



5. COMMUNITY DESIGN AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION ELEMENT

These suggested revisions to the draft goals, policies and actions are based on input provided by staff, community members, the General Plan Subcommittee and the Planning Commission, and are shown in italics and track changes. For policies and actions with suggested revisions, they are listed below the original draft language that was published in July for comparison purposes.

GOALS AND POLICIES

NATURAL LANDSCAPES AND THE URBAN FOREST

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

POLICIES

Policy CD-P1.1 **Respect for the Landscape.** Encourage new development to respect and respond to the natural topography of San Mateo.

Policy CD-P1.2 **Preservation of Natural Focal Points.** Preserve and enhance views of and access to the foothills and the Bay through the design of new development to the extent feasible.

Preservation of Natural Focal Points. Preserve and enhance publicly accessible views of and access to the undeveloped foothills and the Bay through the design of new development, to the extent feasible.

Policy CD-P1.3 **New Development Requirements.** Require new developments to protect and enhance the character of scenic roadways and trails designated on Figure C/OS-4, including land uses, signs, screening, and preservation of view corridors.

New Development Requirements. Require new developments adjacent to ~~protect and enhance the character of~~ scenic roadways and trails designated on Figure C/OS-4, to protect and enhance the visual and architectural character of these corridors, including land uses, signs, screening, and preservation of identified vista points, view corridors. <Note: an updated Figure C/OS-4 will be published with the Draft General Plan.>

GOAL CD-2 Protect heritage trees, street trees, and tree stands and maintain the health and condition of San Mateo’s urban forest.

POLICIES

- Policy CD-P2.1** **Tree Preservation.** Continue to preserve protected heritage and street trees throughout San Mateo.
- Tree Preservation.* Continue to preserve protected heritage and street trees throughout San Mateo, where feasible.
- Policy CD-P2.2** **Replacement Planting.** Require replacement planting or payment of an in-lieu fee when the removal of protected heritage and street trees is permitted.
- Policy CD-P2.3** **New Development Requirements.** Require the protection of trees during construction activity; require that landscaping, buildings, and other improvements located adjacent to trees be designed and maintained to be consistent with the continued health of the tree.
- Policy CD-P2.4** **Public Awareness.** Pursue public awareness and education programs concerning the identification, care, and regulation of trees.
- Policy CD-P2.5** **Tree Maintenance.** Preserve and regularly maintain existing protected heritage and street trees to keep them in a safe, healthy, and aesthetic condition.
- Tree Maintenance.* Preserve and regularly maintain existing City-owned ~~protected~~ heritage and street trees to keep them in a safe and, healthy, ~~and~~ aesthetic condition.
- Policy CD-P2.6** **New Development Street Trees.** Require street tree planting where feasible as a condition of all new developments.
- Policy CD-P2.7** **Street Tree Planting.** Encourage the planting of new street trees to increase the tree canopy throughout the city and especially in gateway areas and in tree deficient neighborhoods; encourage neighborhood participation in tree planting programs.
- Street Tree Planting.* ~~Encourage the planting of~~ Plant new street trees to increase the tree canopy throughout the city and especially in gateway areas and in tree deficient neighborhoods; encourage neighborhood participation in tree planting programs.
- Policy CD-P2.8** **Tree Stand Retention.** Preserve the character of stands or groves of trees in the design of new or modified projects, where feasible.
- Tree Stand Retention.* Preserve the visual character of stands or groves of trees in the design of new or modified projects, where feasible.

Recommended New Policy

Tree Canopy. Increase the tree canopy on public property, especially in equity priority communities and areas with a high heat index, by prioritizing funding for new street tree planting and maintenance.

ACTION

Action CD-A2.1 **Tree Planting Funding.** Identify non-City funded tree planting programs and other funding sources for tree planting efforts on an annual basis.

Recommended New Actions

Urban Tree Canopy. *Identify neighborhoods with less street tree canopy and adopt programs to add climate adapted trees within the public right-of-way or in the front yards of adjacent properties where insufficient space exists within the public right-of-way.*

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.*

HISTORIC RESOURCES

GOAL CD-3 Preserve historic and culturally important structures, assets, and districts to maintain San Mateo’s special identity and continuity with the past.

POLICIES

Policy CD-P3.1 **Historic Preservation.** Preserve historic buildings where feasible.

Historic Preservation. *Preserve-Identify and preserve historic, architectural and cultural resources, including individual properties, districts and sites, where feasible, 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.historic buildings where feasible.*

Policy CD-P3.2 **Historic Districts.** Consider the protection of concentrations of buildings which convey the flavor of local historical periods or provide an atmosphere of exceptional architectural interest or integrity, when they meet identified state and local standards.

Historic Districts, Buildings, and Sites. *Identify and preserve historic buildings, districts and sites. Actively identify and protect Consider the protection of concentrations of historic districts, buildings, and sites buildings-assets which convey the flavor of local historical periods or provide an atmosphere of exceptional architectural interest or integrity, when they meet national, state or local criteria. ~~identified state and local standards.~~*

Policy CD-P3.3 **Historic Building Definition.** Define historic buildings as those that are on or individually eligible for the National Register of Historic Places, California Register of Historical Resources, or Downtown Historic District contributor buildings as designated in the 1989 Historic Building Survey Report, or as determined to be eligible through documentation contained in a historic resources report.

Historic Building Assets Definition. Define historic buildings-assets as those that are on or individually eligible for the National Register of Historic Places, California Register of Historical Resources, or Downtown Historic District contributor buildings as designated in the 1989 Historic Building Survey Report, or as determined to be eligible through documentation contained in a historic resources report.

Policy CD-P3.4

Public Awareness. Foster public awareness and appreciation of the City’s historic, architectural, and archaeological resources and educate the community about how to preserve and improve these resources.

Public Awareness. Foster public awareness and appreciation of the City’s historic, architectural, cultural, and archaeological resources and educate the community about how to preserve and improve these resources. Increase public appreciation through neighborhood workshops, public presentations, interpretive signage, and walking tours. Ensure the public is aware of all the factors the City must consider in approving or denying a project, how past policies adversely affected disadvantaged communities today, and what the City is doing to address these legacy issues.

Policy CD-P3.5

Historic Structure Renovation and Rehabilitation. Promote the renovation and rehabilitation of historic structures 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-P3.6

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 and Federal Historic Preservation Tax Incentives Program.

Policy CD-P3.7

Demolition Alternatives. Require an applicant to submit alternatives to full demolition on how to preserve a historic building as part of any planning application and implement methods of preservation unless health and safety requirements cannot be met.

Demolition Alternatives. Require an applicant to submit alternatives to full demolition on how to preserve a historic building-asset as part of any planning application and implement methods of preservation 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.

ACTIONS

Action CD-A3.1

Historic Building Survey. Establish and maintain an inventory of architecturally, culturally, and historically significant structures and sites. Proactively maintain

an up-to-date historic resources inventory by seeking funding opportunities to update the historic survey.

Historic Building Assets Survey. *Establish and maintain an inventory of architecturally, culturally, and historically significant structures, assets, and sites. Proactively maintain an up-to-date historic resources inventory by seeking funding opportunities to update the historic survey.*

Action CD-A3.2

Historic Preservation Ordinance. Update and maintain the City’s Historic Preservation Ordinance to be consistent with State and Federal standards and guidelines, and to support local historic preservation objectives.

Action CD-A3.3

Preservation Incentives. Create incentives to preserve historic and cultural resources, such as reducing parking requirements, allowing a flexible use, or establishing a transfer of development rights program.

Action CD-A3.4

Historic Design Standards. Create objective design standards for development within historic districts or adjacent to historic structures and/or culturally important sites to maintain the historic character of these resources.

Historic Design Standards. *Create objective design standards for alternations to historic resources and new development within historic districts or adjacent to historic structures and/or culturally important sites to maintain the historic character of these resources that ensures projects have a contextual relationship with land uses and patterns, spatial organization, visual relationships, cultural and historic values, and relationships in height, massing, modulation, and materials. Use of the Secretary of the Interior’s Standards as the basis for these objective design standards.*

CITY IMAGE

GOAL CD-4 Develop and maintain an attractive urban fabric that reflects San Mateo’s unique character.

Develop and maintain an attractive urban fabric that reflects San Mateo’s unique visual and architectural character.

POLICIES

Policy CD-P4.1

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

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-P4.2

Gateways. Develop gateways that visually announce key entrances to San Mateo by creating distinctive architectural or landscape features at the following locations:

- a. Entrances to the Downtown;
- b. North and south ends of El Camino Real (SR 82);
- c. US 101 and Third Avenue;
- d. US 101 and Hillsdale Boulevard;
- e. Mariner's Island Boulevard and J. Hart Clinton Drive at the border of Foster City; and
- f. State Route 92 off-ramps at El Camino Real.

Gateways. *Develop gateways that visually announce key entrances to San Mateo by ~~creating-maintaining or establishing~~ distinctive architectural, art or landscape features, ~~at the following locations:~~*

- a. ~~Entrances to the Downtown;~~
- b. ~~North and south ends of El Camino Real (SR 82);~~
- c. ~~US 101 and Third Avenue;~~
- d. ~~US 101 and Hillsdale Boulevard;~~
- e. ~~Mariner's Island Boulevard and J. Hart Clinton Drive at the border of Foster City; and~~
- f. ~~State Route 92 off-ramps at El Camino Real.~~

Policy CD-P4.3

Sustainable Design. Encourage integration of sustainable design features and elements into the design of new buildings.

Sustainable Design. *Encourage integration of sustainable design features and elements into the design of new buildings, including green building materials.*

Policy CD-P4.4

El Camino Real (SR 82). Encourage 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, such as redesigned transit stops, improved sidewalks, street trees and other pedestrian amenities, and updated/improved building facades. Incorporate the Guiding Principles of the Grand Boulevard Initiative into future plans for the El Camino Real corridor in San Mateo.

El Camino Real (SR 82). *Aspire to make El Camino Real a space to spend time, not just a corridor for people to pass through by. ~~Encourage~~ 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, such as redesigned transit stops, an improved ~~sidewalks, street trees and other~~ pedestrian ~~real~~ amenities, and updated/improved building facades. Incorporate the Guiding Principles of the Grand Boulevard Initiative into future plans for the El Camino Real corridor in San Mateo.*

- Policy CD-P4.5** **Railroad Corridor.** Improve the railroad corridor to create a positive City image and an urban environment that supports a multimodal transportation network.
- Policy CD-P4.6** **Signage.** Maintain signage controls that appropriately regulate the design, size, type, illumination, and quantity of signs visible from corridors.
- 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-P4.7** **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 and unique spaces.
- 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, ~~and~~ unique and functional spaces. Require signage that clearly delineates these spaces as publicly accessible.*
- Policy CD-P4.8** **Public Art.** Continue to require public art as part of new development. 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-P4.9** **Inclusive Outreach.** Involve the community in the City's efforts to develop and maintain an attractive urban fabric that reflects San Mateo's unique character. Use outreach and engagement methods that encourage broad representation and are culturally sensitive, particularly for historically underserved communities.
- 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 historically underserved communities.*

Recommended New Action

Brand Identity Package. Develop a brand identity package for the City.

RESIDENTIAL

GOAL CD-5 Maintain and enhance the existing character and physical quality of residential neighborhoods through the appropriate design of new development.

Balance the growth and evolution of residential neighborhoods with the need to maintain and enhance their existing characteristics and physical qualities, if and when such are defined in the General Plan, through the appropriate design of new development. Maintain and enhance the existing character and physical quality of residential neighborhoods through the appropriate design of new development.

POLICIES

Policy CD-P5.1

Building Mass and Scale. Encourage new residential developments to be compatible with the scale of the surrounding neighboring.

~~Building Mass and Scale. Encourage new residential developments to be compatible with the scale of the surrounding neighboring. <This policy is ambiguous and redundant with other polices in this section.>~~

Policy CD-P5.2

Low-Density Residential Development. Require new homes in the Low and Very Low residential designations, including single-family dwellings, duplexes, triplexes, four-plexes, and ADUs to be consistent with objective design standards as described in the City's Residential Design Standards.

Low-Density Residential Development. Require new homes in the Low and Very Low residential designations, including single-family dwellings, duplexes, triplexes, four-plexes, and accessory dwelling units (ADUs) to be consistent with objective design standards as ~~described-outlined~~ in the City's Residential Design Standards.

Policy CD-P5.3

Single-Family Design. Encourage new single-family dwellings and expansions of existing single-family dwellings that address the preservation and enhancement of neighborhood character through building scale, materials, architectural style and details, and privacy.

Single-Family Design. Encourage single-family additions and new single-family dwellings and expansions of existing single-family dwellings that addresses the preservation and enhancement of neighborhood visual and architectural character through context sensitive building scale, materials, architectural style and details, and privacy.

Policy CD-P5.4

Multi-Family Design. Ensure that the architectural design of new multi-family developments enhances the neighborhood character by providing appropriate building and pedestrian scale elements, high quality materials and construction, open space and resident amenities.

Multi-Family Design. ~~Ensure~~ Encourage that the architectural design of new multi-family developments that enhances the a neighborhood's visual and architectural character by providing appropriate context sensitive building and

pedestrian scale elements, high quality materials and construction, open space, and resident amenities.

Policy CD-P5.5 **Multi-Family Parking.** Require new multi-family developments to design and site parking to avoid blank, ground floor walls and to screen views of parking from the street.

Policy CD-P5.6 **Multi-Family Open Space.** Require that a portion of required open space for new multi-family projects be useable for passive or active recreation.

ACTIONS

Action CD-A5.1 **Objective Design Standards.** Develop and adopt objective design standards that clearly outline the City’s design expectations for new single-family and multi-family projects.

Action CD-A5.2 **Accessory Dwelling Units and Junior Dwelling Units Design.** Continue to monitor State law and update the City’s Accessory Dwelling Unit ordinance to ensure that new ADUs and JADUs are regulated in accordance with State law requirements while also meeting community needs and expectations.

~~*Accessory Dwelling Units and Junior Dwelling Units Design. Continue to monitor State law and update the City’s Accessory Dwelling Unit ordinance to ensure that new ADUs and JADUs are regulated in accordance with State law requirements while also meeting community needs and expectations.*~~
<Redundant with policies and programs in the Housing Element.>

MIXED-USE AND COMMERCIAL AREAS

GOAL CD-6 Improve the visual character, livability, and vitality of mixed -use and commercial areas.

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

POLICIES

Policy CD-P6.1 **Objective Design Standards.** Provide clear, objective, and quantifiable design standards to guide new mixed-use and commercial development.

Policy CD-P6.2 **Pedestrian Oriented Design.** Cultivate pedestrian activity in commercial and mixed-use areas by providing adequate sidewalk widths, locating windows along ground floor street facades, trees and awnings, and human scale construction materials and features.

~~*Pedestrian-Oriented Human Scale Design. Cultivate pedestrian activity in commercial and mixed-use areas by providing adequate sidewalk widths.*~~

~~activating ground floor street facades with locating windows, along-ground floor street facades, trees plantings, and awnings, and using human-scale high-quality construction materials and including human-scale details and architectural and features.~~

Policy CD-P6.3

Respect Existing Scale. Encourage new mixed-use and commercial development to respect the scale of surrounding buildings by providing breaks in the building face at spacings common to buildings in the area and by stepping back upper floors.

~~**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-P6.4

Orient Buildings Toward the Street. Encourage commercial development to be located at the street in retail areas to encourage pedestrian activity and an active streetscape.

~~**Orient Buildings Toward the Street.** Encourage commercial development to be located at the street in retail areas to encourage pedestrian activity and an active streetscape. <Redundant with other policies.>~~

Policy CD-P6.5

Commercial Parking. Encourage commercial projects to provide required parking underground to minimize the amount of ground floor area dedicated to parking. When parking is located at grade, it should be located towards the side and rear of parcels.

~~**Commercial Parking.** Encourage commercial projects to provide required parking underground to minimize the amount of ground floor area dedicated to parking. When parking is located at grade, it should be located towards the side and rear of a parcels, away from active street frontages and public spaces.~~

Policy CD-P6.6

Commercial Transitions. Encourage new commercial development or redevelopment to provide an appropriate transition to adjacent neighborhoods.

~~**Commercial Transitions.** Encourage new commercial development or redevelopment to provide an appropriate transition to adjacent neighborhoods. <Redundant with other policies.>~~

Policy CD-P6.7

Outdoor Display and Eating. Support parklets, the outdoor display of goods at retail uses, and restaurant seating areas to add visual interest and activity to commercial and mixed-use areas.

~~**Outdoor Display and Eating.** Support sidewalk and pedestrian mall outdoor dining and parklets, the outdoor display of goods at-for retail uses, and restaurant-public seating areas to add visual interest and activity to commercial and mixed-use areas.~~

ACTION

Action CD-A6.1 **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.

AREA SPECIFIC DESIGN POLICIES

~~[Note: Additional design policies and actions for specific areas around the City will be developed during outreach efforts based on community and decisionmaker input.]~~

NORTH CENTRAL

Policy CD-P6.8 **Amphlett Boulevard.** Require new buildings and additions to be compatible with adjoining residential areas, including adequate screening and landscaping.

~~*Amphlett Boulevard. Require new buildings and additions to **have high quality architectural design and be context sensitive be-compatible** with adjoining residential areas, including adequate screening and landscaping.*~~

SHOREVIEW

Policy CD-P6.9 **US 101 Frontage.** Encourage upgrading of the appearance of US 101 and properties adjacent to the freeway through design treatment, screening, and right-of-way landscaping.

Policy CD-P6.10 **Marina Lagoon Properties.** Development of private parcels having frontage on Marina Lagoon should retain public access, providing a connection between Shoreline Park and Bayside/Joinville Park.

MARINA LAGOON / BRIDGEPOINTE

Policy CD-P6.11 **Marina Plaza Center.** Retain the Marina Plaza neighborhood retail center and allow limited expansion of low scale commercial uses.

~~*Marina Plaza Center. Retain the Marina Plaza neighborhood retail center and allow limited expansion of low scale commercial uses. <Already covered by policies in the “Diverse Range of Land Uses” and “Shopping Areas in Transition” sections of the Land Use Element.>*~~

NORTHWEST HEIGHTS

~~HAYWARD PARK / SUNNYBRAE~~

BERESFORD PARK

Policy CD-P6.12

25th Avenue Shopping Center. Continue to support ground floor retail uses and improvements to the physical and aesthetic nature of the 25th Avenue commercial district. New buildings or remodels should be compatible with existing buildings while incorporating improved signage and high quality design and construction.

~~**25th Avenue Shopping Center.** Continue to support ground floor retail uses and improvements to the physical and aesthetic nature of the 25th Avenue commercial district. New buildings or remodels should be compatible with existing buildings while incorporating improved signage and high quality design and construction.~~ <Already covered by policies in the “Diverse Range of Land Uses” and “Shopping Areas in Transition” sections of the Land Use Element.>

Policy CD-P6.13

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.

HILLSDALE / SUGARLOAF

Policy CD-P6.14

San Mateo County Hospital. Should all or a portion of the San Mateo County Hospital redevelop, a mixed residential development is appropriate with stepped density compatible with adjacent residential areas, ranging from single-family adjacent to single family residences to medium density where adequately buffered.

~~**San Mateo County Hospital.** Should all or a portion of the San Mateo County Hospital redevelop, a mixed residential development is appropriate with stepped density compatible with adjacent residential areas, ranging from single-family adjacent to single family residences to medium density where adequately buffered.~~ <Recommend removing as properties owned by the County are outside of the City’s permitting authority.>

WESTERN HILLS

Policy CD-P6.15

San Mateo County Facilities Site. Require a Master Plan prior to any future development of the site. Encourage clustered development to maximize open space and protect hillsides, major vegetation, natural topography, and views from surrounding areas.

~~**San Mateo County Facilities Site.** Require a Master Plan prior to any future development of the site. Encourage clustered development to maximize open~~

~~space and protect hillsides, major vegetation, natural topography, and views from surrounding areas.~~ <Recommend removing as properties owned by the County are outside of the City's permitting authority.>