own resources are insufficient to cope with the needs of a given emergency. The State Office of Emergency Services Coastal Administrative Region (Mutual Aid Region II) serves the mutual-aid region that encompasses San Mateo County. Automatic-aid pacts with San Mateo County and surrounding cities provide additional emergency management and response services to the City of San Mateo during and after a disaster.

With advanced warning, evacuation can be effective in reducing injury and loss of life during a catastrophic event. The City of San Mateo uses a comprehensive evacuation support system implemented by San Mateo County. The system provides the community with critical evacuation updates, resources, and latest updates on active incidents. In the event of a wildfire or an emergency situation, the San Mateo Police Department and SMC Fire can issue evacuation warnings or evacuation orders for impacted areas.

Figure S-1 shows the evacuation routes throughout the city. All evacuation routes in San Mateo may be disrupted by a landslide, wildfire, or flooding event, which may block and damage the roadways or collapse bridges. In the event of widespread disruption to local evacuation routes, the remaining evacuation routes may become congested, slowing down evacuation of the community or specific neighborhoods.

An analysis of San Mateo's roadway network and parcels, as shown in Figure S-2, was conducted as part of Strive San Mateo General Plan 2040. It identifies several evacuation-constrained residential parcels, or parcels with less than two ingress/egress routes, spread throughout the city. The majority are these parcels are in the western hillsides and east of US Highway 101, at the edge of the City Limits. Many of the evacuation-constrained parcels in these areas could be subject to damage from wildfires, flooding, or sea level rise. All evacuation-constrained parcels are in a least one hazard-prone area. The lack of multiple emergency access points limits roadway access for these properties, creating difficulties if there is a need to evacuate.

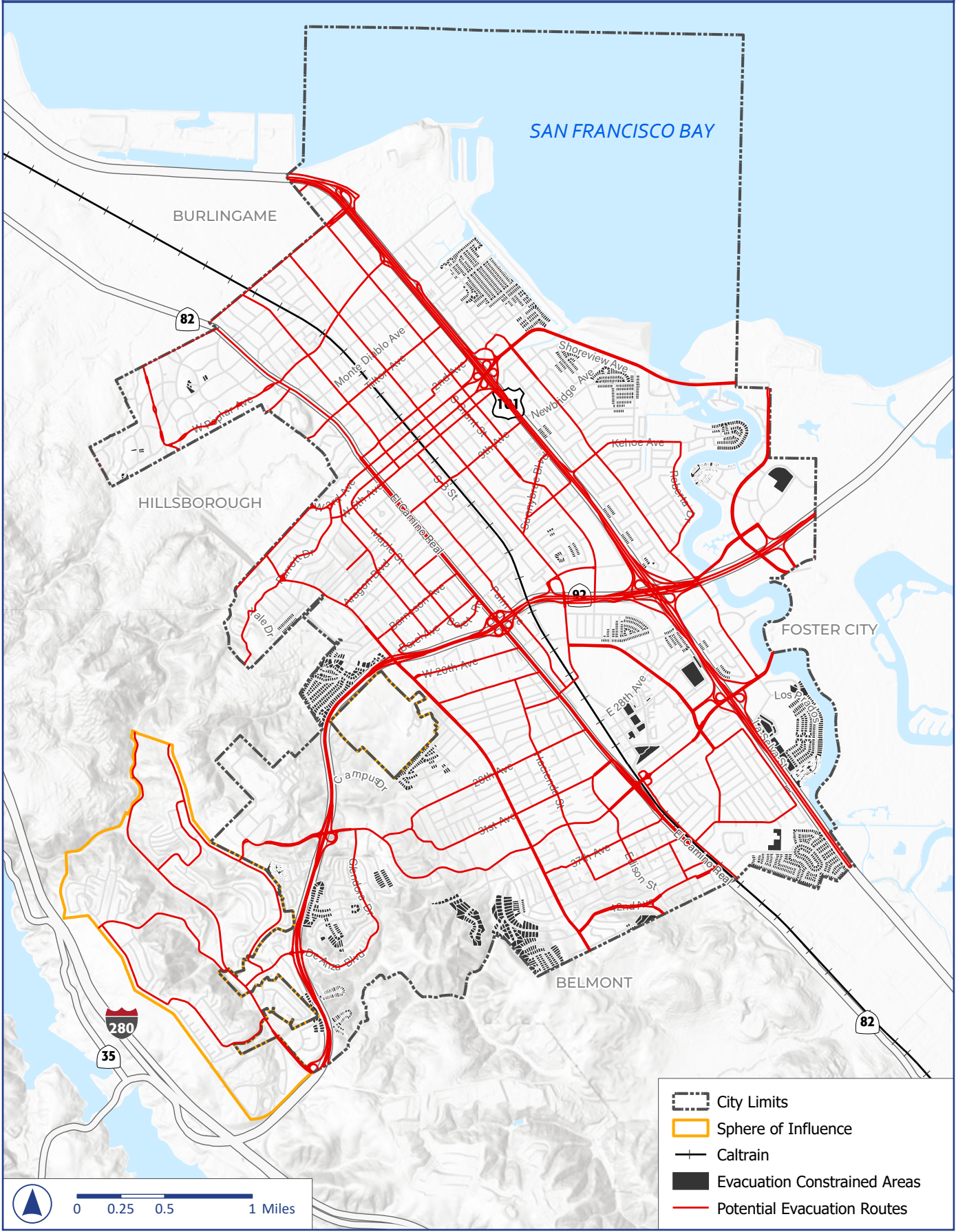
Figure S-1 Potential Evacuation Routes



Source: ESRI, 2022; PlaceWorks, 2023.  
Note: This map is included for informational purposes and is not adopted as part of this General Plan.



Figure S-2 Evacuation-Constrained Areas



Source: ESRI, 2022; PlaceWorks, 2023.

## GOALS, POLICIES, AND ACTIONS

**GOAL S-1** Minimize potential damage to life, environment, and property through timely, well-prepared, and well-coordinated emergency preparedness, response plans, and programs.

### POLICIES



- Policy S 1.1 Emergency Readiness.** Maintain the City's emergency readiness and response capabilities, especially regarding hazardous materials spills, natural gas pipeline ruptures, fire hazards, wildland fire risk, earthquakes, pandemics, and flooding. Focus primarily on areas identified by the City as underserved and most vulnerable to loss of life and property due to proximity to hazardous incidences, and work to ensure funding is available to these communities as a key component of emergency readiness.
- Policy S 1.2 Local Hazard Mitigation Plan.** Incorporate by reference the San Mateo County Multi-jurisdictional Local Hazard Mitigation Plan, approved by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) in 2021, along with any future updates or amendments, into this Safety Element in accordance with Government Code Section 65302.6.
- Policy S 1.3 Location of Critical Facilities.** Avoid locating critical facilities, such as hospitals, schools, fire, police, emergency service facilities, and other utility infrastructure, in areas subject to slope failure, wildland fire, flooding, sea level rise, and other hazards, to the extent feasible.
- Policy S 1.4 Multiple Egress Points.** Require new development to provide at least two points of emergency access (ingress and egress).
- Policy S 1.5 Emergency Planning Document Coordination.** Pursue integration of the City's existing safety and emergency management documents with one another, including this Safety Element, the Local Hazard Mitigation Plan, and other related documents.
- Policy S 1.6 Emergency Infrastructure and Equipment.** Maintain and fund the City's emergency operations center in a full functional state of readiness. Designate a back-up Emergency Operations Center with communications redundancies.
- Policy S 1.7 Defensible Design.** Require that new development support effective law enforcement and fire protection by promoting a safe and accessible public realm, including investing in social gathering spaces, enhancing lighting and safety in public spaces through community-led planning, and ensuring adequate property maintenance.
- Policy S 1.8 Response Times.** When reviewing and analyzing roadway improvements, consider how emergency response times can be maintained and improved without reducing roadway user safety.



**Policy S 1.9**

**Local Utility Cooperation.** Work with local utility operators to coordinate any disruption in services, such as a public safety power shutoff (PSPS) event or other disruption that may be necessary to reduce hazard risks in San Mateo and/or the surrounding area, and support publication of advanced notification and resources to residents in the city, particularly equity priority communities, to help them prepare.

**Policy S 1.10**

**Disaster Recovery.** Ensure that the City government continues to operate during and after hazard events and is able to provide resources and guidance to people and institutions in San Mateo for recovery and reconstruction following the end of the hazard event.

**Policy S 1.11**

**Evacuation Education.** Include information about safe and effective evacuation as part of natural disaster awareness, prevention, and community education and training efforts. Share information about how to prepare for evacuations, potential evacuation routes and shelter locations, how to receive notifications, and other relevant topics.

**Policy S 1.12**

**Inclusive Outreach.** Notify the community of potential hazards affecting their neighborhood. Use outreach and engagement methods that encourage broad representation and are culturally sensitive, particularly for equity priority communities.

**Policy S 1.13**

**Emergency Training.** Conduct training for all City employees to ensure basic understanding of Disaster Service Worker responsibilities, the State Emergency Management System, National Incident Management System, and the Incident Command System.

**Policy S 1.14**

**Multijurisdictional Cooperation.** Continue the development of local preparedness plans and multijurisdictional cooperation and communication for emergency situations.

**Policy S 1.15**

**Emergency Preparedness.** Coordinate with San Mateo County, neighboring cities, and nongovernmental partners to effectively prepare for and respond to hazards and natural disasters.

## ACTIONS

**Action S 1.16**

**Evacuation Routes.** Maintain adequate evacuation routes as identified by arterial streets shown in the Circulation Element, Figure C-3. Evaluate each evacuation route's feasibility using a range of hazard criteria. Update this map on a regular basis to reflect changing conditions and State requirements for evacuation routes.

**Action S 1.17**

**Regular Updates.** Update the Safety Element with each Housing Element update, or every eight years, as necessary, to meet State and local requirements.

**Action S 1.18**

**Automatic and Mutual-Aid Agreements.** Participate in mutual-aid agreements with other local jurisdictions to provide coordinated regional responses, as necessary, to fire, flood, earthquake, critical incidents, and other hazard events in San Mateo and the surrounding area. Work with local jurisdictions to share resources and develop regional plans to implement disaster mitigation and resilience strategies, such as government continuity, emergency operations centers, and communications redundancies.

**Action S 1.19 Community Centers and Recreation Spaces.** Create an inventory of existing community center facilities and recreation spaces and assess their readiness to serve as a community shelter during a disaster. Following the inventory, create a facilities improvement plan that addresses deficiencies found in each facility or recreation space to improve resilience and disaster preparedness in the city.



**Action S 1.20 Rebuilding Priorities.** Establish rebuilding priorities and procedures in the event of a major disaster to expedite reconstruction and enhance access to funding opportunities with special emphasis on equity priority communities that are more vulnerable to climate hazards.

**Action S 1.21 Resilient Power Systems.** Explore the feasibility of on-site power generation and storage at City facilities to reduce reliance on regional power infrastructure in case of a hazard-caused power outage.



**Action S 1.22 Public Safety Outreach.** Develop a public safety education program to increase public awareness of potential hazards, City's emergency readiness and response program, and evacuation routes. Target public education programs to segments of the community that are most vulnerable to hazards and safety risks.



**Action S 1.23 Community Training.** Collaborate with SMC Fire to provide emergency preparedness trainings to maintain and expand existing Community Emergency Response Teams (CERTs).

**Action S 1.24 Emergency Infrastructure and Equipment.** Establish systems to ensure that traffic lights at major intersections, communications and radio infrastructure, and other critical infrastructure continues to function in the event of a localized power outage. Repair any damaged sets of infrastructure or equipment as needed to continue City operations.

**Action S 1.25 Continuity of Operations.** Regularly review, update, and implement the San Mateo Continuity of Operations/Continuity of Government Plan.

**Action S 1.26 Response Time Study.** Conduct a Response Time Study to provide a data-driven understanding of how future roadway safety improvements could impact emergency response times and use this information to adjust proposed roadway improvements as needed.

**Action S 1.27 Emergency Notification System.** Develop an emergency notification system (e.g., SMC Alert and Nixle) for flood-prone neighborhoods and businesses before, during, and after a climate hazard event, to assist with evacuation and other support activities. This includes coordination with the San Mateo County Flood and Sea Level Rise Resiliency District (One-Shoreline) on its early flood warning notification system.



## GEOLOGIC AND SEISMIC HAZARDS

San Mateo is in a region of high seismicity with numerous local faults. The California Geological Survey classifies faults as “active” when they have ruptured the ground surface within the last 10,000 years, while “potentially active” faults are those formed during approximately the last 2 to 3 million years. There are two major active faults that run within six miles of the city:

- San Andreas Fault
- San Gregorio Fault

Movement on any of these two faults or other fault lines in the region could cause earthquakes, fault rupture, and liquefaction. A number of earthquakes of magnitude 5.0 or more have occurred in and near San Mateo over the last 35 years. Earthquakes are caused by a sudden dislocation of the Earth’s crust or a fault rupture, which is when the Earth’s crust slides in opposite directions along the fault line. Figure S-3 shows where the most severe ground shaking would occur from an earthquake.

The Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Act is a State law that limits development along active faults in areas known as Alquist-Priolo Fault Zones. The city may also be subject to tsunami hazards from earthquakes, which is discussed in more detail in the Flood Hazards section.

A secondary effect of seismic activity is liquefaction, which occurs when sandy or silty soil materials become saturated during ground shaking and liquefy. This can damage pipelines, cause roadways and airport runways to buckle, and damage or destroy building foundations. Figure S-4 shows the potential liquefaction areas in the city. Areas along the shoreline and east of US Highway 101 are most susceptible to liquefaction.

Other non-seismic geologic hazards are landslides and erosion, which can occur gradually, continuously, or suddenly, often with disastrous results. In San Mateo, landslides are often triggered by heavy rain, so the potential for landslides largely coincides with severe storms that saturate steep, loose soils. Earthquakes can also trigger landslides, and western areas of the city are highly susceptible to landslides, as shown in Figure S-4.

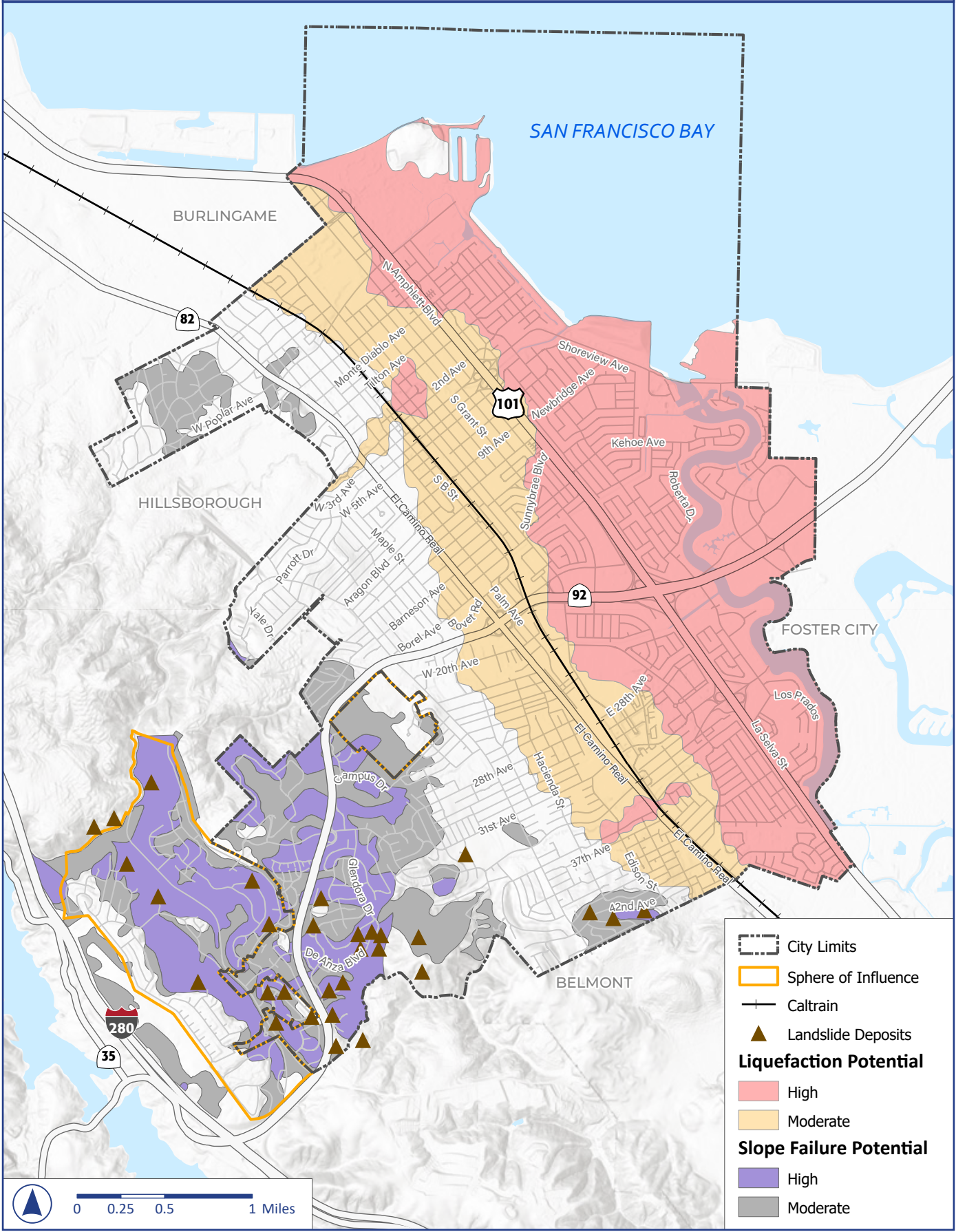
Figure S-3 Shaking Amplification During Earthquakes



Source: California Integrated Seismic Network (CISN), 2021; ESRI, 2022; PlaceWorks, 2023.



Figure S-4 Slope Stability and Liquefaction



Source: City of San Mateo, 2022; ESRI, 2022; PlaceWorks, 2023.

## GOALS, POLICIES, AND ACTIONS

**GOAL S-2** Take steps to protect the community from unreasonable risk to life and property caused by seismic and geologic hazards.

### POLICIES

- Policy S 2.1 Geologic Hazards.** Require site-specific geotechnical and engineering studies, subject to the review and approval of the delegated City Engineer and Building Official, for development proposed on sites identified in Figure S-4 as having moderate or high potential for ground failure. Permit development in areas of potential geologic hazards only where it can be demonstrated that the project will not be endangered by, nor contribute to, the hazardous condition on the site or on adjacent properties.
- Policy S 2.2 Landslides and Erosion Control.** Reduce landslides and erosion in existing and new development through continuing education of design professionals on mitigation strategies. Control measures shall retain natural topographic and physical features of the site, if feasible.
- Policy S 2.3 Vulnerable Buildings.** Encourage modifications to existing unreinforced masonry and soft story buildings, and similar unsafe building conditions to reduce the associated life safety hazards from ground shaking during earthquakes, as shown on Figure S-3. Require voluntary structural modifications to be designed in character with the existing architectural style.
- Policy S 2.4 Liquefaction.** Use the best-available liquefaction mapping data to avoid siting and locating new public facilities and infrastructure in areas susceptible to liquefaction, as shown in Figure S-4.

### ACTIONS

**Action S 2.5 Seismic Shaking Mapping.** Consult with a geology specialist to update the City's geologic hazard mapping, documenting the areas within the city with moderate or high potential for liquefaction or ground failure, as shown in Figure S-4.



**Action S 2.6 Incentives for Seismic Upgrades.** Develop and implement a program to provide financial incentives and education to building owners to support seismic upgrades.

**Action S 2.7 Seismic Stability.** Review the seismic stability of the City's assets and infrastructure, such as City Hall, recreational facilities, roadways, and bridges and identify improvements necessary to enhance each facility's ability to withstand geologic hazards, up to and including a full replacement of the facility.

**Action S 2.8 Unreinforced Masonry Buildings.** Establish and maintain an inventory of unreinforced masonry building in the city and work with the property owners to upgrade the buildings to meet minimum safety and building code requirements.

**Action S 2.9 Soft Story Buildings.** Establish and maintain an inventory of soft story multifamily residential buildings in the city. Educate residents about the vulnerability of soft story construction to severe damage and potential collapse during a significant seismic event, and work with property owners to substantially improve the seismic performance of these residential buildings to meet current structural building design standards.

## FLOOD HAZARDS

Flooding occurs when there is too much water in inland areas to be held in local water detention areas, be carried away by drains or creeks, or soak into the soil. When this happens, water can build up and wash into normally dry areas, causing significant harm to buildings, people, and habitats. Floods can be caused by heavy rainfall or long periods of moderate rainfall, or clogged drains during periods of little rainfall. In rare instances, a break in a dam, levee, water pipe, or water tank can also cause flooding.

FEMA maps areas at risk of inundation from a 100-year flood, which has a 1 percent chance of occurring in any year, and a 500-year flood, where the risk of flooding is 0.2 percent annually, as shown in Figure S-5. These areas are primarily located along creeks, including Laurel Creek and San Mateo Creek, and east of El Camino Real. Climate change may increase the frequency and severity of storms and expand the parts of the city that are considered prone to flooding.

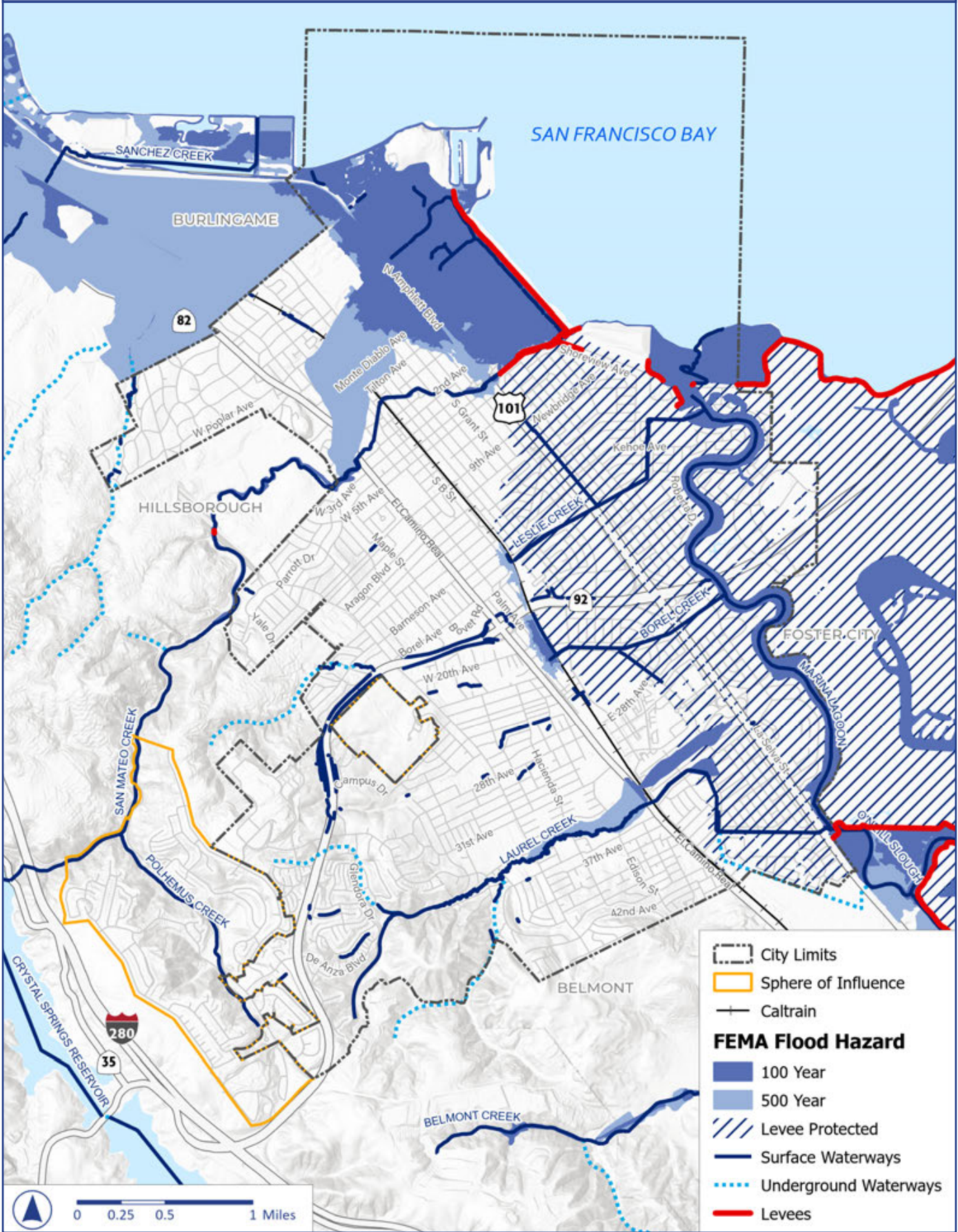
Flooding can also be induced by dam failure, which is caused by structural failure or deficiency associated with intense rainfall, prolonged flooding, earthquakes, landslides, or equipment malfunction. There are two dams of significant concern to San Mateo, as shown in Figure S-6. Failure of Crystal Springs Dam and Laurel Creek Dam would inundate areas along San Mateo Creek and Laurel Creek, and the eastern sections of the city towards the San Francisco Bay. Although dam failures are very rare, they aren't unprecedented. Each dam is required to have a comprehensive emergency action plan approved by the California Department of Water Resources, Division of Safety of Dams.

Tsunamis, caused by offshore earthquakes, can severely damage property, result in loss of lives, disrupt emergency services, and obstruct roads through intense flooding. Figure S-7 illustrates the areas that may be subject to tsunami inundation in San Mateo, which include shoreline areas along the San Francisco Bay. As shown in Figure S-7, although much of the tsunami flooding would occur in the northeast portion of the city, the area of tsunami inundation along the southeast corner of the city originates from the Belmont Slough and would stop at the levee, where the Bay Trail is located and the lagoon starts. Earthquakes with magnitudes below 6.5 are very unlikely to trigger a tsunami. See also the Geologic and Seismic Hazards section of this element for more information on earthquake hazards.

As discussed in the Public Services and Facilities Element, San Mateo has levees that protect the city from flooding from creeks and the San Francisco Bay. Non-federal levees are along the shoreline of Seal Point Park, and over 1,300 feet of levees have been upgraded along the San Mateo and Burlingame border. The San Mateo County Flood and Sea Level Rise Resiliency District, or OneShoreline, was created in 2020 to facilitate multijurisdictional flood and sea level rise resiliency projects in San Mateo County. Earthquakes or overtopping due to major storms can cause levees to fail, flooding the shoreline areas of the city.



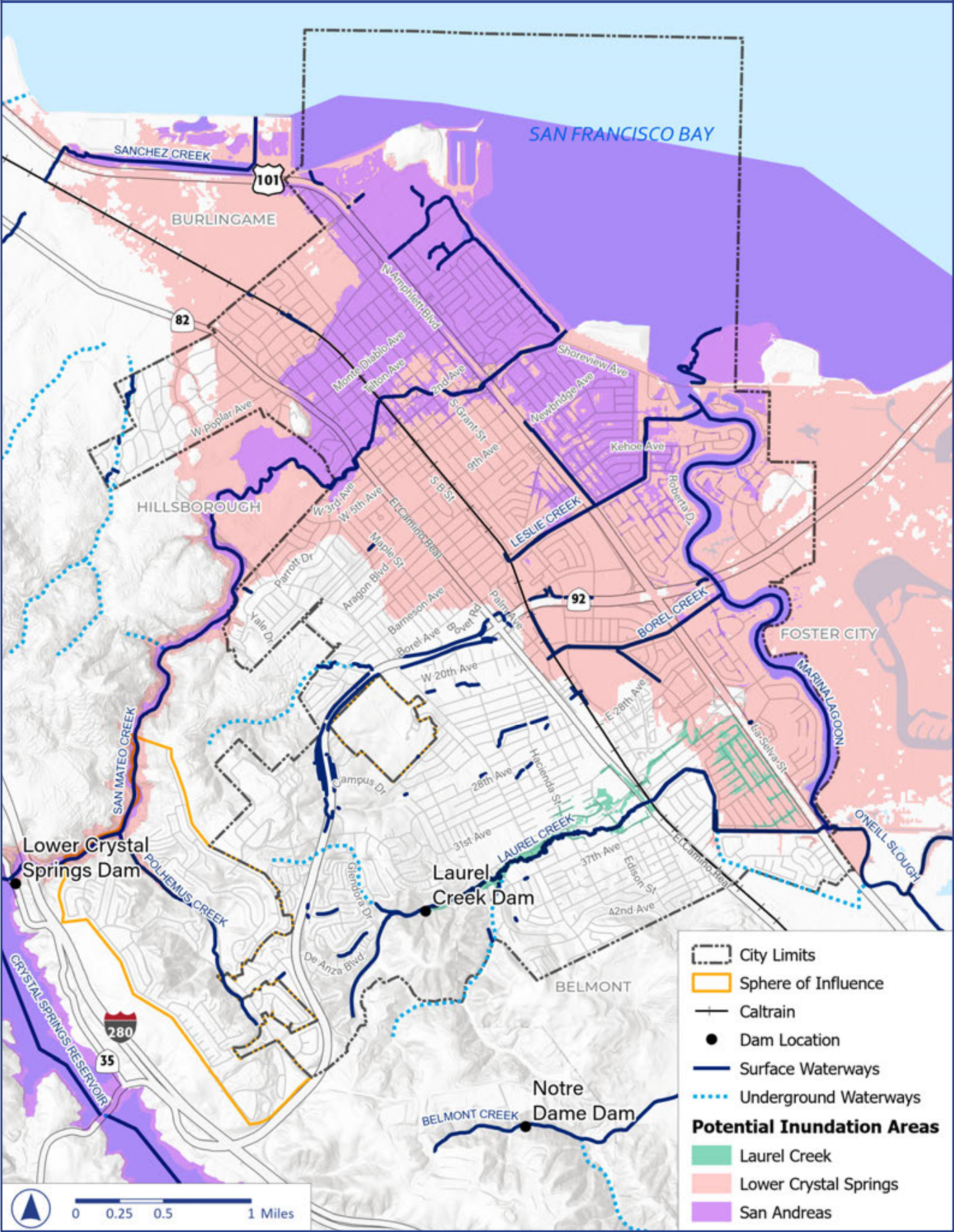
**Figure S-5 Potential Flood Hazards**



Source: CalDWR, 2022; FEMA, 2022; ESRI, 2022; PlaceWorks, 2023.



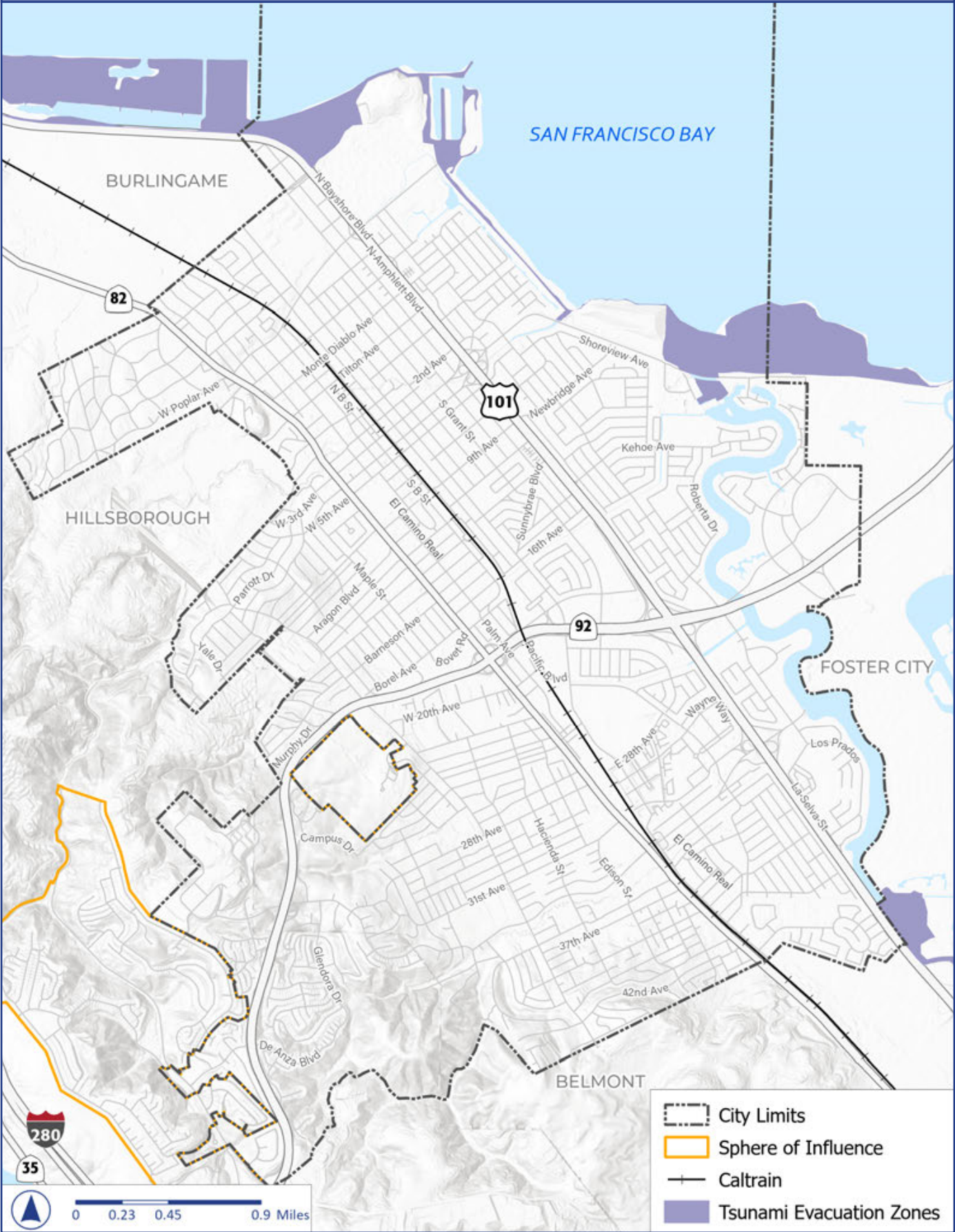
Figure S-6 Potential Flood Hazards – Dam and Levee Failure



Source: CalDWR, 2022; ESRI, 2022; PlaceWorks, 2023.



Figure S-7 Tsunami Hazard Zones



Source: CGS, 2022; ESRI, 2022; PlaceWorks, 2023.  
Note: This map is included for informational purposes and is not adopted as part of this General Plan.



## GOALS, POLICIES, AND ACTIONS

**GOAL S-3** Protect the community from unreasonable risk to life and property caused by flood hazards.

### POLICY

**Policy S 3.1 Development within Floodplains.** Protect new development and substantial retrofits within a floodplain by requiring the lowest finish floor elevation to be above the applicable floodwater elevation or by incorporating other flood-proofing measures consistent with Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) regulations, OneShoreline guidance, the City’s Floodplain Management Ordinance, and other City policy documents.

### ACTIONS

**Action S 3.2 Floodplain Ordinance Update.** Update the Floodplain Management Ordinance, including to align with FEMA and OneShoreline recommendations and to update construction cost value information.

**Action S 3.3 Flood Risk Mapping Data.** Regularly update mapping data pertaining to the 100-year and 500-year floodplains, dams, and levee failure as information becomes available.

**Action S 3.4 Community Rating System.** Undertake efforts that increase the City’s rating under FEMA’s Community Rating System, such as expanding and improving Geographic Information System (GIS) mapping capacity, developing a flood early warning system, and creating a Flood Emergency Action Plan.

**Action S 3.5 Early Flood Warning.** Collaborate with OneShoreline to provide early flood warning for flood-prone areas of the city through OneShoreline’s stream monitoring station and notification system.

## SEA LEVEL RISE

As global temperatures increase, glaciers and other land ice near the north and south poles melt and sea levels rise. Higher temperatures also cause water to expand in oceans, further contributing to sea level rise. Rising seas increase the risk of flooding, storm surge inundation, erosion and shoreline retreat, and wetland loss. According to OneShoreline, San Mateo County as a whole is the most vulnerable county in California to sea level rise because of its extensive coastline and Bay shoreline and the number of people, value of properties, and critical assets in sea level rise-prone areas. Along the shoreline of the city, different scenarios project that sea levels will rise between 1.1 and 2.7 feet by 2050, with levels above 2 feet likely, and by 3.4 to 10.2 feet by 2100. However, it is possible that sea levels could rise faster than these projections. Figures S-8 and S-9 display the expected sea level rise in San Mateo in 2050 (2 feet) and 2100 (7 feet) based on the Ocean Protection Council's 2018 Updated California Sea Level Rise Guidance, featuring models from the Adapting to Rising Tides program of the San Francisco Bay Conservation and Development Commission (BCDC). These figures do not reflect the improvements currently underway for the Foster City levee system.

Rising sea levels can also cause the shoreline to flood more frequently and severely during storms or king tide events. King tides are abnormally high, predictable astronomical tides that occur about twice per year, with the highest tides occurring when the earth, moon, and sun are aligned. Because sea level rise will cause ocean levels to be higher during normal conditions, shoreline floods can reach further onto land. For example, a storm that has a one in five chance of occurring in a given year (known as a five-year storm) can create a temporary increase in sea levels of approximately two feet. The goals, policies, and actions in this section call for planning for a medium- to high-risk aversion scenario in 2100. This scenario uses a 1 in 200 chance for sea level rise projections, providing a precautionary projection that can be used for less adaptive (less able to make changes that reduce harm in response to hazards), more vulnerable developments or populations that will experience moderate to high consequences if actions are not taken to address sea level rise in these areas. Figure S-10 shows shoreline flooding on top of sea level rise in the event of a five-year storm for 2050.

Rising sea levels also threaten a significant portion of San Mateo's housing, commercial buildings, essential infrastructure, and economic drivers, as low-lying land near the shoreline could be subject to more frequent flooding. Affected essential infrastructure includes US Highway 101, State Route (SR-) 92, and the Caltrain station and associated railroad infrastructure. Meanwhile, rising tides may increase groundwater levels, inundating contaminated soils. Given that some contaminated sites in San Mateo sit near the shoreline, rising groundwater may cause contaminated soils to leach into new, different areas.

Natural ecosystems in the bay will be disrupted by the higher tide levels and intrusion of saltwater into freshwater creek systems and the Marina Lagoon. Historically, marshlands along the shoreline have adapted to changes in sea level by building up sediment, increasing the height of the marsh to keep pace with the tide levels of the San Francisco Bay, and moving inland. However, eastern San Mateo is lined with a three-mile levee system that has very little marsh habitat, and any habitat migration is expected to be outpaced by sea level rise. Creative integration of nature-based solutions to combine natural buffers with San Mateo's extensive existing levee system to mitigate flooding risks could be an opportunity to re-establish ecological communities and enhance natural areas, such as the creeks throughout the city and the Marina Lagoon.



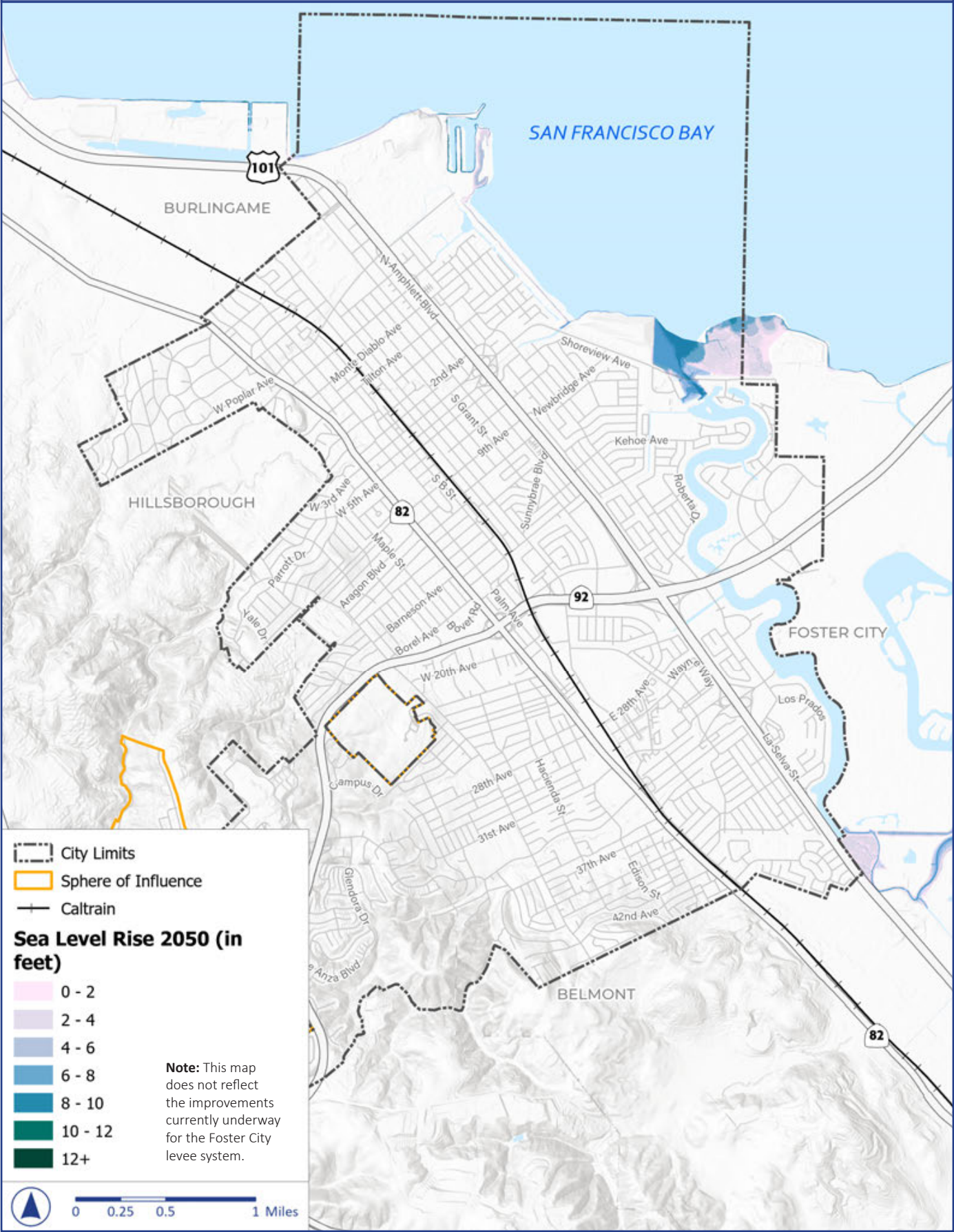


In 2023, the City completed improvements in the North Shoreview neighborhood, which is south of Coyote Point, roughly bound by San Mateo Creek to the south, U.S. Highway 101 to the west, the Poplar Creek Golf Course to the north, and San Francisco Bay to the east. Ground elevations in the neighborhood range from below sea level to about 10 feet above sea level, so the area is susceptible to flooding from San Francisco Bay and stormwater runoff that collects behind the levees protecting the neighborhood from bay water intrusion. Figure S-11 shows a map of the neighborhood and the various structures and facilities that provide protection against these flood risks. The City upgraded the Coyote Point and Poplar Avenue pump stations and made improvements to a section of the Bayfront Levee. With the added protection, approximately 1,600 properties in North Shoreview will be removed from the 100-year flood zone once approved by FEMA. The levee improvements will add 3.9 feet above the predicted base flood elevation to account for sea level rise.

Neighboring Foster City is also in the process of constructing improvements to their levee system, which interconnects with the City of San Mateo's system. Their improvements will provide protection from the 100-year flood and an additional 3 feet above the predicted base flood elevation to account for sea level rise.

The City of San Mateo will continue working with regional, State, and federal partners to proactively address the potential impacts of sea level rise. The City regularly participates in data gathering and mapping, collaborates with OneShoreline, manages a new assessment district in North Shoreview to fund necessary flood protection improvements, and completes infrastructure projects to provide flood protection. The City is also engaged through the BayCAN collaborative, a Bay Area-wide collaborative network of local governments and organizations focused on responding effectively and equitably to the impacts of climate change.

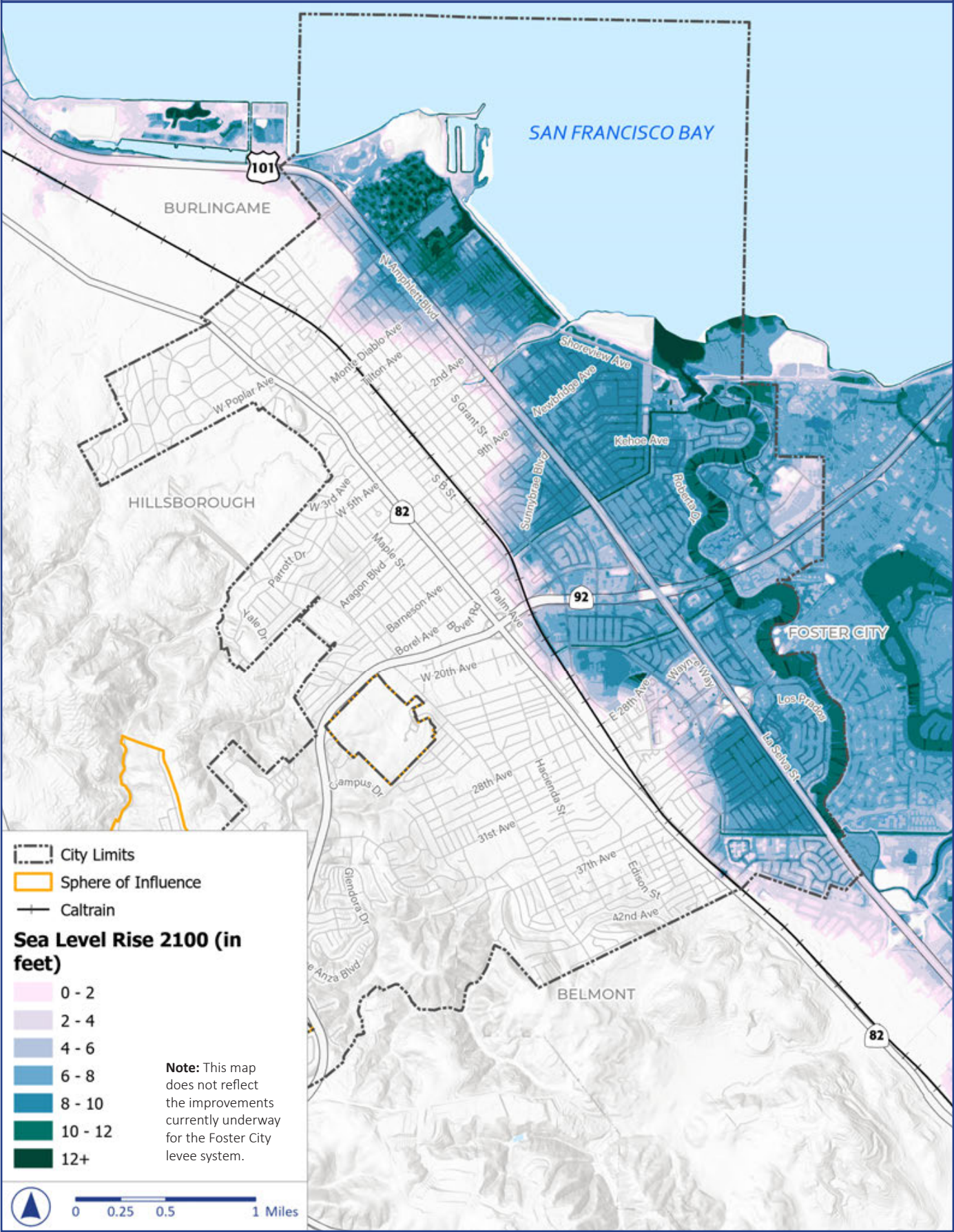
Figure S-8 2050 Sea Level Rise



Source: ESRI, 2022; PlaceWorks, 2023.  
Note: This map is included for informational purposes and is not adopted as part of this General Plan.



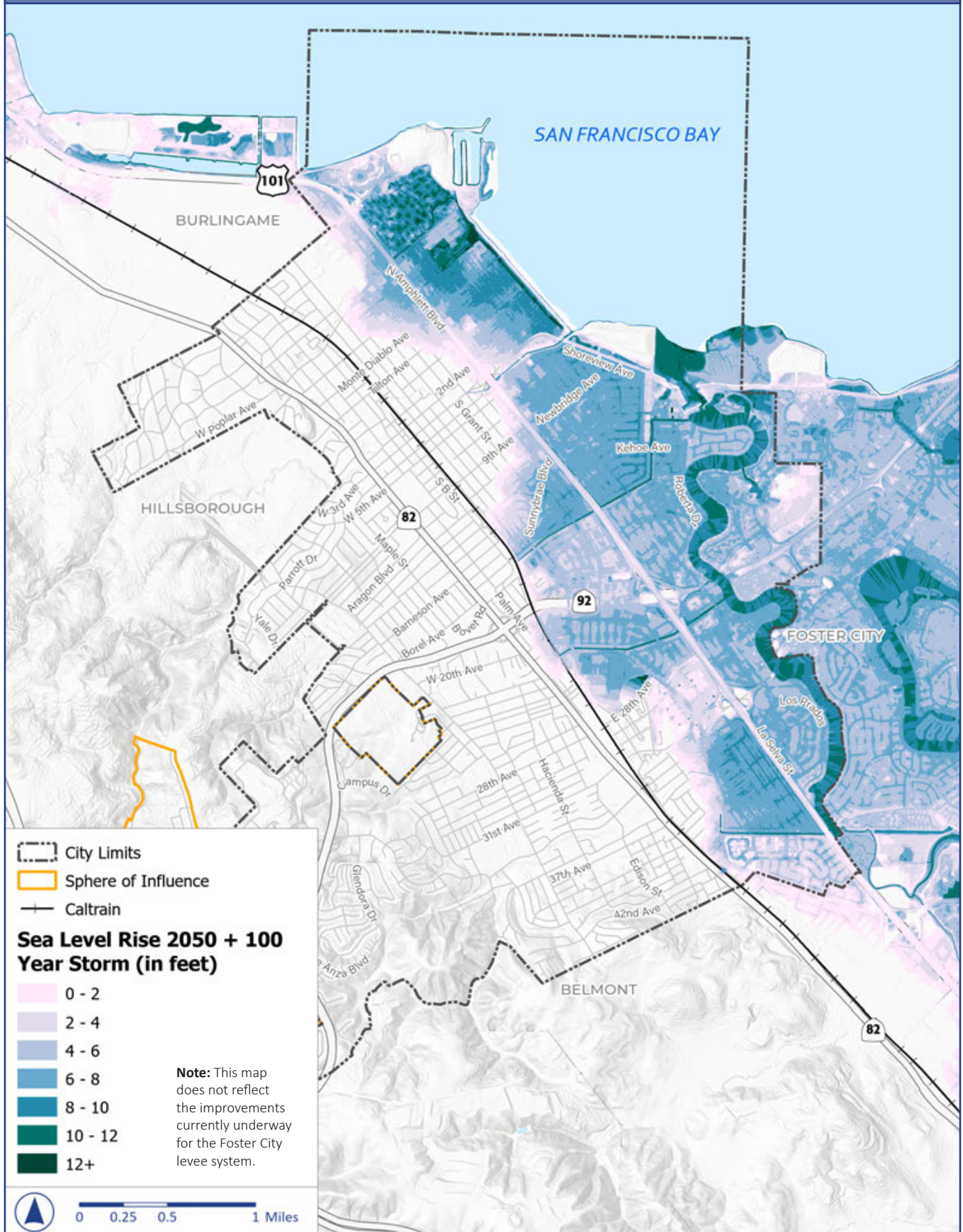
Figure S-9 2100 Sea Level Rise



Source: ESRI, 2022; PlaceWorks, 2023.  
Note: This map is included for informational purposes and is not adopted as part of this General Plan.



Figure S-10 2050 Sea Level Rise Plus 100-Year Storm



Source: ESRI, 2022; PlaceWorks, 2023.

Note: This map is included for informational purposes and is not adopted as part of this General Plan.



**Figure S-11 North Shoreview Flood Protection Improvements**



Note: This map is included for informational purposes and is not adopted as part of this General Plan.

## GOALS, POLICIES, AND ACTIONS

**GOAL S-4** Develop regionally coordinated sea level rise adaptation measures and programs.

### POLICIES

**Policy S 4.1 Sea Level Rise Planning.** Integrate sea level rise planning into all relevant City processes, including General Plan amendments, Specific Plans, zoning ordinance updates, capital projects, and review and approval of new development and substantial retrofits.

**Policy S 4.2 Sea Level Rise and Groundwater Rise Protection.** Ensure that new development, substantial retrofits, critical facilities, City-owned buildings, and existing and future flood control infrastructure are planned and designed to accommodate climate change hazards, including increases in flooding, sea level rise, and rising groundwater, based on the best available science.



**Policy S 4.3 Natural Infrastructure.** Consider the use of nature-based solutions and natural infrastructure in sea level rise adaptation strategies.

**Policy S 4.4 OneShoreline Coordination.** Coordinate with OneShoreline to develop and implement coordinated approaches to sea level rise with other San Mateo County jurisdictions.

## ACTIONS

**Action S 4.5 Climate Change Adaptation Plan.** Assess sea level rise projections, consistent with OneShoreline recommendations, identify the extent of areas vulnerable to sea level rise in the city, and develop a Climate Change Adaptation Plan that sets a comprehensive strategy and includes planning and design standards for climate risk protection. Use this plan to evaluate development applications to ensure projects are protected from sea level rise hazards over the life of the project and to assess public infrastructure needs for adequate protection.

**Action S 4.6 Sea Level Rise Monitoring.** Review and use the best-available sea level rise science and projections and regularly identify natural resources, development, infrastructure, and communities that are vulnerable to sea level rise impacts, including impacts from rising groundwater. Use this information to continue to develop or adjust planning and adaptation strategies.

**Action S 4.7 Rising Groundwater Coordination.** Coordinate with OneShoreline, local jurisdictions, and regional and State agencies to study and enforce requirements related to rising groundwater levels caused by sea level rise.



**Action S 4.8 Natural Infrastructure.** Use or restore natural features and ecosystem processes where feasible and appropriate as a preferred approach to the placement of hard shoreline protection when implementing sea level rise adaptation strategies.

**Action S 4.9 Sea Level Overlay Zone.** Study the feasibility of establishing a sea level rise overlay zone that would allow for the creation of adaptation policies, rules, or construction codes unique to this area, and consistent with OneShoreline guidance, to require properties be made resilient to sea level rise.

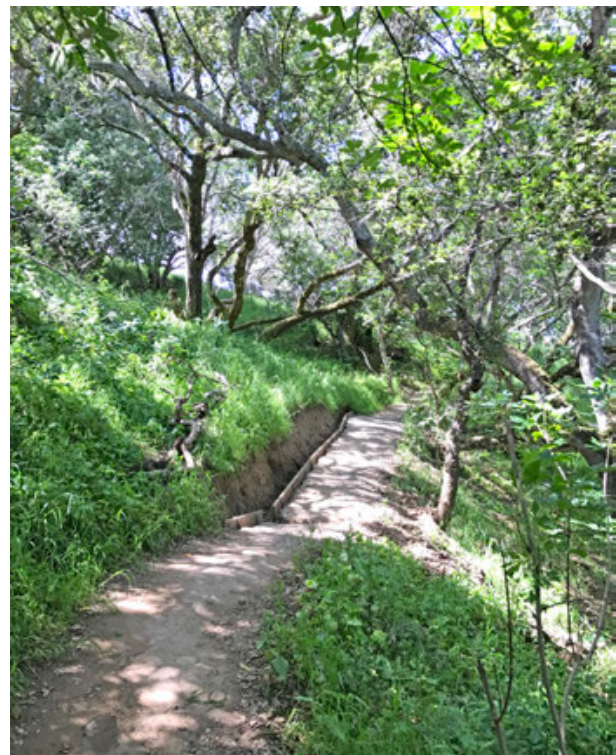
**Action S 4.10 Sea Level Rise Funding.** Study options for establishing dedicated General Fund dollars to support efforts to address sea level rise, including sufficiently supporting OneShoreline.

**Action S 4.11 New Development.** Explore creation of a new fee for new development along the bay shoreline to fund sea level rise protection measures and adaptation strategies.

## WILDFIRE HAZARDS

Wildfires are a regular feature of the landscape in much of California and can be sparked by lightning, malfunctioning equipment, vehicle crashes, or other causes. High winds, such as the Diablo Winds, can cause fires to spread rapidly and erratically, increasing the difficulty of containment and possibility of burning into developed areas. In addition to direct fire impacts on people and property, wildfires remove stabilizing vegetation from hillsides, increasing the likelihood of future landslides. When wildfires burn at very high temperatures, soils can become hydrophobic, preventing the ground from absorbing stormwater and causing flooding downslope. Residents can also be harmed by smoke from wildfires in the region or across northern California. Particulate matter from smoke can cause respiratory illnesses, especially for those who spend a lot of time outdoors during smoky conditions.

The California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE) designates lands into responsibility areas based on who is financially responsible for fire-protection services. Local Responsibility Areas (LRAs) include areas where City fire departments or local fire protection districts are charged with fire protection. State Responsibility Areas (SRAs) include unincorporated areas and State lands where the State has financial responsibility for wildfire protection. San Mateo is within an LRA, and the San Mateo Consolidated Fire Department provides fire prevention and protection services for the area. There are no locations in San Mateo that currently lack access to fire-protection services.





Within the responsibility areas, CAL FIRE designates (with City approval) lands as Moderate, High, or Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zones. As shown in Figure S-12, Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zones are in western San Mateo between the City Limits and SR-92, as well as near Yale Drive and St. Johns Cemetery. Current mapping does not yet designate Moderate or High Fire Hazard Severity Zones in the City Limits. Users should consult the most recent available mapping from CAL FIRE's Fire and Resource Assessment Program (FRAP).<sup>1</sup> Future updates to this Safety Element will include new fire mapping data as it becomes available.

Wildfires may start in wildland areas, natural areas in the unincorporated county, but they can easily spread to developed areas in the city between urban development and wildlands. This area is called the Wildland-Urban Interface (WUI), as shown in Figure S-13. The WUI is made up of two distinct zones. The interface zone contains dense housing or other structures next to vegetation but has little wildland vegetation that can burn in a wildfire. The wildland zones have higher concentrations of wildland vegetation with fewer structures and may have limited access and/or steeper terrain that makes controlling wildfires more difficult. As shown in Figure S-13, the wildland zones are in and near Laurelwood Park and in open space areas near the Peninsula Golf & Country Club. The interface zones border the park and open space areas and include residential neighborhoods, roadways, and other infrastructure throughout west and southwestern parts of San Mateo.

Within the Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zones and WUI zones, there are existing homes, businesses, and public land uses, as well as associated infrastructure like major roadways (e.g., SR-92 and Interstate 280), electrical transmission infrastructure, water and wastewater distribution systems, and communication facilities. Much of this development occurred prior to wildfire hazard mapping; the policies and actions in this element limit future residential development in Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zones and aim to protect existing buildings and infrastructure. Meanwhile, State law requires that homeowners in the WUI zones create and maintain defensible space around homes and other structures, keep roofs clear of flammable material, and use spark arresters on chimneys. Figure S-14 shows the land use designations within Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zones for the Strive San Mateo General Plan 2040.

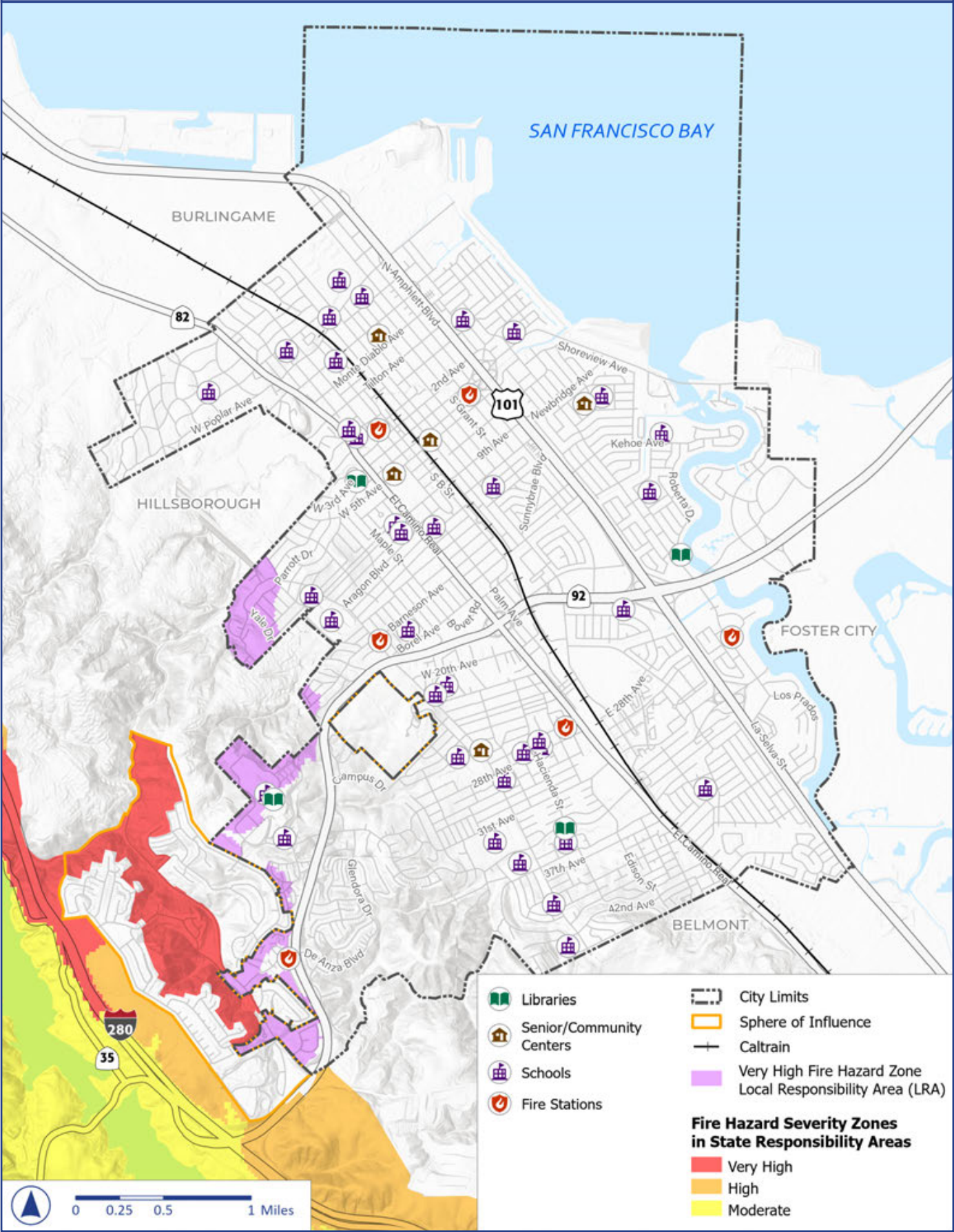
Although no fires have burned in close proximity to San Mateo since CAL FIRE has kept records (1878), several fires have burned in the unincorporated areas of San Mateo County. Recently, the 2020 CZU Lightning Complex Fire burned over 86,000 acres in southern San Mateo County. In 2022, a wildfire burned in the Emerald Hills area of Redwood City, to the south of San Mateo, which could have burned into the city under different conditions. Areas that have previously burned, regardless of their location within or outside of a Fire Hazard Severity Zone, are likely to burn again. Due to climate change, fire activity is projected to increase where development expands in the WUI zones and in areas of high winds.

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<sup>1</sup> Available at <https://frap.fire.ca.gov>.



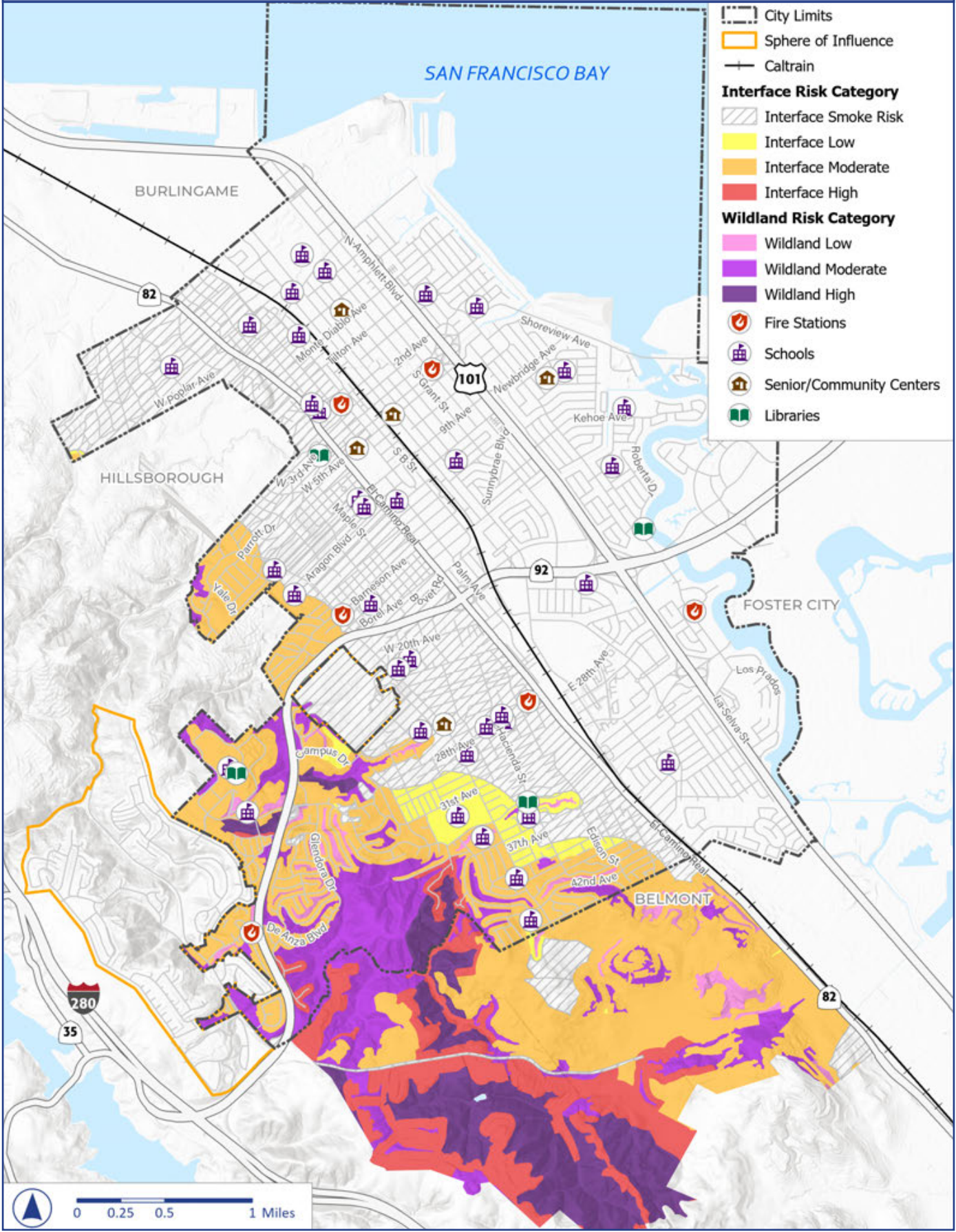
Figure S-12 Wildfire Hazard Zones



Source: CalFire, 2022; ESRI, 2022; PlaceWorks, 2023.  
Note: This map is a draft and will be updated once CalFire publishes the new Wild Hazard Zones.



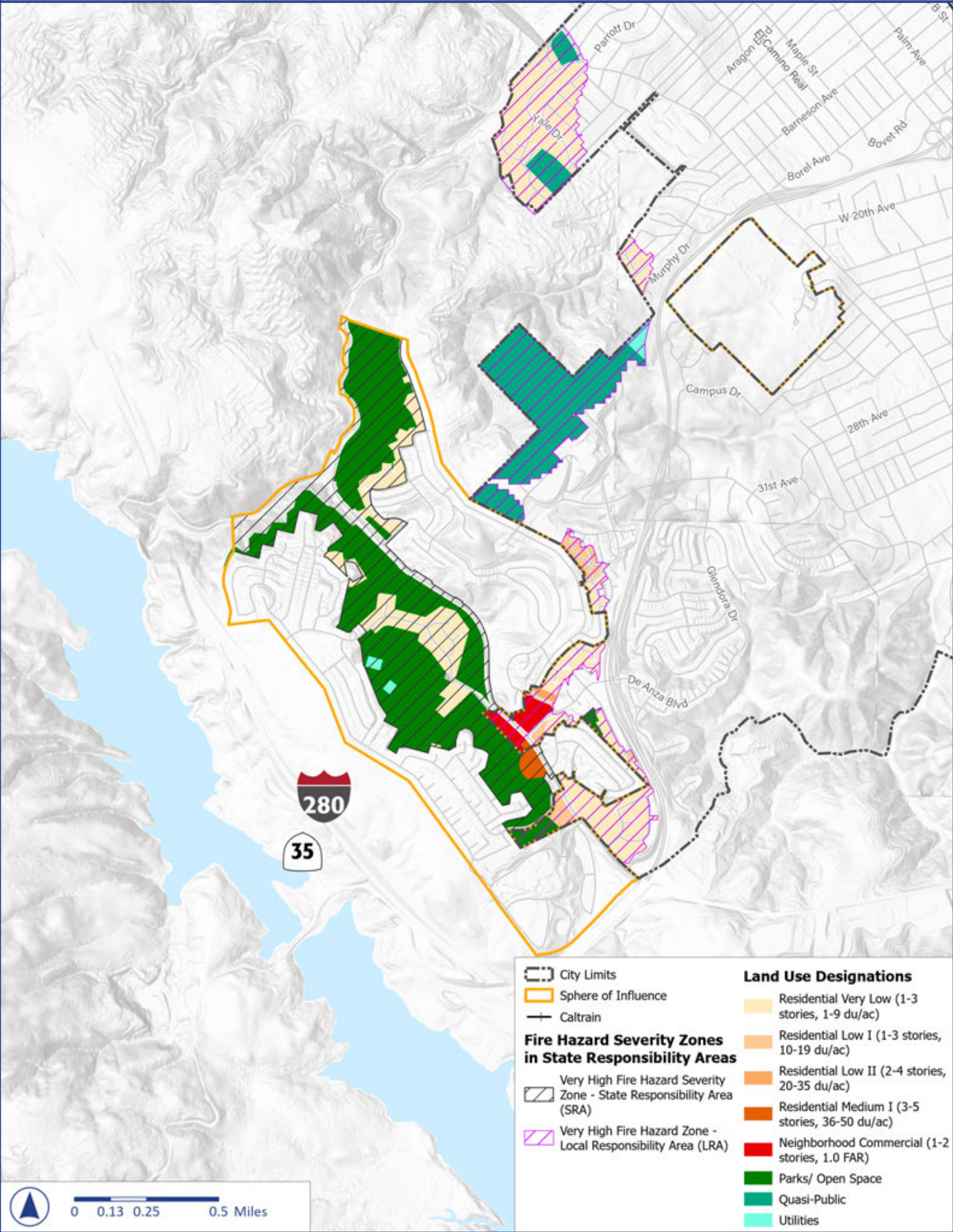
Figure S-13 Wildland-Urban Interface



Source: City of San Mateo, 2022; ESRI, 2022; PlaceWorks, 2023.



Figure S-14 Land Uses in Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zones



Source: City of San Mateo, 2022; ESRI, 2022; PlaceWorks, 2023.  
Note: This map is a draft and will be updated once CalFire publishes the new Wild Hazard Zones.

## GOALS, POLICIES, AND ACTIONS

### GOAL S-5 Maintain adequate fire and life safety protection from wildland fires.

#### POLICIES

- Policy S 5.1 Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zones.** Avoid new residential development in Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zones, as shown on Figure S-14, or the most current data available from CAL FIRE. Redevelopment or reconstruction of existing structures is allowed. Coordinate with San Mateo Consolidated Fire Department (SMC Fire) to ensure new construction of buildings or infrastructure within a Fire Hazard Severity Zone or Wildland-Urban Interface (WUI), as shown on Figures S-12 and S-13 or the most current data available from CAL FIRE, are in full compliance with applicable State and local regulations and meet the Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone Fire Safe Regulations for road ingress and egress, fire equipment access, and adequate water supply.
- Policy S 5.2 Reconstruction of Development.** Require reconstruction projects or significant retrofits in a Fire Hazard Severity Zone and the Wildland-Urban Interface, as shown on Figures S-12 and S-13 or the most current data available from CAL FIRE, to be consistent with the California Building Standards Code, California Fire Code, and Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone Fire Safe Regulations.
- Policy S 5.3 Wildland Fire Protection.** Require all development in and adjacent to designated Fire Hazard Severity Zone and Wildland-Urban Interface to prepare a fire protection plan for review and approval by SMC Fire prior to issuance of building permits and to provide access and defensible space in accordance with California codes and local ordinances.
- Policy S 5.4 Hillside Vegetation Stability.** Stabilize, and as feasible re-vegetate, burned slopes following a wildfire event to reduce landslide and debris flow risk.
- Policy S 5.5 Fire Risk Mapping.** Coordinate with SMC Fire to consistently update any mapping data showing fire extent in San Mateo using CAL FIRE data and local wildland fire risk maps indicating the locations and extents of Fire Hazard Severity Zones, Local Responsibility Areas, and the Wildland-Urban Interface. Use this mapping data to inform decisions about existing risk and future land uses throughout the city and share these maps widely on the City's website, published handouts and flyers, and at in-person and virtual education events.
- Policy S 5.6 Firefighting Infrastructure.** Coordinate with SMC Fire to ensure adequate firefighting infrastructure, including road and building clearance for firefighting vehicles, and clear and legible street signage throughout the community.
- Policy S 5.7 Peakload Water Supply.** Ensure that the California Water Service Company and the Estero Municipal Improvement District provide and maintain a water supply and distribution system that provides an adequate static pressure to deliver the minimum fire hydrant flow to all areas of the city, except where a lesser flow is acceptable, as determined by SMC Fire.



- Policy S 5.8 Facilities Planning.** Place all new public facilities or relocate existing public facilities outside of identified fire hazard risk areas as feasible. Appropriately retrofit public facilities to mitigate fire risk.
- Policy S 5.9 Land Use Management for Fire Risks.** Maintain all City-owned public lands and work with private landowners to reduce fuel loads, establish appropriately placed fire breaks/defensible space, require long-term maintenance of fire hazard reduction projects, and educate all property owners in the city on proper landscape maintenance and firescaping standards to reduce the risk of fire hazards.
- Policy S 5.10 Wildland Fire Vulnerability.** Consider all improvements at Sugarloaf Mountain and Laurelwood Park in the context of the area's high fire risk and include wildfire mitigation components in projects when feasible.
- Policy S 5.11 Fire-Safe Roads.** Coordinate with SMC Fire to evaluate new development or significant retrofits that have access on roadways that do not meet fire-safe road and vegetation standards within the Wildfire-Urban Interface and/or Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone and ensure that road standards and vegetation management occurs and is maintained.
- Policy S 5.12 Secondary Access.** Explore secondary means of ingress and egress in areas with evacuation constraints, as shown in Figure S-2, Evacuation-Constrained Areas, for existing subdivisions or developments of 30 units or more within a Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone.
- Policy S 5.13 Emergency Access.** Require that roads, driveways, and other clearances around structures are located and designed to ensure emergency access.
- Policy S 5.14 Emergency Services.** Work with SMC Fire to provide fire prevention, protection, and emergency preparedness services that adequately protect residents, employees, visitors, and structures from fire and fire-related emergencies.

## ACTIONS



- Action S 5.15 Tree Maintenance.** Collaborate with SMC Fire to maintain City-owned trees in a manner that does not contribute to fire danger, in accordance with current best management practices (BMPs).



- Action S 5.16 Fire-Safe Education.** Work with SMC Fire and seek funding to develop a fire-safe education program that provides information and awareness to community members about defensive space, fire-resistant landscaping and construction, evacuation preparation, and other wildfire education topics.

- Action S 5.17 Fire Hazard History.** Include a historical record of any significant fire events that have occurred in San Mateo or the surrounding area in all updates to the City's Safety Element.

- Action S 5.18 Vegetation Management on City-Owned Land.** Coordinate with SMC Fire to continue conducting and providing long-term maintenance of vegetation management projects in City-owned parks and open spaces to prevent wildfire ignition and spread.

**Action S 5.19 Reevaluation of Development Standards.** Reevaluate development standards for wildfire risk areas following major wildfire events and apply updated standards as needed to maintain high levels of wildfire protection.

**Action S 5.20 Vegetation Management.** Coordinate with the SMC Fire and the FIRE SAFE San Mateo County to obtain funding for and conduct vegetation and fuel modification or management.

## HAZARDOUS MATERIALS

Much of the economic success of the Bay Area is based on research and manufacturing, the byproducts of which include substances that may be harmful to people and the surrounding environment. Hazardous waste ranges from familiar substances, such as waste oil and cleaning solvents, to highly toxic industrial compounds, and include toxic metals, gases, flammable and explosive liquids and solids, corrosive materials, radioactive materials, and infectious biological waste. They can be released through human error, malfunctioning or broken equipment, or as an indirect consequence of other emergencies (e.g., if an earthquake damages a hazardous material storage tank). Hazardous materials can also be released accidentally during transportation, as a consequence of vehicle accidents.

Most of the waste generators in San Mateo are small-quantity generators – small businesses and households that generate less than 12 tons per year. Numerous industrial and commercial operations, both past and present, have manufactured, handled, stored, and disposed of hazardous materials. Hazardous material sites include manufacturing operations, facilities with leaking underground storage tanks (LUSTs), and generators of hazardous waste. In the twenty-first century, life science buildings are replacing industrial businesses as users of hazardous materials and producers of hazardous waste.

The San Mateo County Hazardous Waste Management Plan, implemented by San Mateo County Environmental Health Service, the designated Certified Unified Program Agency for the county, has designated 15 areas in San Mateo that are zoned for either commercial or industrial uses as suitable for waste treatment, recycling, storage, and transfer facilities. The sites designated for these facilities are in manufacturing districts adjacent to the Union Pacific rail corridor. Sites designated for storage and transfer facilities are in service commercial and transit-oriented development zoning districts adjacent to the rail corridor, west of US Highway 101 on Amphlett Boulevard, and in Coyote Point Park.

Hazardous materials are primarily transported within San Mateo via trucks carrying a variety of materials, including gasoline, other petroleum products, and other chemicals known to cause fire and life safety problems. There is a significant potential for accidental release of wastes in transit due to the presence of US Highway 101 running through the eastern portion of the city. The transport of hazardous materials is regulated by the California Department of Transportation and California Highway Patrol on State and Interstate highways in California. Local agencies have the authority to restrict the use of local roads for waste transport, as well as the time of transit, if not unduly restrictive to commerce.

Generally, selection of transportation routes should minimize the time and distance that hazardous waste is in transit, avoid residential neighborhoods and sensitive receptors, avoid periods and areas of traffic congestion, minimize use of local roads, and provide for adequate emergency response services.

## GOALS, POLICIES, AND ACTIONS

**GOAL S-6** Protect the community's health, safety, and welfare relating to the use, storage, transport, and disposal of hazardous materials.

### POLICIES

- Policy S 6.1 County Cooperation.** Cooperate with the County of San Mateo and San Mateo Consolidated Fire Department in the regulation and transportation of hazardous materials in San Mateo. Share hazardous materials management enforcement with San Mateo County and San Mateo Consolidated Fire Department.
- Policy S 6.2 County Hazardous Waste Management Plan.** Adopt the San Mateo County Hazardous Waste Management Plan by reference into the Safety Element. Make amendments, as necessary, to suit local needs and issues.
- Policy S 6.3 Transportation Routes.** Restrict the transportation of hazardous materials and waste to designated truck routes and limit such transportation to non-commute hours.
- Policy S 6.4 Hazardous Waste Management Facilities Location.** Regulate the location and operation of new hazardous waste management facilities.
- Policy S 6.5 Design of Hazardous Waste Management Facilities.** Require the following features and mitigation measures in the design of proposed hazardous waste management facilities, including life sciences buildings, to minimize potential health, safety, and aesthetic impacts on surrounding properties and occupants:
- For sites in areas subject to flooding or inundation as shown on Figures S-5 and S-6, require facilities to have a surface elevation at least 1.5 feet above the maximum flood water level for areas containing hazardous substances or to be flood-proofed in some other manner suitable to the City.
  - Require facilities to provide for full on-site containment of maximum permitted quantities of hazardous substances, including protection of storm drain or sanitary sewer inlets from accidental entry of hazardous materials.
  - Require facilities to provide separate storage and/or treatment of potentially reactive substances, including separate spill containment vessels. Require that storage of hazardous gases provides adequate filtration and neutralization devices to prohibit accidental release of toxic substances.
  - Require that all storage and treatment occur within an enclosed structure.
  - Require new facilities be sited as far away as possible within the project site from sensitive communities, such as homes, schools, playgrounds, sports fields, childcare centers, senior centers, and long-term healthcare facilities.

**Policy S 6.6 Risk Assessment.** Require applications for hazardous waste management facilities to prepare a risk assessment to determine site suitability. Establish risk criteria such as distance from public facilities, residential, or immobile population and recreation areas; impacts from natural hazards (seismic, geologic, flood, and fire hazards); impacts on wetlands, endangered species, air quality, and emergency response capabilities; and proximity to major transport routes.



**Policy S 6.7 Contaminated Sites.** Require the cleanup of contaminated sites, including those indicated on the Hazardous Waste and Substances Sites List (Cortese List) published by the Department of Toxic Substances Control and/or other agencies, such as the San Mateo County Health Department and the Regional Water Quality Control Board, in conjunction with substantial site development or redevelopment, where feasible.

**Policy S 6.8 Cost Recovery.** Require San Mateo County businesses that generate hazardous waste or applicants for hazardous waste management facilities to pay necessary costs for implementation of Hazardous Waste Management Plans and for application costs, and to pay for costs associated with emergency response services in the event of a hazardous material release, to the extent permitted by law.

## ACTION

**Action S 6.9 Shared Data.** Regularly coordinate with San Mateo County to collect data on businesses that store hazardous substances to share with local emergency service providers, including the Police Department and San Mateo Consolidated Fire Department, as well as the Public Works Department for the wastewater source-control program.





# CHAPTER 9

## Noise Element







# NOISE ELEMENT

## INTRODUCTION

This Noise Element provides the policy framework for controlling, managing, and mitigating excessive noise in the city. These policies will protect land uses that are sensitive to noise, such as residences, schools, and libraries, while minimizing noise from the sources that create them.

### RELEVANCE TO GENERAL PLAN THEMES



#### Sustainability in this Element:

- Reducing noise levels reduces stress for humans and animals, improving the health and well-being of our community and habitats.



#### Environmental Justice in this Element:

- Minimizing and mitigating noise impacts will help alleviate the harmful effects of noise pollution in neighborhoods close to freeways, the rail corridor, and other high-volume roadways, which already experience disproportionate impacts from multiple pollution sources.



#### Community Engagement in this Element:

- Informs the San Mateo community about upcoming land use projects that would contribute to or be affected by a noisy environment.
- Leverages creative outreach strategies to engage with all San Mateo residents, particularly those that live in equity priority communities, about development projects and new activities that could generate noise or mitigate existing noise nuisances.



## NOISE IN SAN MATEO

Sounds can bring joy to the listener, but they can also be a nuisance. Loud sounds can become unwanted noise that could be harmful to our physical, mental, and emotional health. Stress and lost sleep from noise pollution contributes to cardiovascular and metabolic diseases. While noise pollution has the potential to affect all San Mateo residents, existing noise levels are highest in neighborhoods closest to freeways and the rail corridor, compounding the negative health effects of air pollution and other pollution sources in those communities.

San Mateo's vibrant urban environment generates noise on a daily basis. Vehicles create a rhythmic hum that is oftentimes punctuated by honks and other noises as they travel along the city's streets and thoroughfares. Trains traveling on the Caltrain/Southern Pacific rail corridor sound their horns to warn pedestrians, motorists, and others about their impending arrival. This safety measure also creates noise pollution for those that live or work near the rail corridor. Commercial activities and open spaces, such as restaurants, storefronts, and parks help to create a lively atmosphere for social interactions and economic activities. However, they also have the potential to generate noise nuisances, especially for entertainment uses that occur after normal business hours. Other noise sources in the community come from construction activities, aircraft flyovers, landscaping equipment, and fixed mechanical equipment, such as air conditioning units.

## MEASURING ENVIRONMENTAL NOISE

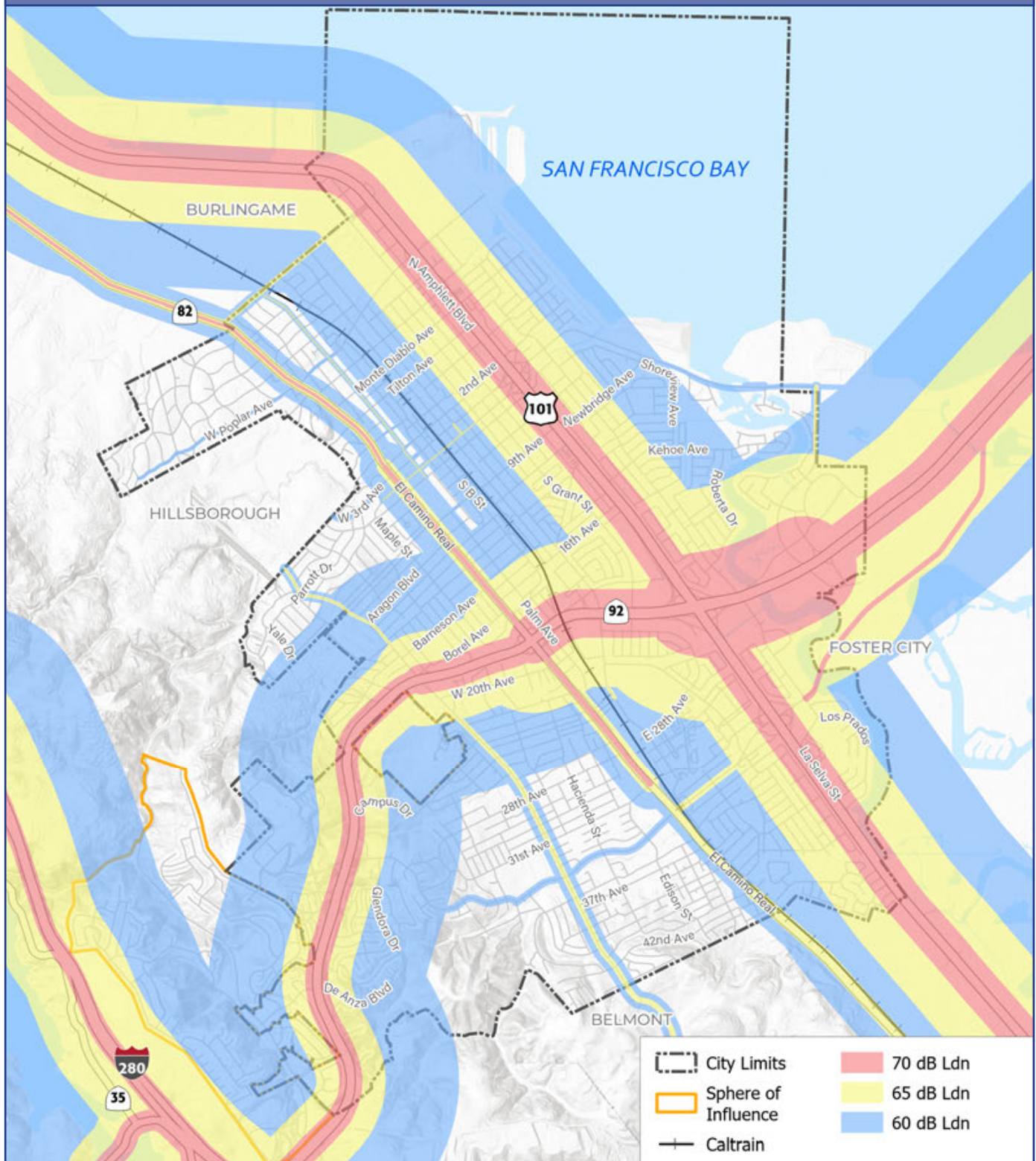
Environmental noise level or intensity is measured in decibels (dB), which range from 0 dB, the threshold at which people can detect sound, to 140 dB, the threshold where it becomes painful to hear. For every increase of 10 dB, the perceived loudness of noise is doubled. For example, a motorcycle accelerating (90 dB) seems twice as loud as a power lawn mower (80 dB).

This Noise Element uses a unit of measurement called the "A-weighted" decibel scale, which is sometimes expressed as dBA. Humans do not hear all frequencies equally. As a result, this measurement takes into consideration that human hearing decreases at extremely low and high frequencies. State law requires general plans to use the Community Noise Equivalent Level (CNEL) or the Day/Night Average Sound Level ( $L_{dn}$ ) to describe the community noise environment and its effects on the population. The City of San Mateo uses the Day/Night Average Sound Level ( $L_{dn}$ ), which represents a 24-hour average sound level, with an additional 10 dB added for nighttime noise between the hours of 10:00 p.m. and 7:00 a.m., as shown in the land use compatibility standards for noise in Table N-1.

Table N-1 is used to determine whether the existing exterior noise levels that would surround a proposed new use are acceptable or unacceptable and to identify where a proposed project may need to incorporate noise mitigation features. Roadway noise is the primary contributor to the average exterior noise levels in San Mateo. Existing and projected average exterior noise levels in San Mateo are shown in Figures N-1, N-2, and N-3.



Figure N-1 Existing Traffic Noise Contours

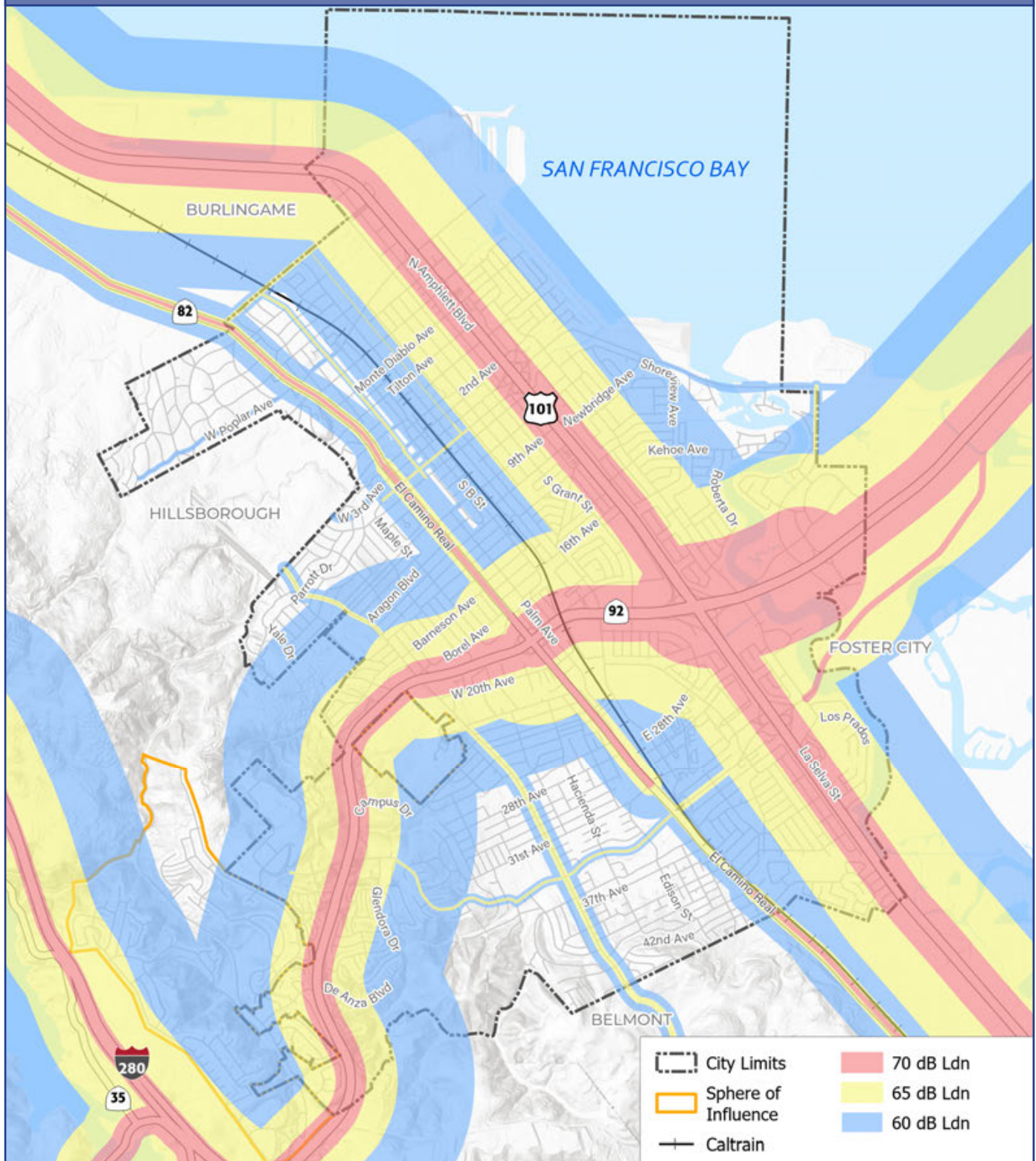


Source: ESRI, 2022; ECORP, 2023; PlaceWorks, 2023.

Note: This map is included for informational purposes and is not adopted as part of this General Plan.



Figure N-2 Future Traffic Noise Contours

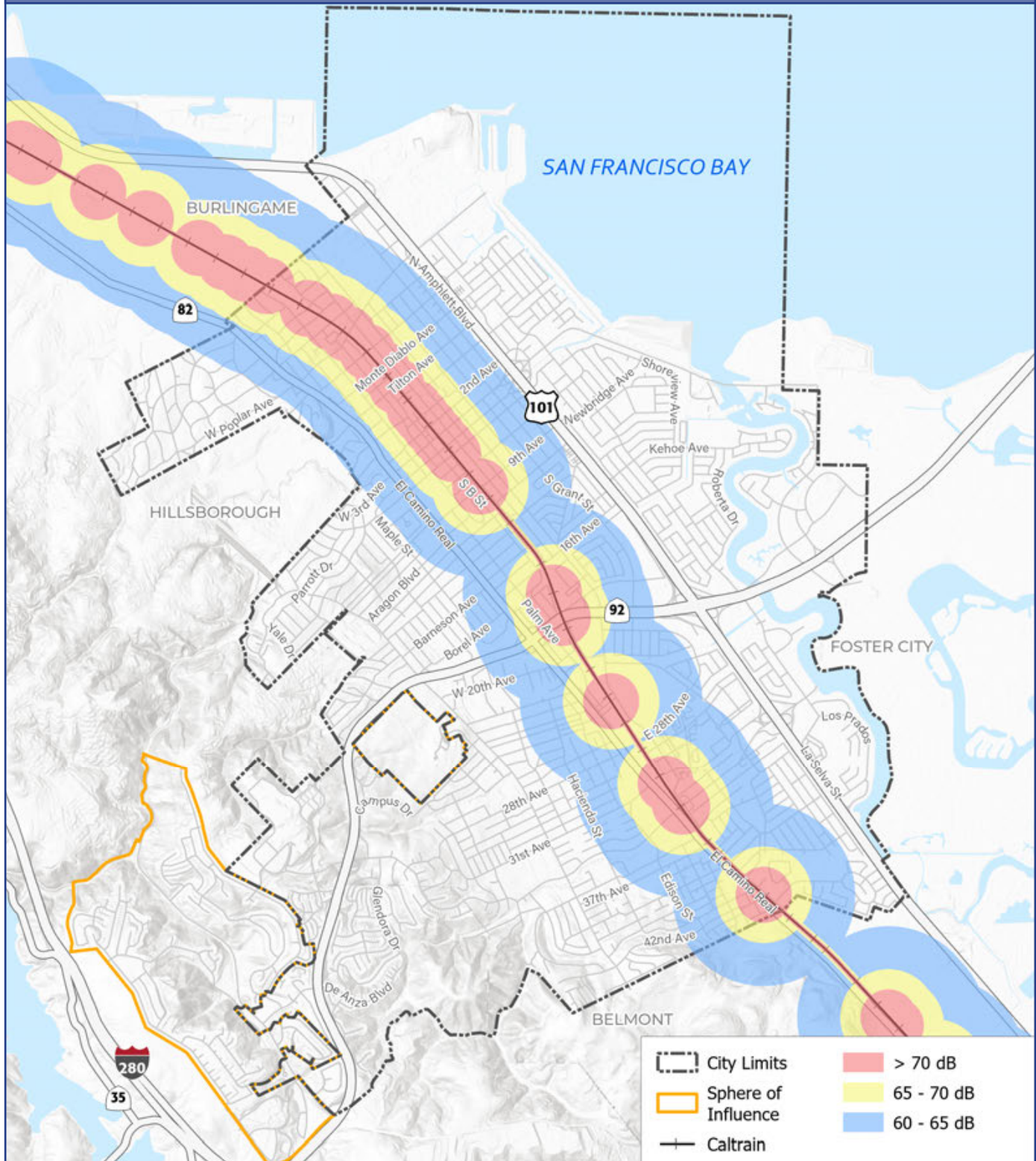


Source: ESRI, 2022; ECORP, 2023; PlaceWorks, 2023.





Figure N-3 Rail Noise Contours



Source: ESRI, 2022; ECORP, 2023; PlaceWorks, 2023.



Table N-1 Land Use Compatibility Guidelines

Land Use Category of Proposed New Use		Day-Night Average Exterior Noise Level, $L_{dn}$ (dBA)				
		0 - 59	60 - 65	66 - 70	71 - 80	over 81
Noise-Sensitive Land Uses	Residential (all densities) *					
	Multifamily Common Open Space for Residents					
	Hotels, Motels, and Other Lodging					
	Schools, Libraries, Hospitals, Churches, Long-Term Care Facilities					
	Parks, Playgrounds, Privately Owned Publicly Accessible Open Space					
Office and Commercial						
Research and Development, Industrial						
	<b>Normally Acceptable.</b> Specified land use is satisfactory based on the assumption that any buildings involved are of normal, conventional construction, without any special noise mitigation requirements.					
	<b>Conditionally Acceptable.</b> New construction or development should be undertaken only after a detailed analysis of the noise-reduction requirements is made and needed noise mitigation features have been included in the design.					
	<b>Normally Unacceptable.</b> New construction or development should not be undertaken.					

\* See residential land use designations in the Land Use Element of this General Plan.



## MITIGATING NOISE IMPACTS

Excessive noise in the city can be addressed in three ways: land use planning, physical mitigation, and administrative regulation. Land use planning means considering the existing and future noise environment when reviewing proposed development and locating new uses in a way that minimizes the exposure of new community members to excessive noise. Most of San Mateo is within the “conditionally acceptable” range of between 60 dB and 70 dB ( $L_{dn}$ ), so some form of noise mitigation will likely need to be incorporated into building and site design for any new noise-sensitive land uses listed in Table N-1.

San Mateo’s residential neighborhoods that border US Highway 101, State Route (SR-) 92, El Camino Real, and the railroad corridor are subject to sound levels exceeding 70 dB ( $L_{dn}$ ), as shown in Figures N-1 and N-3. The Land Use Element allows residential and other types of development in these areas, and this Noise Element provides policy guidance to mitigate noise impacts on that new development, such as through site design and construction methods.

Physical mitigation refers to reducing the noise level by controlling how buildings are built and where they are located. For instance, buildings could use sound-absorbing materials to absorb the noise, install walls or windows to reduce the noise indoors, or be located in areas away from sources that produce substantial noise, such as freeways or train tracks. Trees and other vegetation can also help to absorb, deflect, and mask unwelcome noise, while also offering shade and absorbing carbon.

The City’s Noise Control Ordinance is an example of administrative regulations. This ordinance, which is part of the Municipal Code, limits the operating hours and duration of noise sources by decibel level. For example, construction activities are restricted at night so residents can have a quiet and peaceful night of sleep.

Noise mitigation in the city requires a collaborative approach between the City of San Mateo and other agencies. The City has the power to enact the policies in this Noise Element and the regulations in the Noise Control Ordinance. However, many sources of noise pollution are outside of the City’s control. Noise generated from trains that use the Caltrain/Southern Pacific rail corridor, particularly the train horns, is regulated by safety standards set by the Federal Rail Administration. While there is noise pollution from the San Francisco International Airport (SFO), the City has limited influence on flight paths, which are determined by the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA). Additionally, freeways are under the jurisdiction of the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans). Moving forward, the City will continue to work closely with agencies such as Caltrain, Caltrans, and SFO to reduce noise impacts to all those that live, work, and play in San Mateo.



## GOALS, POLICIES, AND ACTIONS

**GOAL N-1** Protect noise-sensitive land uses from excessive noise levels.

### POLICIES

**Policy N 1.1 Noise and Land Use Planning.** Integrate noise considerations into land use planning decisions to minimize noise impacts to or from new development.

**Policy N 1.2 Interior Noise Level Standard.** Require submittal of an acoustical analysis and interior noise insulation for all noise-sensitive land uses listed in Table N-1 that have an exterior noise level of 60 dBA ( $L_{dn}$ ) or above, as shown on Figure N-2. The maximum interior noise level shall not exceed 45 dBA ( $L_{dn}$ ) in any habitable rooms, as established by the California Building Code.

**Policy N 1.3 Exterior Noise Level Standard for Residential Uses.** Require an acoustical analysis for new multifamily common open space for residents that have an exterior noise level of 60 dBA ( $L_{dn}$ ) or above, as shown on Figure N-2. Incorporate necessary mitigation measures into residential project design to minimize common open space noise levels. Maximum exterior noise should not exceed 65 dBA ( $L_{dn}$ ) for residential uses and should not exceed 65 dBA ( $L_{dn}$ ) for public park uses.

**Policy N 1.4 Exterior Noise Level Standard for Parks and Playgrounds.** Require a feasibility analysis of noise-reduction measures for public parks and play areas that have an exterior noise level of 70 dBA ( $L_{dn}$ ) or above.



**Policy N 1.5 Inclusive Outreach.** Notify the community when new land uses that would result in excessive noise levels are being considered and inform community members about how they can engage in the process. Use outreach and engagement methods that encourage broad representation and are culturally sensitive, particularly for equity priority communities.



## GOAL N-2 Minimize unnecessary, annoying, or unhealthful noise.

### POLICIES

**Policy N 2.1 Noise Regulation.** Regulate noise in San Mateo to prohibit noise that is annoying or injurious to community members.

**Policy N 2.2 Minimize Noise Impacts.** Incorporate necessary mitigation measures into new development design to minimize short-term noise impacts. Determine whether new development has the potential to result in a significant noise impact on existing development based on the following standards. Impacts will be analyzed based on long-term operational noise increases at the sensitive receptor property line, or new uses that generate noise levels at the sensitive receptor property line, as follows:

Ldn Category of Existing Development Per Figures N-1, N-2, and/or N-3	Noise Increase Considered “Significant” over Existing Noise Levels
Normally Acceptable	An increase of more than 5 dBA and the total Ldn exceeds the “normally acceptable” category
Conditionally Acceptable	An increase of more than 5 dBA
Unacceptable	An increase of more than 5 dBA

**Policy N 2.3 Minimize Commercial Noise.** Protect land uses other than those listed as “noise sensitive” in Table N-1 from adverse impacts caused by the on-site noise generated by new developments. Incorporate necessary mitigation measures into development design to minimize short-term and long-term noise impacts. Prohibit new uses that generate noise levels of 65 dBA ( $L_{dn}$ ) or above at the property line, excluding existing ambient noise levels.

**Policy N 2.4 Traffic Noise.** Recognize projected increases in ambient noise levels resulting from future traffic increases, as shown on Figure N-2. Promote reduced traffic speeds and the installation of noise barriers or other methods to reduce traffic noise along highways and high-volume roadways where noise-sensitive land uses (listed in Table N-1) are adversely impacted by excessive noise levels (60 dBA [ $L_{dn}$ ] or above).

**Policy N 2.5 Railroad Noise.** Support the installation of noise barriers and other mitigations along the railroad corridor where noise-sensitive land uses are adversely impacted by excessive noise levels (60 dBA [ $L_{dn}$ ] or greater), as shown in Figure N-3.

**Policy N 2.6 Railroad Vibration.** Require that new residential projects (or other sensitive uses) within 200 feet of existing railroad lines conduct a ground-borne vibration and noise evaluation consistent with Federal Transit Administration-approved methodologies.

**Policy N 2.7 Construction Noise and Vibration Monitoring.** Require construction noise limits and vibration monitoring around sensitive receptors, including through limiting construction hours and individual and cumulative noise from construction equipment. For larger development projects that demand intensive construction periods and/or use equipment that could create vibration impacts, require a vibration impact analysis, as well as monitoring and reporting of noise/vibration levels throughout construction, consistent with industry standards.

## ACTIONS

**Action N 2.8 Conditions of Approval for Noise Monitoring.** Establish conditions of approval for larger development projects to ensure that requirements for construction noise and vibration monitoring. Include a requirement for a monitoring plan that provides information on the monitoring locations, durations and regularity, the instrumentation to be used, and appropriate noise and vibration control measures to ensure compliance with the noise ordinance and any applicable vibration limits.

**Action N 2.9 Railroad Noise Reductions.** Implement projects necessary to achieve Quiet Zones in the city, such as elimination of at-grade rail crossings or other mitigation measures to decrease horn and other operational noise levels, with a focus on achieving Quiet Zones as part of any substantial expansions of the rail service.

**Action N 2.10 Railroad Noise Barriers.** Work with the Peninsula Corridor Joint Powers Board to promote and encourage adequate noise mitigations and barriers to be incorporated into any rail service expansion or track realignment.





# CHAPTER 10

## Abbreviations and Glossary









# ABBREVIATIONS AND GLOSSARY

This glossary explains the technical terms used in this General Plan. Definitions come from several sources, including the California Office of Planning and Research, the California Institute for Local Government, and the American Planning Association *Glossary of Zoning, Development, and Planning Terms*.

## ABBREVIATIONS

<b>AA-T</b>	Arts Degree for Transfer
<b>AB</b>	Assembly Bill (State)
<b>ABAG</b>	Association of Bay Area Governments
<b>ADA</b>	Americans with Disabilities Act
<b>ADU</b>	Accessory Dwelling Unit
<b>AMI</b>	Area Median Income
<b>AS-T</b>	Associate in Science Degree for Transfer
<b>AV</b>	Autonomous vehicle
<b>BAAQMD</b>	Bay Area Air Quality Management District
<b>BART</b>	Bay Area Rapid Transit
<b>BMR</b>	Below Market Rate
<b>BRT</b>	Bus Rapid Transit
<b>BUILD</b>	Better Utilizing Investments to Leverage Development
<b>CalEnviroScreen</b>	California Communities Environmental Health Screening Tool
<b>CAL FIRE</b>	California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection
<b>CalOES</b>	California Governor's Office of Emergency Services
<b>Cal Water</b>	California Water Company
<b>Caltrans</b>	California Department of Transportation
<b>CAP</b>	Climate Action Plan
<b>C/CAG</b>	City/County Association of Governments of San Mateo County
<b>CDFW</b>	California Department of Fish and Wildlife
<b>CEQA</b>	California Environmental Quality Act
<b>CERT</b>	Community Emergency Response Team
<b>CNEL</b>	Community Noise Equivalent Level

<b>CIP</b>	Capital Improvement Program
<b>dB</b>	Decibel
<b>dba</b>	Decibel “A-Weighted”
<b>du/ac</b>	Dwelling units per acre
<b>EAS</b>	Emergency Alert System
<b>EBT</b>	Electronic Benefit Transfer
<b>EIR</b>	Environmental Impact Report
<b>EMS</b>	Emergency Medical Service
<b>EMID</b>	Estero Municipal Improvement District
<b>EV</b>	Electric Vehicle
<b>FAR</b>	Floor Area Ratio
<b>FAST</b>	Fixing America’s Surface Transportation
<b>FEMA</b>	Federal Emergency Management Agency
<b>FHSZ</b>	Fire Hazard Severity Zone
<b>FIRM</b>	Flood Insurance Rate Map
<b>FRAP</b>	Fire and Resource Assessment Program
<b>GHG</b>	Greenhouse Gas
<b>GIS</b>	Geographic Information Systems
<b>GPA</b>	General Plan Amendment
<b>GPS</b>	General Plan Subcommittee
<b>ITS</b>	Intelligent Transportation Systems
<b>JPB</b>	Joint Powers Board
<b>LAFCO</b>	Local Agency Formation Commission
<b>Ldn</b>	Day/Night Average Sound Level
<b>LID</b>	Low Impact Design
<b>LOS</b>	Level of Service
<b>LRA</b>	Local Responsibility Area
<b>MFD</b>	Multi-Family Dwelling
<b>MJHMP</b>	Multi-Jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan
<b>MMRP</b>	Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program
<b>MTC</b>	Metropolitan Transportation Commission



<b>ODS</b>	Objective Design Standards
<b>OneShoreline</b>	San Mateo County Flood and Sea Level Rise Resiliency District
<b>PCE</b>	Peninsula Clean Energy
<b>PG&amp;E</b>	Pacific Gas and Electric Company
<b>PSPS</b>	Public Safety Power Shutoff
<b>RHNA</b>	Regional Housing Needs Allocation
<b>SB</b>	Senate Bill (State)
<b>SLR</b>	Sea Level Rise
<b>SPAR</b>	Site Plan and Architectural Review
<b>SFD</b>	Single-Family Dwelling
<b>SFPUC</b>	San Francisco Public Utilities Commission
<b>SF RWS</b>	San Francisco Regional Water System
<b>SMC Fire</b>	San Mateo Consolidated Fire Department
<b>SMCTA</b>	San Mateo County Transportation Authority
<b>SMPD</b>	San Mateo Police Department
<b>SOI</b>	Sphere of Influence
<b>SR-</b>	State Route
<b>SRA</b>	State Responsibility Area
<b>SVS</b>	Social Vocational Services
<b>TAC</b>	Toxic Air Contaminant
<b>TDM</b>	Transportation Demand Management
<b>TIA</b>	Transportation Impact Analysis
<b>TNC</b>	Transportation Network Company
<b>TOD</b>	Transit Oriented Development
<b>USACE</b>	United States Army Corps of Engineers
<b>VMT</b>	Vehicle Miles Traveled
<b>VHFHSV</b>	Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone
<b>WUI</b>	Wildland-Urban Interface

## TERMINOLOGY

**21 Elements.** A multi-year, multi-phase collaboration of all 21 San Mateo County jurisdictions, along with partner agencies and stakeholder organizations.

**Acreage.** The land area that exists prior to any dedications for public use, health, and/or safety purposes.

**Action.** A measure, procedure, or technique that helps the City achieve a specific goal. An action is something concrete that can and will be completed. (see “Goal”)

**Adaptation.** Making changes in response to current or future conditions (such as the increased frequency and intensity of climate-related hazards), usually to reduce harm and take advantage of new opportunities.

**Adaptive Management.** A flexible, iterative decision making process that can be adjusted in the face of uncertainties as outcomes from management actions and other events become better understood.<sup>1</sup>

**Adverse Impact.** A negative consequence for the physical, social, or economic environment resulting from an action or project.

**Affordability, Housing.** The relation of housing costs to household income.

**Affordable Housing.** A for-sale housing or rental housing affordable to households whose incomes do not exceed 120 percent of the area median income (moderate- or lower-income households).

**Archaeological Resource.** Material evidence of past human activity found below the surface of ground or water, portions of which may be visible above the surface.

**Assembly Bill (AB).** A State law or bill originating from the State Assembly. The abbreviation “AB” preceeds the specific bill number.

**Association of Bay Area Governments.** The regional planning agency for the nine Bay Area counties, including San Mateo County, and the 101 cities and towns within these counties.

**Asset.** A valued feature of a community that may be harmed by climate change. Assets may include buildings, infrastructure, community services, ecosystems, and economic drivers.

**Below Market Rate Unit.** A below market rate unit is an affordable housing unit (see Affordable Housing definition).

**Buffer.** An area established between potentially conflicting land uses, which, depending on the potential impact, may use landscaping or structural barriers such as yards or roads.

**Bicycle Class Facilities.** A classification system for bicycle paths and roadways identified in the California Highway Design Manual.

**Shared-use paths (Class I):** Off-road pathways designed for people walking, biking, and rolling (e.g., skateboard or scooter).

**Separated bike lanes (Class IV):** A designated lane separated from vehicular traffic by a buffer with vertical protection (e.g., flexible posts, planters, parked vehicles, curbs).

1 U.S. Department of the Interior, 2009. *Adaptive Management, The U.S. Department of the Interior Technical Guide*, page 5.

**Buffered bike lanes (Class II):** A designated bicycle lane adjacent to vehicular traffic separated by a striped buffer area on the pavement.

**Standard bike lanes (Class II):** A designated bicycle lane directly adjacent to vehicular traffic.

**Bicycle boulevards (Class III):** Bicyclists share a lane with vehicular traffic and are identified with bicycle signage and pavement markings to increase driver awareness of bicyclists and aid bicyclists with navigation; however, bicycle boulevards include traffic-calming treatments and are solely implemented on low-speed (i.e., less than 25 mile per hour) and low-volume (i.e., less than 3,000 vehicles per day) streets to ensure they are low-stress facilities.

**Bicycle routes (Class III):** Bicyclists share the lane with vehicular traffic and are identified with bicycle signage and pavement markings to increase driver awareness of bicyclists and aid bicyclists with navigation. The City is phasing out this type of route within the bicycle network and upgrading to other facility types.

**Building.** A structure with substantial walls and roof designed for the shelter, enclosure, or protection of persons, animals, chattels, or property of any kind. (see “Structure”)

**Building Code.** Standards adopted by the State governing the construction, alteration, demolition, occupancy, or other use of buildings used for human habitation. The State regulations are substantially the same as those contained in the most recent editions of the Uniform Building Code, Uniform Housing Code, Uniform Plumbing Code, Uniform Mechanical Code, and the National Electric Code. Local governments may have stricter standards under certain circumstances.

**California Environmental Quality Act.** Legislation and corresponding procedural components established in 1970 by the State of California to require environmental review for projects anticipated to result in adverse impacts to the environment. (see “Environmental Impact Report”)

**Capital Improvement Program.** A program that schedules permanent improvements, usually for a minimum of five years in the future, that fits the projected fiscal capability of the local jurisdiction. The program generally is reviewed on an annual basis for conformance to and consistency with the General Plan.

**Carbon Neutral.** Reducing greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions to zero, either by entirely eliminating all GHG emissions or by balancing out all remaining GHG emissions through carbon removal practices so that the “net” emissions are zero.

**City.** City with a capital “C” generally refers to the City of San Mateo government or administration. City with a lower case “c” may mean any city or may refer to the geographical area.

**City Limits.** The legal boundaries of the geographical area subject to the jurisdiction of the City of San Mateo’s government. For example, development applications for properties located within the City Limits must be reviewed by the City.

**Clean Air Refuge.** A building with efficient air filtration and improved air quality that is opened to community members during poor air quality days.

**Climate Change.** Long-term shifts in temperatures and weather patterns that have come to define the Earth’s local, regional and global climates. In the context of this plan, this term refers to changes brought on by human activities, also known as anthropogenic climate change.

**Compatible.** Capable of existing together without conflict or ill effects.

**Complete Street.** A transportation facility that is planned, designed, constructed, operated, and maintained to provide comfortable and convenient mobility, and improve accessibility and connectivity to essential community destinations for all users and abilities, regardless of whether they are travelling as pedestrians, bicyclists, wheelchair users, public transportation riders, or drivers. Complete streets are especially attuned to the needs of people walking, using assistive mobility devices, rolling, biking, and riding transit.

**Complete Streets Act.** A law that requires all road construction and improvement projects to evaluate how the right-of-way serves all who use it, including pedestrians, bicyclists, and transit users.

**Conservation.** The management and use of natural resources in a sustainable manner. Conservation results in land and water areas that are protected and managed for durability to sustain functional ecosystems, both intact and restored, and the diversity of life they support.

**Conserve.** To manage natural resources sustainably.

**Critical Facility.** A facility whose continued functioning is necessary to maintain public health and safety following a disaster, and where damage or failure could pose hazards to life and property well beyond their immediate vicinity.

**Cultural Resource.** A historic, archaeological, tribal, or paleontological resource or human remains. Cultural resources include tribal cultural resources, as defined in California Public Resources Code Section 21074, regardless of whether a tribe is federally recognized.

**Decibel (dB).** A unit used to express the relative intensity of a sound as it is heard by the human ear. The lowest volume a normal ear can detect under laboratory conditions is 0 decibel, the threshold of human hearing. Since the decibel scale is logarithmic, 10 decibels are 10 times more intense and 20 decibels are 100 times more intense than 1 decibel.

**Decibel, A-weighted (dBA).** The “A-weighted” scale for measuring sound in decibels, which weighs or reduces the effects of low and high frequencies to simulate human hearing. Every increase of 10 dBA doubles the perceived loudness, even though the noise is actually 10 times more intense.

**Dedication.** Giving private land for public use, and the acceptance of land for such use by the governmental agency having jurisdiction over the public function for which it will be used. Dedications for roads, parks, school sites, or other public uses are often required by a city or county as conditions for approval of a development. (see “In-Lieu Fee”)

**Density.** The number of permanent residential dwelling units per acre of land (du/acre). Densities specified in this General Plan are expressed in dwelling units per net acreage, excluding land area that may be devoted to public right-of-way, including roadways..

**Development Review.** The comprehensive evaluation of a development and its impact on neighboring properties, the environment, and the community as a whole, from the standpoint of site and landscape design, architecture, materials, lighting, and signs, in accordance with a set of adopted criteria and standards.



**Development.** The physical expansion and/or construction of non-farm land uses. Development activities include subdivision of land; construction of a single-family dwelling on an existing lot; construction or alteration of structures, roads, utilities, and other facilities; grading; deposit of refuse, debris, or fill materials; and clearing of natural vegetative cover (with the exception of agricultural activities). Routine repair and maintenance activities are not considered development.

**Development Fees.** Direct charges or dedications collected on a one-time basis for a service provided or as a condition of approval being granted by the local government. The purpose of the fee or exaction must directly relate to the need created by the development. In addition, its amount must be proportional to the cost of the service or improvement. Fees can be broken down into two major classes: (1) service charges, such as permit fees covering the cost of processing development plans, connection, or standby fees for installing utilities, or application fees for reviewing and considering development proposals; and (2) “impact” fees levied on new development to cover the cost of infrastructure or facilities necessitated by development. (See “Impact Fee”)

**Disability, persons with.** A physical impairment or mental disorder, which is expected to be of a long, continued, or indefinite duration and is of such a nature that the person’s ability to live independently could be hindered unless improved by more suitable housing conditions.

**Duplex.** A free-standing house divided into two separate living units or residences, usually having separate entrances; or two single-family detached dwelling units on a single lot.

**Dwelling Unit.** The place of customary abode of a person or household, which is either considered to be real property under State law or cannot be easily moved.

**Ecosystem.** An interacting system formed by a biotic community and its physical environment.

**Electric Vehicle.** A zero-emission vehicle that uses electricity stored in a battery to power one or more electric motors and can be plugged in at home, work, fleet, or public charging stations.

**Environmental Impact Report.** A study required pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act that assesses all the environmental characteristics of an area, determines what effects or impacts will result if the area is altered or disturbed by a proposed action, and identifies alternatives or other measures to avoid or reduce those impacts. (see “California Environmental Quality Act”)

**Equity.** The state in which each individual or group is allocated or has access to the resources needed to reach an equal or fair outcome.

**Equity Priority Community.** A low-income area that is disproportionately affected by environmental pollution and other hazards that can lead to negative health effects, exposure, or environmental degradation. This is the term the City of San Mateo uses in place of “disadvantaged communities,” as named in Senate Bill (SB) 1000. SB 1000 defines disadvantaged communities per Health and Safety Code Section 39711, specifying CalEnviroScreen as the primary screening method for identifying these communities.

**Erosion.** The process by which soil and rock are detached and moved by running water, wind, ice, and gravity.

**Evacuation Route.** A roadway designated in the General Plan as a potential recommended route to travel when evacuating from a hazardous condition.

**Evacuation-Constrained Parcels.** Parcels located on a single-access road that do not have at least two ingress/egress routes.

**Exposure.** The presence of people, infrastructure, natural systems, and economic, cultural, and social resources in areas that are subject to harm.

**Farmers' Market.** A mobile or non-mobile market: (1) operated by a local government agency, one or more certified producers, or a nonprofit organization; (2) certified by and operating in a location approved by the County Agricultural Commissioner; and (3) where farmers sell directly to consumers agricultural products or processed products made from agricultural products that the farmers grow themselves.

**Fault.** A fracture in the earth's crust that forms a boundary between rock masses that have shifted.

**Fire Hazard Severity Zone.** An area of significant fire hazard based on fuels, terrain, weather, and other relevant hazards.

**Flood, 100-Year.** In any given year, a flood that has a 1 percent likelihood (a 1 in 100 chance) of occurring, and is recognized as a standard for acceptable risk.

**Flood, 500-Year.** In any given year, a flood that has a 0.2 percent likelihood (a 1 in 500 chance) of occurring.

**Floodplain.** The relatively level land area on either side of the banks of a stream regularly subject to flooding.

**Floor Area Ratio.** The size of a building in square feet (gross floor area) divided by gross land area, expressed as a decimal number. For example, a 60,000-square-foot building on a 120,000-square-foot parcel would have a floor area ratio of 0.50. The FAR is used in calculating the building intensity of development.

**Garden, Community.** A shared, semi-public space where people in the surrounding neighborhood share the work and harvest of maintaining a plot of fruits, vegetables, or other plants. Community gardens provide residents with an opportunity to grow fresh produce, flowers, or other plants on land that they do not own. Community gardens can also serve an educational function, especially when operated by community organizations or educational institutions.

**Gateway.** A unique transition point in topography, architecture, or land use that serves as an entrance to the city or specific neighborhoods within the city.

**General Plan.** A collection of City policies regarding its long-term development, in the form of maps and accompanying text. The General Plan is a legal document required of each local agency by the State of California Government Code Section 65301 and adopted by the City Council.

**Geographic Information Systems.** A combination of approaches, programs, methodologies, and technologies to map, gather, store, manipulate, analyze, present, and interpret spatial information and data.

**Goal.** A description of the general desired result sought by the City. Each goal has one or more policies and/or actions associated with the goal. (see "Policy" and "Action")

**Greenhouse Gas.** A gas that allows sunlight to pass through but reflect heat radiated from the earth's surface, trapping heat in the lower atmosphere. Common greenhouse gases (GHGs) include water vapor, carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>), methane (CH<sub>4</sub>), and nitrous oxide (N<sub>2</sub>O). They may be emitted by natural or human processes.

**Groundwater.** Water that exists beneath the earth’s surface, typically found between saturated soils and rock, and is used to supply wells and springs.

**Habitat.** The physical location or type of environment in which an organism or biological population lives or occurs.

**Hazard.** An event or physical condition that has the potential to cause fatalities, injuries, property damage, infrastructure damage, agricultural losses, damage to the environment, interruption of business, or other types of harm or loss.

**Hazard Mitigation.** Sustained action taken to reduce or eliminate the long-term risk to human life and property through actions that reduce hazard, exposure, and vulnerability.

**Hazardous Material, Hazardous Waste.** A substance or waste that, because of its physical, chemical, or other characteristics, may pose a risk of endangering human health or safety or of degrading the environment. This does not include household hazardous waste, universal waste, or electronic waste, as they do not contain the quantity, concentration, and/or types of products significant enough to pose a substantial risk to human health and safety or to the environment.

**Historic Resource.** A historic resource is a building, structure, site, or district that has one or more of the following characteristics:

- Listed in or determined to be on or individually eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places and/or California Register of Historical Resources.
- Identified as a Downtown Historic District or Glazenwood Historic District contributor building as designated in the 1989 Historic Building Survey Report.
- Determined to be eligible through documentation contained in a historic resources report.

**Horizon Year.** The year through which the General Plan is intended to be effective, or 2040.

**Household.** All persons occupying one dwelling unit.

**Human Scale.** Buildings, structures, streetscape, and other urban design elements that are of a size and proportion that relates to the size of a human to create a comfortable and inviting experience.

**Impact, Climate.** The effects (especially the negative effects) of a hazard or other condition associated with climate change.

**Impact Fee.** A fee imposed on a proposed development project by a jurisdiction to address impacts to city services or infrastructure, based on the number of units, square footage, or acreage. The fee is often used to offset costs of schools, roads, police and fire services, housing, and parks. (See “Development Fee”)

**Implementation.** Actions, procedures, programs, or techniques that carry out a plan.

**Infill Development.** Development that occurs on vacant or underutilized land within areas that are already largely developed.

**In-Lieu Fee.** A fee that may be required of an owner or developer as a substitute for a dedication of land or an asset for public use, such as public art, replacement of trees, or parking spaces, usually calculated in dollars per lot, and referred to as in-lieu fees or in-lieu contributions. (see “Dedication”)

**King Tides.** Abnormally high, predictable astronomical tides that occur about twice per year, with the highest tides occurring when the Earth, Moon, and Sun are aligned.

**Land Use.** The occupation or use of an area of land for any human activity or purpose.

**Land Use Designation.** One particular land use category, from a range of land use classifications, assigned to a parcel as established by the General Plan Land Use Element.

**Landslide.** Movement of soil and/or rock down a slope, which typically occurs during an earthquake or following heavy rainfall.

**Liquefaction.** The transformation of loose, wet soil from a solid to a liquid state, often as a result of ground shaking during an earthquake.

**Local Agency Formation Commission.** A five- or seven-member commission within each county that reviews and evaluates all proposals for formation of special districts, incorporation of cities, annexation to special districts or cities, consolidation of districts, and merger of districts with cities. Each county's LAFCO is empowered to approve, disapprove, or conditionally approve such proposals.

**Maximum Development.** Development of land to its full potential, or theoretical capacity, as permitted under current or proposed planning or zoning designations.

**Micro Agriculture.** The practice of growing and processing fresh food in an urban area.

**Micromobility.** Transportation via small, lightweight vehicles, typically electric assisted, operated by the driver, such as electric scooters and bicycles. Vehicles typically do not exceed 15 miles per hour and are often available for rent for short-range travel within a defined area.

**Mitigation.** A protective measure or modification of a project to avoid, reduce, minimize, or eliminate a negative impact. There are various types of mitigation, including environmental impact mitigation, hazard mitigation, greenhouse gas emissions mitigation, and more.

**Mixed-Use.** Any mix of land uses, including mixing residences with commercial, offices with retail, or visitor accommodation with offices and retail. As distinguished from a single-use land use designation or zone, mixed use refers to an authorized variety of uses for buildings and structures in a particular area. When the mix of uses is within one building, its called vertical mixed-use. A type of mixed-use development where uses are behind or next to each other but in different buildings on the same development site is called horizontal mixed use.

**Multimodal Level of Service.** A scale that measures the performance of vehicle, bicycle, pedestrian, and transit facilities.

**Municipality.** An incorporated city or town.

**Neighborhood.** Relatively large residential areas that have some common characteristics, such as a common history, neighborhood association, or common physical characteristics (e.g., architectural style), a common meeting place, intangible characteristics (e.g., a psychological sense of cohesion), or clear physical boundaries (e.g., waterways or major roads).

**Noise Contour.** A line connecting points of equal noise level as measured on the same scale.



**Noise-Sensitive Use.** A location where people reside or where the presence of unwanted sound could adversely affect the use of land, such as residences, schools, and hospitals.

**Non-Conforming Use.** A use that was legally allowed when brought into existence, but no longer permitted by current regulation. “Non-conforming use” is a generic term and includes: (1) non-conforming structures (because their size, type of construction, location on land, or proximity to other structures is no longer permitted); (2) non-conforming use of a conforming building; (3) non-conforming use of a non-conforming building; and (4) non-conforming use of land. Any use lawfully existing on any piece of property that is inconsistent with a new or amended General Plan, and that in turn is a violation of a Zoning Ordinance amendment subsequently adopted in conformance with the General Plan, will be a non-conforming use. Typically, non-conforming uses are considered “grandfathered in” and permitted to continue, subject to certain restrictions on discontinuance or rehabilitation.

**Nonessential Idling.** Unnecessary operation of a gas-powered vehicle while it is stationary when none of the following circumstances are met: the vehicle is stuck in traffic; idling is necessary to inspect or service the vehicle; the vehicle is transferring power via a power-takeoff device; the vehicle can’t move due to adverse weather conditions or mechanical failure; the vehicle is a bus with passengers on board. See California Code of Regulations, Title 13, Section 2485, for a full definition.

**Overlay.** A land use or zoning designation that modifies the basic underlying designation or designations in some specific manner.

**Parcel.** An area of land that is a legally created lot.

**Park.** Tract of land set aside for public use, aesthetic enjoyment, recreation, or the conservation of natural resources.

**Regional Park:** Regional Parks are of a relatively expansive size and their unique natural and cultural attractions draw visitors from the entire region. These parks usually have many uses and require a higher level of management when compared to smaller parks such as city parks, neighborhood parks, recreation centers, and pocket parks, which have fewer activities and primarily serve local residents.

**Community Park:** Community parks serve the needs of a range of people, from several neighborhoods to the entire city. They typically contain a wide variety of facilities for active and passive recreation, and organized sports. They also provide amenities typical of neighborhood parks for use by the surrounding residents. Parks containing fewer elements but that contain facilities that serve the entire city may be considered to be community parks.

**Neighborhood Park:** Neighborhood Parks provide for the daily recreation needs of nearby residents, with primarily passive and informal recreation facilities. Neighborhood parks often include play areas, picnic areas, open turf areas or green space, basketball courts, and tennis courts. The neighborhood parks also may contain play fields.

**Mini Parks:** Mini parks are small parks, generally less than one acre in size, that accommodate the daily recreation needs of nearby residents. They typically include children’s play areas, sitting areas, and limited green space, but are not large enough to contain play fields.

**Policy.** A specific statement that guides decision making as the City works to achieve a goal. Policies represent statements of City regulation and set the standards used by decision makers when considering proposed development and actions. A policy is ongoing and requires no further action (see “Goal”).

**Reach Code.** A local municipal code that exceeds the State Building Code requirements. A reach code must be at least as stringent as the State Code, cost-effective, approved by the California Energy Commission, and updated and re-approved with each State Energy Code update.

**Reconstruction.** Redevelopment of a building or structure, after being damaged or destroyed in a disaster, to its original state.

**Resilience.** The capacity of any entity—an individual, community, organization, or natural system—to prepare for disruptions, recover from shocks and stresses, and adapt and grow from a disruptive experience. Community resilience is the ability of communities to withstand, recover, and learn from past disasters to strengthen future response and recovery efforts.

**Rewilding.** Returning land to its natural state to regenerate natural areas. In contrast to restoration, rewilding focuses on returning ecosystems to their former states as close as possible while allowing for plant, animal, and other ecosystem substitutions to account for changing future conditions.

**Riparian.** A habitat and vegetation zone that is associated with the banks and floodplains of a river, stream, or lake. Riparian trees and shrubs are typically phreatophytes, plants whose root systems are in constant contact with groundwater.

**Risk.** The potential for damage or loss created by the interaction of hazards with assets such as buildings, infrastructure, or natural and cultural resources.

**Roadway Classifications.** Roadway classifications define the function of various street types in the transportation network. The City of San Mateo classifies its roadways using the Caltrans Functional Classification System.

**Local Streets and Alleyways:** Local streets and alleyways make up the majority of the roadway system and typically have lower speeds and vehicular traffic volumes.

**Collectors:** Collectors link neighborhoods together and allow travelers to reach places outside of their neighborhoods. They have higher speeds than local streets and can handle more traffic volume. Collectors are important segments of San Mateo’s existing and proposed bikeway network.

**Arterials:** Arterial streets connect the regional roadway network with collectors. Most intersections along arterials are signalized, often with a coordinated and interconnected signal system. Compared to collectors, arterials have higher capacity to accommodate traffic volumes, and they provide for longer, continuous movement throughout the city.

**Freeways:** Freeways are high-speed roadways without intersections that allow residents to reach destinations outside of the city, either by car or transit. US Highway 101 and State Route 92 run through the city, while Interstate 280 is just west of the City Limits.

**Safe Routes to School.** Pedestrian and bicycling routes that provide children with safe access to and from schools.

**Scenic Roadways; Scenic Trails.** Land that is visible from, adjacent to, and outside a roadway right-of-way, and is made up primarily of scenic and natural features. Topography, vegetation, viewing distance, and/or jurisdictional lines determine the scenic corridor boundaries.

**Sea Level Rise.** The worldwide average rise in mean sea level, which may be due to a number of different causes, such as the thermal expansion of sea water and the addition of water to the oceans from the melting of glaciers, ice caps, and ice sheets, including as a result of climate change.

**Seniors.** People 65 years of age or older.

**Sensitive Habitat.** Land containing unique, representative, threatened, and/or endangered plant and animal communities, or ecosystems.

**Sensitive Receptor.** A use that is highly sensitive to impacts from other uses, including homes, schools, playgrounds, sports fields, childcare centers, senior centers, hospitals, and long-term healthcare facilities.

**Sensitivity.** The level to which a species, natural system, community, or government would be affected by changing climate conditions.

**Severe Ground Shaking.** Intense ground movement resulting from the transmission of seismic waves during an earthquake.

**Specific Plan.** Under Article 8 of the Government Code (Section 65450 et seq.), a legal tool for detailed design and implementation of a defined portion of the area covered by a General Plan. A Specific Plan may include all or a part of detailed regulations, conditions, programs, and/or proposed legislation that may be necessary or convenient for the systematic implementation of any General Plan element(s).

**Sphere of Influence.** The probable physical boundaries and service area of a municipality or special district, as determined by the Local Agency Formation Commission of the county.

**Stormwater.** Water that comes from a rain event.

**Structure.** Anything constructed or erected on and permanently attached to the ground, except fences six feet or less in height (see “Building”).

**Sustainability.** Meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs in three key realms, or pillars: economic viability, environmental protection, and social equity.

**Toxic Air Contaminant.** An air pollutant that may cause or contribute to an increase in serious illness, or that may pose a present or potential hazard to human health, according to California Health and Safety Code Section 39655.

**Traffic Calming.** Measures designed to reduce motor vehicle speeds and to encourage pedestrian and bicycle use, including narrow streets with fewer lanes, tight turning radii, sidewalk bulbouts, parking bays, textured paving at intersections, and parkways between sidewalks and streets.

**Transit-Oriented Development.** The clustering of homes and jobs at higher densities within a half mile of a rail station or bus service with 15 minute headways or less.

**Triplex.** A free-standing house divided into three separate living units or residences, usually having separate entrances, or three single-family detached dwelling units on a single lot.

**Unincorporated Area.** Land that is outside of an incorporated city and falls under a County’s jurisdiction. Development proposals in unincorporated areas need County review and approval.

**Use.** The purpose for which a lot or structure is or may be leased, occupied, maintained, arranged, designed, intended, constructed, erected, moved, altered, and/or enlarged in accordance with the City Zoning Code and the General Plan land use designations.

**Wastewater.** Water that contains other elements, such as sewage, small pathogens, organic matter, and inorganic contaminants. This term is also used to refer to water generated in industrial plants and commercial activity.

**Wetland.** An area that is seasonally or permanently inundated or saturated by surface water or ground-water at a frequency and duration sufficient to support a distinct ecosystem with a prevalence of vegetation typically adapted for life in saturated soil conditions, commonly known as hydrophytic vegetation. Wetlands may be coastal or inland.

**Wildland-Urban Interface.** An area that includes both houses and wildland vegetation, creating a significant threat to human life or property from wildfires.

**Zoning.** Zoning implements the land use policies of the General Plan. The adopted codes of a City by ordinance or other legislative regulation that identifies districts or zones citywide. These zones specify allowable uses for real property, as well as standards for buildings constructed in these areas.







[StriveSanMateo.org](https://www.StriveSanMateo.org)





## MEMORANDUM

**TO** San Mateo City Council

**FROM** Joanna Jansen and Carey Stone, PlaceWorks

**SUBJECT** Summary of Community Engagement on the Draft General Plan

This memorandum provides a summary of the community outreach and engagement effort that supported the publication of the Draft General Plan between July and early October 2023. The overarching goal of this outreach and engagement effort was to comprehensively promote awareness of the Draft General Plan, engage with all segments of the San Mateo community and provide many channels and opportunities for the community to provide input and feedback on the draft goals and policies. This Summary Memorandum includes a list of all outreach events that occurred; Public input channels used to collect feedback and comments; Methods used to publicize and broadcast information; Outreach focused on the City's Equity Priority Communities; and statistics on the demographics that were engaged with during this outreach phase.

## Community Outreach Events

Table 1 includes a list of all outreach events that occurred during this phase of the General Plan Update effort, between July 17, 2023 and October 9, 2023.

**TABLE 1** COMMUNITY OUTREACH EVENTS

Date	Outreach Event	# of Participants
Friday, July 17, 2023 to Sunday, October 1, 2023	Draft General Plan Online Comment Tool	236 Comments
Friday, July 17, 2023 to Monday, October 9, 2023	Written Public Comments	52 Comments
Monday, June 12, 2023	Meeting with Neighborhood Group (25th Ave Speaks)	4
Wednesday, July 26, 2023	Sierra Club Land Use Subcommittee Staff Presentation	6
Tuesday, August 15, 2023	Video Loco (North B St) Pop-up	20
Tuesday, August 15, 2023	Canvassing and passing out flyers to local businesses in North B Street	25
Tuesday, August 15, 2023	Distribute flyers at La Huerta Market & El Ranchito Market	n/a
Tuesday, August 15, 2023	Beresford Hillsdale Neighborhood Association Meeting Staff Presentation	34
Wednesday, August 16, 2023	Virtual Workshop	30
Wednesday, August 16, 2023	Canvassing at Idaho & Poplar Neighborhoods	6
Wednesday, August 18, 2023	Flyers were left at local businesses at Kingston Street in North Shoreview	n/a
Tuesday, August 22, 2023	Canvassing at Tilton/Delaware Food Distribution	20
Friday, August 25, 2023	Canvassing at Norfolk and 3rd Ave Shopping Center	10

**TABLE 1**                      **COMMUNITY OUTREACH EVENTS**

<b>Date</b>	<b>Outreach Event</b>	<b># of Participants</b>
Saturday, August 26, 2023	Firefighter's Chili Cook-Off Pop-Up	85
Sunday, August 27, 2023	North B Street Fiesta Pop-up	115
Monday, August 28, 2023	Canvassing Rogell Street Food Distribution	35
Tuesday, August 29, 2023	Canvassing at North Shoreview Shopping Center	30
Thursday, August 31, 2023	District 5 Town Hall Meeting	125
Wednesday, September 6, 2023	Canvassing at Hacienda Market and commercial center on North Amphlett	40
Wednesday, September 6, 2023	Canvassing at La Raza Family Market	40
Wednesday, September 6, 2023	District 1 Town Hall Meeting	120
Thursday, September 7, 2023	Canvassing at King Center/Soccer Fields	60
Thursday, September 7, 2023	September Nights on B Pop-Up	100
Friday, September 8, 2023	Movies in the Park Pop-Up	50
Wednesday, September 13, 2023	District 2 Town Hall Meeting	40
Thursday, September 14, 2023	September Nights on B Pop-Up	100
Friday, September 15, 2023	Movies in the Park Pop-Up	75
Sunday, September 17, 2023	Canvassing at Iglesia Pentecostal de San Mateo, Second Baptist Church, Sturge Presbyterian Church, Shoreview United Methodist Church, St. Timothy Catholic Church	8 individuals + 300 total fliers left with church staff
Tuesday, September 19, 2023	Canvassing at Chavez Market, North Shoreview Shopping Center and along Cary Avenue	30
Tuesday, September 19, 2023	Phone call and email reminders to religious institutions and businesses	5
Wednesday, September 20, 2023	District 4 Town Hall Meeting	30
Thursday, September 21, 2023	Home Association of North Central San Mateo (HANCSM) Meeting Staff Presentation	25
Friday, September 22, 2023	Movies in the Park Pop-Up	75
Friday, September 23, 2023	Autumn Moon Festival Pop-Up (materials provided in simplified Chinese with bilingual staff)	75
Thursday, September 28, 2023	District 3 Town Hall Meeting	50
Saturday, September 30, 2023	Chamber of Commerce Downtown Festival Pop-Up	100



## Public Input Channels

This section summarizes the public input channels that were used to collect feedback on Draft General Plan 2040. The City collected feedback via:

- **Draft General Plan Online Comment Tool.** The online tool was available on [www.strivesanmateo.org](http://www.strivesanmateo.org) from July 17, 2023 through October 1, 2023 to allow community members an opportunity to share reactions and feedback on Draft General Plan 2040. Respondents could add comments directly into a PDF of the Draft General Plan and share feedback on all components of the plan.
- **Pop-up Events.** The City planned 10 pop-up events at locations throughout the city to ensure the outreach process was aimed at collecting input from the following groups per Council direction:
  - Non-English speakers
  - Renters
  - Residents 44 and under
  - Low-income and very low-income households
  - Under-represented neighborhoods: North Shoreview, Shoreview, North Central, Central, and East of 101.

At the pop-up events, City staff shared information about Draft General Plan 2040 and publicized the upcoming outreach event.

- **Virtual Workshop.** The City hosted a virtual workshop on Wednesday, August 16, 2023. At this event, participants could ask questions and provide feedback on the Draft General Plan 2040.
- **Town Hall Meetings.** The City hosted five District Town Hall Meetings around the city to gather feedback on Draft General Plan 2040, with one town hall meeting held in each Council District. The meetings occurred in August and September 2023. The meetings included an open house format where the community could engage with staff and various General Plan topics, a presentation about the Draft General Plan 2040 with focused topics for each District and a follow-up question and answer session. City Staff were available to answer questions about the Draft General Plan 2040, as well as other projects related to roadway safety, transportation improvements and stormwater protection.
- **Staff Presentations.** The City met with local neighborhood organizations and other interest groups to help spread the word about Draft General Plan 2040 and respond to questions. This included providing a presentation to the Sierra Club Land Use Subcommittee, Beresford Hillsdale Neighborhood Association, North Central Neighborhood Association, and meeting with a neighborhood group about 25<sup>th</sup> Avenue.
- **Written Comments.** Throughout the General Plan Update process, the City has encouraged people to submit written comments to [generalplan@cityofsanmateo.org](mailto:generalplan@cityofsanmateo.org). during the Draft General Plan outreach phase, from July 17, 2023 to Monday, October 9, 52 written comments were received. The written comments can be viewed at [www.StriveSanMateo.org/documents/publiccomments](http://www.StriveSanMateo.org/documents/publiccomments).

## Getting the Word Out

To ensure the community was aware of the Draft General Plan and the proposed goals and policies, and to spread the word about project updates and upcoming events, the City utilized a variety of outreach methods and tools:

- **StriveSanMateo.org Project Website.** The project website provided background information, meeting dates, workshop materials, and other ways to get involved.
- **Self-Guided Open House.** The City distributed Draft General Plan 2040 self-guided open house stations throughout the city that included boards and materials with information about the General Plan. The stations were available at City Hall and Council Chambers, Downtown Library, Hillsdale Branch Library, Marina Branch Library, and King Community Center.
- **Social Media.** City staff made regular posts on Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, and Nextdoor.com to update the public about the project, including a different Big Idea featured each week. A total of 53 posts were made to spread the word about the Draft General Plan.
- **Citywide Newsletter.** The City published a newsletter that announced the publication of the Draft General Plan which was mailed to every residence in San Mateo. The newsletter had information about the outreach events, a QR code to the project website, a description of the ten big ideas, in addition to other information.
- **Town Hall Postcard.** A postcard was mailed to every residence in San Mateo advertising information about the five Town Hall meetings, including the time and location of each event.
- **Sidewalk Decals.** The City placed over 190 sidewalk decals around the city that included the Strive San Mateo logo and a QR code to the project website.
- **Earned Media.** Publication of the Draft General Plan was prominently featured in a July 18, 2023 article in the *San Mateo Daily Journal*, as well as in multiple other articles and editorials in the *Daily Journal* between July and October.
- **Eblasts.** PlaceWorks sent out eight emails to 897 people subscribed to the project mailing list prior to every Town Hall Meeting and workshop. Information about the Draft General Plan and outreach opportunities were also regularly featured in the City's eNewsletter, which has approximately 13,000 subscribers.
- **Print Advertisement.** Information about the Draft General Plan was featured on the inside cover of the City's Fall Recreation Activity Guide.
- **Canvassing and Flyer Distribution.** Bilingual staff (English and Spanish) from the Peninsula Conflict Resolution Center (PCRC) and Good City Company distributed flyers to raise awareness of the Draft General Plan and upcoming outreach opportunities by visiting businesses, markets, religious institutions, and by walking or standing in key areas of the city.
- **Draft General Plan 2040 User Guide.** The City prepared a user guide for the Draft General Plan that explains what the General Plan is, identifies ten big ideas from the General Plan, and highlights where community members can find the issues they care about in the General Plan.
- **Ten Big Ideas in San Mateo's Draft General Plan 2040.** The City developed a list of ten big ideas that will guide the next 20 years of San Mateo for community members to use as a resource.

## Outreach to Equity Priority Communities

North Central and North Shoreview/Shoreview are both identified as Equity Priority Communities and are located within Council Districts 2 and 4. Leading up to the District 2 and District 4 Town Hall meetings, PCRC and Good City conducted outreach to increase awareness of the Draft General Plan 2040 among residents of equity priority communities and also increase attendance at the District 2 and District 4 Town Hall meetings. This effort was guided by the following principles:

- Meet community members where they already are. Proactively go to places where the target audience already is rather than creating new events.
- Focus on Non-English speakers. Multilingual with a focus on Spanish speakers and lower-income households.
- Use clear and concise language, avoid jargon and technical terms.
- The information provided should be relevant to the community.

Outreach locations were chosen because of their potential for high pedestrian traffic (parks, supermarkets, major thoroughfares, commercial centers), including community wide events such as the North B Street Fiesta, food distribution events, as well as nonprofit and religious institutions such as the San Mateo Adult School and St. Timothy's Catholic Church. All activities were conducted by Spanish speaking volunteers from PCRC and Good City. Outreach was completed in many areas of District 2 and District 4 and were effective at reaching residents in the targeted audience that spoke Spanish.

The following is a summary of the outreach effort that focused on reaching community members from North Central and North Shoreview/Shoreview:

- Staff/volunteers from PCRC and Good City conducted outreach on 12 separate dates in the afternoons, evenings, weekdays and weekends leading up to Town Hall meetings.
- Approximately 1,400 total flyers were distributed.
- Visited five religious institutions and the Adult School of San Mateo and dropped off flyers.
- Distributed flyers at approximately 35 businesses located at 6 different commercial shopping centers/strips (El Video Loco and North B Street, Chavez Market, La Hacienda Market, Primas Market, La Raza Family Market, Mercado El Nayarita).
- Attended and passed out information to attendees at 1 community wide event (North B Fiesta) and two food distribution events.
- Canvassed at Martin Luther King Park twice (afternoon and evening).
- 1 pop-up event and tabling event on North B Street.

## Outreach Demographics

This section summarizes the demographic characteristics of the outreach participants that provided voluntary demographic data. This includes participants from the outreach events listed in Table 1 and demographic data from participants at past outreach events that answered the same question. The summary below includes demographic data from January 2022 to October 2023. The demographic data below helps the project team determine if the outreach program is reaching the full range of San Mateo's demographics. This data indicates that the outreach program should continue to be refined to increase involvement of renters, younger residents, and residents who identify as Asian, Hispanic, and Black/African American. A summary of the demographics of the outreach participants is presented below. Please note, the demographics summary below is not inclusive of all participants, since participants were not asked to provide voluntary demographic data during the pop-ups or canvassing events.

### Is this your first time joining us for a General Plan event?

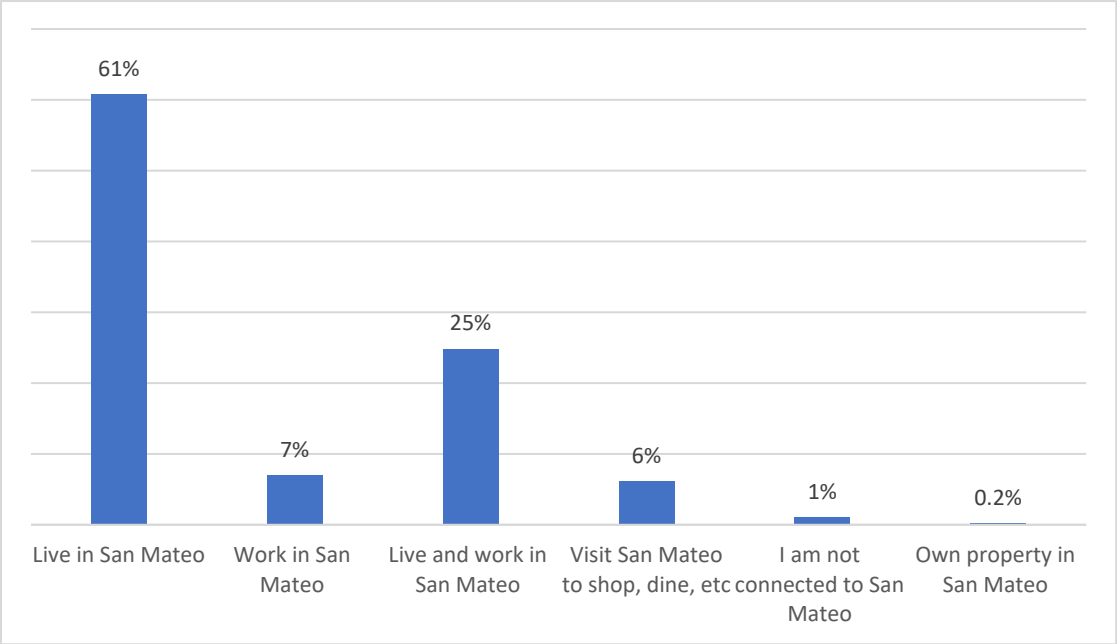
*Number of Respondents: 405*

- 44 percent of the workshop participants were new.

- 56 percent had participated in a pervious General Plan meeting.

**How are you affiliated with San Mateo?**

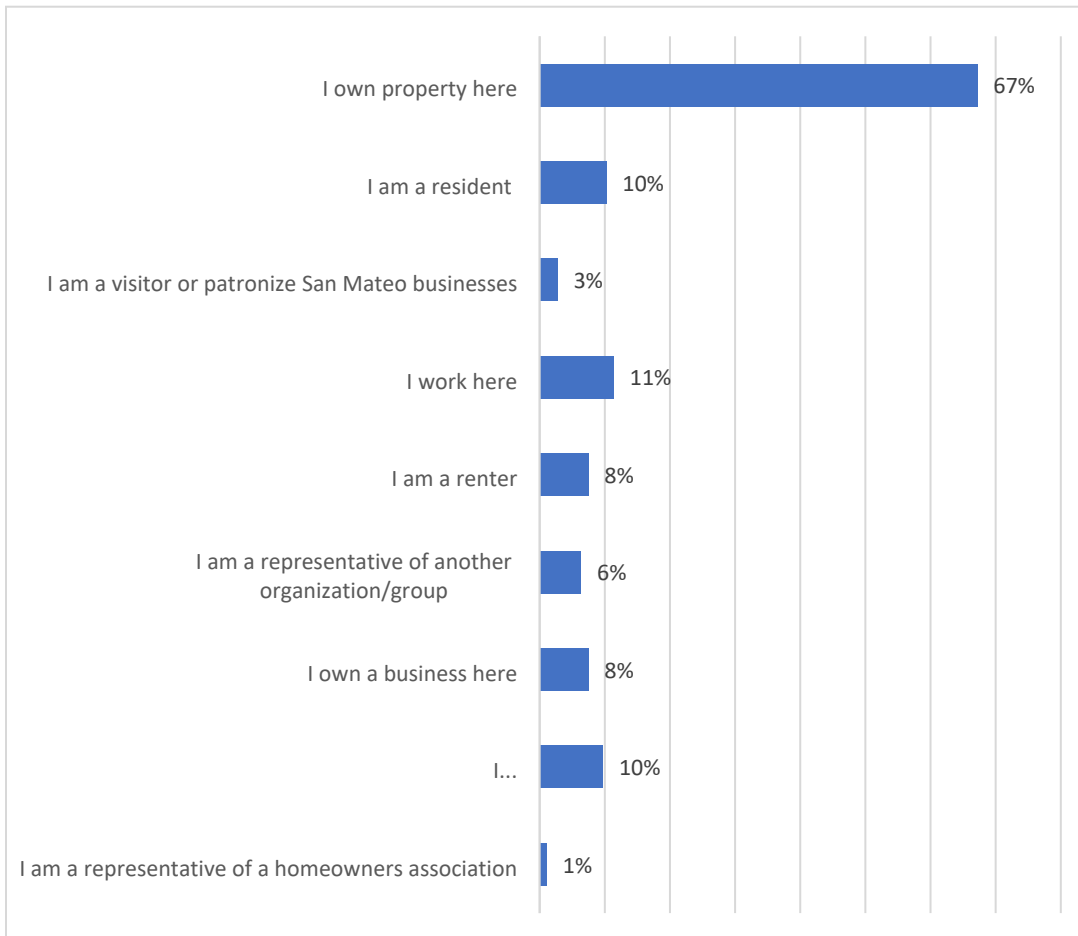
*Number of Respondents: 459*





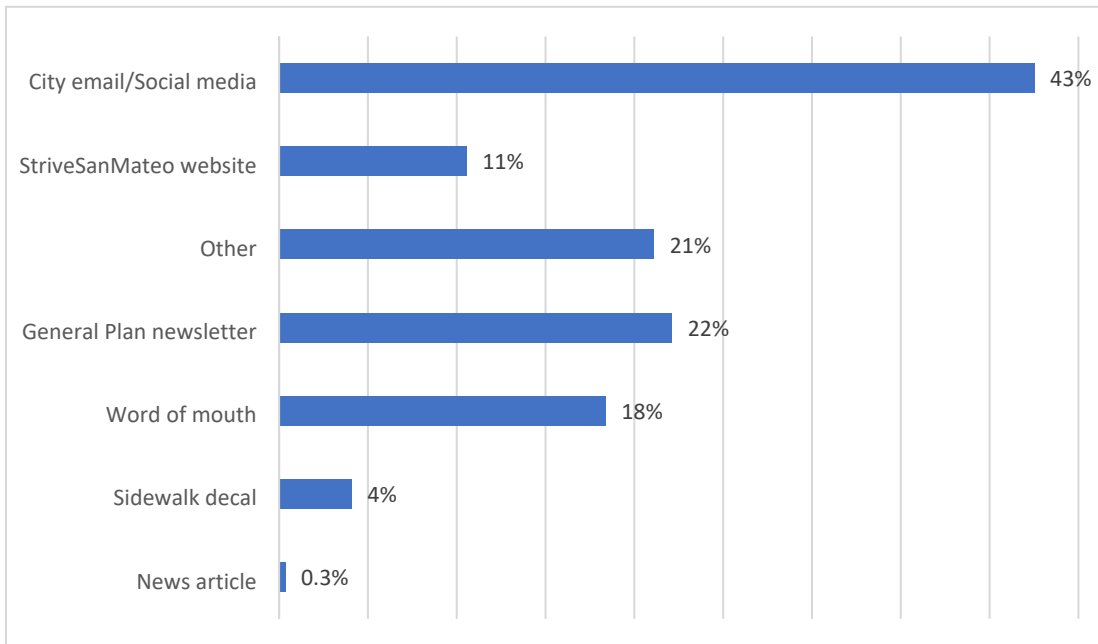
## What kind of stakeholder are you?

Number of Respondents: 360



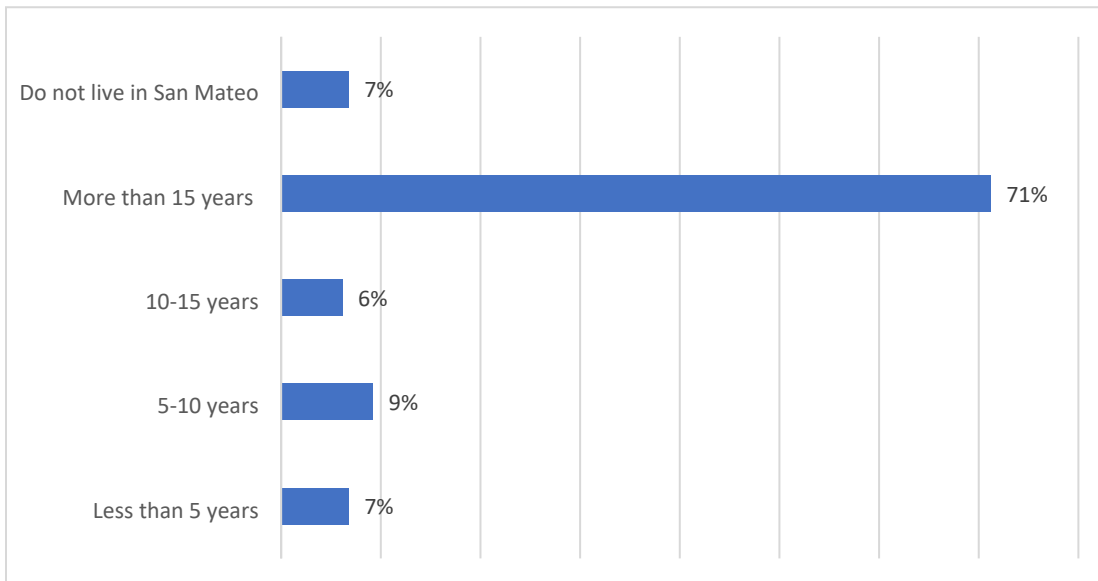
## How did you hear about the event?

Number of Respondents: 294



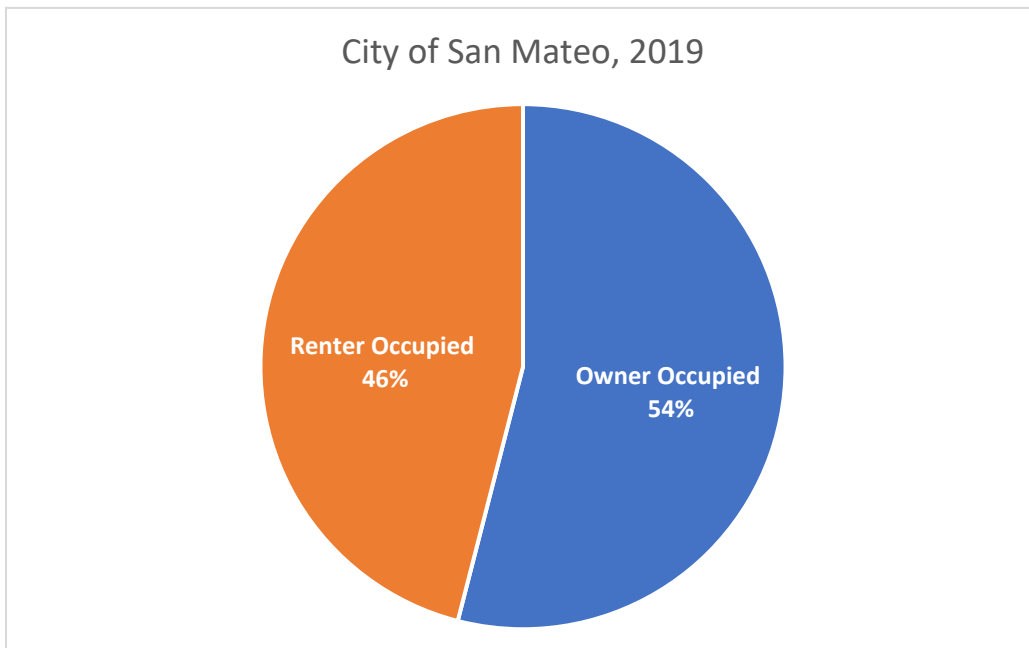
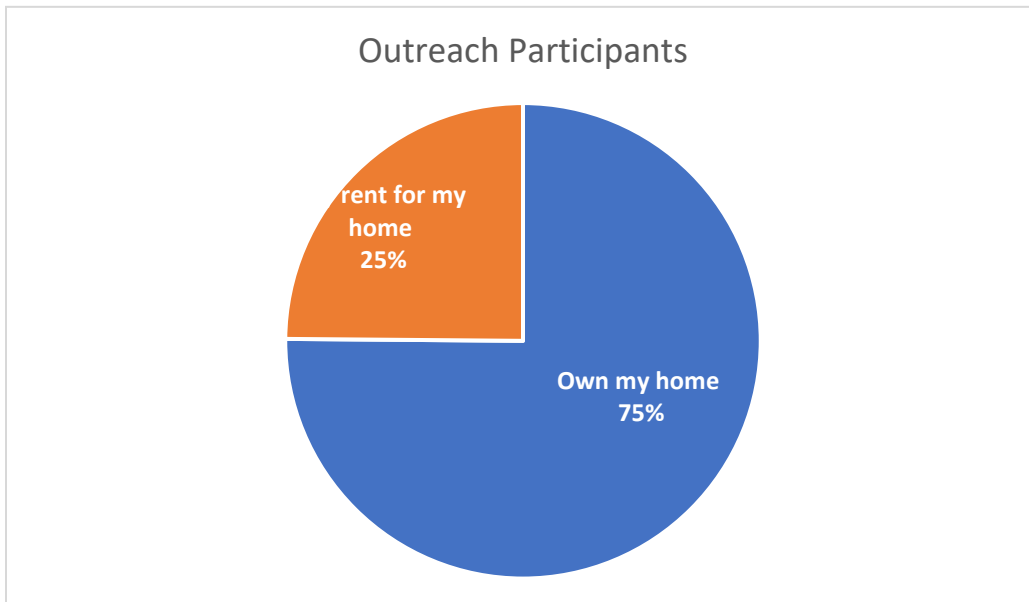
## How long have you lived in San Mateo?

Number of Respondents: 186



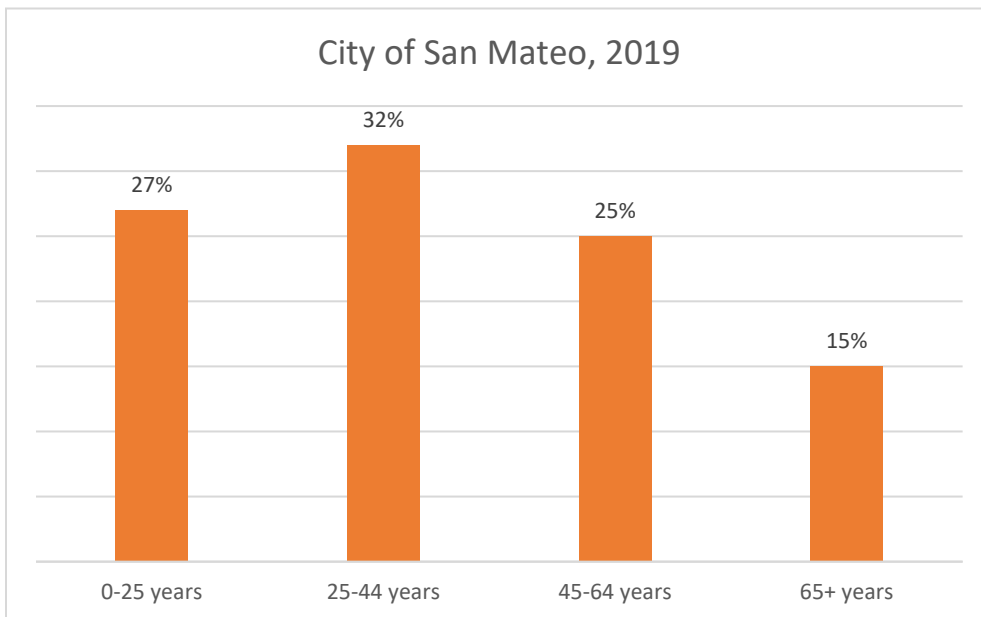
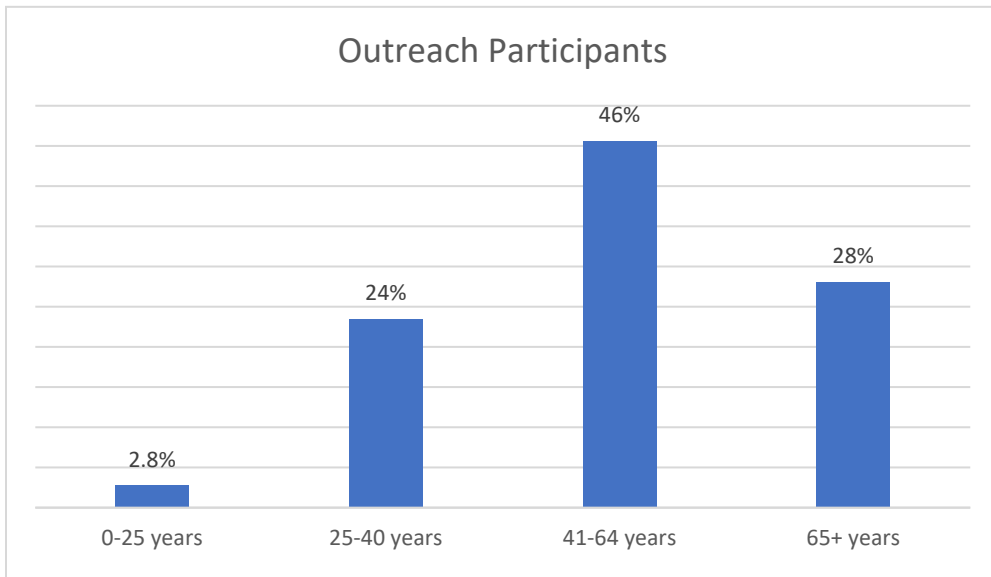
## Which best describes your current housing situation?

Number of Respondents: 386



## What is your age group?

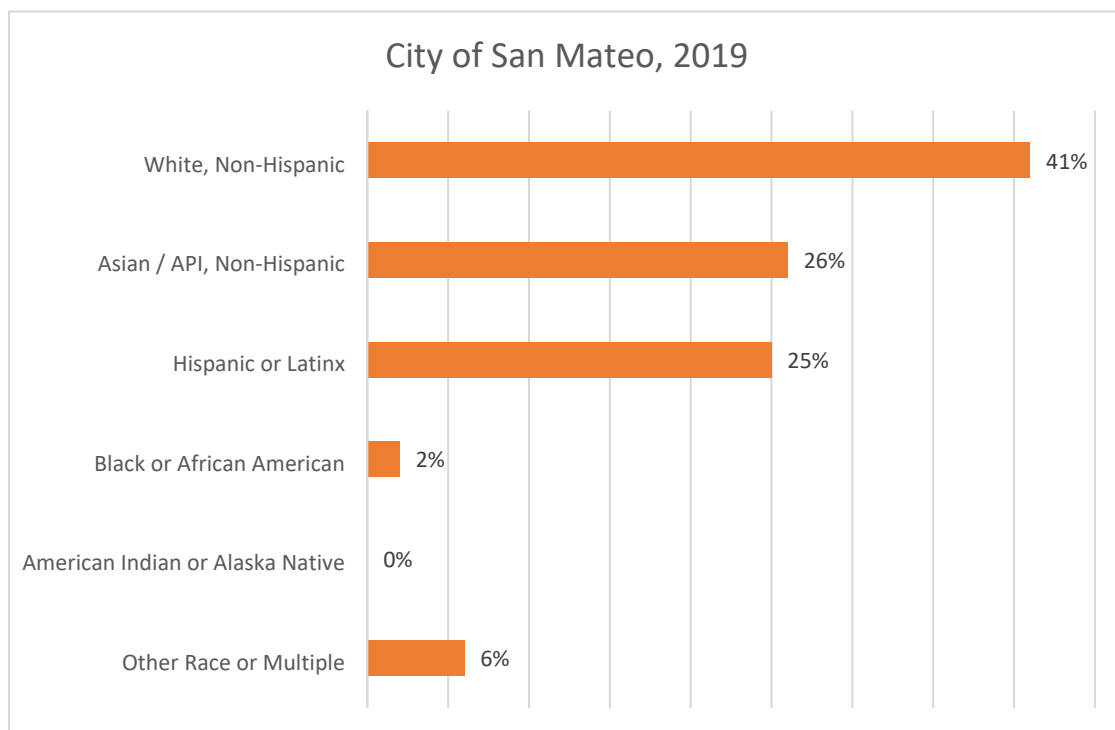
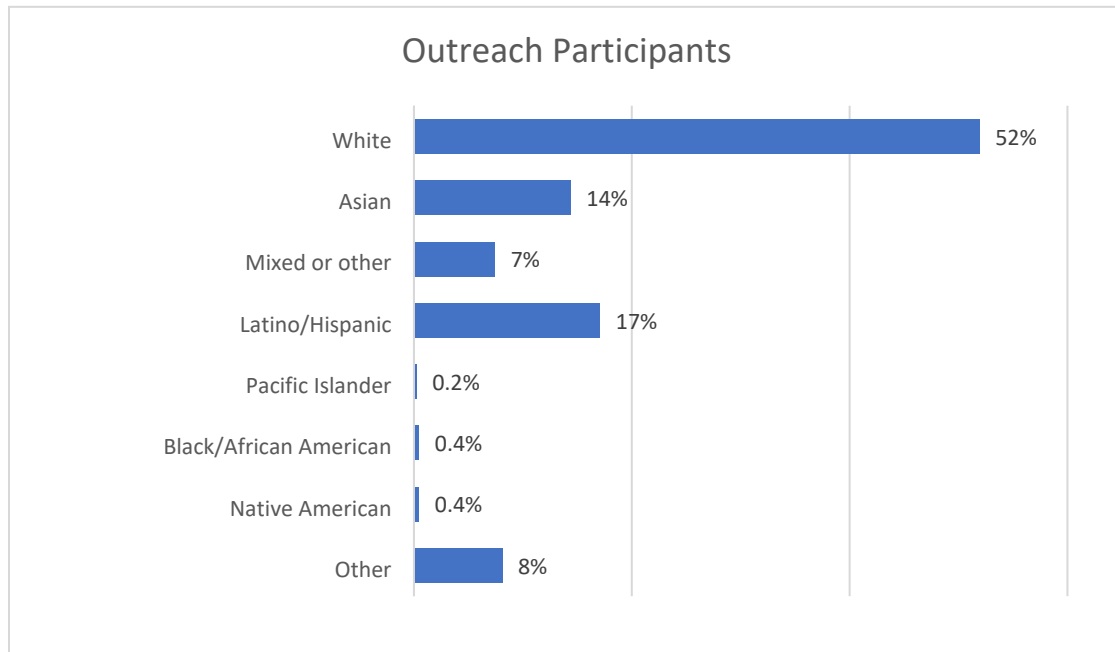
Number of Respondents: 434





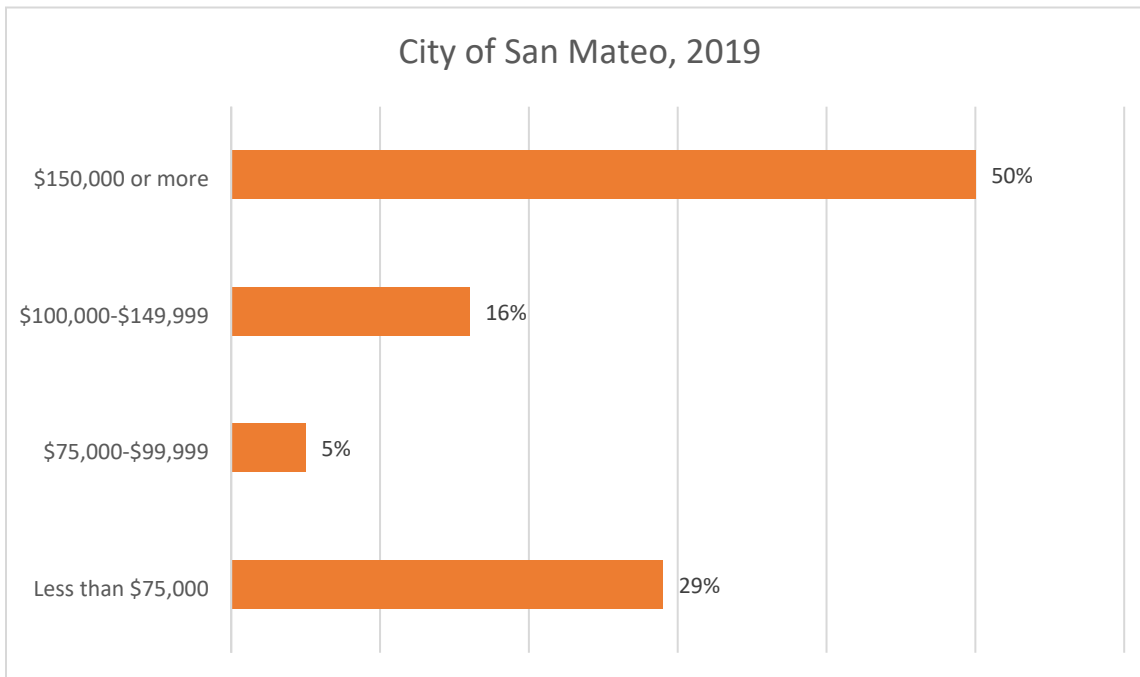
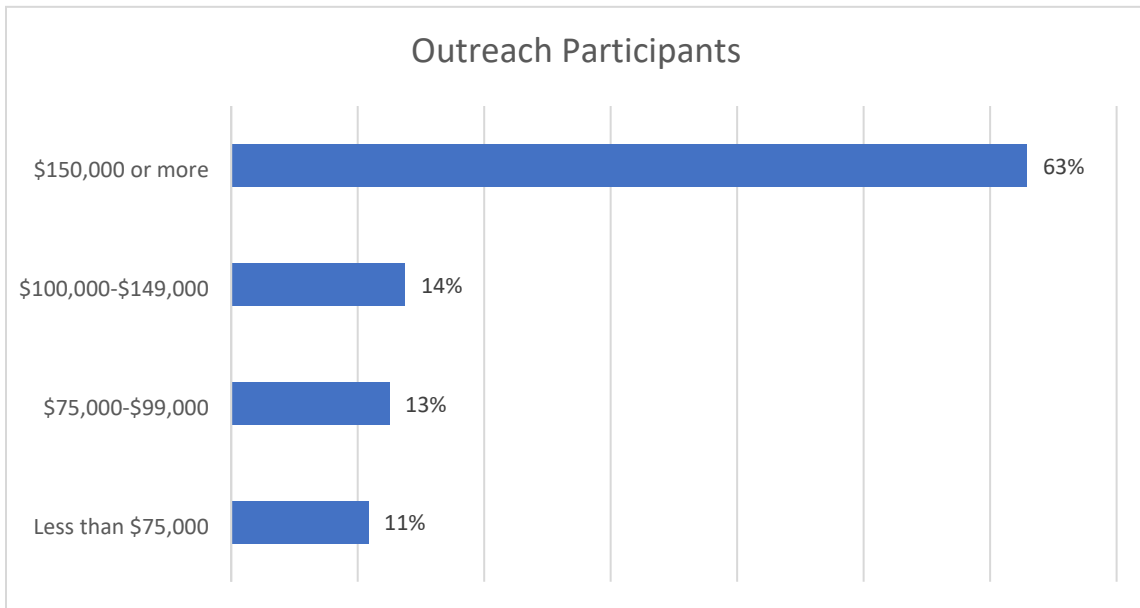
What is your race or ethnicity? (Check all that apply).

Number of Respondents: 445



## Which best describes your household annual income?

Number of Respondents: 240



## MEMORANDUM

DATE September 1, 2023  
TO San Mateo Planning Commission  
FROM Joanna Jansen and Carey Stone, PlaceWorks  
SUBJECT Summary of General Plan Subcommittee Input on Draft General Plan 2040

This memorandum summarizes the General Plan Subcommittee (GPS) input on Draft General Plan 2040 received at the August 29, 2023 GPS meeting. The summary of GPS input focuses on comments that requested changes to the Draft General Plan and other requested actions by the GPS. In addition, when the GPS requested additions related to specific goals, policies, or actions, the policy language has been pasted below for the reader's reference.

### GENERAL COMMENTS

- Some GPS members requested the addition of an executive summary at the start of each element to explain what changes could result upon implementation and how it could affect community members in their day-to-day activities. One GPS member suggested that the Big Ideas fulfilled this function.
- Several GPS members supported the placemaking concepts in the Draft General Plan and expressed interest in actions that will help define and enhance what makes San Mateo charming and unique from other Peninsula communities. This includes adding further text, policies, and actions that support cultural events and entertainment resources.
- Add policy direction throughout the General Plan to support local businesses, including business retention, and highlight the positive impacts local businesses have on the city.
- Continue to coordinate with OneShoreline when planning for flooding improvements and sea level rise adaptation.
- Examine City fees for mixed-use and residential development projects and ensure that these fees are not an obstacle to housing production.
- Evaluate the parameters for mixed-use development to ensure commercial development is balanced with housing development.
- GPS members expressed support for initial staff recommendations to:
  - Modify Study Area 3 boundary in the 25<sup>th</sup> Avenue area to remove the church parking lot site.
  - Add policy guidance on seniors/aging, including a focused section in Public Services and Facilities Element.
  - Reflect applicable plans on flooding/stormwater infrastructure to align with community priorities.

## LAND USE ELEMENT

- Look at the allowed density ranges for Residential Low I and Residential Low II land use designations and confirm whether the allowed uses of triplexes, fourplexes, condominiums, and apartments can feasibly be accommodated under these designations. If not, consider whether these uses should be removed from the designation descriptions.
- Some GPS members requested that housing not be allowed within 500 feet of high-volume roadways while maintaining the overall residential capacity of the Draft General Plan Land Use Map. Other GPS members feel more comfortable with housing near high volume thoroughfares given building technology and buffers that can reduce exposure to particulate matter and a vehicle fleet that is transitioning to electric.
- Revisit the Draft General Plan Land Use Map to ensure that a single block does not have more than one land use designation.
- Clarify **Policy LU 1.9 Voter Approved Growth Limits** so that it is clearer that Measure Y stays in effect after adoption of the General Plan until voters determine whether or not to modify the height and density requirements.
- Support for new **Action LU 1.10** to annually monitor housing and job growth.
- Communicate more transparently that only the ten Study Areas would be exempt from Measure Y upon voter approval and that other areas of the city would still be regulated by Measure Y requirements.
- Update **Action LU 8.4 City Investment** as follows: “Use funds collected by the park impact fee and other additional resources to invest in programs and public improvements that connect residents with opportunities to increase their physical activity and improve their physical and mental health, especially in equity priority communities with higher risk of negative public health outcomes. Identify new funding sources for programs and public improvements, if needed.”
- Add actions to support **Policy LU 8.5 Community Preservation** and **Policy LU 8.6 Safe and Sanitary Homes**.
  - **Policy LU 8.5 Community Preservation.** Prevent displacement in equity priority communities by protecting tenants, helping homeowners remain in place, and funding affordable housing.
  - **Policy LU 8.6 Safe and Sanitary Homes.** Encourage homes and neighborhoods that are free of environmental health hazards.
- Add policy direction to support accessory commercial units in residential areas at a scale that would not be disruptive to the surrounding neighborhoods.
- Provide incentives for low-income homeowners to maintain their properties.
- Add more specific policies or actions about future land acquisition by the City.



## CIRCULATION ELEMENT

- Consider being more explicit about reducing vehicle miles traveled in **Policy C 1. Sustainable Transportation**: “Reduce vehicle miles traveled (VMT) and greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions from transportation by increasing mode share options for sustainable travel modes, such as walking, bicycling, and public transit.
- Ensure that the City coordinates with transit providers to maintain transit service in San Mateo and plans for first/last mile connections to transit.
- Consider revising **Action C 1.11 Complete Streets Plan** to reference the travel modes included in Goal C-1 (i.e. walking, bicycling, and transit): “Complete and implement the Complete Streets Plan to improve the City's circulation network, including pedestrian, bicycling, and transit infrastructure, to accommodate the needs of street users of all ages and abilities.
- Add a goal that would identify a timeframe the City plans to implement all planned infrastructure projects and the number of City staff that would be required to meet that goal.
- Consider adding an action that would support improving leading pedestrian intervals, automatic actuation of pedestrian signals, and identifying a policy about limiting right turns on red to improve pedestrian and bicycle safety.
- Confirm that Policy C4.4 and C 4.5 are not the same thing. *Note from General Plan team: Policy C 4.4 focuses on bicycle safety technology and Policy C 4.5 focuses on shared mobility technology.*
  - **Policy C 4.4 Bicycle-Related Technology**. Explore ways to use technology to improve bicycle safety and connectivity.
  - **Policy C 4.5 Bicycle and Shared Mobility-Related Technology**. Explore ways to use technology to improve bicycle and shared mobility safety and connectivity.
- Clarify **Policy C 6.7 Capital Improvement Program** that it does not apply to adding new traffic lanes:
  - **Policy C 6.7 Capital Improvement Program**. Prioritize improvements that increase person throughput, but do not add new traffic lanes, in project prioritization to reduce VMT.
- Consider adding a policy that would allow density bonuses if additional parking is provided in areas where there are parking capacity issues such as portions of North Central.

## COMMUNITY DESIGN AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION ELEMENT

- Revise **Policy CD 1.3 Scenic Corridors** as follows:
  - **Policy CD 1.3 Scenic Corridors**. Require new development adjacent to designated scenic corridors within San Mateo County’s General Plan to protect and enhance the visual character of these corridors to the extent feasible.

- Update **Policy CD 5.4 Public Awareness** to ensure that property owners are aware if their property is being considered for designation as a historic resource or district.
  - **Policy CD 5.4 Public Awareness.** Foster public awareness and appreciation of the City's historic resources and educate the community about how to preserve and improve these resources. Increase public appreciation by supporting groups and organizations that provide neighborhood workshops, public presentations, interpretive signage, and walking tours.
- Update **Action CD 3.11 Tree Support for Low-Income Homeowners** to ensure there are funding sources for low-income homeowners to pay for the replacement of trees:
  - **Action CD 3.11 Tree Support for Low-Income Homeowners.** Explore funding sources and other forms of City support for low-income homeowners to plant and/or replace trees on their property.
- Ensure the City understands all the implications of defining a historic resource as being eligible for listing on National and California registers.
  - **Policy CD 5.3 Historic Resources Definition.** Define historic resources as buildings, structures, sites, and districts that are listed in or determined to be eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places and/or California Register of Historical Resources, designated resources in the 1989 Historic Building Survey Report, and resources found to be eligible through documentation in a historic resources report.
- Remove **Policy CD 8.3 Respect Existing Scale and Rhythm** because it is too prescriptive and would fit better in the objective design standards:
  - **Policy CD 8.3 Respect Existing Scale and Rhythm.** Encourage new mixed-use and commercial development to respect the scale and rhythm of surrounding buildings, including by providing breaks in the building face at spacings common to buildings in the area and by stepping back upper floors.

## CONSERVATION, OPEN SPACE, PARKS AND RECREATION ELEMENT

- Add policies and/or actions to support the expansion of cultural and entertainment resources in San Mateo.
  - **Goal COS-9** Provide stable and adequate operational and capital funding for the parks and recreation system.

## PUBLIC SERVICES AND FACILITIES ELEMENT

- Add background text and policy direction for seniors and aging, building on the Age-Friendly Action Plan.
- Add a policy to encourage local businesses to attain the Age Friendly Business certification.
- Add more policies to support the use of recycled water.
- Add policy direction to increase public restrooms in San Mateo, especially in parks.

- Strengthen policies and actions about microgrids further.
- Expand **PSF 4.11 Public Wi-Fi** so that it applies to other public buildings
  - **PSF 4.11 Public Wi-Fi.** Provide high-speed internet access to the public at all City facilities and parks and school facilities.

#### SAFETY ELEMENT

- Update Policies SAF 1.14 and SAF 1.15 and Action SAF 1.19 to refer to the County Events Center which is a designated emergency center and will be an important resource in the event of an emergency:
  - **Policy SAF 1.14 Multijurisdictional Cooperation.** Continue the development of local preparedness plans and multijurisdictional cooperation and communication for emergency situations.
  - **Policy SAF 1.15 Emergency Preparedness.** Coordinate with San Mateo County, neighboring cities, and nongovernmental partners to effectively prepare for and respond to hazards and natural disasters.
  - **Action SAF 1.19 Public Safety Outreach.** Develop a public safety education program to increase public awareness of potential hazards, City's emergency readiness and response program, and evacuation routes. Target public education programs to segments of the community that are most vulnerable to hazards and safety risks.

#### NOISE ELEMENT

- The GPS did not have any comments on the Noise Element.

## ATTACHMENT 4 – LAND USE ELEMENT – RECOMMENDED REVISIONS

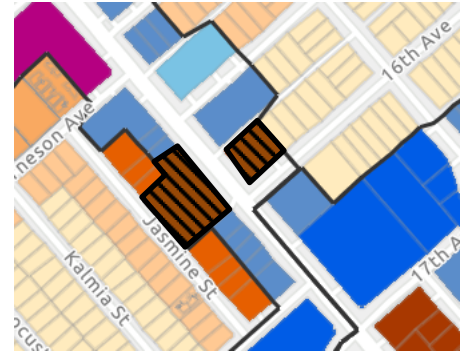
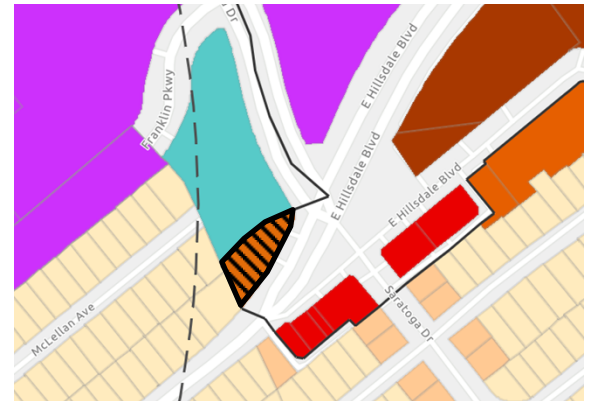
Change ID	Policy/ Action Number	Comment Source	Comment	Recommended Change(s)
1	General Plan Height and Intensity Standards	General Plan Subcommittee	Communicate more transparently that only the ten Study Areas would be exempt from Measure Y upon voter approval and that other areas of the city would still be regulated by Measure Y requirements.	Staff will update the Measure Y language in the General Plan to ensure it is current and clearly articulates that all areas outside of the Study Areas would still be subject to Measure Y height and density limits, and that the Study Areas would be subject to amended limits upon voter approval.
2	General Plan Land Use Designations and Land Use Map text box	Public Comment	Clarify the land use designation identify height limits by stories rather than building height.	Revise the explanatory text in the blue text box as follows: “Residential densities for the land use designations are expressed in terms of dwelling units per acre (du/ac). Building heights are expressed by the number of stories. <u>The General Plan assumes each story is an average of 11 feet, provided that the applicable overall height limit shall not be exceeded.</u> ”
3	Figure LU-1 Land Use Map	Public Comment	Move the Highway 101 label on the map so it does not obscure the designations shown.	Reduce the size of the Highway 101 label on the map and move to ensure that all land use designations are visible.
4	Table LU-1 Land Use Designations	City Staff	Update the title of the Service Commercial land use designation to recognize that both service commercial and light industrial uses exist and are anticipated on properties with this designation.	Update Service Commercial Service designation to be “Service Commercial/ <u>Light Industrial</u> .”
5	Policy LU 3.3 Neighborhood Commercial Preservation  Policy LU 3.4 Convenience Retail	City Staff Recommended Change	Combine Policy LU 3.3 and LU 3.4 since these two policies overlap. Draft new Policy LU 3.4 that focuses on preserving ground floor retail and commercial uses in new developments.	<b>Policy LU 3.3 Neighborhood Commercial and Service Uses. Preservation.</b> Encourage the preservation of local-serving commercial retail and service uses in neighborhood shopping districts <u>and adjacent to residential neighborhoods, including as part of new mixed-use development.</u>  <b>Policy LU 3.4 Neighborhood Commercial Preservation Convenience Retail.</b> <u>Support neighborhood serving shopping area vibrancy and maintain commercial concentrations by encouraging new development to retain existing ground floor retail and commercial uses, to continue to meet the needs of the surrounding neighborhoods. Encourage and preserve convenience stores and neighborhood retail uses adjacent to residential neighborhoods, including as part of new mixed-use development.</u>
6	Policy LU 3.5 Support Service Uses	Public Comment  Build Up San Mateo County	Would like to see hardware stores added to Policy LU 3.5 Support Service Uses.  Update child care language in General Plan draft.	<b>Policy LU 3.5 Support Service Uses.</b> Encourage businesses that provide a variety of services, such as restaurants, <u>child care day care</u> facilities, medical clinics, gyms, pharmacies, <u>hardware stores</u> , and grocery stores in locations that serve residential neighborhoods and commercial/office uses. Prioritize the development of these services in equity priority communities in the city.

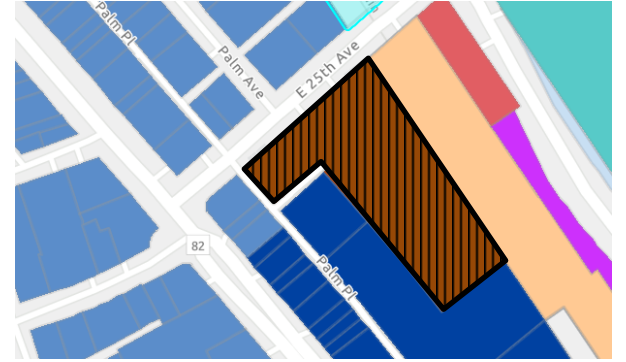
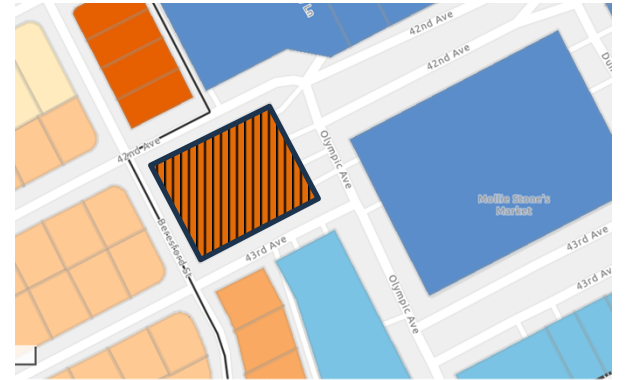


Change ID	Policy/ Action Number	Comment Source	Comment	Recommended Change(s)
7	Policy LU 3.10 Service Commercial	City Staff Recommended Change	Move Policy LU 3.10 above Policy 3.6 to better flow with commercial policies and update title to align with Land Use Designation Table.	<b>Policy LU 3.610 Service Commercial/Light Industrial.</b> Retain service commercial and light industrial uses in San Mateo to support local businesses and to meet the needs of residents locally. Preserve properties that are zoned for service commercial uses and discourage uses that are allowed elsewhere in the city from locating in service commercial and light industrial areas.
8	Policy LU 3.12 Publicly Accessible Spaces	Public Comment	Public spaces need to be welcoming and safe.	<b>Policy LU 3.12 Publicly Accessible Spaces.</b> Integrate a variety of privately owned and maintained publicly accessible spaces into new development. <u>Spaces should be safe, welcoming and include</u> <del>require</del> signage that clearly identifies these spaces as publicly accessible.
9	Action LU 8.4 City Investment	General Plan Subcommittee	Update Action LU 8.4 City Investment as follows: “Use funds collected by the park impact fee and other <u>additional resources</u> to invest in programs and public improvements that connect residents with opportunities to increase their physical activity and improve their physical and mental health, especially in equity priority communities with higher risk of negative public health outcomes. Identify new funding sources for programs and public improvements, if needed.”	<b>Action LU 8.4 City Investment.</b> Use funds <u>from</u> <del>collected by</del> the park impact fee and other sources to invest in programs and public improvements that connect residents with opportunities to increase their physical activity and improve their physical and mental health, especially in equity priority communities with higher risk of negative public health outcomes. Identify new funding sources for programs and public improvements, if needed.
10	Action LU 8.11 City Services	Planning Commission	Change Action LU 8.11 City Services, “ <u>Improve services provided by the City and other partners in order to achieve full neighborhood level parity in areas of safety, security and sanitation in equity priority communities.</u> ”	<b>Action LU 8.11 City Services.</b> Work with residents in equity priority communities to <del>identify</del> <u>improve</u> services <del>that provided by</del> the City or other partners <del>could provide to improve</del> <u>related to</u> safety, sanitation, and security in these neighborhoods.
11	Action LU 8.12 Neighborhood Beautification	Planning Commission	Modify Action LU 8.12 Neighborhood Beautification. “Support and promote neighborhood clean-up and beautification initiatives in equity priority communities, <u>such as planting and maintenance of street trees to support neighborhood beautification,</u> including in partnership with neighborhood organizations.”	<b>Action LU 8.12 Neighborhood Beautification.</b> Support and promote neighborhood clean-up and beautification initiatives in equity priority communities, including <del>in</del> <u>planting and maintenance of street trees,</u> and partnership with neighborhood organizations.

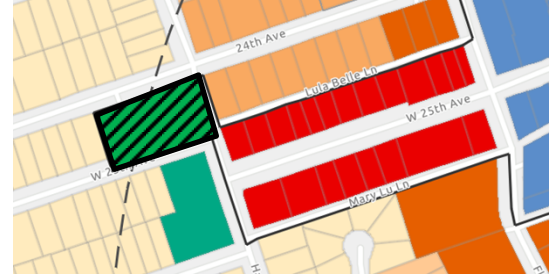
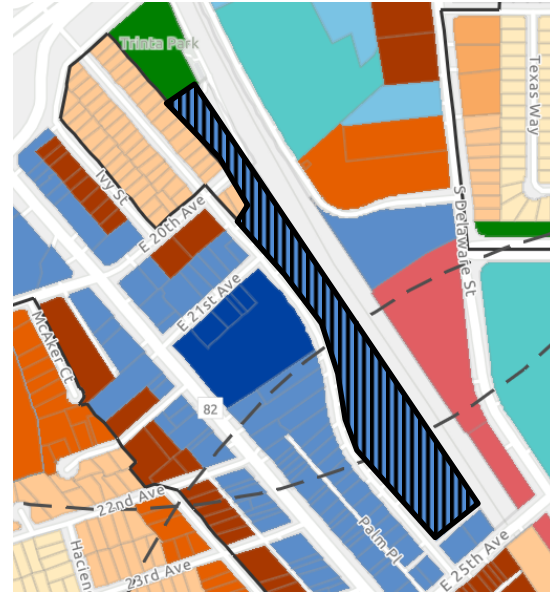
Change ID	Policy/ Action Number	Comment Source	Comment	Recommended Change(s)
12	Policy LU 10.1 Effects of Climate Change	Online Tool	Replace the word “consider”.	<b>Policy LU 10.1 Effects of Climate Change.</b> <del>Consider</del> <u>As feasible, account for</u> the effects of climate change in updating or amending the General Plan, disaster planning, City projects, infrastructure planning, future policies, and long-term strategies. Recognize potential climate change consequences, such as sea level rise, flooding, higher groundwater, less availability of drinking water, hotter temperatures, increased wildfire risk, and changing air quality. Prioritize protecting equity priority communities from the disproportionate burden of climate hazards, including against risks of displacement and challenges in rebuilding after major incidents.

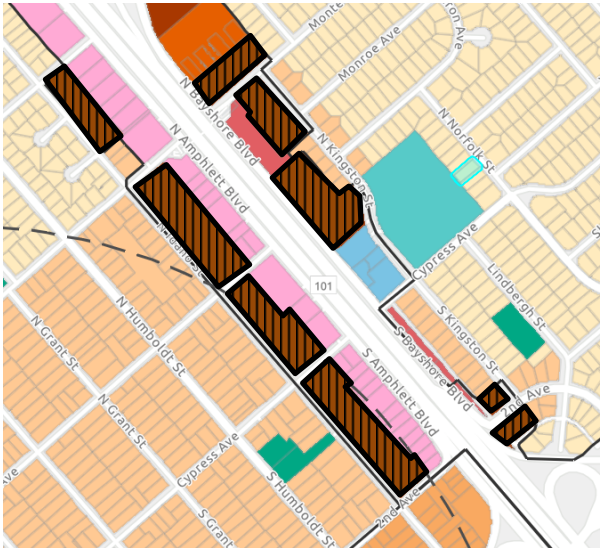
## ATTACHMENT 5 – DRAFT 2040 LAND USE MAP – RECOMMENDED REVISIONS

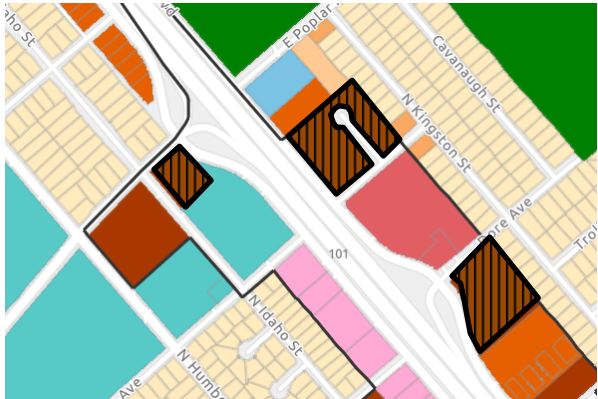
Change ID	Location/Address	Comment Source	Current Land Use	Recommended Land Use	Notes
1	1515 El Camino Real 1528 El Camino Real	City Staff	Residential Medium II	Mixed-Use Medium II	Change to align with adjacent mixed-use designations; and to recognize existing uses on these two sites are mixed-use (commercial, office & residential). 
2	221 E. Hillsdale Blvd	City Staff	Residential Medium I	Neighborhood Commercial	Change to align with existing gas station use; and to maintain existing Neighborhood Commercial in current General Plan 2030. 

Change ID	Location/Address	Comment Source	Current Land Use	Recommended Land Use	Notes
3	South side of 25 <sup>th</sup> Ave, between Palm Pl and railroad tracks (12 parcels)	City Staff	Residential Medium II	Mixed-Use Medium II	Change to acknowledge and support existing commercial uses on these parcels. 
4	4200 Olympic Ave Olympic Village Shopping Center	City Staff	Residential Medium I	Mixed-Use Medium I	Change the Olympic Village Shopping Center site to Mixed-Use to align with existing commercial uses. 



Change ID	Location/Address	Comment Source	Current Land Use	Recommended Land Use	Notes
5	Waypoint Church Parking Lot at 25 <sup>th</sup> Ave and Hacienda St	Public Comments and City Staff	Site located within Study Area 3	Site moved outside Study Area 3	Change Study Area 3 boundary to remove the Waypoint Church parking lot site; site is designated Quasi Public. 
6	East side of Palm Ave and adjacent to the Caltrain corridor, between Trinta Park and 25 <sup>th</sup> Ave (18 parcels)	City Staff	Mixed-Use Medium II	Service Commercial	Change to support and maintain the existing service commercial uses on this block; area is designated Service Commercial in current General Plan 2030 and adjacent to the rail corridor, so not ideal for residential uses. 

Change ID	Location/Address	Comment Source	Current Land Use	Recommended Land Use	Notes
7	<p>East side of Idaho St, between E. Santa Ynez Ave and 2<sup>nd</sup> Ave (46 parcels)</p> <p>West side of N. Kingston St, between Monte Diablo Ave and Cypress Ave (11 parcels)</p> <p>2<sup>nd</sup> Ave at Bayshore Blvd (5 parcels)</p>	<p>Planning Commission and City Staff</p>	Residential Medium II	Residential Medium I	<p>Change to align with existing land use (Medium Density Multi-Family) to avoid increasing residential density on parcels within one block of HWY 101 in Study Area 7; and to better align with adjacent residential neighborhoods.</p> 

Change ID	Location/Address	Comment Source	Current Land Use	Recommended Land Use	Notes
8	<p>470 and 490 Idaho Street (2 parcels)</p> <p>Rogell Court, north of and Rogell Ave (15 parcels)</p> <p>Dore Ave at N. Bayshore Blvd (5 parcels)</p>	<p>Planning Commission and City Staff</p>	Residential Medium II	Residential Medium I	<p>Change to align with existing land use (Medium Density Multi-Family) to avoid increasing residential density on parcels within one block of HWY 101 in Study Area 7; and to better align with adjacent residential neighborhoods.</p> 

## ATTACHMENT 6 – INTRODUCTION, GLOSSARY AND OTHER GENERAL PLAN SECTIONS – RECOMMENDED REVISIONS

### INTRODUCTION

Change ID	Policy/ Action Number	Comment Source	Comment	Recommended Change(s)
1	Big Ideas in Strive San Mateo's General Plan 2045	Online Tool	Update text to broaden reference to low density residential design instead of just focusing on single-family design.	<b>Enhance San Mateo's Neighborhood Fabric and Quality of Life.</b> Strive San Mateo General Plan 2040 promotes context sensitive <u>low density residential</u> <del>single-family</del> design, supports neighborhood shopping areas, improves neighborhood walkability and traffic congestion, protects homes, schools, and libraries from excessive noise levels, and provides for a comprehensive network of parks and recreational facilities for all to enjoy.
2	Big Ideas in Strive San Mateo's General Plan 2045	Build Up San Mateo County	Update child care language in General Plan draft.	<b>Support the Local Economy.</b> Strive San Mateo General Plan 2040 focuses on ways to keep jobs and dollars in San Mateo by supporting local shops, businesses, and services. It encourages new businesses that residents need and enjoy, such as restaurants, <u>child care facilities</u> <del>daycares</del> , medical clinics, gyms, pharmacies, and grocery stores, in convenient locations throughout the community
3	Big Ideas in Strive San Mateo's General Plan 2045	Online Tool	Expand the reference to potential hazards to refer to other topics such as pandemics. It would be nice to see some information on outbreak policies	<b>Improve Community Safety Planning and Awareness.</b> Strive San Mateo General Plan 2040 establishes clear actions to protect the community from <u>emergencies and extreme weather events such as</u> flooding, wildfires, earthquakes <u>and pandemics</u> , by reinforcing the City's emergency readiness and response capabilities, increasing power system resilience, maintaining a state-of-the art emergency notification system, providing community training programs, and planning ahead for disaster recovery.
4	Equity Priority Communities Section	Public Comment	Reference to the Department of Toxic Substances Control's active case at the College Park Elementary School may become outdated for the General Plan. Community members can refer to the Department of Toxic Substances Control for active cases in the city.	Hazardous waste materials, sites, or facilities that could emit toxins into the air, water, and soil that are harmful to people are present in North Central, <u>such as existing or former dry cleaners, gas stations, and buildings with lead and asbestos.</u> <del>California's Department of Toxic Substances Control tracks hazardous waste facilities and sites. As of January 23, 2023, the Department of Toxic Substances Control's data management system shows there is an active case at the College Park Elementary School that could pose a threat to public health.</del>
5	Equity Priority Communities Section	Public Comment	The census tract numbers mentioned on Pages 30-31 are not complete.	The census tracts numbers mentioned in the Equity Priority Communities section, including the text and figures, will be updated to include the entire census tract number.



## CIRCULATION ELEMENT

Change ID	Policy/ Action Number	Comment Source	Comment	Recommended Change(s)
6	Policy C 1.5 El Camino Real	Online Tool	Pedestrian improvements are needed along El Camino Real to minimize noise and improve safety.	<b>Policy C 1.5 El Camino Real.</b> Facilitate efficient travel and pedestrian safety along El Camino Real <u>by supporting improvements that enhance pedestrian connectivity, such as improved pedestrian crossings.</u>
7	Action C 3.7 Pedestrian Connectivity	Online Tool	Pedestrian improvements are needed along El Camino Real to minimize noise and improve safety.	<b>Action C 3.7 Pedestrian Connectivity.</b> Incorporate design for pedestrian connectivity across intersections in transportation projects, <u>including the El Camino Real corridor,</u> to improve visibility at crosswalks for pedestrians and provide safe interaction with other modes. Design improvements should focus on increasing sight lines and removing conflicts at crosswalks.
8	Policy C 5.6 Transit Safety	Online Tool	Pedestrian improvements are needed along El Camino Real to minimize noise and improve safety.	<b>Policy C 5.6 Transit Safety.</b> Prioritize improvements <u>that enhance pedestrian connectivity to transit and to</u> increase safety, access, and comfort at transit centers and bus stops in equity priority communities, along commercial corridors, and in dense, mixed-use neighborhoods.

## CULTURAL AND ENTERTAINMENT RECOMMENDED REVISIONS

Change ID	Policy/Action Number	Comment Source	Comment	Recommended Change(s)
9	Diverse Range of Land Uses Section	Planning Commission  General Plan Subcommittee	Add policies and/or actions to support the expansion of cultural and entertainment resources in San Mateo.	(first paragraph) Commercial centers and an active Downtown provide a space where people can work, recreate, and build community <u>through cultural and entertainment events</u> while also supporting the city's fiscal health.  (second paragraph) It also promotes parks, open space, cultural <u>venues</u> , and recreational facilities, and community gathering spaces for all members of the San Mateo community.
11	Policy LU 3.7 Visitor Economy	Planning Commission  General Plan Subcommittee	Add policies and/or actions to support the expansion of cultural and entertainment resources in San Mateo.	<b>Policy LU 3.7 Visitor Economy.</b> Collaborate with other Peninsula cities and the San Mateo County/Silicon Valley Convention and Visitors Bureau to support the continued development of the visitor economy of both the city and the region, including lodging, entertainment, <u>cultural</u> , recreation, retail, and local events; encourage uses that attract visitors. Incentivize through fee reduction and visitor perks, sustainable modes of travel to and from the city to reduce both the use of air travel and gas-powered vehicles.
12	Policy LU 3.13 Cultural Facilities and Public Art	Planning Commission  General Plan Subcommittee	Add policies and/or actions to support the expansion of cultural and entertainment resources in San Mateo.	<b>Policy LU 3.13 Cultural Facilities and Public Art.</b> Recognize cultural facilities, <u>entertainment events</u> , <u>performing arts</u> , and public art as part of a healthy and thriving community. Use funds from the City's art in-lieu fee to enhance existing public art and cultural facilities and encourage new facilities that reflect the character and identity of the surrounding neighborhoods.
13	Policy LU 4.1 Downtown Land Uses	Planning Commission  General Plan Subcommittee	Add policies and/or actions to support the expansion of cultural and entertainment resources in San Mateo.	<b>Policy LU 4.1 Downtown Land Uses.</b> Allow and prioritize a wide range of residential, dining, <u>cultural</u> , entertainment, lodging, and other commercial uses downtown, at high intensities and densities, with strong multi-modal connectivity to the San Mateo Caltrain station and other transit.

Change ID	Policy/ Action Number	Comment Source	Comment	Recommended Change(s)
14	Action LU 4.4 Downtown Area Plan	Planning Commission General Plan Subcommittee	Add policies and/or actions to support the expansion of cultural and entertainment resources in San Mateo.	<b>Action LU 4.4 Downtown Area Plan.</b> Update the Downtown Area Plan to support and strengthen the Downtown as a vibrant and active commercial, cultural, <u>entertainment</u> , and community gathering district. The updated Downtown Area Plan shall align with the General Plan, integrate recommendations from other concurrent City efforts, focus growth and intensity in proximity to the Caltrain station, encourage superblock concepts or approaches and allow parklets, update parking standards and parking management strategies, allow for increased housing units and density, and support high-quality, pedestrian-oriented design and architecture.
15	Policy COS 5.2 Creating Community	Planning Commission General Plan Subcommittee	Add policies and/or actions to support the expansion of cultural and entertainment resources in San Mateo.	<b>Policy COS 5.2 Creating Community.</b> Cultivate opportunities to come together as a community, celebrate our heritage, cultures, and milestones; <u>through cultural and entertainment events</u> and have social supports available, which are key to creating a sense of community and building community resilience.
16	Policy COS 5.3 Creative Outlets	Planning Commission General Plan Subcommittee	Add policies and/or actions to support the expansion of cultural and entertainment resources in San Mateo.	<b>Policy COS 5.3 Creative Outlets.</b> Provide skill development, <u>cultural</u> , and performance opportunities within each of the major art forms with an emphasis on promoting lifelong enjoyment to nurture creative discovery.

## FIGURES

Change ID	Policy/ Action Number	Comment Source	Comment	Recommended Change(s)
17	Figures	Online Tool	Make the maps in the General Plan accessible for text-to-speech voice readers.	The maps in the General Plan will be updated to be accessible for text-to-speech voice readers.

## GLOSSARY

Change ID	Policy/ Action Number	Comment Source	Comment	Recommended Change(s)
18	Glossary	City Staff Recommended Change	Add "Story" to the glossary.	<b>Story.</b> The term to define building height in the General Plan. The General Plan assumes each story is an average of 11 feet, provided that the applicable overall height limit shall not be exceeded.

Change ID	Policy/ Action Number	Comment Source	Comment	Recommended Change(s)
19	Glossary	Public Comment	Define active transportation.	<b>Active Transportation.</b> Biking, walking, and other human-powered ways of getting around.
20	Glossary	City Staff Recommended Change	The General Plan includes policies and actions that address ADA accessibility; however, the term “persons with disability” is not used in the General Plan.	<b>Disability, persons with.</b> A physical impairment or mental disorder, which is expected to be of a long, continued, or indefinite duration and is of such a nature that the person’s ability to live independently could be hindered unless improved by more suitable housing conditions.



**From:** Joe Daly <[REDACTED]>  
**Sent:** Sunday, October 15, 2023 4:57 PM  
**To:** City Council (San Mateo) <[CityCouncil@cityofsanmateo.org](mailto:CityCouncil@cityofsanmateo.org)>  
**Subject:** Resident concern with General Plan

Hello Council-

While I appreciate the collaborative efforts of the Community reach out and discussion of the General Plan, I want to register my concern with an effort to turn 5th Ave and 9th Ave into arterials, a classification that allows further traffic via vehicle traffic.

Please understand that the existing traffic is difficult and dangerous for the residents, and our calls for "traffic calming" via roundabouts and speed bumps has met with a resounding silence from our elected officials. We need "traffic calming" services to deal with our existing problems, much less the predictable chaos the reclassification of 5th and 9th to arterial streets presents.

Please consider the concerns of residents and taxpayers who live in these neighborhoods.

Respectfully,

Joe and Diane Daly  
[REDACTED]

From: Judith Paton <[REDACTED]>  
Sent: Sunday, October 15, 2023 7:23 PM  
To: City Council (San Mateo) <[CityCouncil@cityofsanmateo.org](mailto:CityCouncil@cityofsanmateo.org)>  
Subject: 5th Avenue arterial

Please do not turn this pretty street into another thru-way to 101. We will lose mature shade trees (supposedly trees are considered desirable according to the General Plan) as well as parking for the local residents.

We would have to pay to remove the chicanes and traffic circle, which were put in even though the City knew Kiku Crossing was in the works).

Traffic should be routed along Claremont to 4th. There's no real benefit to having some drivers travel on 5th since, in the end, the same number of cars will end up back on 4th in order to enter 101.

Thank you

Judith Paton

[REDACTED]

Sent from my iPhone

From: Michael <[REDACTED]>  
Sent: Monday, October 16, 2023 3:41 PM  
To: City Council (San Mateo) <[CityCouncil@cityofsanmateo.org](mailto:CityCouncil@cityofsanmateo.org)>  
Cc: Patrice Olds <[polds@cityofsanmateo.org](mailto:polds@cityofsanmateo.org)>; Brad Underwood <[bunderwood@cityofsanmateo.org](mailto:bunderwood@cityofsanmateo.org)>;  
Bethany Lopez <[blopez@cityofsanmateo.org](mailto:blopez@cityofsanmateo.org)>; Killough, Maurine <[REDACTED]>  
[REDACTED]; Francie Souza <[REDACTED]>  
Weinhauer, Shelly <[REDACTED]>  
Subject: 10/16/23 Draft GP Comments

Members of the City Council -

As residents of Central San Mateo, we feel the Draft General Plan does not provide enough protection for our neighborhood.

- 5<sup>th</sup> & 9<sup>th</sup> Avenues should not be treated as arterials, regardless of state/federal classification. They are two of the main neighborhood streets in Central and should be maintained as such. We ask that the city - specifically we call upon PW Director Brad Underwood, and Bethany Lopez to immediately agendize a review of San Mateo's policy regarding traffic calming at the soonest possible SIC meeting, with the stated goal of revising this policy such that traffic calming will be allowed on streets classified as arterials.

- We require an interim plan for increased traffic due to the Kiku garage as well as several planned future projects in the immediate vicinity.

- Further traffic calming measures should be instituted NOW and existing traffic calming should remain in place.

- Lack of parking on our neighborhood streets is an issue anywhere there is not a 2-hour limit. A simplified Residential Parking Permit Program (RPPP) is needed, again BEFORE these projects come online and we're already feeling the impacts.

Thank you for your consideration -

Michael & Shelly Weinbauer





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RE: San Mateo Draft General Plan 2040

October 26<sup>th</sup>, 2023

Zachary Dahl

Interim Community Development Director

City of San Mateo

330 W 20<sup>th</sup> Ave, San Mateo, CA 94403

Dear Zachary,

Our team has had the pleasure of engaging with and following your City's General Plan 2040 process. It has been exciting to see this plan grow and come into a defined vision represented by the Draft version of the General Plan. As you may know, Harvest is an active developer in San Mateo of residential, mixed-use, and commercial developments in downtown San Mateo and near the College of San Mateo. In review of recently released Draft General Plan 2040 our team has the following comment which we believe will benefit the City of San Mateo.

In our reading of the Draft General Plan, we understand that Office Low, Medium, and High, all have an underlying residential zoning. We are very excited to see this shift in zoning, as our group believes in the transition of Class B and C office space into residential homes benefits San Mateo and the greater Bay Area. In fact, our team recently entitled and is currently under construction of our Campus Drive project which took approximately a quarter million square feet of defunct commercial office space off the market and converted it into 290 entry-level for-sale homes. **However, our team is very concerned that due to the minimum residential densities listed in the Office Medium and Mixed-Use Medium I zonings that the City will see zero production of for-sale housing that would allow new families with kids to stay in San Mateo.** The proposed minimum residential density thresholds for these zonings is 36du/ac which is not low enough to allow for San Mateo to increase its for-sale housing inventory. For reference, a townhome/garden style development typically achieves 15-25du/ac. Our Campus Drive project achieved 19du/ac, which blended single-family, attached townhome, and four-story walk-up product. **Our team would recommend that City Staff lower the minimum density per acre threshold to approximately 15du/ac in the Office Medium and Mixed-Use Medium I zonings to allow for conversions of old commercial products into for-sale developments.**

The back side of this document includes the current Land Use Map as shown on Figure LU-1 and the Land Use Designations as shown on Table LU-1 from the City's Draft General Plan from July of 2023.

Thank you for your consideration on this matter. Our team is available to discuss if your team has any questions for us.

Sincerely,  
Harvest Properties, Inc.

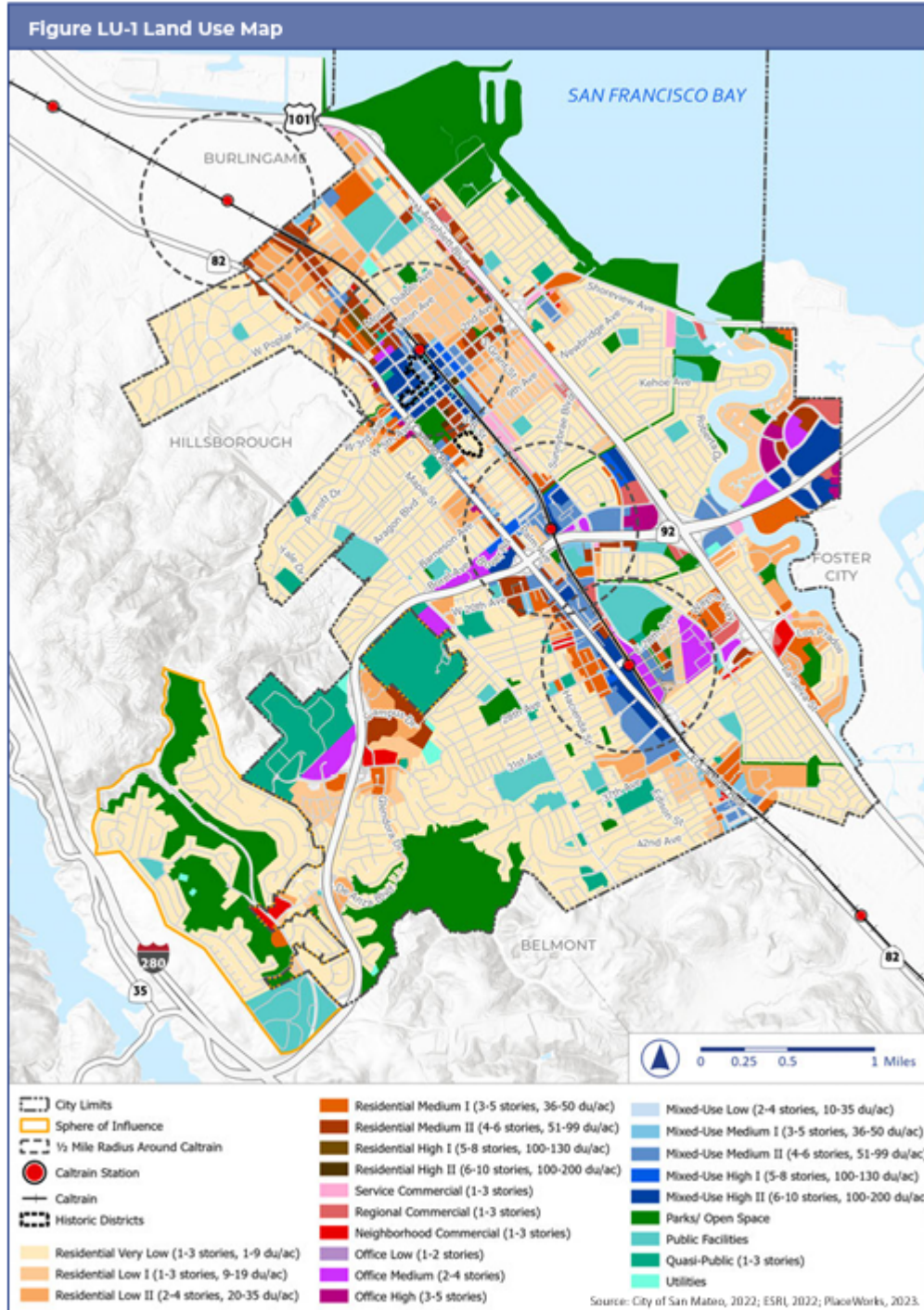


Table LU-1 Land Use Designations				
Designation	Density (min/max) (Residential Uses)	Maximum FAR (Nonresi- dential uses)	Height Limit	Description
<b>Mixed-Use</b>				
<b>Mixed-Use Low</b>	10 to 35 du/ac	2.0	2-4 stories	This designation allows low-density mixed-use buildings that provide a mix of commercial, office, and/or residential uses within the same site or building. It is intended to allow a mix of uses that encourages people to live, work, play, and shop in close proximity.
<b>Mixed-Use Medium I</b>	36 to 50 du/ac	3.0	3-5 stories	This designation allows low medium-density mixed-use buildings that provide a mix of commercial, office, and/or residential uses within the same site or building. It is intended to allow a mix of uses that encourages people to live, work, play, and shop in close proximity.
<b>Commercial</b>				
<b>Office Low</b>	10 to 35 du/ac	1.0	1-2 stories	This designation is intended for low-density office uses, such as medical, administrative, or professional offices. Supportive uses, including personal services, restaurants, health clubs, residential, day care, and limited retail sales are permitted. Research facilities that support the development of new products and may include professional uses, manufacturing, laboratories, and/or maker's spaces in the same building or site may be permitted depending on the type and intensity of the use.
<b>Office Medium</b>	36 to 50 du/ac	2.0	2-4 stories	This designation is intended for medium-density office uses, such as medical, administrative, or professional offices. Supportive uses, including personal services, restaurants, health clubs, residential, day care, and limited retail sales are permitted. Research facilities that support the development of new products and may include professional uses, manufacturing, laboratories, and/or maker's spaces in the same building or site may be permitted depending on the type and intensity of the use.

\*red circle indicates zoning requested to be shifted from 36du/ac to 15du/ac. No change to upper limit requested

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Friday, October 27, 2023 2:24 PM  
**To:** City Council (San Mateo) <[CityCouncil@cityofsanmateo.org](mailto:CityCouncil@cityofsanmateo.org)>  
**Cc:** Patrice Olds <[polds@cityofsanmateo.org](mailto:polds@cityofsanmateo.org)>; Zachary Dahl <[zdahl@cityofsanmateo.org](mailto:zdahl@cityofsanmateo.org)>  
**Subject:** 10/30/23 City Council meeting - comments on draft General Plan

To the City Council:

Here are my written comments on the draft General Plan in advance of Monday night's meeting. In copying Mr. Dahl I am asking him to please ensure that these comments are added to the ones already available in the Strive San Mateo website, and/or wherever else they should be available as part of the permanent record of the development of the plan. I am also copying City Clerk Patrice Olds to ensure these comments become part of the permanent record for the meeting.

One of the main reasons that I am writing, rather than expecting to speak Monday night is that the concept of **public input** on agenda items has become a pro forma pretense. No one can be sure that they will be lucky enough to be part of the limited number of commenters allowed both in person and remotely. If an item is of wide public interest, and "too many" people want to speak, each chosen person is given a meaningless 1 minute for thier comments. Other than a quick "I'm in favor" or I'm not in favor", it becomes impossible to provide significant input for the Council's decision. The message becomes clear. The Council is really not interested in hearing from the public. If this widely held belief is wrong, I encourage you to find a better way to make public comment a reality again.

Hence my written comments.

The overall intensity of development proposed in the 10 study areas by **this plan is excessive to our needs** over the next 15 years, and well beyond what the community has said it wants for our future. It needs to be scaled back, overall. Surveys have been conducted over the past 3 or 4 years, trying to determine what San Mateans value and what they want. The city's surveys may be "statistically valid", but I suggest that you have seen the very best statistical survey of all - the 2020 election - where the development parameters originally put in place in 1991 were reconfirmed as Measure Y. No series of leading (or misleading) questions answered by 638 probable voters can replace the tens of thousands of people who voted to keep San Mateo as a moderate growth suburban community.

Although City Hall has spent the time since 2020 acting as if Y did not pass, I think you ignore that message at the risk of having to reinvent this whole General Plan process. The rationale always falls back on the necessity to meet the State imposed RHNA numbers. Staff has repeatedly told you that the 2030 RHNA numbers (widely regarded as over inflated; questionable at best) can be met with a Measure Y-friendly General Plan update. Please keep that in mind as you proceed to adopt a General Plan.



Commenting on a draft General Plan can be overwhelming. I'll focus on one particular land use change in this plan as the "poster child" of what is **wrong with the process and outcome**. The 10 story apartment building at **120 W. Third Ave. (Ryan Towers** - notice it has always been considered a "tower") is being increased to a Residential High II designation. According to the Measure Y comparison on the Strive site, this is "the one site" so designated that falls outside of the study areas; "however this designation is proposed because the site contains an existing 10-story residential building." When I asked staff for details, I was first told this change was "required". When I pushed for better information, that changed, being called "best practices". No one has cited public input or request in making this change. I suggest that using such an outsize designation for what appears to be cleaning up the map is ludicrous. What "best practices" harm has come to this site since at least 1991, when it has had a height limit of 45', and a density cap of 50 units per acre? Why aren't the staff recommendations and decision makers' discussions focused on a General Plan that should codify what we actually want for our city, for our neighborhoods? This building is in the midst of very attractive 2 and 3 story multifamily, and the next block is the Baywood single family neighborhood. No one can justify the idea that, were something to happen at Ryan Towers - and unforeseen things happen all the time - that we would want it replaced with another 10 story building with up to 200 units per acre. Please do not allow that to happen.

Please be sure that this General Plan lives up to the stated goals, particularly including the one to **"Enhance Neighborhood Fabric and Quality of Life"**, particularly through "context sensitive neighborhood design". Do not increase the land use at 120 W. Third Ave.

In another location, I support staff's recommendation for **removing the church parking lot from the 25th Ave. study area** for the same reason. Its inclusion creates a potential for greatly intensified land use, right in the midst of single story homes, which would fly in the face of the stated goal of enhancing neighborhoods. Please remove it.

What other designations have become part of this draft plan without much or any public interest or notice?

Back to the "poster child", Ryan Towers. It is a concerning example of what is being proposed throughout this General Plan. Is it true, as staff has written, that this is the only building that needs such an egregious "spot zoning" type designation? (Yes, I know, this is not technically zoning, but anyone with this intense a land use designation will expect an equally intense zoning.) Is that statement true only because it is residential, or does it also apply to commercial and mixed use buildings throughout the city? If that is true, broadly, it speaks to just how much **the land uses in the 10 study areas have been over-intensified**.

Are all of the other "standing out" tall/dense buildings in San Mateo now being "protected" by a major increase in the land use categories? Does this apply to ones like the Bay View building at 21st and El Camino Real? It is on land with a height limit of 40/55'. Will it be regularized by the 2040 plan? Some have called such a building a sore

thumb, others more kindly just saying, well, we certainly don't want to do that again. This is the same reaction people had to the Pan Am building on the west side of ECR north of 92. I can't make out the colors on the land use map. What will its designation be? Does the plan regularize that building and make it conforming with the 2040 land use? Similar comments could be made about certain other buildings on the west side of ECR closer to downtown. They all have become background "never again".

Will the 2040 plan say that this taller/denser is better approach is our future? I think you'll find that **San Mateans say, NO.**

Many San Mateans have become accustomed to individual taller/denser buildings which have been part of our city for well over 30 years. When asked about height (and density) I often hear people say that they have no objection to a specific building, usually one that stands alone, on a wide street with plenty of landscaping, sunlight and visibility around it. But imagine creating a long line of such buildings on both sides of the street, or for most sides of a block or 2 and they see an oppressive looming presence that is not what they want for San Mateo's future. We can appreciate the history and proportions and decoration of the Ben Franklin building. Put a row of them down both sides of Third Avenue and you have destroyed a major part of our downtown. Please don't let this "it looks reasonable on a map, it makes sense to make uses match what is there today" kind of thinking dominate our 2040 plan.

I urge you to **revisit many of the details of the Option A in your earlier discussions**, choose the most reasonable, and modify this draft plan to better match what San Mateans can support.

Karen Herrel  
Hillsdale Blvd.

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\* PRIVILEGE AND CONFIDENTIALITY NOTICE: This message, together with any attachments, is intended only for the use of the individual or entity to which it is addressed. It may contain information that is confidential and prohibited from disclosure. If you are not the intended recipient, you are hereby notified that any dissemination or copying of this message or any attachment is strictly prohibited. If you have received this message in error, please notify the original sender immediately by telepho

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Monday, October 30, 2023 10:13 AM  
**To:** City Council (San Mateo) <[CityCouncil@cityofsanmateo.org](mailto:CityCouncil@cityofsanmateo.org)>  
**Subject:** urban density

Dear City Council Members,

Thank you for your efforts for this city. As a long time resident I am profoundly offended by the questions of growth being always seen through the lens of the maximum possible when we have neither the streets, parking or other infrastructure to support it. Please address the longstanding serious drainage problems in Baywood before you get lofty about growth. The last thing this town needs are senseless high-rises blocking views residents have cherished for decades, and more density while people are leaving the area. What makes this town special is its character which would be far too easy to destroy with unfettered growth.

Thank you for your consideration,  
Helene Wickett  
[REDACTED]

**From:** Strive San Mateo <email@strivesanmateo.org>  
**Sent:** Friday, October 27, 2023 4:53 PM  
**To:** General Plan <generalplan@cityofsanmateo.org>  
**Subject:** New message on Strive San Mateo

**Name:** Rowan Paul

**Email:** [REDACTED]

**Message:** Bottom line is that we want a Palo Alto, Mountain View, Menlo vibe, with sustainable development that is reasonable, not disruptive to the core character of San Mateo. We do NOT want another Redwood City or San Francisco.

It is increasingly clear that the Planning Commission and City want to make our beautiful city into yet another characterless Redwood City.

We moved to San Mateo from San Francisco in 2013 to get away from the incestuous politics, and build build build mentality, the crime and the congestion. This is San Mateo's future. Already we see increased homeless walking out streets and higher crime. I am attaching a map showing this.

It is becoming clear, based on what Naomi (my wife) and Mike are saying that the planning commission is in bed with the developers. So there is a conflict of interest. The developers don't care about long term character, safety, and traffic flow of the city. They care about squeezing out the biggest profit and leveraging State laws as a shield to justify their actions.

The sub-urban/mini-urban vibe of San Mateo will be lost forever if the general plan goes through and the developers get what they want at our expense.

Many of us work full time (myself 65+ hours/week) and simply can't attend in person meetings. We all pay the taxes and your salaries, so we need representation. True representation. Not token or placating words. Not bringing our community in at the last second as if the general plan is a foregone conclusion and can't be amended.

Frankly speaking, when my wife Naomi Ture came back from the last city planning meeting, she was absolutely furious that she could not get her questions answered on the record. She asked direct questions multiple times in different ways with no clear answers. There was a clear feeling of evasion by the planning commission.

I have never seen her so triggered and she has not stopped thinking about it since. She is not alone in her anger and frustration. Expect a real fight.

My 2 cents.

Rowan Paul, MD

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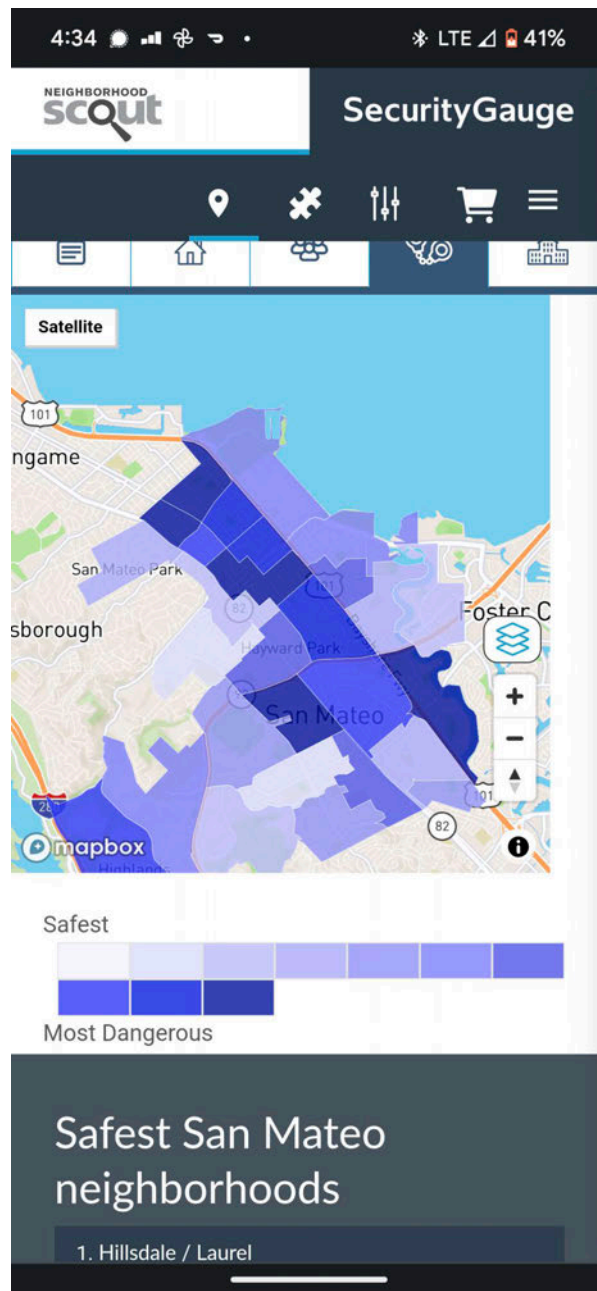
Date: October 27, 2023

Time: 11:53 pm

Page URL: <https://strivesanmateo.org/participate-online/>



User Agent: Mozilla/5.0 (Linux; Android 10; K) AppleWebKit/537.36 (KHTML, like Gecko)  
Chrome/116.0.0.0 Mobile Safari/537.36  
Remote IP: 174.194.197.131  
Powered by: Elementor



**From:** Maxine Turner [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Friday, October 27, 2023 3:51 PM  
**To:** City Council (San Mateo) <[CityCouncil@cityofsanmateo.org](mailto:CityCouncil@cityofsanmateo.org)>; Lisa Nash <[Lisadnash25@gmail.com](mailto:Lisadnash25@gmail.com)>; Richard Hedges <[rhedges@cityofsanmateo.org](mailto:rhedges@cityofsanmateo.org)>; Rob Newsom <[rnewsom@cityofsanmateo.org](mailto:rnewsom@cityofsanmateo.org)>; Amourence Lee <[alee@cityofsanmateo.org](mailto:alee@cityofsanmateo.org)>; [alorraine@cityofsanmateo.org](mailto:alorraine@cityofsanmateo.org)  
**Cc:** Alex Khojikian <[akhojikian@cityofsanmateo.org](mailto:akhojikian@cityofsanmateo.org)>; Zachary Dahl <[zdahl@cityofsanmateo.org](mailto:zdahl@cityofsanmateo.org)>; Patrice Olds <[polds@cityofsanmateo.org](mailto:polds@cityofsanmateo.org)>  
**Subject:** Land Use Comments

Dear Mayor and Councilmembers:

The majority of San Mateans have consistently supported the construction of more housing, particularly affordable housing, continued job growth and economic development. But they don't believe it is necessary, nor are they willing, to sacrifice their homes, neighborhoods, quality of life, or character of their historic downtown in the process. And they don't have to. The current General Plan 2030 allows increased development potential in transit-oriented areas and meets state housing requirements. General Plan 2030 is a good plan that recognizes the importance of community and the unique land use assets that make San Mateo such a desirable community to live and work in. And most importantly, General Plan 2030 includes the Measure Y land uses that were approved by a majority of voters in 2020 and is the best measure of what level of increased development the community prefers.

**WHY** did the City Council choose the highest level of height and density in every identified study area, ignoring the more balanced, sustainable smart growth Measure Y model? Voters of San Mateo have made it clear what kind of community they want to live in and what shape its future should take. Over and over again, San Mateo voters have determined that they do not want 8-12 story high-rise buildings with densities of 100-200 units per acre throughout downtown and along El Camino Real.

Just whose interests is this general plan update intended to serve? Despite numerous outreach meetings, staff and the Council know how few unique individuals actually participated. The outsized influence of special interest organizations and paid operatives living in other cities appear to be the primary voices shaping the General Plan. The beneficiaries of the urban-scale redevelopment envisioned in the Draft General Plan 2040 are not those of us who live here, but those who stand to financially profit the most - big tech, big real estate, and big construction.

**WHY** is the 2040 General Plan based on excessive state housing requirements that are already out of date and will be significantly reduced before the current General Plan 2030 expires. The State Department of Finance has released new population projections showing CA growth is flat through 2060. Even so, General Plan 2030 meets the current excessive housing requirements.

Perhaps of equal concern is the lack of information about how much the extreme levels of development proposed in General Plan 2040 will cost and how it will be funded. New development does NOT pay its own way. The General Plan proposes maximum development and population growth without identifying where potable water will come from or how and when adequate transit will be provided. Nor does it identify where new parks, open space and other critical services can be provided in our already built out city. And nowhere is affordable housing specifically identified.

**WHY** has no fiscal analysis been done of the costs of providing the new services and infrastructure necessary to accommodate the extreme levels of new development proposed.

The state legislature is trying to urbanize non-urban communities to the detriment of everyone and the resulting costs for local cities are totally out of control. Developers profit while residents have to get ready for new taxes, fees and bond measures.

There is no need to approve the 2040 General Plan update at this time since the current General Plan 2030 is alive and well serving the community. A few developers may want more but it is not legally necessary to update now. And General Plan 2040 needs a lot more fine-tuning to become acceptable to the community at large. A win-win solution exists and San Mateo residents would be receptive to moderate land use changes but not the extreme high height and density increases proposed in every study areas.

**WHY** is the General Plan 2040 being rushed for a 2024 ballot when the existing General Plan 2030 is in conformance with the recently adopted Measure Y managed growth initiative and meets all state RHNA housing requirements for another 7 years? Many already approved projects have asked for extensions and have not been built. There is **NO RUSH**.

My specific comments follow:

- Propose a 2-phase GP that recognizes that voter approved Measure Y expires in 2030. Beyond 2030 there is no way to rely on current assumptions of future RHNA requirements given the rise in remote work and over-building of office space. After Measure Y expires in 2030, the City can revisit and amend the land use regulations given the then current economic and environmental realities.

After 2030 -

- Maintain Measure Y's heights given the fact that the State takeover of land use control automatically gives developers significant height and density bonuses.

- Provide Mix and Match balance in each study area, not broad brush maximum heights & densities. To exceed Measure Y limits, identify specific sites within each study area and note why necessary and what the benefits would be. Recognize that there are a few large lot sites that can accommodate a range of heights but that downtown is not one of them.

- Identify and protect key community serving land uses by not upzoning sites that residents rely on, such as grocery stores, car repair, small businesses and service providers. Most existing small businesses along El Camino Real and surrounding Downtown will be displaced by allowing maximum development because the cost of new construction significantly raises rents.

**From:** Keith Weber <[REDACTED]>  
**Sent:** Friday, October 27, 2023 3:52 PM  
**To:** City Council (San Mateo) <[CityCouncil@cityofsanmateo.org](mailto:CityCouncil@cityofsanmateo.org)>; Amourance Lee <[alee@cityofsanmateo.org](mailto:alee@cityofsanmateo.org)>; Rob Newsom <[rnewsom@cityofsanmateo.org](mailto:rnewsom@cityofsanmateo.org)>; Adam Loraine <[aloraine@cityofsanmateo.org](mailto:aloraine@cityofsanmateo.org)>; Lisa Diaz Nash <[ldiaznash@cityofsanmateo.org](mailto:ldiaznash@cityofsanmateo.org)>; Richard Hedges <[rhedges@cityofsanmateo.org](mailto:rhedges@cityofsanmateo.org)>  
**Cc:** Patrice Olds <[polds@cityofsanmateo.org](mailto:polds@cityofsanmateo.org)>; Zachary Dahl <[zdahl@cityofsanmateo.org](mailto:zdahl@cityofsanmateo.org)>; Alex Khojikian <[akhojikian@cityofsanmateo.org](mailto:akhojikian@cityofsanmateo.org)>  
**Subject:** 10/30/23 CC mtg. re Land Use/Circulation Elements, GP2040

Members of the City Council:

The proposed General Plan 2040 Land Use and Circulation Elements should **not** be approved for the following reasons:

1. They are based solely on RHNA growth projections that are questionable at best, and wildly inflated according to many, particularly when compared to recent population projections which indicate California's population will remain flat for the next 40 years.
2. They present a level of intense growth that far exceeds the necessity of providing housing through the current RHNA cycle.
3. They are contrary to the moderate and sustainable growth vision for our community which has been consistent for 3 elections over 3 decades, the most recent in 2020.
4. The current General Plan is valid until 2030 and has been determined to adequately meet our RHNA housing needs through the end of the current cycle at which time Measure Y will sunset, so there is no urgency to approving a new general plan.
5. The public review process has been designed to push a single hyper-growth agenda with pop-up and post-it note "input," and ruling out meaningful community conversations, discussions and compromises as has been the custom in San Mateo.

I ask the City Council to **please deny approval of the Land Use and Circulation elements of General Plan 2040.**

Thank you,  
Keith Weber  
San Mateo



**From:** Frances Boscacci [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Sunday, October 29, 2023 2:59 PM  
**To:** Patrice Olds <[polds@cityofsanmateo.org](mailto:polds@cityofsanmateo.org)>  
**Subject:** Please do NOT approve the draft of the General Plan tomorrow.

I've been a resident of San Mateo for 31 years. I have seen enough dramatic change, to where small business is being pushed out and lower income renters given no choice but to move away. Our children can not afford the high rents. New construction has not made rents lower. And some of the new multi unit buildings of today could become the troubled communities of tomorrow. Please see what is happening with "The Hillside Apartments" being managed by a sloppy corporation. Even SMPD is having a hard time partnering with the corporate property management giant.

Please respect the democratic process- Citizens of San Mateo voted Measure Y in and DO NOT need to have the city council IMPOSE unnecessary maximum growth and building heights. Do not create more traffic and noise please, as well as infrastructure problems that you as city council can not solve- Listen to the people who are paying the skyrocketing taxes, and have been paying for a long time.

Please DO NOT approve the draft of the General Plan as is- it's NOT correct. My family and I beg you to send it back to the drawing board.

Thank you.  
Frances and Mark  
[REDACTED]

**From:** Janet Cook [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Sunday, October 29, 2023 1:54 PM  
**To:** Patrice Olds <[polds@cityofsanmateo.org](mailto:polds@cityofsanmateo.org)>  
**Subject:** Rework current GPU

I do not agree with the new General Plan Update.

#1 – Residents already made their desires clear with the height/density limits for new buildings by voting in Measure Y. THIS HAS BEEN IGNORED,

#2 Under AB1287, by providing additional income-restricted units, developers can now make the height of buildings 100% larger. This is not acceptable!! This is not what we voted for. You need to go back and modify this plan to be in keeping with measure Y.

#3 - Concerned citizens from all over our Peninsula district met with Senator Becker last week as his cities flail to receive approval from the state for their Housing Elements (plans for state mandated new housing units). Meanwhile, these cities are spending an inordinate amount of money to try to obtain approval to no avail - with bankruptcy on the horizon. At the heart of this are the mandated housing numbers which no one could ensure were either accurate or adequately supported, as published by our own state auditor in 2022. Yet, here we are in San Mateo constantly pushing for maximum growth based on these faulty numbers.

#4 - At the recent Town Hall meetings to review this GPU, residents asked City staff just HOW the City would handle all the infrastructure needs that go hand in hand with what they are projecting. Without a plan for infrastructure this current GPU cannot go forward. Sacramento cannot usurp our will!!

#5 - We cannot go forward with blinders and hope for the best - setting our entire city on a path that is sure to create more hardship, on the backs of the taxpaying homeowners.

Janet A Cook  
[REDACTED]

Sent from my iPhone

From: Nancy Glasson [REDACTED]  
Sent: Sunday, October 29, 2023 5:43 PM  
To: City Council (San Mateo) <[CityCouncil@cityofsanmateo.org](mailto:CityCouncil@cityofsanmateo.org)>  
Subject: STOP STOP In the best of interests of the citizens of the city of San Mateo who you represent this totally wrong plan

Sent from my iPhone

From: Brent Harnish [REDACTED]  
Sent: Sunday, October 29, 2023 4:55 PM  
To: Patrice Olds <[polds@cityofsanmateo.org](mailto:polds@cityofsanmateo.org)>  
Subject: Measure Y

We have become alarmed at the alarming density which is being proposed, This tremendous make over attacks the previous wishes of the public.  
Please support your citizens in rethinking what is happening to our City

Brent Harnish  
[REDACTED]  
San Mateo

Sent from my iPhone



**From:** Dana Jordan [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Monday, October 30, 2023 9:36 AM  
**To:** General Plan <generalplan@cityofsanmateo.org>  
**Subject:** Draft General Plan 2040 Comment for Oct 30 meeting

Hi there,

I'd like to comment on the draft plan with regards to a particular block that, after living here for over 10 years and as an active cyclist, needs some attention. I live on Monte Diablo Ave just a block East of the pedestrian overpass/Bayshore Ave (1400/1500 block) just past N Kingston Ave. With a vision of "San Mateo is a **vibrant, livable, diverse, and healthy** community that respects the **quality** of its neighborhoods, fosters a flourishing economy, is committed to equity, and is a leader in **environmental sustainability**." (page 7), the bolded terms are directly affected on a regular basis. There is a high incidence of active cyclists, runners, pedestrians on this street as it is the **ONLY** thoroughfare in our neighborhood to directly access the Bay trail, of which is actively used by many to support a **vibrant, healthy quality** of life and supports those of us who frequently think about the environment

As you cited on page 30, "North Central and North Shoreview/Shoreview received a **high score for traffic**." There is a focused statement regarding "**equity and health** of all residents" page 16 and, with respect to figure 1.7 (page 32) there are high asthma, traffic, particulate matter, diesel particulate matter and toxic releases" - making my proposal much more important since there is a high incidence of people on bicycles/by foot using Monte Diablo for exercise on the Bay trail, it being the road connected to the 101 pedestrian overpass into North Central neighborhood/downtown and the only contiguous thoroughfare to the Bay trail.

Cars whipping by on Monte Diablo are going way too fast and there are just too many things going on to accommodate two-way traffic AND bicyclists/pedestrians with a slender street. The sidewalks have rounded edges and, thus, cars tend to park up on the sidewalk, forcing bicyclists and sometimes pedestrians to use the street, yet east of Huron Ave the street seems to widen and there are no longer rounded sidewalk edges.

**My proposal is to consider a ONE-WAY section of Monte Diablo Ave, between North Kingston and Huron Avenue, running westbound, WITH speed bumps. This will allow for a dedicated bike lane on this section of road, still keeping both sides of the street for parking, and will prevent cars from North Kingston (driving southbound) to turn left onto Monte Diablo Ave, of which I've witnessed too many close calls as well as accidents.**

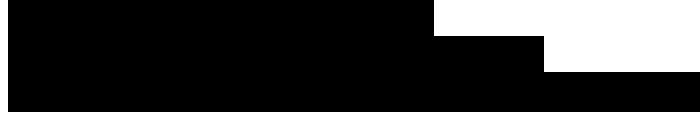
When the City Council discussed the Complete Streets Plan earlier this month, Mayor Lee mentioned the "**absence of feedback from the community East of 101**" (SM Daily Journal 10/23/23 pg 17) and Council member Hedges references "a high percentage of residents in the area have expressed concern with the **lack of safe routes to their schools**.." - this is all concerning to me, as I see students walking/biking to the Montessori school and the former Boys&Girls Club on Monte Diablo on a regular basis, not to mention those who ride/walk/run for exercise.

I'm sorry to have to miss tonight's city council meeting but, please consider this proposal as you are discussing more safe, equitable, healthy alternatives to getting around San Mateo.

Thank you,  
Dana Jordan

--

Dana Jordan | Math/Science Teacher, Academic Support Center



From: Chuck Kabala [REDACTED]  
Sent: Sunday, October 29, 2023 6:03 PM  
To: City Council (San Mateo) <[CityCouncil@cityofsanmateo.org](mailto:CityCouncil@cityofsanmateo.org)>  
Subject: General Plan Update

Please reconsider approving the current General Plan 2040. San Mateans voted for the passing of measure Y which you seem intent on overriding with tall, high density buildings. There is not the infrastructure to support the kind of intense building u are proposing and the democratic process needs to be followed! Please listen to the majority of your constituents. Sincerely, Elizabeth Kabala

**From:** LAURENCE KINSELLA [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Sunday, October 29, 2023 1:23 PM  
**To:** City Council (San Mateo) <[CityCouncil@cityofsanmateo.org](mailto:CityCouncil@cityofsanmateo.org)>  
**Subject:** for the City Council members...

The question is whose interests is this general plan update intended to serve? The outsized influence of special interest organizations, the YIMBY subculture, and paid operatives living in other cities continue to be the primary voices shaping the General Plan. The promised “robust” general plan update process turned out to be a ruse guided by *appointed* city council members and commissioners sympathetic to the YIMBY 'build-everything-in-*your*-backyard' narrative. The result now is a general plan created by YIMBYs for YIMBYs.

**The beneficiaries of the large scale redevelopment envisioned in the Draft General Plan 2040 are not those of us who live here, but those who stand to profit the most - big tech, big real estate, and big construction.**



From: Yi-ting Lin [REDACTED]  
Sent: Sunday, October 29, 2023 9:06 PM  
To: City Council (San Mateo) <[CityCouncil@cityofsanmateo.org](mailto:CityCouncil@cityofsanmateo.org)>  
Subject: No to General Plan 2040

I vote No to General Plan 2040.

Yi-ting Lin  
San Mateo resident

Sent from my iPhone

**From:** OSCAR E. LOPEZ-GUERRA [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Sunday, October 29, 2023 11:41 AM  
**To:** City Council (San Mateo) <[CityCouncil@cityofsanmateo.org](mailto:CityCouncil@cityofsanmateo.org)>  
**Subject:** Too much construction!

Please respect Measure Y!!

**Oscar López-Guerra**

US

From: Charles Lopuck [REDACTED]  
Sent: Sunday, October 29, 2023 2:35 PM  
To: City Council (San Mateo) <[CityCouncil@cityofsanmateo.org](mailto:CityCouncil@cityofsanmateo.org)>  
Subject: GPU reject

Please reject GPU plan and send staff to reconsider we already voted and passed measure Y. We don't need taller buildings in San Mateo

Sent from my iPhone

From: Jill McHale [REDACTED]  
Sent: Sunday, October 29, 2023 2:31 PM  
To: Patrice Olds <[polds@cityofsanmateo.org](mailto:polds@cityofsanmateo.org)>  
Subject: Density and Infrastructure Concerns

I am a San Mateo home owner of 18 years and live near Beresford Park.

While growth in San Mateo is something we cannot stop, I'm especially concerned about the supporting infrastructure for the increased density.

At recent Town Hall meetings, residents asked city employees how the city will handle the stresses on infrastructure that this ongoing growth will create. To my ears, there didn't seem to be a plan. Are we just hoping everything will work out?

San Mateo is expensive already, and I pay high taxes and expect a certain quality of life in return. I expect city planners to have foresight and be responsible in making decisions for the taxes I pay. I expect the city to listen to voters.

I was part of the majority of voters who made our voices clear when we voted on Measure Y and have observed council members not only ignoring what the community demanded with regard to limiting building heights but in some cases, seeming to actively work against it.

Now, under AB1287, by providing additional income-restricted units, developers can now construct units that are 100% larger than previously agreed. I implore the Council not to accept the current GPU. And WHY does the GPU incorporate the maximum development option presented to residents (Alternative A) rather than the smallest alternative (Alternative C)? Once again, the larger alternative ignores our votes on Measure Y. If Council approves the GPU as it is, developers will have power to build as much 'affordable housing' as required to get this 100% increase. We can't stand for this.

Please fight on our behalf to go back to the beginning on these plans  
- they are not good, don't incorporate many key details, and ignore voters' clear voices.

Thank you,

Jill McHale  
[REDACTED]  
San Mateo, CA 94403  
[REDACTED]



**From:** Genel Morgan [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Sunday, October 29, 2023 2:12 PM  
**To:** City Council (San Mateo) <[CityCouncil@cityofsanmateo.org](mailto:CityCouncil@cityofsanmateo.org)>  
**Cc:** Patrice Olds <[polds@cityofsanmateo.org](mailto:polds@cityofsanmateo.org)>  
**Subject:** General Plan Update

Dear City Council Members,

I am writing to you to have my voice heard, although I have no faith you will even listen!

I understand you will vote on Monday night to approve or reject the 2040 General Plan Update. I ask you to reject it and ask staff to revise their recommendations and include plans for supporting infrastructure no matter which option is chosen.

I continue to see the will of the people being ignored in relation to Measure Y. This measure passed but because some on the council and developers don't like the result, they are working for a do-over! This is not the democratic process.

Citizens have made it clear they support moderate growth, yet the council continues to not even consider that option in the General Plan. On top of that, the council has not put forth any concrete plans for how the city will deal with the increased infrastructure needed with any of the options.

Allowing buildings up to 20 stories because of a promise for more affordable units is a joke. Affordable, in reality, is not affordable and then you have sold out the city to developers.

You are in office to represent all the citizens and you need to weigh seriously the impact your decisions will have on San Mateo residents and the culture of San Mateo as a whole. I am a longtime San Mateo resident. As I've said before, I am not against growth but I am against irresponsible growth.

Regards  
Genel Morgan  
District 5

From: Tom Oertli [REDACTED]  
Sent: Sunday, October 29, 2023 12:21 PM  
To: City Council (San Mateo) <[CityCouncil@cityofsanmateo.org](mailto:CityCouncil@cityofsanmateo.org)>  
Subject: 2040 General Plan Update

Dear City Council,

I ask that you reject the current 2040 General Plan update. Over the course of many years the City has asked for input about the General Plan and I with many others have asked for a moderate plan on development in San Mateo that works with Measure Y. What I have seen and believe is reflected in the current General Plan is a maximum development approach and I ask you to vote NO on Monday. Please respect the voters that passed measure Y and vote No on the current max development General Plan.

Thank You,  
Tom Oertli

**From:** Seema Patel [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Sunday, October 29, 2023 6:23 PM  
**To:** City Council (San Mateo) <[CityCouncil@cityofsanmateo.org](mailto:CityCouncil@cityofsanmateo.org)>  
**Subject:** Draft General Plan Land Use Element

Hello City Council!

Attached are my personal comments on the Draft General Plan Land Use Element. I appreciate your time and consideration!

Respectfully,  
Seema Patel

Mayor Lee, Deputy Mayor Nash and Councilmembers Hedges, Loraine & Newsom,

Although I currently serve as a Planning Commissioner for the City of San Mateo, I am submitting these comments on my own behalf as a private resident of San Mateo.

Our Draft General Plan has three key themes: Sustainability, Environmental Justice, and Community Engagement. We have a once in twenty year opportunity to make meaningful progress in these areas and shape a San Mateo where anyone and everyone can thrive. Our current Draft General Plan sites a significant amount of new residential development within 500' of heavily trafficked freeways. Just over 48% of the new housing units on our Housing Element Site Inventory are located within this buffer, contrary to the recommendations of both the California Air Resources Board (CARB) and the Bay Area Air Quality Management District (BAAQMD). Almost 42% of the low-income units on our Site Inventory are located within this buffer, reinforcing what is stated in BAAQMD's [Best Practices for Centering Environmental Justice, Health and Equity](#), "The burden of breathing unhealthy air is often disproportionately borne by low-income communities and communities of color, many of which are situated closer to busy highways, ports, factories, and other pollution sources."

I do not believe our Draft General Plan is meeting our theme of environmental justice and would like to offer specific suggestions to remedy this.

Commissioner Wiggins gave a [great overview of the air quality risks](#) at the September 26, 2023 Planning Commission meeting. He explained that CARB's [Air Quality and Land Use Handbook](#) considers the risks of poor air quality on sensitive receptors such as homes, daycares, etc., and recommends against placing these uses within 500' of a roadway that averages in excess of 100,000 vehicles/day. [CalEnviroScreen 4.0](#) shows that census tracts adjacent to Highways 101 and 92 have high levels of particulate matter. The intersection of Highways 101 & 92 in particular has more than half a ton of particulate emissions per year. This level of particulate matter is 95% higher than other census tracts in CA and 6x the particulate emissions in San Mateo Park.

The Bay Area Air Quality Management District's #1 tool in their [Planning Healthy Places](#) guidance is to place sensitive receptors away from heavily trafficked highways, including Highways 101 and 92 (pg 10). While air filtration systems can mitigate the impact indoors, the City requires residential projects to provide open space for residents, effectively requiring that residents have access to unhealthy air. Placing the open space as far from the roadway as possible may help, but many of these residential parcels are located entirely within the 500' buffer.

Concerned about the impact to future residents (and the disproportionate impact to low-income residents) both the General Plan Subcommittee and Planning Commission have repeatedly suggested "swapping" specific land uses to move residential uses away from Highways 101 and 92. This is in line with BAAQMD's recommendation, "...when updating or making revisions to a zoning code in an area characterized by elevated levels of air pollution (such as immediately adjacent to a



freeway), local government may choose to designate the land use as commercial, office, or parking instead of residential..." (pg 37).

Specific suggestions include:

1. Do not allow residential uses on any land within 500' of 101 & 92. Instead, designate this land as commercial or office.
2. Change the land use of the "Service Commercial" area at 10th Ave and S Claremont St to "Residential High I". This area is located 0.7mi from both the Downtown Caltrain Station and Hayward Park Caltrain Station and would be a great opportunity for Transit-Oriented Development.
3. Increase each land use in the area roughly bounded by E Santa Inez Ave and Tilton Ave, and N Delaware St and San Mateo Dr by one level.
4. If residential uses must be designated within 500' of 101 & 92, create a 100' buffer against the roadway that is designated Office High so that office buildings can serve as barriers between residential uses and the roadways.

I would like to offer responses to counterpoints I've heard when raising these concerns:

1. If we don't build housing near freeways the housing will just be built farther away, increasing sprawl and vehicle miles traveled, ultimately making air pollution worse.

While this argument is applicable when deciding whether or not to build a specific project adjacent to a freeway, that is not the decision before us at this moment. The question before us is not whether or not to build the housing, but **where** to build the housing, and we have many options that fall outside both the 500' roadway buffer and R1 neighborhoods.

2. With restrictions on diesel engines and adoption of electric vehicles, air quality is improving.

As Commissioner Wiggins explained, the primary source of PM 2.5 particulates near roadways is brakes and tires, which is actually getting worse due to increasing vehicle weight.

3. At the Planning Commission's suggestion, Policy LU 8.6 is being modified to ensure that open space is aggregated away from pollution sources to the greatest extent possible.

"Greatest extent possible" is not a hard requirement. Even an objective design standard that requires open space to be contained within a protected courtyard or sited as far from pollution sources as possible would be a likely target for a state density bonus waiver or concession as it would be a significant constraint to the design of the project.

4. The area designated "Service Commercial" at 10th Ave & South Claremont St is outside a Study Area.

When the Study Areas were created, Council stated that changes outside the Study Areas were possible, but most changes would be concentrated within the Study Areas. Ultimately this decision will go to the voters and based on the recent survey results, I believe voters would be amenable to concentrating new housing development within 0.7mi of two Caltrain stations.

5. Due to the high cost of construction, new service commercial uses are not being built. If the area at 10th Ave & S Claremont St is redeveloped into residential, San Mateo will likely lose those businesses.

While it would be unfortunate to lose those businesses, when faced with the decision to retain those businesses or provide healthy living space for future residents, I believe we must prioritize the health of our residents.

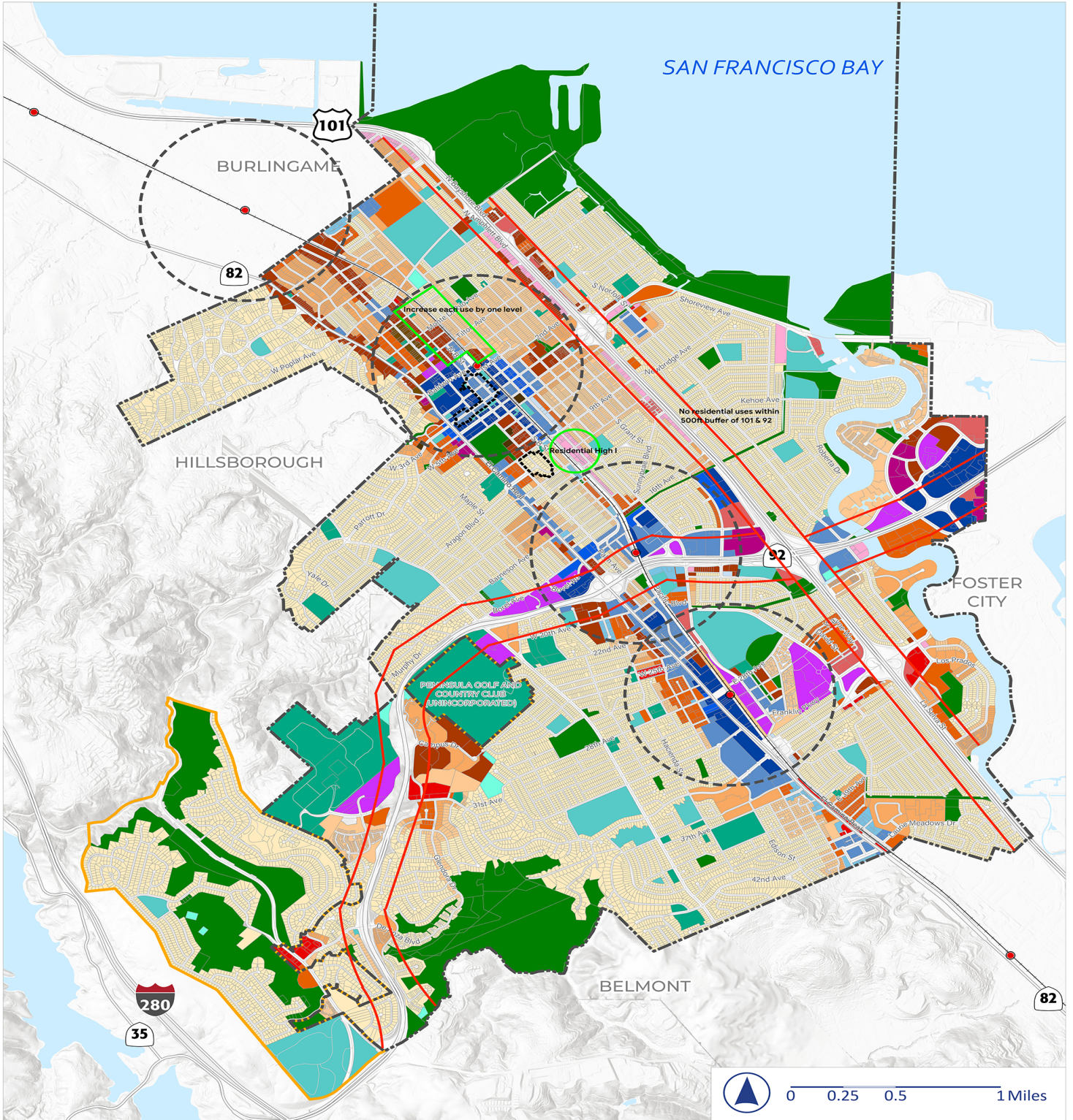
6. We cannot change the designation of the existing residential uses within 500' of 101 & 92 because we are not legally permitted to downzone residential uses.

SB 330 prevents local jurisdictions from downzoning residential uses *unless they upzone an equivalent amount elsewhere within their boundaries*. I believe we have the ability (and opportunity) to add equivalent capacity elsewhere, without altering R1 neighborhoods outside the 500' buffer.

Thank you for your consideration of my suggestions. I appreciate your support in building a healthy San Mateo for current and future generations.

Regards,  
Seema Patel

# Draft General Plan 2040 Land Use Map



- |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|
| City Limits                                   | Residential Medium I (3-5 stories, 36-50 du/ac)   | Mixed-Use Low (2-4 stories, 10-35 du/ac)        |
| Sphere of Influence                           | Residential Medium II (4-6 stories, 51-99 du/ac)  | Mixed-Use Medium I (3-5 stories, 36-50 du/ac)   |
| 1/2 Mile Radius Around Caltrain               | Residential High I (5-8 stories, 100-130 du/ac)   | Mixed-Use Medium II (4-6 stories, 51-99 du/ac)  |
| Caltrain Station                              | Residential High II (6-10 stories, 100-200 du/ac) | Mixed-Use High I (5-8 stories, 100-130 du/ac)   |
| Caltrain                                      | Service Commercial (1-3 stories)                  | Mixed-Use High II (6-10 stories, 100-200 du/ac) |
| Historic Districts                            | Regional Commercial (1-3 stories)                 | Parks/ Open Space                               |
| Residential Very Low (1-3 stories, 1-9 du/ac) | Neighborhood Commercial (1-3 stories)             | Public Facilities                               |
| Residential Low I (1-3 stories, 9-19 du/ac)   | Office Low (1-2 stories)                          | Quasi-Public (1-3 stories)                      |
| Residential Low II (2-4 stories, 20-35 du/ac) | Office Medium (2-4 stories)                       | Utilities                                       |
|   | Office High (3-5 stories)                         |   |

Source: City of San Mateo, 2022; ESRI, 2022; PlaceWorks, 2023



**From:** Dave Santos [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Sunday, October 29, 2023 8:16 PM  
**To:** City Council (San Mateo) <[CityCouncil@cityofsanmateo.org](mailto:CityCouncil@cityofsanmateo.org)>; Patrice Olds <[polds@cityofsanmateo.org](mailto:polds@cityofsanmateo.org)>  
**Subject:** 2040 General Plan Update

I am writing the City Council to share my concerns about the new General Plan 2040 and the future development of San Mateo.

The pandemic has changed the economy of the Bay Area; many of these changes are likely to be permanent.

I do not feel that the new General Plan for 2040 takes this into consideration. The previous assumptions no longer apply. Revised office work patterns and population forecasts by the State auditor need to be included. State population forecasts show the previous population estimates are not accurate..

It appears that the will of the people in passing Measure Y is being ignored; some council members continue to push for high growth development. At the council meetings I have attended, residents have continually advocated for single family home neighborhoods, small business and retail operations being preserved. Business owners are considering converting their office space to housing because of lack of demand. Increased property revenue forecasts have been adjusted downward. Compounding this issue is the decrease in sales and new construction which is hindered by rising mortgage interest rates. The cost of new construction has risen 24 % this year according to a city of San Jose report.

Please remember the several blocks near downtown San Mateo sit vacant with plans for development in limbo.

There is no such thing as affordable housing; in the Bay Area; it is a myth. Yet a new law provides for a larger building in exchange for more low- and



moderate-income housing. The plan will have a profound negative impact on the quality of life of all of San Mateo as developers incentivize higher buildings for profits.

It is important to rethink this new General Plan because resources are limited. There is also the matter of infrastructure. At a Town Hall meeting I attended, the question of new infrastructure came up. and the staff could not address the issue. The plan fails to analyze future infrastructure needs and their projected costs.

I do not feel that this General Plan considers the more reasonable alternative of moderate growth. Please revisit Alternative A, which is a moderate growth plan that preserves neighborhood quality of life. The Council needs to consider alternatives to ensure maximum efficiency. Opting for a high growth option without considering new infrastructure is a myopic path.

The new general Plan needs to be revised to reflect the new realities.

Sincerely,

Dave Santos

From: Suzanne Shelley [REDACTED]  
Sent: Sunday, October 29, 2023 2:03 PM  
To: City Council (San Mateo) <[CityCouncil@cityofsanmateo.org](mailto:CityCouncil@cityofsanmateo.org)>  
Subject: Please respect MEASURE Y

Dear City Council,

Please respect Measure Y- no more high rise buildings adding even more density to our crowded neighborhoods!

There needs to be balance between pleasing developers & accommodating the desires of San Mateo residents to preserve our neighborhoods.

Suzanne Shelley  
San Mateo

**From:** Aimee WCrollerskate [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Sunday, October 29, 2023 3:55 PM  
**To:** City Council (San Mateo) <[CityCouncil@cityofsanmateo.org](mailto:CityCouncil@cityofsanmateo.org)>; Patrice Olds <[polds@cityofsanmateo.org](mailto:polds@cityofsanmateo.org)>  
**Subject:** NO to the new 2040 General Plan Update. The voters have already spoken.

Dear Dear Members of the San Mateo City Council,

Rather than focusing on other pressing community matters, I find myself repeatedly writing this council about efforts to undermine the will of the people regarding the settled vote on Measure Y.

This marks the THIRD occasion on which I have brought this matter to your attention.

We ALL want increased availability of affordable housing in our area. However, historically there has been a noticeable absence of accountability for previous developers who have been given a ticket to the city but failed to meet the needs of our community. The electorate has made it clear that they are unwilling to embark on this path again without the requisite safeguards and considerations in place. We're also extremely concerned that there is NO plan to ensure that our infrastructure can accommodate these plans.

All in all, city staff have fallen short in providing critical and necessary assurances on these matters, while eroding the trust of many of its constituents in the process.

I ask again that the City Council honor the will of the voters as expressed through Measure Y, and to **reject the proposed New 2040 General Plan Update and any future proposals that seek to circumvent the provisions outlined in Measure Y.**

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Aimee Stevland, resident

[REDACTED]  
San Mateo, 94403

**From:** Lisa Taner [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Sunday, October 29, 2023 10:49 AM  
**To:** City Council (San Mateo) <[CityCouncil@cityofsanmateo.org](mailto:CityCouncil@cityofsanmateo.org)>  
**Cc:** Patrice Olds <[polds@cityofsanmateo.org](mailto:polds@cityofsanmateo.org)>; Alex Khojikian <[akhojikian@cityofsanmateo.org](mailto:akhojikian@cityofsanmateo.org)>  
**Subject:** Gambling on the Draft 2040 General Plan Update?

Dear City Council,

Concerned citizens from all over our Peninsula district met with Senator Becker last week as his cities fail to receive approval from the HCD for their Housing Elements. Meanwhile, these cities are spending an inordinate amount of money to do so - with bankruptcy on the horizon. At the heart of this are the RHNA numbers which the HCD could not ensure were either accurate or adequately supported, as published by our own state auditor in 2022. Yet, here we are in San Mateo constantly pushing for maximum growth based on these faulty numbers.

Your constituents have been clear in their desire for balanced growth, yet your staff has been directed to plan for the most extreme possibilities for development. At the recent Town Hall meetings, staff was asked logically just HOW the City would handle all the infrastructure needs that go hand in hand with what they are projecting. There was no answer, because staff was not tasked to figure that out. it seems no one has been tasked to figure that out. With that, we are in jeopardy.

The Housing Leadership Council recently spoke to San Mateo Rotarians, expectedly promoting growth on the basis that more growth equates to more 'affordable housing.' Yet, when asked about their metric for measuring their success to create such based on the many changes in our region, they had none. (These changes include San Francisco's currently growing 30% commercial vacancy rate - which would likely not be converted to housing as developers aren't lining up for, per KTVU earlier this month. We see similar impacts here in San Mateo with multiple projects on pause for 2 years per developers' requests.)

We rely on our leaders to see the entire landscape, to protect us from massive risks, and to fight for us when things are unjust. We can not go forward with blinders and hope for the best - setting our entire city on a path that is sure to create more hardship, not only on the backs of the taxpaying homeowners, but resulting in more gentrification for all those struggling to get by if we give the nod to maximum development to obtain a pittance of below market units that are still unaffordable (<https://www.housingisahumanright.org/what-is-a-yimby-hint-its-not-good/> ).

So much good has been removed from the General Plan. So much dice rolling replaces it in the 2040 update. None of which is what your constituents asked for. This is not success.

All of our futures depend so heavily on your decision whether to gamble on what will or will not happen if you accept this General Plan Update and open the floodgates. Your public will be watching with grave concerns Monday night to see if our Council is willing to put everything at risk with this unacceptable 2040 draft update.

Sincerely,

Lisa Taner  
San Mateo Resident



**From:** Joe Totah [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Sunday, October 29, 2023 9:08 PM  
**To:** City Council (San Mateo) <[CityCouncil@cityofsanmateo.org](mailto:CityCouncil@cityofsanmateo.org)>  
**Subject:** San Mateo Height Limits

Dear Mayor and Council Members Lee, Nash, Newsome, Hedges and Lorraine, San Mateo is not a big city and don't want it to be a big city, I like the small to medium size nature of the city. Furthermore, traffic is getting bad here and with more density, it will get worse. It was often stated that the bay meadow development will not create extra traffic because everyone is near the train, but my understanding is that the Hillsdale Caltrain Station did not significantly grow in ridership as new units were being added, I believe the ridership is fairly flat for the last 10 years. In either case, I do realize it may be necessary to build some units, but breaching our currently height limits would not only be no acceptable, it would cause me to not vote for any council member that supports higher heights and higher density. I don't say that as to punish anyone, I say it to protect our city from those who want to make life difficult for existing residents. Thank you for your attention to this.

Joe Totah  
[REDACTED]

From: Joan Young [REDACTED]  
Sent: Sunday, October 29, 2023 8:11 PM  
To: City Council (San Mateo) <[CityCouncil@cityofsanmateo.org](mailto:CityCouncil@cityofsanmateo.org)>  
Subject: Measure Y

To the powers that be ....please overturn measure Y!!!!!!  
Sent from my iPhoneThank You

From: jeanne bosschart [REDACTED]  
Sent: Monday, October 30, 2023 9:12 AM  
To: City Council (San Mateo) <[CityCouncil@cityofsanmateo.org](mailto:CityCouncil@cityofsanmateo.org)>  
Subject: San Mateo building density

I am opposed to increasing building density and height limitations in San Mateo. We do not have the infrastructure to support these increases and if you do not follow advice of the San Mateo voters, you will ruin the quality of life in our city. We live here so that we can have a suburban town, not an urban city like San Francisco.

Jeanne Bosschart

[REDACTED]

San Mateo

Sent from my iPad

**From:** Doug D'Anna [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Monday, October 30, 2023 6:44 AM  
**To:** City Council (San Mateo) <[CityCouncil@cityofsanmateo.org](mailto:CityCouncil@cityofsanmateo.org)>; Patrice Olds <[polds@cityofsanmateo.org](mailto:polds@cityofsanmateo.org)>  
**Subject:** Urgent: Reevalue the 2040 General Plan Update--DO NOT APPROVE AS IS

Dear City Council Members,

I urge you to immediately reassess the 2040 General Plan Update (GPU). There are vital concerns that demand your attention:

- **Disregard for Measure Y:** Our community's decision on height and density limits, as reflected in Measure Y, is being blatantly ignored. Some council members and representatives are actively working against this democratic process.
- **AB1287's Impact:** Recent legislation (AB1287) grants developers substantial increases in building heights in exchange for providing low and moderate-income housing units. If the current GPU is accepted, this could lead to a potential doubling of building heights. The focus on the maximum development alternative (Alternative A) at the expense of the smaller alternative (Alternative C) directly undermines the essence of Measure Y.
- **Flawed Housing Numbers:** Concerned citizens, alongside Senator Becker, have unveiled issues with state-mandated Housing Elements. The accuracy and credibility of these mandated housing figures, as highlighted by the state auditor in 2022, are in question. It is disconcerting that San Mateo is pursuing maximum growth based on these questionable statistics.
- **Infrastructure Planning Deficiency:** Recent Town Hall meetings revealed a glaring absence of answers from city staff regarding essential infrastructure planning. It appears that no one has been tasked with addressing this critical aspect.
- **Avoiding Blind Development:** Proceeding without a clear vision and strategic foresight is perilous. Embracing maximum development without considering the repercussions will inflict further hardships on homeowners and exacerbate gentrification issues.

I implore you to reject the current GPU draft and revisit the more prudent growth plan, Alternative A. Ensure that the new draft aligns with the city's objectives, especially concerning the enhancement of neighborhood quality of life and sensitive neighborhood design.

The current General Plan has stripped away many essential aspects, and the 2040 update seems perilous. I urge you to take these concerns seriously and DO NOT APPROVE 2040 General Plan Update (GPU), which ignores the will of the people, as expressed in Measure Y.

Thank you for addressing these crucial matters promptly.

Sincerely,

Doug D'Anna



**From:** [ceo@ethicssanmateo.com](mailto:ceo@ethicssanmateo.com) <[ceo@ethicssanmateo.com](mailto:ceo@ethicssanmateo.com)>

**Sent:** Monday, October 30, 2023 10:22 AM

**To:** Amourance Lee <[alee@cityofsanmateo.org](mailto:alee@cityofsanmateo.org)>; Lisa Diaz Nash <[ldiaznash@cityofsanmateo.org](mailto:ldiaznash@cityofsanmateo.org)>; Adam Loraine <[aloraine@cityofsanmateo.org](mailto:aloraine@cityofsanmateo.org)>; Rob Newsom <[rnewsom@cityofsanmateo.org](mailto:rnewsom@cityofsanmateo.org)>; Richard Hedges <[rhedges@cityofsanmateo.org](mailto:rhedges@cityofsanmateo.org)>; Patrice Olds <[polds@cityofsanmateo.org](mailto:polds@cityofsanmateo.org)>

**Cc:** [CityAttorneysOffice@cityofsanmateo.org](mailto:CityAttorneysOffice@cityofsanmateo.org); City Mgr <[citymgr@cityofsanmateo.org](mailto:citymgr@cityofsanmateo.org)>

**Subject:** Oct 30, 2023 Special Council Meeting Written Comments Agenda Items 1 and 2

Honorable Mayor and Council Members,

I am Dave Cohen representing Ethics San Mateo, a California nonprofit public benefit corporation. We do not take positions of supporting or opposing specific issues, we are focused on ethical conduct by our city's leadership.

We are concerned about the Voter Opinion Survey on Draft General Plan 2040 Heights and Land Use Designation and the Draft General Plan for several reasons.

- 1) The General Plan was produced using a population forecast that has been revised by the authoritative State Agency, the Calf Department of Finance. The revised forecast actually shows declines in San Mateo County population from now to 2060, with every year's forecast population lower than 2023. A copy of the forecast, which is publicly available online, is attached.
- 2) We question the validity of the on-line Voter Opinion Survey on the Draft General Plan 2040 Heights and Land Use Designation. ESM has requested information regarding the development of the questions, including asking for the Statement of Work that True North was under contract to perform, who wrote or influenced the development of the questions, and how they were reviewed. We did not receive a response and have escalated our request. The requests are attached.

We believe some of the questions were not subject to critical review for adherence to best practice design of survey questions to avoid inaccurate or skewed results. The development of survey questions is a science and should be insulated from bias on the part of the authors or those contracting for the survey.

- 3) ESM believes that the development of the Draft General Plan has been subject to the publicly announced demands contained in the agendas of activist groups. We have observed members of activist groups, including probable lobbyists, attempting to marginalize and minimize the voices of San Mateo residents who oppose parts of their agendas.

ESM has received a copy of an email for YIMBY Action intended for city commissioners and elected officials, inviting them to participate in the organization's Local Government Alliance. Their stated goal is to implant activists into city leadership. They have succeeded in doing so. We believe San Mateo's Planning Commission is an example. A copy of the email is attached. The influence of activists on the Draft General Plan must be considered – their loud demands are drowning out what residents are stating.

We therefore ask the council to:

- a. Have the Draft General Plan re-evaluated using the updated population forecasts.
- b. Cause the suspension of any use of the survey results until it can be independently determined the methodology meets best practices.
- c. Determine the effect of conflicts of interest by activists, or those aligned with the activist groups' agendas, within our city government on the Draft General Plan development.

We believe that if the city had adequate, clearly defined, and enforceable standards of ethical conduct these kinds of issues would simply not rise to this high level of concern.

Regards,

Dave Cohen, President/CEO

Ethics San Mateo, A California Nonprofit Public Benefit Corporation

***DEDICATED TO TRUTH, TRANSPARENCY AND ETHICAL CONDUCT IN CITY GOVERNMENT***



**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Monday, October 30, 2023 9:47 AM  
**To:** City Council (San Mateo) <[CityCouncil@cityofsanmateo.org](mailto:CityCouncil@cityofsanmateo.org)>  
**Subject:** Reconsider Vote

San Mateo City Council,

I moved to San Mateo in 1964. I was in The Navy stationed at Treasure Island and no housing was available there. My wife wanted to teach school in a nice suburban neighborhood. We selected San Mateo and she taught in Foster City. Now with all the stack and pack housing along the transit corridor it's looking more and more like the city we were able to avoid then. There is lots of land both north and south along the California coast for suburban development. I don't like the European model where everyone lives in an apartment. We have a nice home with a large lot and a view of the bay. To afford it we drove two paid for VW's for 12 years in order to make the big house payments. Now you want my neighbors to build housing in their back yards!

Why is the state of California bribing the city with transportation money to add more housing when people are leaving the State? Our residents approved prop Y and expressed their desires. Please go back to the drawing board and don't approve the proposed plan.

Warren Gammeter  
San Mateo

**From:** Dana Jordan [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Monday, October 30, 2023 9:36 AM  
**To:** General Plan <generalplan@cityofsanmateo.org>  
**Subject:** Draft General Plan 2040 Comment for Oct 30 meeting

Hi there,

I'd like to comment on the draft plan with regards to a particular block that, after living here for over 10 years and as an active cyclist, needs some attention. I live on Monte Diablo Ave just a block East of the pedestrian overpass/Bayshore Ave (1400/1500 block) just past N Kingston Ave. With a vision of "San Mateo is a **vibrant, livable, diverse, and healthy** community that respects the **quality** of its neighborhoods, fosters a flourishing economy, is committed to equity, and is a leader in **environmental sustainability**." (page 7), the bolded terms are directly affected on a regular basis. There is a high incidence of active cyclists, runners, pedestrians on this street as it is the **ONLY** thoroughfare in our neighborhood to directly access the Bay trail, of which is actively used by many to support a **vibrant, healthy quality** of life and supports those of us who frequently think about the environment

As you cited on page 30, "North Central and North Shoreview/Shoreview received a **high score for traffic**." There is a focused statement regarding "**equity and health** of all residents" page 16 and, with respect to figure 1.7 (page 32) there are high asthma, traffic, particulate matter, diesel particulate matter and toxic releases" - making my proposal much more important since there is a high incidence of people on bicycles/by foot using Monte Diablo for exercise on the Bay trail, it being the road connected to the 101 pedestrian overpass into North Central neighborhood/downtown and the only contiguous thoroughfare to the Bay trail.

Cars whipping by on Monte Diablo are going way too fast and there are just too many things going on to accommodate two-way traffic AND bicyclists/pedestrians with a slender street. The sidewalks have rounded edges and, thus, cars tend to park up on the sidewalk, forcing bicyclists and sometimes pedestrians to use the street, yet east of Huron Ave the street seems to widen and there are no longer rounded sidewalk edges.

**My proposal is to consider a ONE-WAY section of Monte Diablo Ave, between North Kingston and Huron Avenue, running westbound, WITH speed bumps. This will allow for a dedicated bike lane on this section of road, still keeping both sides of the street for parking, and will prevent cars from North Kingston (driving southbound) to turn left onto Monte Diablo Ave, of which I've witnessed too many close calls as well as accidents.**

When the City Council discussed the Complete Streets Plan earlier this month, Mayor Lee mentioned the "**absence of feedback from the community East of 101**" (SM Daily Journal 10/23/23 pg 17) and Council member Hedges references "a high percentage of residents in the area have expressed concern with the **lack of safe routes to their schools**.." - this is all concerning to me, as I see students walking/biking to the Montessori school and the former Boys&Girls Club on Monte Diablo on a regular basis, not to mention those who ride/walk/run for exercise.

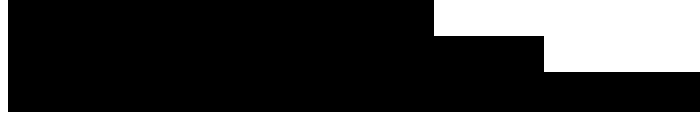
I'm sorry to have to miss tonight's city council meeting but, please consider this proposal as you are discussing more safe, equitable, healthy alternatives to getting around San Mateo.

Thank you,  
Dana Jordan



--

Dana Jordan | Math/Science Teacher, Academic Support Center



From: Patricia Lind <[REDACTED]>  
Sent: Monday, October 30, 2023 8:22 AM  
To: Patrice Olds <[polds@cityofsanmateo.org](mailto:polds@cityofsanmateo.org)>  
Subject: No on Y

More input is needed from residents. Put a PAUSE on this measure and reconnect with the public. It is NOT favored by the public.

Sent from my iPhone

**From:** Marcie Maffei <[REDACTED]>  
**Sent:** Monday, October 30, 2023 7:22 AM  
**To:** Patrice Olds <[polds@cityofsanmateo.org](mailto:polds@cityofsanmateo.org)>  
**Subject:** Why again

Hello,

Where is democracy? We have voted against raising the height of buildings TWICE!!!! Isn't one vote enough and now you're trying for a third time. ENOUGH!!! You are just like a screaming child throwing a tantrum until you get your way. It's like all of you have sold your souls.

Your way is destroying San Mateo. The designs of the buildings are horrible and empty...future ghettos. Enough Listen to what we have already said.

And please plant some trees. Fifth street garage and the new housing are ugly and at least some trees could help the fronts...

It's so sad what all of you have done to our lives and our town.

And your NIMBY strive San Mateo flyer was heartbreaking...if we don't pass the height restrictions...this will be in your neighborhood....horrible...like so much these days...just horrible.

Marcie Maffei

**From:** Rick Mayerson [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Monday, October 30, 2023 10:19 AM  
**To:** City Council (San Mateo) <[CityCouncil@cityofsanmateo.org](mailto:CityCouncil@cityofsanmateo.org)>  
**Subject:** 2040 General Plan comments

1. Housing Density Bonuses are significant (potentially doubling project size) and should be reflected in the 2040 Land Use Element.

2. The voters have repeatedly voiced their preference for measured growth while still complying with state mandates. Surveys and survey questions in particular can be highly manipulated, are often self-serving and shouldn't serve as the basis to overrule community preferences expressed at the ballot box. *(yes, propositions too are highly manipulated and sometimes contain downright deceptive language... don't get me started!)*.

Thank you for your consideration and the time you all have invested in advancing these very important policy frameworks.

-Rick Mayerson  
[REDACTED]



From: marcia mehl [REDACTED]  
Sent: Monday, October 30, 2023 9:28 AM  
To: City Council (San Mateo) <[CityCouncil@cityofsanmateo.org](mailto:CityCouncil@cityofsanmateo.org)>  
Subject: Tonight's vote

I have been a San Mateo resident since 1973 and have loved this community. Our children attended public schools here.

This current dis- regard for the height limits we cited for are most disturbing to me. Where are the infrastructure change plans? Where is the plan for increased schools and teachers? What are the facts about current available low income housing compared to other open spaces?

In some areas of town, I'm even getting lost due to street changes, unfamiliar sites and buildings.

Due to constant street detours, my quiet neighborhood is now a very busy zone with buses and trucks rumbling by.

There have been confusing notifications posted even regarding private property near 25th.

I urge you to reject the current plan and go back to the drawing boards to protect your constituents from over development. We tax payers provide the funds for this city's operation. Please have the courtesy to re- consider this plan.

VOTE. NO.

Marcia Mehl

Sent from my iPhone

-----Original Message-----

From: Morris [REDACTED]  
Sent: Monday, October 30, 2023 9:15 AM  
To: Patrice Olds <[polds@cityofsanmateo.org](mailto:polds@cityofsanmateo.org)>  
Subject: Reject GPU

Please reconsider and do not approve the current plan that will/can increase bldg heights. You need to listen and understand what the citizens voted for on measure Y. Otherwise why is there a voting process?  
Thank you.

October 30, 2023

Dear Mayor Lee and Members of the City Council,

The current General Plan is valid until 2030 and meets the RHNA numbers with a buffer. Developers can use the new housing laws with Measure Y and increase the heights and densities depending the configuration of affordable housing they choose. For example Kiku Crossing affordable housing used AB 1763 to increase the density and height.

Categories High Density I and High Density II the maximum heights will go much higher and more dense with new state density bonus laws such as AB1287. 8 or 10 stories could become 16 or 20 stories. Do not approve the maximum growth scenario.

1. At the District 3 meeting 90% of the attendees supported keeping 1 - 2 stories in the Downtown with a maximum 3 - 4 stories. We would like to keep the charm like other downtowns - San Carlos, Palo Alto, and Mt. View Downtowns. We still need protections from traffic and air quality issues. The maximum alternative GP is too extreme.
2. We oppose rezoning the Service Commercial designation to Service Commercial/Light Manufacturing on S Amphlett. This re-designation brings more large trucks to Central and Sunnybrae neighborhoods. Light Manufacturing will add more warehouses and car repair shops increasing diesel pollution, truck noise and tree damages. San Mateo needs an Industrial Park near 101/92 for these kinds of businesses. We need solutions.
3. We do not support Accessory Commercial Units in residential neighborhoods. We already have a Home Occupation Business Ordinance.

Best,

Michael Weinbauer  
Maurine Killough  
David Light  
Francie Souza  
Laurie Watanuki

**From:** weller323 [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Monday, October 30, 2023 10:01 AM  
**To:** City Council (San Mateo) <[CityCouncil@cityofsanmateo.org](mailto:CityCouncil@cityofsanmateo.org)>  
**Subject:** SM General Plan

Dear City Council Members,

There remains much confusion and an unknown future in terms of the needs for a 2040 General Plan for San Mateo.

\*\*\*What is REALLY necessary to meet housing requirements given the new housing laws passed this year?

\*\*\*California is losing population, making predicted housing needs unreliable.

\*\*\*Why have the initial drafts for the General Plan always chosen the maximum growth option when medium and low growth alternatives were options?

Ironic that the high density population planned for downtown San Mateo and the Hillsdale area, people will have to get in their cars just to buy groceries---"progressive urban planning" at its worst! Although Draeger's MAY return to a smaller space in the proposed new building, it is a high end grocery for the low income shopper. Lots of talk about less reliance on cars, but the reality of San Mateo's development tells another story---it has been all about tear down and build, build, build without regard to the need for infrastructure, increased traffic, wind tunnel affects of high building downtown blocks, already plenty of empty office space, convenient access to basic needs such as groceries, etc. And, a token nod for low income housing, requiring only the minimum from developers.

City planners, the Planning Commission, real estate interests and developers seem eager to tip San Mateo into a high density, characterless suburban "nothing community." I urge you, the City Council, the ultimate decision makers for our city, to take a thoughtful approach before approving more high density for San Mateo.

Sincerely,  
Nancy Weller



**From:** Robert Whitehair [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Monday, October 30, 2023 9:19 AM  
**To:** City Council (San Mateo) <[CityCouncil@cityofsanmateo.org](mailto:CityCouncil@cityofsanmateo.org)>; Clerk <[clerk@cityofsanmateo.org](mailto:clerk@cityofsanmateo.org)>  
**Subject:** General

Dear Honorable Mayor Lee, Deputy Mayor Nash and Councilmembers Hedges, Loraine & Newsom,

The Draft General Plan accomplishes so much by providing a decent response to the one most famous, or infamous, issue that has bedeviled San Mateo for almost 4 decades: building height and density. Kudos to the City for bold action that provides an acceptable pathway for responding to that problem.

But the Draft General Plan fails as a response to the climate crisis.

As many have pointed out, the Draft General Plan has three key themes: Sustainability, Environmental Justice, and Community Engagement. We have a once in twenty year opportunity to make meaningful progress in these areas and shape a San Mateo where anyone and everyone can thrive and where significant climate issues can be addressed. Meanwhile the climate worsens, bringing some of the hottest months on record in the last 2000 years.

The good news is that there is still a time to respond.

The reality is that in my lifetime the climate crisis will probably not be resolved. However, **IF** we were to immediately adopt an all hands on deck approach, eliminate fossil fuels, and regenerate our planet, there is a decent chance to turn around the climate crisis in the next 7 generations.

**IF.**

The City has already shown statewide leadership by its adoption of reach codes, and by developing a Building Decarbonization strategy.

The best next step is to adopt a focused Climate Action Element of the General Plan, similar to what the County of San Mateo has done <https://www.smcgov.org/media/73461/download?inline=>

Adoption of such an element by the City of San Mateo will provide a bold statement and additional staff resources. Some of us have already called for a Climate Element, but we were summarily dismissed.

If a City as powerful and focused as San Mateo can find closure on the building height and density issue, then we stand a great chance of dealing with the climate crisis.

Please direct staff to adopt a Climate Element to the General Plan

Thank you

Robert Whitehair  
San Mateo home owner for 41 years

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Monday, October 30, 2023 10:13 AM  
**To:** City Council (San Mateo) <[CityCouncil@cityofsanmateo.org](mailto:CityCouncil@cityofsanmateo.org)>  
**Subject:** urban density

Dear City Council Members,

Thank you for your efforts for this city. As a long time resident I am profoundly offended by the questions of growth being always seen through the lens of the maximum possible when we have neither the streets, parking or other infrastructure to support it. Please address the longstanding serious drainage problems in Baywood before you get lofty about growth. The last thing this town needs are senseless high-rises blocking views residents have cherished for decades, and more density while people are leaving the area. What makes this town special is its character which would be far too easy to destroy with unfettered growth.

Thank you for your consideration,  
Helene Wickett  
[REDACTED]

**From:** [cgillett343@gmail.com](mailto:cgillett343@gmail.com) <[cgillett343@gmail.com](mailto:cgillett343@gmail.com)>

**Sent:** Monday, October 30, 2023 1:45 PM

**To:** Amourance Lee <[alee@cityofsanmateo.org](mailto:alee@cityofsanmateo.org)>; Lisa Diaz Nash <[ldiaznash@cityofsanmateo.org](mailto:ldiaznash@cityofsanmateo.org)>; Adam Loraine <[aloraine@cityofsanmateo.org](mailto:aloraine@cityofsanmateo.org)>; Rob Newsom <[rnewsom@cityofsanmateo.org](mailto:rnewsom@cityofsanmateo.org)>; Richard Hedges <[rhedges@cityofsanmateo.org](mailto:rhedges@cityofsanmateo.org)>; Patrice Olds <[polds@cityofsanmateo.org](mailto:polds@cityofsanmateo.org)>; 'Cc:' <[CityAttorneysOffice@cityofsanmateo.org](mailto:CityAttorneysOffice@cityofsanmateo.org)>; City Mgr <[citymgr@cityofsanmateo.org](mailto:citymgr@cityofsanmateo.org)>

**Subject:** FW: Oct 30, 2023 Special Council Meeting Written Comments Agenda Items 1 and 2

As a member of the Ethics committee I agree with this very reasonable request.

**From:** [ceo@ethicssanmateo.com](mailto:ceo@ethicssanmateo.com) <[ceo@ethicssanmateo.com](mailto:ceo@ethicssanmateo.com)>

**Sent:** Monday, October 30, 2023 10:22 AM

**To:** [alee@cityofsanmateo.org](mailto:alee@cityofsanmateo.org); [ldiaznash@cityofsanmateo.org](mailto:ldiaznash@cityofsanmateo.org); [aloraine@cityofsanmateo.org](mailto:aloraine@cityofsanmateo.org); [rnewsom@cityofsanmateo.org](mailto:rnewsom@cityofsanmateo.org); [rhedges@cityofsanmateo.org](mailto:rhedges@cityofsanmateo.org); [polds@cityofsanmateo.org](mailto:polds@cityofsanmateo.org)

**Cc:** [CityAttorneysOffice@cityofsanmateo.org](mailto:CityAttorneysOffice@cityofsanmateo.org); [citymanager@cityofsanmateo.org](mailto:citymanager@cityofsanmateo.org)

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Regards,

Dave Cohen, President/CEO

Ethics San Mateo, A California Nonprofit Public Benefit Corporation

***DEDICATED TO TRUTH, TRANSPARENCY AND ETHICAL CONDUCT IN CITY GOVERNMENT***





From: HOLLY HEWITT <[hhewitt@aol.com](mailto:hhewitt@aol.com)>  
Sent: Monday, October 30, 2023 11:08 AM  
To: Patrice Olds <[polds@cityofsanmateo.org](mailto:polds@cityofsanmateo.org)>  
Subject: Building density

I have to say it doesn't seem to matter how loudly it is said, too much is in the pipeline to be built. So far all seems to be box like with a deck at the 3rd floor to visually reduce the monstrosity of each building. Just hearing the handwringing about the need for all the "below market" housing is too much. Such major changes proposed in San Mateo. A shame. High rise building with too many offices and scant need. Just my opinion.  
Holly Hewitt

Sent from my iPhone

**From:** [gisoardi@aol.com](mailto:gisoardi@aol.com) <[gisoardi@aol.com](mailto:gisoardi@aol.com)>  
**Sent:** Monday, October 30, 2023 1:49 PM  
**To:** Patrice Olds <[polds@cityofsanmateo.org](mailto:polds@cityofsanmateo.org)>  
**Subject:** General Plan

Dear City Council:

I am concerned about the current General Plan Update and asking you to slow down, reject it and take a step backward to reconsider some important issues:

1. It incorporates the most aggressive growth alternative C (instead of the more balanced moderate ones, A or B) and ignores Measure Y which voters have approved not wanting higher levels of density. US Census data shows San Mateo population is declining, so why the most aggressive growth scenario:

**April 1, 2020 105,665**

**July 1, 2022 100,984**

2. State AB 1287 will allow 100% larger buildings instead of 50% if developers add additional income restricted units. This means 10 story units will become 20 story if developers decide to go that route. The plan must be revised to reflect these density bonuses.

3. How will the city handle the infrastructure costs, traffic and parking issues?

4. Shopping centers is/will be eliminated replaced by housing. K Mart is gone, Triggs is gone, Draegers is on the chopping block, Rite Aide Complex area will be gone, Fish Market is gone, Southern part of Hillsdale shopping Center will be gone and more to come. So, elimination of supermarkets, drug stores, small grocery stores, small business, large retail stores will cause more cross town and inter city driving to find the same or substitutes causing more gas consumption and time on the road.

5. This plan will not achieve the GPU's stated goals of balance and improving quality of life. Instead, the opposite. It puts an undue burden on taxes paid by homeowners, traffic and parking problems , limited shopping choices and more driving, higher densities than the community wants and significant reduction in open space. It also forces gentrification with the over whelming majority being market rate housing with a pittance for below market.

As long as we have growth in high paying jobs, affordability will always be a problem for those uneducated, do not have good trade skills, have more children then they can afford, do not make good financial decisions, etc etc.

Thanks for taking the time to listen

Respectfully

Gary Isoardi

**From:** Karen S <[karensonline@gmail.com](mailto:karensonline@gmail.com)>  
**Sent:** Monday, October 30, 2023 1:13 PM  
**To:** City Council (San Mateo) <[CityCouncil@cityofsanmateo.org](mailto:CityCouncil@cityofsanmateo.org)>  
**Cc:** Patrice Olds <[polds@cityofsanmateo.org](mailto:polds@cityofsanmateo.org)>  
**Subject:** General plan update - Please reject

Dear City Council,

Please reject the current proposed General Plan Update! Please revisit options with less density, such as Alternative C.

The current iteration of the general plan does NOT reflect voters' preferences and concerns!

- It ignores the voices of those who don't want unmitigated building heights pushed by developers in exchange for very little for the community. It ignores voter-approved Measure Y all together.

- It does not offer a solution for the added infrastructure that would be required for additional construction. Our area simply cannot bear more construction without more infrastructure.

- It assumes we need these extra developments when, in fact, people are leaving the area and buildings sit dormant. The extra development does not provide the housing that is needed.

Please don't move ahead as is!!! Please listen to the voices of voters!!

Sincerely,  
Karen Sid



**From:** John Tastor <[johnrastor85@gmail.com](mailto:johnrastor85@gmail.com)>  
**Sent:** Monday, October 30, 2023 1:55 PM  
**To:** Patrice Olds <[polds@cityofsanmateo.org](mailto:polds@cityofsanmateo.org)>  
**Subject:** San Mateo Master Plan

Commending the City Staff and Council for the revised Master Plan and especially the Housing Element.

Housing, especially low-income affordable housing is critical, and we support passage of the plan before the Council this evening.

John & Sharon Tastor  
3508 Wnway, San Mateo 94403  
District 5

**From:** Michael <mweinbauer@gmail.com>

**Sent:** Monday, October 30, 2023 1:13 PM

**To:** City Council (San Mateo) <CityCouncil@cityofsanmateo.org>; General Plan <generalplan@cityofsanmateo.org>

**Cc:** Patrice Olds <polds@cityofsanmateo.org>

**Subject:** Council Meeting 10/30/23 - Comments on GP 2040 Land Use Element

Dear Mayor and Members of the City Council - The 2040 General Plan as written is nothing short of a slap in the face to more than half the electorate who gave you the most statistically significant survey you could ask for - the passage of Measure Y in 2020. I realize several of you find yourself in a very difficult position as a result of inheriting the results of prior council, commission, and staff decisions, not to mention the bind the state continues to put all cities in with an unelected, unaccountable HCD and RHNA cycles detached from reality. That makes the direction you go in tonight that much more difficult, but also that much more important.

Specifically, land use scenario C as adopted by the previous council is completely unacceptable as it represents the maximum growth scenario. I laud efforts to eliminate the High II option, and appreciate councilmembers Newsom, Hedges, and Diaz-Nash's genuine efforts to find compromises before the cement dries, but this plan remains way off the mark, and is not viable in its current state. Most importantly, this plan, if adopted, would succeed in urbanizing San Mateo, but will do almost nothing to make it more affordable. Developers will be enriched, quality of life for San Mateans will suffer. This plan is based on so many specious assumptions of growth and extreme, unrealistic changes in human behavior (eg walking vs driving, gas vs electric, etc.) as to be a work of fantasy versus a serious blueprint for the development of a community. I'm also not supportive of several ideas that pass this plan, either assuming developers won't actually build to the heights allowed, or that would have us revisit the plan and revise based on then-current numbers. Unfortunately given the history of our council (eg lifelong carpenter's union advocates) and current tolerance of activist planning commissioners etc, we can't trust that they'll be willing to revise downward even when growth data doesn't fit their narratives.

The city must realize that they are literally gambling years of effort and millions of dollars on an electorate that will stand by and let this be implemented. I promise you, that couldn't be further from the truth. Furthermore, there is no need to pass this plan in 2024, especially given economic uncertainties and the delayed/uncertain state of many projects currently in flight in San Mateo. We have a plan valid until 2030 and have submitted a solid housing element to the state, which should protect us from the Builders Remedy. I've heard rumblings of the big bad HCD coming after us should we delay. To that, I say we need to band with other cities and fight these unfunded, overreaching mandates from the state. We're spending millions on our housing elements and having to ask taxpayers for more money to protect against flooding. What a wasteful and misguided use of scarce municipal funds. To date, only 2 of 21 Housing Elements in San Mateo county have been accepted by the state. That to me indicates a problem with them, not us, and it's time to fight back along with the 19 other cities in the same predicament, who are also wasting precious time and money chasing these absurd mandates.

Should the city fail to pass this GP by rushing it and not going back and compromising, it will be an extremely embarrassing black eye on our city. One that will unfortunately, and at least in some cases undeservedly, become part of your legacies. It's time for some hard, but necessary choices - go back to the drawing board, scale this project back, slow it down, and create something we can all get behind.

Thanks for listening - Michael Weinbauer

**From:** Connie Weiss <[connieuweiss@yahoo.com](mailto:connieuweiss@yahoo.com)>  
**Sent:** Monday, October 30, 2023 11:27 AM  
**To:** City Council (San Mateo) <[CityCouncil@cityofsanmateo.org](mailto:CityCouncil@cityofsanmateo.org)>; City Mgr <[citymgr@cityofsanmateo.org](mailto:citymgr@cityofsanmateo.org)>  
**Subject:** Comments for 2040 General Plan Land Use Element

Hello City Council Members and City Manager Khojikian,

As you review the Land Use Element at tonight's City Council meeting, I would urge you to be aware of, and take corrective action on, the following:

- The previous City Council majority was much more in tune with the wishes of developers and activists pushing an agenda of overbuilding which was at odds with, and at the expense of, the wishes of San Mateo residents. The result of this bias shows in the aggressive approach to building in the 2040 General Plan and the Land Use Element.
- The current Planning Commission has a majority of activists onboard that consistently ignore the input of residents wanting more measured growth. They continue to push for overbuilding and stay true to their activist agendas.
- The recent survey on height was highly questionable in its approach. The choices were: Do you want high-rise buildings downtown or mid-rises everywhere in the City? How can that be considered "statistically valid"? Results from this survey need to be tossed.
- Residents have taken action three times to vote for limits on building heights and densities. We have the forecasted decline of population (to 2060) by the California Department of Finance, and additional housing resulting from density bonuses (which developers are now regularly using) which are not reflected in the current Land Use Element at all. This needs to be changed to clearly reflect this data, and the aggressive growth needs to be changed to lower growth that also is aligned with this data.

I love San Mateo and the beauty it provides. We need affordable housing, but not towers of buildings that will result in significant degradation of our quality of life.

Thank you,

Connie Weiss  
San Mateo Resident