



# CHAPTER 3

## Circulation Element







MAIN STREET

San Mateo  
Safe  
Center





# 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. Safety is a cornerstone of the Circulation Element and improving safety for all users, including pedestrians, bicyclists, transit-users, and motorists is integrated into the goals, policies, and actions identified in this Element. 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

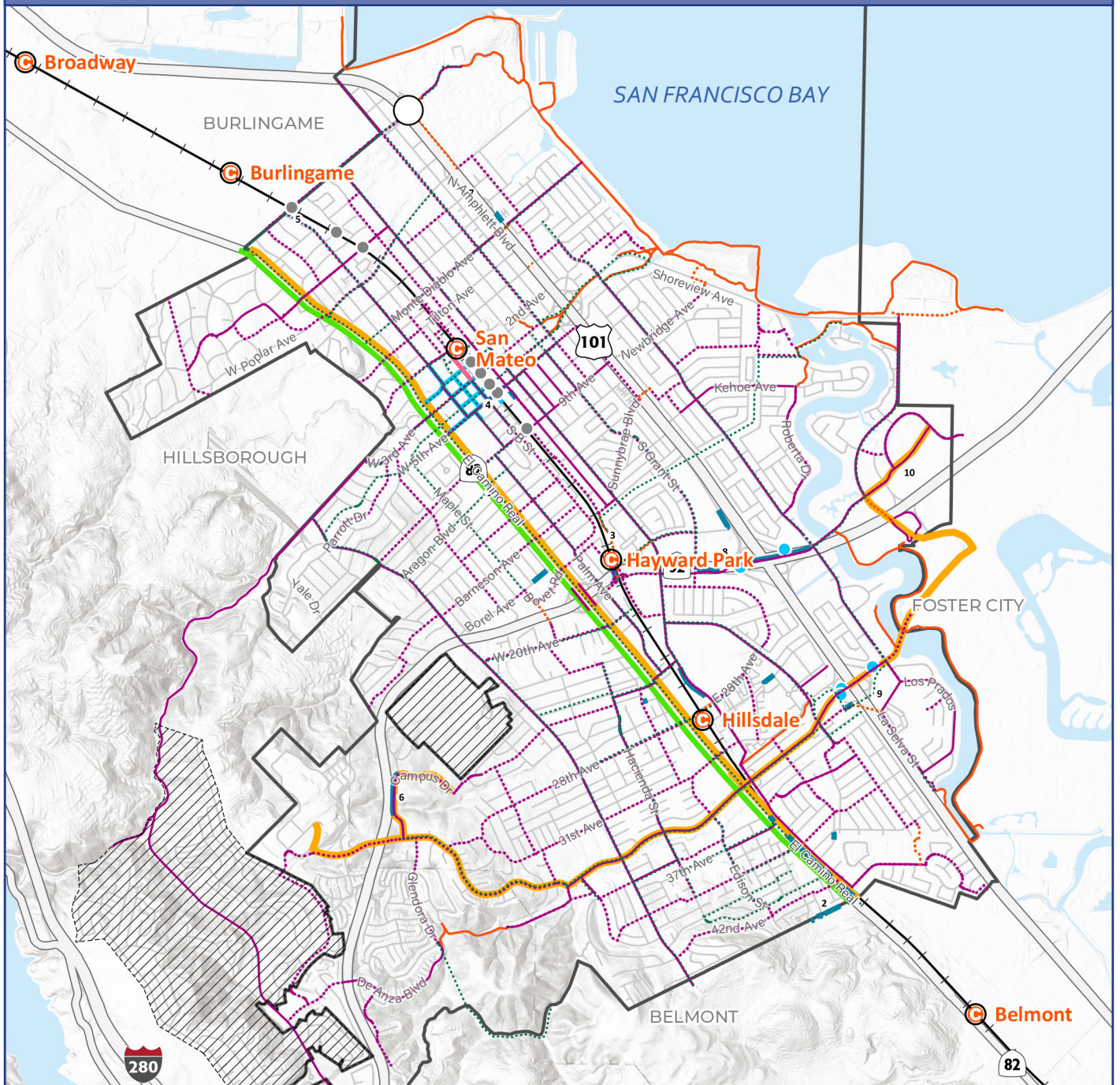
In transportation planning, “modes” refer to different ways of getting around: walking, bicycling, riding transit, and driving. A “multimodal” transportation network accommodates many different modes of transportation, while embracing complete streets principles. A complete street includes safety improvements 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 & Transit Priority 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 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.



**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 by supporting improvements that enhance pedestrian connectivity, such as improved pedestrian crossings.



**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, including pedestrian, bicycling, and transit infrastructure, 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 higher-frequency travel along El Camino Real, Bus Rapid Transit, and other modes of alternative transportation.



**Action C 1.14 Safe Routes for Seniors.** Develop a "safe routes for seniors" program to promote active transportation connections for seniors in collaboration with seniors' organizations and based on the likely walking routes for older adults identified in the Age Friendly Action Plan. Prioritize improvements for seniors in equity priority communities.





**Action C 1.15 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 to improve access to and from the Caltrain Stations.

**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.** Provide safety education to increase awareness of roadway safety practices 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.** Regularly 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.

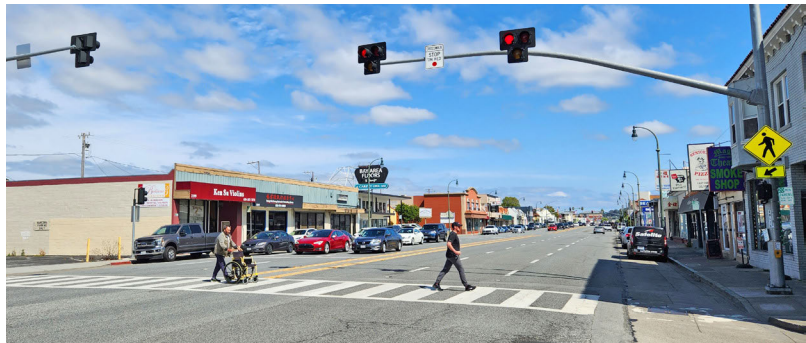
### POLICY



**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 and shuttle partnerships 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.** In conjunction with other TDM strategies that aim to reduce vehicle trips, 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, including the El Camino Real corridor, 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 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 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 and Shared Mobility-Related Technology.** Explore ways to use technology to improve bicycle and shared mobility safety and connectivity.



**Policy C 4.5 Bicycle Improvements.** Require new developments to construct or contribute to improvements that enhance the cyclist experience, including bicycle lanes and bicycle parking.



**Policy C 4.6 Coordination with Other City Projects.** Maximize opportunities to implement bicycle facilities through other City of San Mateo projects.



**Policy C 4.7 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.

**Policy C 4.8 Bicycle Lane Maintenance.** Maintain existing and future bicycle lanes to keep them in a usable and safe condition for cyclists.

## 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.

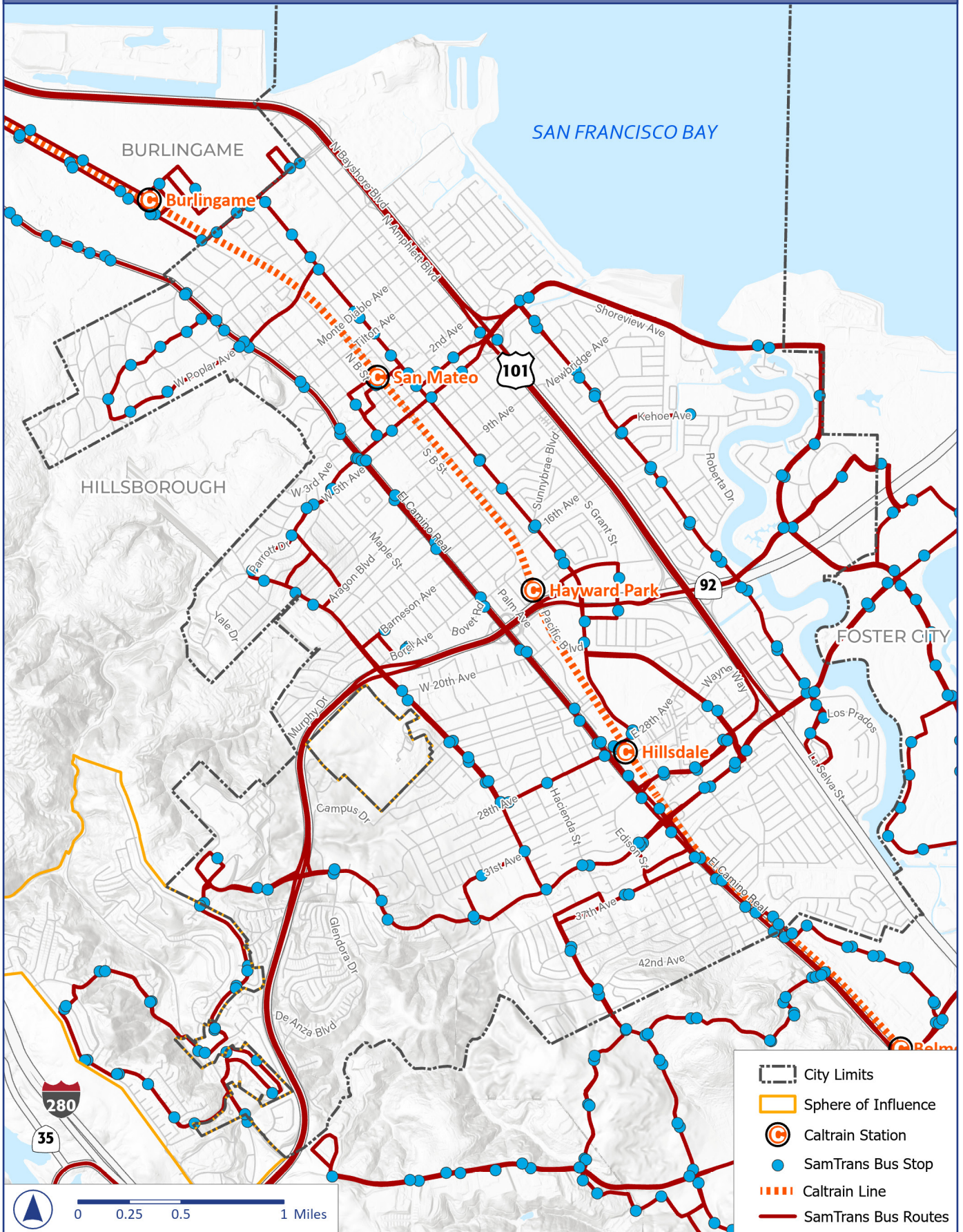
## TRANSIT SERVICES

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.

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.





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. SamTrans is also developing transit plans that will provide improved access and frequency along the El Camino Real corridor.

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 and Frequency.** Support SamTrans and Caltrain in their efforts to increase transit ridership and frequency of transit services.



**Policy C 5.2** **Caltrain and SamTrans.** Support Caltrain and SamTrans as critical transit service providers 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 that enhance pedestrian connectivity to transit and 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.

**Policy C 5.9 Paratransit.** Support San Mateo County's efforts to provide paratransit services in the city.

## ACTIONS

**Action C 5.10 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 5.11 Transit Experience Improvements.** Prioritize installing new transit shelters and benches or other seating and an energy-efficient street lighting program at transit stops using SamTrans standards in equity priority communities and areas that improve transit access, safety, and experience.



**Action C 5.12 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.

**Action C 5.13 Safe Routes to Transit.** Prioritize bicycle and pedestrian improvement projects that provide safe and equitable access to transit stops.

## 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. 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 existing roadway classifications in San Mateo as identified by Caltrans. The City uses the Caltrans roadway classifications to:

- Define the function of various street types in the transportation network;
- Monitor performance and track multimodal use; and
- Plan for improvements needed to accommodate changes in traffic over the life of the Strive San Mateo General Plan 2040.

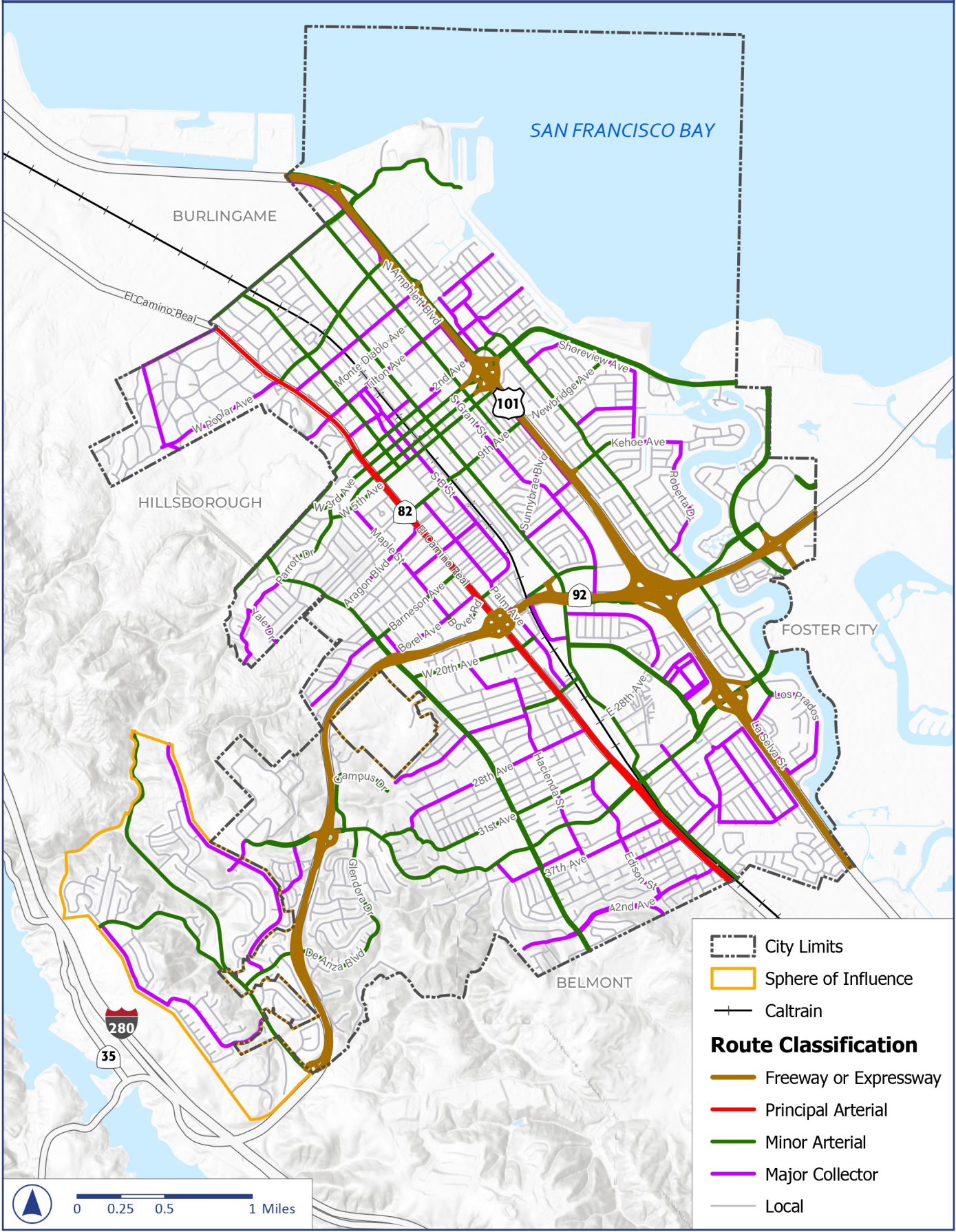
In addition, the City aligns with the Caltrans roadway classifications to receive State funding for roadway improvements. However, the Caltrans roadway classifications may not capture on-the-ground conditions for all roadway segments. To ensure that the roadway classifications meet the community's intended use of the street network, the City plans to request that Caltrans update the roadway classifications using the framework of the City's Complete Streets Plan as a guide for the suggested changes.

The roadway classification definitions below are based on the definitions from Caltrans and the Federal Highway Administration. These definitions include the annual average daily trip volume for each classification. The surrounding land uses will influence the actual volumes for each roadway in San Mateo.

- **Freeways or Expressways.** Freeways and expressways have directional travel lanes that are usually separated by a physical barrier, and their access and egress points are limited to on- and off-ramp locations or a very limited number of at-grade intersections. The annual average daily traffic volume for freeways and expressways is 13,000 to 55,000 trips. US Highway 101 and State Route 92 are the two freeways in San Mateo.
- **Principal Arterials.** Principal arterials are the main streets within the city that carry the greatest number of users and serve the largest area. Unlike a freeway, travelers can access destinations directly from the arterial through driveways and at-grade intersections with other roadways. The annual average daily traffic volume for principal arterials is 7,000 to 27,000 trips. El Camino Real is the only principal arterial in San Mateo.
- **Minor Arterials.** Minor arterials are used for trips of moderate length, serve smaller geographic areas than principal arterials and offer connections between principal arterials and other roadways. The annual average daily traffic volume for minor arterials is 3,000 to 14,000 trips.
- **Major Collector.** Major collectors gather traffic from local roads and funnel it to arterials. Compared to local roadways, major collectors are longer, have fewer driveways, have higher speed limits, and may have more travel lanes. The annual average daily traffic volume for major collectors is 1,100 to 6,300 trips.
- **Local.** Local roads are the largest percentage of roadways in terms of mileage. These provide direct access to abutting land. They may be designed to discourage through traffic; they are not intended to cover long distances. The annual average daily traffic volume for local roads is 80 to 700 trips.



Figure C-3 Existing Caltrans Roadway Classification Map



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



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.

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 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 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 legally 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 (CIP).** Prioritize improvements that increase person throughput, such as increased pedestrian, bicycle, and transit access, that work toward achieving the City’s goal of reducing 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 Traffic Calming Policy.** Evaluate whether updates are needed to the City’s Neighborhood Traffic Management Program to determine if the program should be expanded to include major and minor collectors and arterials.
- Action C 6.10 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 6.11 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 6.12 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.

**Action C 6.13 Street Classification Update.** Request that Caltrans and the Federal Highway Administration update their functional roadway classifications based on the roadway network framework defined by the Complete Streets Plan.

## 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.

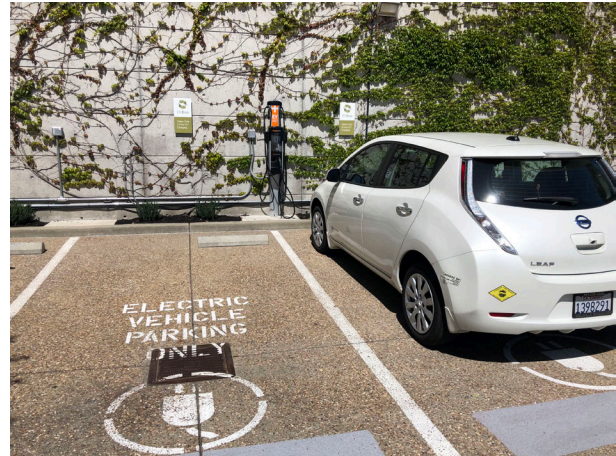
**Policy C 7.6** **Loading for New Development.** Require adequate loading to meet the needs of new development, including evaluation of shared use of loading zones.

## ACTIONS

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- 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.
- Action C 7.14 Off-Street Parking Incentives.** Explore a new policy or code amendment that would provide incentives to projects in exchange for providing additional off-street parking in neighborhoods that have on-street parking capacity issues, such as areas in the North Central Neighborhood.





## 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.



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