

## **GENERAL PLAN – LAND USE ELEMENT**

GOAL 1d: Concentrate major high-intensity commercial office and retail development in specific focal areas, as delineated on the City Image Plan, Figure UD-1.

GOAL 1f: Provide a wide range of land uses, including retail, commercial services, office, industrial, parks, open space, and housing, to adequately meet the needs of the community.

GOAL 1g: Attain development which occurs in an orderly fashion and which limits adverse environmental impacts to the community.

LU 1.11: Commercial Focal Areas. Concentrate the most intense office and retail uses at locations delineated on the Land Use Plan. Discourage such uses outside the commercial nodes delineated on the Land Use Plan.

LU 1.15: Mixed Use. Encourage developments which mix commercial retail and office uses with residential uses at locations and intensities/densities as delineated on the Land Use Plan and Building Intensity Plan.

GOAL 2a: Promote economic vitality which provides jobs for existing and future residents and maintains the City's ability to finance public improvements and human services.

GOAL 2c: Promote an intensity of commercial activity that enhances the business climate in the City to increase the level of business types which will benefit existing commercial uses.

LU 2.4: Downtown Plan. Establish downtown San Mateo as the social, cultural, and economic center of the City with a wide range of office, medical, residential, entertainment, and retail uses at high intensities and densities while encouraging pedestrian activity and bicycle connectivity to adjacent neighborhoods.

LU 2.10: Optimize Development Opportunities. Ensure that developments optimize the development potential of property in major commercial areas such as the Downtown Retail Core and along South El Camino Real.

LU 3.1: Downtown Plan. As the social, cultural and economic center of the City, the downtown shall maintain a wide range of office, medical, residential, entertainment, and retail uses at high intensities and densities.

### **3. DOWNTOWN.**

The goals, policies, and objectives for downtown San Mateo are located in the Downtown Plan. A general discussion of the downtown also occurs in Section 3 of this Land Use Element.

Provisions of the voter-approved Measure H, Measure P, and Measure Y which reduced building heights, floor area ratios and residential densities, were also incorporated, including the provisions following below (the Measure H, P and Y provisions are in italics).

*a. A Specific Plan for the Downtown was adopted by the City Council in July 1985, and amended in 1993, consistent with the provisions of Measure H as adopted by the voters in November 1991. This Specific Plan also constituted an amendment to the previous General Plan.*

## **GENERAL PLAN – HOUSING ELEMENT**

H 2.12: Mixed Use. Continue the policy of encouraging residential uses in existing commercial areas, or in locating adjacent or near transit nodes, where the residences can be buffered from noise and safety concerns and can provide adequate on-site parking and usable open space. Provide floor area and/or height bonuses for residential development in selected areas of the City.

## **DOWNTOWN PLAN**

### **GOALS**

ONE Enhance Downtown's Role as the City Center and Maintain Its Unique Sense of Place Downtown San Mateo possesses a traditional downtown image, including an informal, cozy atmosphere. Key landmarks and landscaping in the form of street trees, San Mateo Creek and Central Park contribute to downtown's unique character. New development should complement this character, while at the same time bringing contemporary elements that revitalize and energize the downtown.

TWO Enhance the Vitality and Activity of Downtown by Incorporating an Overall Good Mix and Diversity of Uses Maintain and improve on the wide range of uses available downtown including retail and service establishments, entertainment uses, such as the Downtown Century Theater, residential uses and unique facilities, such as Central Park. Facilitate a wide mix of retail stores, service uses such as restaurants, and housing uses.

THREE Enhance the Downtown's Pedestrian Environment and Enhance the Safety and Attractiveness of Downtown. Allow for outdoor uses, such as cafes and sitting areas, to promote the pedestrian activity and multiple destination trips to the downtown. Strengthen the links between Central Park and downtown, and between the downtown and surrounding residential areas.

### **POLICIES**

I.1 Downtown Core High Density/Intensity Development. Encourage the development of mixed-use high density residential projects and high intensity commercial projects within the Downtown Retail Core.

II.1 Downtown Core Shopping Area. Preserve the downtown's core shopping area between 1st and 5th Avenues from El Camino Real to the railroad.

II.2 Required Retail Frontage. Require the provision of ground floor retail uses with windows on properties located on the primary shopping streets as identified in the Required Retail Frontage Zone Map (see map at the end of this chapter). In addition to traditional retailing activities, permit entertainment and cultural uses, and allow fast food establishments in limited instances.

II.8 Office Development. Encourage the establishment of offices within the Downtown Retail Core and surrounding commercially designated areas.

II.9 Housing in the Retail Core. Provide housing for new households that will utilize downtown businesses and is within proximity to the transit station to reduce vehicle trips and vehicle ownership.

II.10 Mixed Use Commercial-Residential. Facilitate housing production by allowing multi-family dwellings as part of mixed use developments in all downtown commercial and office land use categories, except areas designated service commercial and parks/open space in the General Plan.

IV.2 Store Fronts in the Retail Core. Maintain the traditional store front environment of the Downtown Retail Core area by requiring new buildings to be constructed to the street property line. In the retail core area, require ground floor building walls to be dominated by windows and pedestrian entrances

IV.3 Design Guidelines. Evaluate the Downtown Design Guidelines to ensure that it:

- (1) Emphasizes the public realm - streets and sidewalks and public spaces in building design, scale, detail, and pattern of new developments;
- (2) Encourages building design to be compatible with the historic and architectural features common to many buildings in the Downtown;
- (3) Encourages a compatibility of diverse building styles; and
- (4) Encourages building details, surfaces, textures and materials that are interesting for the pedestrian.

IV.6 Downtown Design Guidelines/Downtown Historic District Design Guidelines. Revise the Downtown and Historic District Design Guidelines to give consideration to new development within a historic preservation context, thereby providing a balance between preserving a unique community asset (in the form of a historic district with intact distinct historic and contributor structures) and providing for new development and improvements within the downtown area.

### IMPLEMENT A NEW FINANCING MECHANISM FOR DOWNTOWN PARKING.

The Central Parking and Improvement District (CPID) was created by the City in 1954 as a means of financing land acquisition and construction of downtown public parking facilities. The CPID includes on-street parking, surface lots and five (5) parking structures. The bonds issued to fund these downtown parking facilities have been retired, and the City is presently examining methods to fund additional downtown parking.

Funding of additional public parking in downtown should consider the following principles:

- a. Property owners should participate in the funding of future parking expansion through assessments or other appropriate methods.
- b. Parking in-lieu fees when combined with assessments and other parking revenues should be maintained at a level to provide the full cost of constructing a new parking space.

### SUPPORT THE DOWNTOWN SAN MATEO ASSOCIATION IN CREATION OF A PROPERTY BASED IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT FOR DOWNTOWN IMPROVEMENTS AND MAINTENANCE.

As a way to provide funding for additional parking facilities, the Downtown San Mateo Association (DSMA) is currently exploring the formation of a Property Based Improvement District (PBID) as well as other funding options, including options with contributions by property owners and/or tenants. The City should continue to support these efforts in an attempt to address funding issues related to the provision of additional downtown parking facilities.

Outdoor Seating  
Hayward



### SUPPORT SUSTAINABLE TRANSPORTATION INITIATIVES.

In order to improve pedestrian, bicycle, shuttle, and transit access implement Downtown Area Plan policies to reduce vehicle trips and encourage transit use and promote bicycle and pedestrian accessibility.

Additionally, the Downtown Area Plan includes vehicle trip reduction, bicycle and pedestrian accessibility policies. These policies will be employed on a case by case basis as development is reviewed, with the goal of reducing vehicle trips and promoting alternative means of mobility.



Outdoor Seating,  
Mountain View



Outdoor Seating  
Hayward



## Downtown Retail Core

### Background

The Downtown Retail Core extends from 5th Avenue to 2nd Avenue between El Camino Real and the Railroad. 3rd Avenue, 4th Avenue and B Street are the primary retail streets (see map at end of this chapter). The two vacant former gas station sites at 3rd Avenue/El Camino Real present opportunities and challenges at this gateway to the downtown. Mills Health Center, the Downtown Century Cinema, and the Downtown Transit Center (see next sub-area discussion) are also included in this sub-area.

### Future Conditions

Downtown Plan policies continue to support the retail core shopping area by requiring retail uses along 2nd, 3rd and 4th Avenues, San Mateo Drive, Ellsworth Avenue, and B Street. This will require a good mix of ground floor retail uses that will contribute to foster retail vitality and downtown's pedestrian oriented environment. New priorities for the retail core include:

- a. Provide housing for new households that will utilize downtown businesses and is within proximity to the transit station to reduce vehicle trips and vehicle ownership. In order to implement this policy, the City should allow flexibility in architectural style to facilitate use of nontraditional housing designs, such as loft spaces, and allow flexibility in design where more modern forms relate to existing buildings within an historic environment.
- b. Examine the feasibility of reducing lanes on 4th Avenue down to 3 lanes to provide pedestrian enhancements.
- c. Examine the potential for providing a public plaza in the retail core. The City has commissioned ERA to examine a public plaza at the northwest corner of 3rd Avenue and San Mateo Drive in conjunction with a mixed use development at 2nd Avenue and San Mateo Drive.
- d. Continue to seek additional sites for parking and actively explore alternative methods to manage existing parking inventory. Parking inventory management may include experimenting with long term/overnight reserved parking for premium fees, use of technological advancements, encouraging short term parking turn over, and other methods as they become available.
- e. Provide an entry feature at the entryways to downtown in the vicinity of the 3rd Avenue/El Camino Real intersection, 4th Avenue/El Camino Real intersection, B Street/5th Avenue intersection, and B Street/1st Avenue intersection.
- f. Improve pedestrian linkages to Central Park and other plazas, and provide additional widened sidewalks where adequate parking and circulation can be maintained.
- g. Focus on 5th Avenue/San Mateo Drive and opportunities to directly tie Downtown to Central Park, including physically and visually open up to intersection at 5th/San Mateo Drive.
- h. Look at development opportunities on 5th Avenue and where public benefits may be used to help fund linkages to and/or improvements in Central Park.



## North B Street/Tilton Avenue

### Background

Uses north of Baldwin and west of Ellsworth include small scale medical offices along San Mateo Drive, the Peninsula Regent (200+ unit senior citizen project), the Mills Square mixed-use high rise office/residential project and single family homes are located on Tilton Terrace.

Along B Street there is a mix of uses including those continued from the retail core as well as neighborhood commercial uses that serve nearby residential areas. Recent renovation and establishment of new uses, such as Cappelini's restaurant, has been increasing in this area.

### Future Conditions

Land use designations in the area will support existing uses, including the neighborhood commercial uses along B Street. The emphasis for the North B Street/Tilton Avenue policies include:

- a. Enhance North B Street area and designate it as a unique district serving the nearby neighborhood population. Encourage retail/restaurant uses to locate on ground floors and office/service uses to locate in upper level spaces, while maintaining the existing character of this district. To further develop this unique district, establish relationships with existing bilingual services in the community and merchants.
- b. Encourage and facilitate development of large, vacant, underutilized parcels such as the former Blue and White Laundry site on North B Street. Development of underutilized parcels with significant development which attempts to maximize use of the sites will not only have direct economic impacts generated by the projects themselves, but also contribute to the overall downtown shopping environment.









