tional use restrictions, along with regulations for areas of special environmental concern.

As open space regulations have been adopted, parkland acquisition has also reduced development potential. In the early 1970s, the East Bay Regional Park District acquired Mission Peak, opening the park as a regional preserve for hiking and passive recreation. Today the park encompasses 3,000 acres and extends south to the Santa Clara line and east to the city limits. It is connected through adjoining regional preserves to the Sunol Regional Wilderness and the Ohlone Regional Wilderness in southeast Alameda County, and to Ed Levin County Park in Santa Clara County. In the 1990s, the EBRPD acquired 1,030 acres on the slopes of the Vargas Plateau, with plans to create another regional park. Another 217 acres were recently acquired on the Rose Ranch north of Morrison Canyon Road. Properties within the EBRPD landholdings are managed to reduce the risk of wildfire, avoid the spread of invasive plants, protect special status wildlife species, and minimize hazards such as erosion.

Other areas of the hills are preserved under Williamson Act contracts. These contracts provide reduced property taxes in exchange for agreements to keep the land in agricultural use, primarily grazing. The hills are also subject to state and federal resource agency regulations which protect threatened and endangered species. Several areas have been designated as Critical Habitat for Alameda whipsnake and California red legged frog by the US Fish and Wildlife Service, with related limitations on development.

The overarching vision for the Hill area is to continue its use for agriculture, outdoor recreation, open space, and when appropriate, very low density residential use. The citywide General Plan elements include policies to protect natural resources, watersheds and water quality, wildlife habitat, scenic beauty, and visual qualities, while permitting access to nature and outdoor recreation. In the Hill Area, this will be achieved through zoning regulations, vegetation management and habitat restoration measures, and agricultural and grazing practices.

## Northern Fremont Hills

The Northern Hill Area is the smallest of the hill subareas. It includes the hill face east of Mission Boulevard and north of Niles Canyon. The hill face provides a scenic backdrop for the community of Niles and has almost no development other than overhead transmission lines and water storage facilities. This is unlikely to change during the time horizon of this plan.

Beyond the primary ridgeline, there is an area containing steep terrain accessed by a fire road that extends to the Union City city limits. This area is also known as the Niles Hills and is undeveloped. Future development is limited to one unit per 20 acres, which could accommodate a limited number of new housing units assuming the lots have access on an approved City street and the new street does not cross slopes in excess of 30 percent. Existing fire roads are not considered legal access roads for purposes of development. Consistent with the Hill Area Initiative, if any lots larger than 40 acres are subdivided, clustering of the resulting home sites would be required to reduce the overall development footprint.

## Central Fremont Hills

The Central Hills include a large area of hill face and ridgeline lands and portions of the Vargas Plateau beyond the ridgeline. A small rural residential area exists along Vargas Road north of I-680, with about 25 homes on various unimproved side streets. There are also a handful of rural residences along Morrison Canyon Road. The rest of the area includes a combination of public and private land, with most of the area used for grazing. Manmade features include the Union Pacific rail line and railroad tunnel, water tanks, a decommissioned concrete aqueduct, transmission lines and telecommunication facilities, and older farm buildings.

Elevations in this area range from 200 feet to about 1,200 feet, with steep slopes in many locations. The Vargas Plateau stands out as a prominent and isolated landform among the Fremont hills. It is sharply distinguished from adjacent ridges by Niles Canyon on the north and Mission Pass on the south.

The hillsides in this area are covered by Measure T, which limits densities to one unit per 20 acres. Any development on the hills could impact visual character, water quality, and biological resources and would be subject to the standards established by the hillside ordinances. Beyond the ridgeline, the Vargas Plateau extends to the City limits and beyond. The Plateau includes a mix of rolling hills and relatively flat terrain as well as highly constrained, steep slopes and biologically sensitive creek areas. Since there are

a number of vacant lots in the Vargas Road area that were created before the hillside ordinances, the potential for a limited number of new homes still exists.

In 2007, the East Bay Regional Park District (EBRPD) prepared a Land Use Plan for the Vargas Plateau Regional Park. The Plan divides the park into a series of planning units. For each planning unit, the Plan recommends what park facilities should be built and how the land and resources should be managed. The planning units include staging areas, recreation areas, natural areas, special management features, and special protection features.

The EBRPD Plan calls for staging areas on Morrison Canyon Road and in the Upper Ranch area. It proposes a limited number of recreational improvements including group camping and picnicking areas, and trails for hiking, dog walking, jogging, and horseback riding. The recreational units are generally limited to a 43-acre area on the North Plateau and a 26-acre area on the top of the ridgeline. The Plan also calls for long-term conservation of natural resources and land management, including vegetation management, wildlife monitoring, and fire safety. Various stock ponds, wetlands, and other ecologically sensitive features would be preserved.

A portion of the Bay Area Ridge Trail passes through the park. Future trail extensions would connect this trail to other regional parks in central and northern Alameda County as well as parks to the south. Trails could also be connected to neighborhoods in Niles and Lower Niles Canyon.

Implementation of the Vargas Plateau Regional Park Land Use Plan is expected during the time horizon of this General Plan. At the same time, the EBRPD is acquiring additional sites in the Central Fremont Hills, creating the opportunity for additional access points and an expansion of the planned trail system.

## *Southern Fremont Hills*

The Southern Hill Area is the largest of the three Hill subareas, extending from I-680 south to Santa Clara County. Like the Northern and Central Hill Areas, it includes a large area of hill face open space and other hillside properties beyond the ridgeline. The South Hills also includes Mission Peak Regional Preserve, including Mission Peak (2,519 feet), Mount Alison (2,658 feet), and Monument Peak (2,594 feet). Much of the South Hills is in public or institutional ownership, including large areas owned by the Ohlone College District and the City of Fremont. The area also

includes a number of rural homes along Mill Creek Road on the eastern slopes of Mission Peak.

The Southern Hill Area adjoins the Mission San Jose and Warm Springs Planning Areas, with numerous subdivisions extending from Mission Boulevard/I-680 up to the toe of the hill. In a few cases, development predating the hillside ordinances extends above this line. This includes approximately one half of the Avalon subdivision and all of Ponderosa Heights, with over 300 homes on large view-oriented lots just north of the Santa Clara County line. Although these pre-existing residential communities are designated as open space on the General Plan Diagram, the existing legal lots may be used for single family homes. No further subdivision or lot splitting is permitted.

There are a few other instances where large lot or estate development encroaches above the toe of the hills. Much of this development occurred during the 1980s and 90s in subdivisions such as Vineyard Heights and Vista del Sol. A major landslide on the slopes of Mission Peak in 1998 heightened public awareness of geologic hazards in this area and provided some of the impetus for Measure T in 2002.

Measure T established additional prohibitions above the toe of the hill, including buildings or roads on slopes of 30 percent of more, buildings on visible ridgelines and hilltops, development in riparian corridors, commercial vineyards and Christmas tree farms, and agricultural cultivation on steep slopes. Measure T also limited the aggregate size of buildings on a parcel and the development envelope on large tracts, with some exceptions for smaller sites. Additional language in the initiative and implementing ordinances requires that visual impacts be minimized through site planning and design.

Very little change is envisioned in the Southern Hill Area during the lifetime of this General Plan. Continued very low density residential development may occur on existing legal lots, consistent with Measure T. Subdivision potential is extremely limited. Mission Peak will continue to be maintained as a regional preserve, primarily oriented around hiking, conservation, and vegetation management. Small areas in the park have been designated for hang gliding and remote-controlled (non-motorized) aircraft. The park includes a number of staging area and trailheads, but there are no significant improvements planned within its boundaries, with the exception of potential parking lot expansion. Beyond its boundaries,

eventual extension of the Ridge Trail is planned to link the park to other regional parks in the East Bay hills.

### *Unincorporated Area*

The State Government Code allows a general plan to include any land that is "outside [a city's] boundaries which in the planning agency's judgment bears relation to its planning." The Fremont Planning Area has been defined to extend from the city limits eastward to Calaveras Creek and north to Alameda Creek near the town of Sunol. The eastern part of the Vargas Plateau, the Sheridan Road area, and portions of Calaveras Road are included in this area. Any area annexed by Fremont would be subject to the City's Hill Area planning and zoning regulations, including a 100-acre minimum lot size requirement.

The unincorporated area is characterized by steep terrain with very limited, if any, development potential. Much of the land is in public ownership and is managed as watershed land for nearby reservoirs. Some is private ranchland and has historically been used for sheep and cattle grazing. Although the area is crisscrossed by fire trails and footpaths, it is largely inaccessible.

Some of the properties along the I-680 corridor have been developed with resource-oriented uses, including a large quarry near Calaveras Creek and plant nurseries and small farms on Andrade Road. There is also a golf course on the north side of the freeway near Sunol. Along Sheridan Road and Mission Road, there are a number of farms and rural estates. Because these areas are on gentler terrain and are relatively close to I-680, they have experienced more development pressure than the rest of the area. The City's policy is to maintain the rural, agricultural character of the unincorporated area through the horizon year of this Plan.

## Special Study Areas

No Special Study Areas have been designated within the Hill Community Plan Area.

## HILL AREA DEFINITIONS

The following definitions were adopted by voter initiatives in 1981 and 2002 and are incorporated as part of the General Plan. These definitions shall apply unless the text or context indicates otherwise:

1. The "Hill Area" as defined by the 1981 initiative includes generally the area lying easterly of a line which begins at the Milpitas City limit, runs north along Route 680 and Mission Boulevard, and then north along Mission Boulevard to the Union City limit. The Hill Area includes Niles Canyon, Mission Pass and the Mission Hills, but excludes a small area at the mouth of the Niles Canyon and at the base of Mission Pass. The "Hill Area" as defined by the 2002 initiative is the area bounded by the Toe of the Hill, from the Alameda County-Santa Clara County boundary north to the Fremont-Union City boundary, east along that boundary to Alameda Creek, east and south along Alameda Creek, south along Calaveras Creek to the Alameda - Santa Clara County boundary, and west along that boundary to the Toe of the Hill.

2. The "Ridgeline" is a visual ridge as established from a point of origin a distance of one and one-half miles from the ridgeline. The point of origin shall be located along a line lying perpendicular to Mission Boulevard and Warm Springs Boulevard. The point of origin of the ridgelines for Niles Canyon shall be located along Niles Canyon Road and shall be a visual ridge located along a perpendicular to Niles Canyon road. The point of origin of the ridgeline for Mission Pass shall be located along a line lying perpendicular to Route 680.

3. The "Toe of the Hill" shall mean a line along the base of the hills where the natural grade first becomes twenty percent (20%) or more, on the western side of the Hill Area from the Fremont-Union City boundary to the Alameda - Santa Clara County boundary, and on both sides of Niles Canyon and Route 680 east of Mission Boulevard to the Fremont City Limits.

4. The "Hill Face" consists of those lands situated between the Toe of the Hill and the Ridgeline.

5. "Constrained land" is land having a slope of 30 percent or greater, soils which the City determines are unsafe for development, or land which is inaccessible.

6. "Development" includes the placement or construction of any building or structure, including mobile dwelling units, and grading, excavation, or fill of land.

7. "Building" is any structure having a roof supported by walls or columns, or both, except for greenhouses, and intended for the shelter, housing or enclosure of any person, animal or property.

8. "Structure" includes but is not limited to any building, greenhouse, tower, antenna, utility line, retaining wall, dam, pumping facility, water tank or anything constructed or erected, the use of which requires location on the ground or attachment to something located on the ground.

9. "State law" means State Constitutional provisions, valid statutes and regulations, and court declared common law.

# Policies and Implementing Actions

## Adopted By Voter Initiative

The policies and definitions below were approved by voter initiative. Consistent with the Fremont Municipal Code, no changes to this language have been made in the update of the General Plan and no changes may be made in the future without a public vote. The policy numbering scheme from the previous General Plan has been updated to reflect the format of this General Plan.

### • Policy 11-5.1: Development on Constrained Land

Residential development shall be prohibited on constrained land, subject to exceptions provided herein. Except for prohibitions or restrictions imposed by the 2002 Initiative, the Planning Commission may allow development on constrained land in order to better conform to the terrain and where all technical conditions for safe development are assured.

### • Policy 11-5.2: Allowable Uses in the Hill Area

Subject to the prohibitions, restrictions, densities, conditions and requirements imposed by the 2002 Initiative, Hill Area generally compatible uses are agriculture, recreation, and very low density residential uses which comply with standards and densities set out in the General Plan text. According to the 2002 Initiative, the following uses and their normal and appropriate accessory uses and structures (as well as uses preemptively authorized by Federal and State law) are permitted in the Hill Area, if they comply with all of the provisions of this plan and with other City prohibitions, restrictions, regulations, conditions and requirements:

a) One single family residence on each legal parcel, secondary units to the extent required by State law, and dwelling units for persons employed on the parcel, or on a ranch or farm that includes the parcel.

b) Rental of rooms, including with board, not exceeding two units in a residence.

c) Agriculture including grazing, horticulture, floriculture and arboriculture, but not including:

1) commercial feedlots, except for livestock that primarily receive their sustenance in the Hill Area from grazing on a ranch or farm that includes the parcel,

2) large or medium-size pig farms, poultry ranches, or commercial vineyards, or

3) Christmas tree farms.

d) Small-scale, low-intensity rearing, custodianship, training or care of animals, other than ruminants which shall be governed as agriculture by subsection (c), that does not cause material environmental harm.

e) Commercial uses, limited to the following:

1) Outdoor recreation and pastimes predominantly for active participants (this category of permitted uses does not include, among other things, amusement or theme parks and motor vehicle tracks, courses or recreational activities);

2) Nature observation, study or enjoyment;

3) Accommodations for short term occupancy and for provision of food and drink (including low-intensity campgrounds and picnic facilities), predominantly for persons engaged in outdoor recreation or nature observation, study or enjoyment;

4) Uses in historic structures, incidental to preserving the structures and their historic qualities and setting;

5) Home occupations and offices, subordinate to residential use and conducted primarily by occupants of the property, that will have no deleterious effects on the environment or visual qualities or materially increase local traffic;

6) Neighborhood stores and services, predominantly to serve the unmet agricultural and other needs of the population of the Hill Area, that cannot practicably be met outside the Area;

7) Healthcare;

8) Cemeteries;

9) Packaging, processing, storage or sale of agricultural produce or plants, a substantial portion of which were grown in the Hill Area;

10) Small-scale extraction and processing of rock, soil, or water;

11) Special, occasional short-term events related to agriculture or animals that do not interfere substantially with the use of land for agriculture or cause lasting adverse environmental harm or visual effects, provided that access for vehicles and emergency equipment and for parking meet generally applicable City standards.

f) Institutional and other non-profit uses that primarily serve Hill Area residents, or whenever and to the same extent like commercial uses would be permitted.

g) City and other government facilities and infrastructure, and public utility facilities, that are limited to meeting the needs created by uses permitted in the Hill Area unless the City Council reasonably finds more extensive public need, that cannot practicably be met outside the Hill Area. However, this exception for more extensive public need shall not apply to waste treatment and disposal or commercial electrical power generating facilities. Publicly provided outdoor recreation and nature observation and enjoyment and ancillary accommodations are permitted whenever like commercial uses would be allowed.

## • Policy 11-5.3: Hill Face Open Space

Areas on the Hill Face and the Ridgeline are hereby redesignated "Hill Face Open Space." Development in this area is limited to one residential dwelling unit per twenty acres (.05 units per acre). Constrained and unconstrained land may be combined within a single ownership in order to comply with the density requirements herein, provided that there is at least one contiguous acre of unconstrained land per residential dwelling unit. Development on accessible but purely constrained land is limited to one unit per twenty (20) acres (.05 units per acre), provided that a site which meet the other standards herein is available.

## • Policy 11-5.4: Hill Area Outside Hill Face and Ridgeline

General Plan designations and densities for the portions of the Hill Area outside the Hill Face and Ridgeline are as follows:

a) Areas formerly designated as "Institutional Open Space" or under the control of a public agency shall be designated "Resource Conservation and Public Open Space" or "Hill Open Space."

b) Areas formerly designated "Open Space" or "Open Space- Three Acre Estate" are redesignated "Hill Open Space." Development in the area designated Hill Open Space is limited to one dwelling unit per twenty (20) acres of land (.05 units per acre). Constrained and unconstrained land may be combined within a single ownership in order to comply with the density requirements herein, provided that there is at least one contiguous acre of unconstrained land per residential dwelling unit. Development on accessible but purely constrained land is limited to one unit per twenty (20) acres (.05 units per acre), provided that a site which meets the other standards herein is available.

c) Areas designated "Residential" are redesignated "Hill Open Space" with a density of one dwelling unit per twenty (20) acres (.05 units per acre).

The densities used in Policies 11-5.3 and 5.4 are maximums. The City may provide for lower densities, especially in agricultural preserve areas.

## • Policy 11-5.5: Consistency of Future Projects with Hill Area Standards

All rezonings (including Planned districts), permits and approvals for subdivision maps, planned unit developments, grading, conditional uses and all building permits, variances, and other entitlements for use, shall be consistent with these requirements and with the associated designations on the General Plan Summary Map and Area Maps. This plan does not affect the validity of existing parcels, development, structures, and uses that are legal at the time it becomes effective. However, parcels, development, structures and uses may not be expanded or changed in ways that are inconsistent with the prohibitions, limits or requirements of this plan, except as authorized by State law. The restrictions and requirements imposed by this plan shall apply to proposed development that has not received all necessary discretionary City and other authorizations and approvals prior to the plan's effective date, except to the extent precluded by State law.

## • Policy 11-5.6: Resolution of Conflicting Policies and Ordinances for the Hill Area

To prevent conflicts within the General Plan otherwise unavoidable by the 2002 Hill Initiative, amendments of the General Plan, except as approved by the voters after approval of the 2002 Hill Initiative, to the extent inconsistent with that Initiative, are superseded and nullified. More generally, if there is any inconsistency between provisions of that Initiative and other provisions of the General Plan, despite efforts to avoid all inconsistencies, those other provisions to the extent they are inconsistent are superseded and nullified and the provisions of the 2002 Hill Initiative shall govern.

Any provision of any existing or subsequently adopted specific or area plan, that is not part of the General Plan, and any provision of any zoning ordinance or any other ordinance, resolution or policy of the City of Fremont, not part of the General Plan, is ineffective to the extent that the provision is inconsistent with the provisions of the 2002 Hill Initiative, except as State law may mandate otherwise. No subdivision map, development agreement, development plan, use permit, variance or other discretionary action inconsistent with the prohibitions, restrictions or requirements of the 2002 Hill Area Initiative may be permitted, approved or taken by the City, or its agencies or officials, except as required by State law.

General Plan provisions, ordinances and other City regulations are not to be deemed inconsistent with and are not affected by the 2002 Hill Area Initiative to the extent that they impose additional prohibitions, restrictions, conditions, regulations or requirements beyond this ordinance on the division, development or use of land in the Hill Area. In that respect, the 2002 Hill Initiative shall be deemed to establish only minimum standards.

## • Policy 11-5.7: Hill Area Minimum Parcel Size, Lot Line Adjustments, and Certificates of Compliance

The minimum new parcel size shall be at least twenty (20) acres in the Hill Area within the Fremont city limits on January 1, 2002, except as permitted in Policy 11-5.18. The minimum new parcel size shall be at least one hundred (100) acres in the parts of the Hill Area that are annexed to Fremont after January 1, 2002, except as permitted by clustering under Policy 11-5.18. Existing parcels of record as of January 1, 2002 which are below the minimum lot sizes specified herein must comply with all standards herein except standards relating to size.

Substandard contiguous parcels in common ownership must recombine.

No more than one residential dwelling unit is permitted on any one substandard parcel. Apart from the regular subdivision process, the City may not permit lot line adjustments, except as required by State law, if the adjusted parcels for any reason would not comply with the General Plan, including minimum parcel sizes, and all city zoning and building ordinances, or adjustments between more than four (4) parcels, or part of a plan or series of adjustments between more than four (4) parcels.

The City shall not grant certificates of compliance or conditional certificates of compliance except as required by State law. The City shall impose all conditions permissible under State law on conditional certificates of compliance, and shall hold the owner or subsequent transferee to strict compliance with these conditions. A certificate of compliance, by itself, creates no right to develop, nor diminishes in any respect the City's authority to control development.

## • Policy 11-5.8: Easements Limiting Further Development

An easement, conveyed to the City or the City's appropriate designee, shall be required for each parcel with respect to which development is permitted, including parcels from which development is transferred in cases of clustering. The easement shall bar any further development that would not be permitted under this ordinance. The easement shall be negative only; it shall convey no possessory interest to the City or its designee, nor confer any right of public access. The parcel remains wholly in private ownership, so far as the easement is concerned, with exclusive occupancy and use in the owner. The City has no responsibility or liability because of the easement for acts or omissions on the parcel, except in good faith and effectually to remedy or prevent violations of the easement. The easement shall terminate when the parcel is restored substantially to its pre-development condition, so far as the effects of development are concerned.

## • Policy 11-5.9: Architectural Review for Hill Area Development

The City shall perform architectural review for any development in the Hill Area in order to ensure consistency with the policies of the General Plan. In addition, all development on the Ridgeline and Hill Face

shall be subject to discretionary review and must be approved by the Planning Commission, or by the City Council on appeal.

## • Policy 11-5.10: Development Standards for Hill Area Sites

Consistent with the Hill Area Initiative of 2002, all development shall be designed to minimize disturbances of the natural terrain and vegetation and to minimize visual impact. The following restrictions shall apply to development in the Hill Area:

a) No building site, in whole or in part, may be located on a slope of thirty percent (30%) or more. No building may be located on a site that has access over a slope of thirty percent (30%) or more. No greenhouses, in whole or in part, may be located on a slope of fifteen percent (15%) or more. Cultivated agriculture may not be conducted on a slope of thirty percent (30%) or more.

b) Structures may not be located on ridgelines or hilltops, or where they will project into the visual plane of a ridgeline or hilltop, as viewed from public roads, trails, or other public places, unless there is no other building site on the parcel or on a contiguous parcel in common ownership when this ordinance becomes effective or thereafter.

c) New or reconfigured parcels, including those resulting from lot line adjustments, must be created or drawn to minimize visibility of development from public places.

d) To the extent practicable, structures shall be located, including by setbacks from parcel boundaries, on that part of a parcel or on contiguous parcels in common ownership that minimizes visibility from public places, except agricultural structures necessary for agricultural purposes may be located in more visible areas.

e) In all cases, appropriate landscaping, preservation of vegetation, screening, and building materials shall be required by the City to minimize the visual impact of development. Consistent with that end, alteration of topography by grading, excavating, filling or other development activity shall be minimized. Development shall be subordinate to and blend with the natural and open space qualities of the area where located, so as to be as unobtrusive as possible, and not to impair those qualities. To the maximum extent practicable, lighting must be located, designed and shielded so as to confine direct rays to the parcel where the lighting is located.

f) The height of buildings shall not exceed 35 feet.

g) All buildings on a parcel shall be placed within a contiguous "development envelope" not to exceed two acres, except for buildings that must be located outside the envelope for agricultural uses or security needs, or for government or public utility facilities that the City Council reasonably finds require a more extensive area.

h) The maximum aggregate floor area for all floors (regardless of composition) in buildings on a parcel may not exceed one percent (1%) of the parcel's area, or 20,000 square feet, whichever is less, but for any parcel a minimum of 10,000 square feet shall be permitted. Greenhouses are subject to a maximum aggregate floor area of one percent (1%) or 40,000 square feet, whichever is less. Government facilities are not subject to the aggregate limit to the extent that the City Council finds reasonably that they are necessary to serve important public needs, that they cannot practicably be located outside the Hill Area, and that they must exceed the floor area maximum. The City Council may also authorize a larger area

if needed for housing for agricultural workers, or for processing, packaging or storage of agricultural produce or plants, a substantial portion of which were grown in the Hill Area, or for other agricultural purpose.

### • Policy 11-5.11: Minimizing Impacts through Site Planning

Development shall utilize clustering, density transfers and other techniques to maximize open space, minimize environmental and visual impact and encourage development in the Hill Area outside the Hill Face and especially outside the portion of the Ridgeline visible from any point below the Toe of the Hill, within a one mile radius of the site. If feasible, clustering shall be required for residential and other permitted development on contiguous parcels in common ownership to the extent that clustering or partial clustering would reduce overall visibility of development from public places. Clustering, which also may be described as transfer of density or development rights, may be allowed for permitted development on any parcels if the effect is to reduce overall visibility from public places or, consistent with that, to reduce environmental harm. Required or permitted, clustering may be on a single parcel or on separate, adjacent parcels that do not exceed two acres.

## Not Adopted By Voter Initiative

The policies below were not adopted by voter initiative. They have been carried forward from the prior General Plan with edits made as necessary for consistency in style and format with other policies in this version of the Plan. To the extent permitted by law, these policies apply to the unincorporated area east of Fremont as well as to land within the city itself.

### • Policy 11-5.12: Identifying Constrained Lands

Consider areas identified as having any of the following characteristics to be "constrained":

- Severe soil instability
- Class VIII soil as classified by the Soil Conservation Service
- Groundwater conditions that may affect or be affected adversely by construction
- Lands which are determined to be an unstable landslide or lands in the path of land with potential for landslide as identified by an on-site geologic investigation or by a survey by the United State Geological Service
- Lands having slopes in excess of 30 percent.
- Lands not restricted by constraints but which are inaccessible as a result of having to cross constrained lands

Policy 11-5.12 supplements Definition #5 in the Measure T Hillside Initiative (see text box above), and complements Policy 2-2.8 in the Land Use Element.

### • Policy 11-5.13: Environmental Assessments for Hill Area Projects

Require early assessment of environmental constraints and resources for any applications submitted for development in the hill areas. Early consultation with the City regarding the implications of the environmental assessment for proposed development is recommended. Issues to be addressed include geology (e.g.,

seismicity, soils, slope), biology (e.g., wetlands, riparian zones, landmark trees), mineral resources, and visual sensitivity. These resources and constraints are roughly identified in the Natural Resources and Safety Elements of the General Plan.

## • Policy 11-5.14: Water District Services in the Hill Area

Encourage the Alameda County Water District to provide water facilities in the Hill Area to the extent necessary and feasible to protect property and the safety, health, and welfare of residents. Additional capacity, if any, should be planned in conformance with City policies and regulations for the Hill Area.

### > Implementation 11-5.14.A: Hill Area Water System Planning

Plan for a comprehensive and integrated water system in the Hill Area. The City strongly encourages the Alameda County Water District to provide gravity fed water service in the Hill Face only in conformance with the City's policies and regulations for the Hill Area.

## • Policy 11-5.15: Hill Area Transfer of Density to Less Sensitive Areas

Whenever feasible and where development is allowed, require transfer of density from higher elevations on the hill face and ridgeline to lower, less visible and sensitive areas, where services can be efficiently and safely provided.

## • Policy 11-5.16: Ridgeline and Hilltop Preservation

Prohibit the siting of structures on ridgelines or hilltops, or where they will project into the visual plane of a ridgeline or hilltop, as viewed from public roads, trails, or other public places, unless there is no other building site on the parcel or on a contiguous parcel in common ownership. Unless there is no other possible configuration, new parcels may not be created that would cause a building to project into the visual plane of a ridgeline or hilltop, as viewed from a public place.

### > Implementation 11-5.16.A: Ridgeline and Hilltop Development Standards

Continue to maintain development standards to implement this policy.

### > Implementation 11-5.16.B: Coordination with Union City in the Niles Hills

Coordinate regulations for the Niles Hills sub-area with Union City. Encourage Union City to maintain its hillsides in open space to the greatest extent feasible.

## • Policy 11-5.17: Sunol Valley Watershed Protection

Protect the portion of the Alameda Creek watershed which drains to the Sunol Valley from significant negative impacts.

## • Policy 11-5.18: Design Sensitivity to Natural Features

Design new development to be compatible with its natural surroundings. Development shall be designed to maximize retention of natural topographic features, such as drainage swales, slopes, rock outcroppings, vistas, landmark trees, natural foliage and plant formations, historical sites, riparian areas and areas of natural

beauty. Development shall minimize disturbances of any natural watercourses or streams and wildlife breeding areas.

## • Policy 11-5.19: Use of Natural Drainage in Hill Area

Utilize natural drainage whenever feasible, with minimum modification to natural waterways. The impact on downstream, drainage structures shall be considered.

### > Implementation 11-5.19.A: Assessing and Mitigating Downstream Impacts

Require projects with the potential to have a significant effect on waterways or streams to determine the impacts on downstream drainage structures and recommend mitigations as appropriate.

## • Policy 11-5.20: Minimization of Hill Area Grading

Require development to conform to the natural grades and not scar the existing terrain and vegetation by excessive grading. Buildings should fit the land, not vice versa.

## • Policy 11-5.21: Minimization of Hill Area Erosion and Pollution Impacts

Require development to minimize erosion and pollution impacts from construction.

### > Implementation 11-5.21.A: Sediment and Erosion Control Plans

Require all proposals for Hill Planning Area buildings to include a sediment and erosion control plan.

## • Policy 11-5.22: Hill Area Building Variety

Encourage a variety of building types in the Hill Planning Area.

## • Policy 11-5.23: Hill Area Clustering

Utilize clustering of units, density transfers and other techniques to reduce the need for earth movement and enable steep hill slopes, wooded areas and areas of special scenic beauty or history interest to be preserved. The potential to reduce impacts through density transfers shall be considered and used to the maximum extent feasible as early in the development review process as possible.

See also Policy 11-5.11 on clustering

## • Policy 11-5.24: Hill Area Road Standards

Adopt Hill Area road standards that reflect the need to minimize scarring, earth movement, and the potential for erosion and ground failure, and respect the natural topography of the area.

## • Policy 11-5.25: Hill Area Subdivision Access

Limit development in areas served by only one point of access in a manner that is consistent with local fire codes and ingress/egress requirements. An adequate emergency vehicle access way shall constitute a point of access.

## • Policy 11-5.26: Hill Area Trail Development

Develop equestrian and hiking trails throughout the Hill Area, to the extent feasible and consistent with other General Plan policies.

### > Implementation 11-5.26.A: Vargas Plateau Regional Preserve

Support the East Bay Regional Park District's efforts to develop trails within the Vargas Plateau Regional Preserve, and to link trails between Vargas Plateau and Mission Peak as part of the Bay Area Ridge Trail project.

## • Policy 11-5.27: Relationship of the Fremont Planning Area to City Limits

Consider the area outside the City's eastern boundary extending to Calaveras Creek as being part of the City's planning area. By identifying this area as such, it is not the City's intent to imply the City's boundaries or sphere of influence should be expanded to include all or any part of this area.

### > Implementation 11-5.27.A: Annexation of Vargas Plateau East or Sheridan Road

Oppose any efforts to incorporate the Vargas Plateau East or Sheridan Road subareas into another city's sphere of influence.

### > Implementation 11-5.27.B: Annexation Studies

Undertake appropriate environmental, infrastructure, public service, and economic/fiscal studies prior to annexing land into the city.

General Plan Map designations for the Hill Area Community Plan Area are shown in Diagram 11-6.

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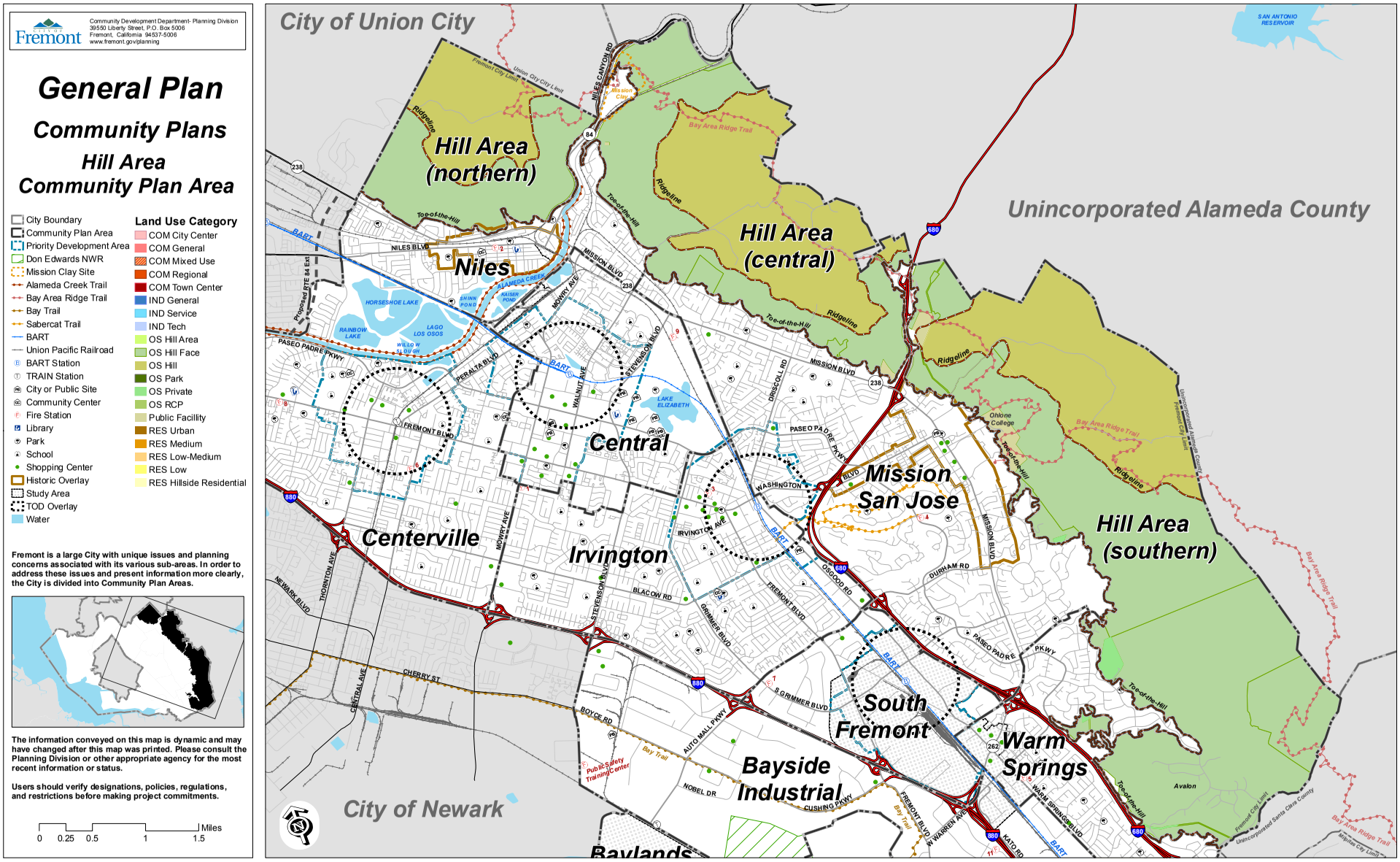


Diagram 11-6 Hill Area Community Plan Area



This is a reduced image. Please see the most current color full-size maps available at the Fremont Planning Division or online at www.fremont.gov/planning
The information on this diagram is dynamic and may have changed since this page was last printed.

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# Irvington

## Profile

The Irvington Community Plan Area is centered around the historic community of Irvington, one of Fremont's five original towns. It encompasses 4.8 square miles. The Plan Area extends from Mowry Avenue on the north to Auto Mall Parkway on the south. The western boundary is formed by I-880 and the Newark city limits. The eastern boundary skirts the edge of the Central Community Plan Area along Argonaut Way, Bidwell Street, and Fremont Boulevard, and then extends up Grimmer Boulevard to Paseo Padre Parkway and east to the Union Pacific railroad tracks.

The area traditionally referred to as the "Irvington District" is located in the northeast part of the Community Plan Area. The Irvington District contains a range of land uses, including large and small retailers, restaurants, offices, warehouse and construction operations along the railroad tracks, multi-family residential complexes, single family homes, and public buildings, including a post office and fire station. There are a number of Fremont Register Historic Resources in this area, including the Leal Theater, the Hiram Davis Home, and the Odd Fellows Hall.

The remainder of the Community Plan area includes residential neighborhoods dating from the 1950s through the 1980s, with newer infill development on scattered sites. Neighborhoods include Sundale, Sundale South, and 28 Palms, along with numerous single family subdivisions in the Blacow and Grimmer Road areas. Many of these neighborhoods, and the network of major thoroughfares that connect them, were developed during the first decade after the city's incorporation. Thoroughfares like Blacow, Mowry, and Stevenson reflect the auto-oriented design of early Fremont, with multi-lane arterials for through-traffic, paralleled by parkway strips and frontage roads for local access.

The Community Plan area includes numerous multi-family developments along its major thoroughfares and close to the Irvington Town Center. It also contains the Southlake Mobile Home Park along Auto Mall Parkway. The area includes Irvington Community Park, Blacow Park, Grimmer Park, Marshall Park, Rix Park, Noll Park, and Azeveda Park. Kennedy and Irvington High Schools serve the area, as do Walters and John Horner Junior High Schools and several elementary schools. Civic facilities such as the Wally Pond Community Center provide local gathering places and are important community resources.

### GOALS FOR IRVINGTON

- Strengthen the historic heart of Irvington as one of Fremont's five Town Centers
- Maintain a distinct identity for Irvington that reflects its history and cultural diversity
- Attract unique shopping, dining, and neighborhood services to Irvington
- Establish clear, walkable connections between the new BART Station and Five Corners
- Manage parking in a way that supports businesses, BART, and local transit
- Provide a well designed pedestrian and bicycle network, which connects neighborhoods, open spaces, commercial areas, and transit facilities
- Promote transit-oriented development around the new BART Station

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## GOALS FOR IRVINGTON

Continued from previous page

- Transform underperforming shopping centers into vibrant new mixed use projects
- Improve the appearance of streets, neighborhoods, and business districts—especially the Grimmer Boulevard and Fremont Boulevard corridors
- Enhance Mowry Avenue as a major city gateway.

Commercial uses include the Irvington Business District (centered around the "Five Corners" at Fremont Boulevard, Washington Boulevard, and Bay Street), several neighborhood shopping centers, and local businesses along the major thoroughfares. The largest of the shopping areas is located along Mowry Avenue between I-880 and Blacow Road. This includes the Mowry East and Mowry Landing Shopping Centers, as well as several hotels, gas stations, and other free-standing commercial uses oriented toward travelers on I-880 and visitors to Fremont. Another large cluster of shopping centers exists on the perimeter of Irvington's historic center.

The Community Plan Area also includes the Osgood Road corridor (between Auto Mall Parkway and Washington Boulevard). This is primarily a service industrial area, with building suppliers, self-storage warehouses, light manufacturing, and the municipal corporation yard, along with a few older homes and offices. A number of community assembly uses (dance schools, churches, etc.) have moved into this area during recent years, attracted by relatively low rents, large sites, and a central location within Fremont. The Irvington area also includes several PG&E transmission line corridors, the Hetch Hetchy aqueduct right-of-way, and flood control channels.

Irvington is one of Fremont's four designated Priority Development Areas (PDAs), focused around a future BART station just east of the historic Town Center. Once rail transit is in place, this area may absorb a substantial share of the city's growth through transit-oriented development. Irvington is also located along the busiest bus corridor in Southern Alameda County, providing feeder service to BART via Fremont Boulevard.

In 2005, the City adopted a Concept Plan for the heart of Irvington, including land use, transportation, and urban design recommendations. The Concept Plan included a 20-year vision for the District's future, along with renderings and illustrative site plans showing how specific areas might be redeveloped. The major recommendations of the *Irvington Concept Plan* have been incorporated into this Community Plan through the narrative, policies, and implementing actions below.

The Concept Plan included location-specific design guidelines, which are not included in the Community Plan. The Guidelines remain a separate document and are still applicable to projects in this area.

# Planning Issues and Vision

## *Overview*

Most of the Irvington Community Plan Area's neighborhoods are well established, with limited potential for major change. Growth is expected within the Priority Development Area (PDA), especially in the Irvington Town Center and around the new Irvington BART station. Other potential growth areas include the Fremont Boulevard corridor, the Osgood Road corridor, and older shopping centers such as those along Blacow Road.

The Five Corners area will be reinforced as the heart of Irvington. New development will make the area more walkable, with improved shopping and dining choices, new housing, and a more integrated and consistent network of sidewalks and public spaces. Historic buildings will be retained where feasible, with new uses occupying structures that are vacant or underutilized today. Some of the older shopping centers may be replaced by mixed use projects, creating more vibrant streets, pedestrian activity, and uses which complement the community's historic fabric. A five-minute walk to the east, a new BART station will connect Irvington to the region, making the area more accessible to residents, commuters, shoppers, and visitors.

Some characteristics of the existing built environment in Irvington can be emulated in new development to achieve the General Plan vision of a strategically urban city. Most of the streets in the Town Center already have sidewalks and well-maintained landscaping. Bay Street near Fremont Boulevard has streetscape amenities such as pedestrian-scaled lighting, underground utilities, landscaping buffers, crosswalks, and street furniture. The Irvington Monument at Five Corners provides a strong sense of identity and is a visual landmark. Some of the buildings around the monument have a high level of architectural detail.

Other parts of the Community Plan Area are more auto-oriented. Sidewalks are discontinuous in many places, and sidewalk design standards are inconsistent. Commercial buildings are often set back from the street, surrounded by parking. Similarly, Irvington's neighborhoods have well kept homes, sidewalks, school crosswalks, and low traffic volumes, but walking to a neighborhood store or park often requires a long, circuitous route.

The City of Fremont has invested heavily in Irvington's transportation network. Fremont Boulevard was widened in the mid 2000s, and sidewalks were added to Osgood Road and Roberts Avenue. A railroad grade separa-

tion project and track realignment in 2007-2009 provided a Washington Boulevard overpass and a Paseo Padre Parkway underpass across the Union Pacific tracks. This resolved long-standing concerns over emergency access, congestion, and safety. The City has also provided off-street parking in the Bay Street area.

The next section of this chapter includes recommendations for specific areas within Irvington. The content is largely derived from the 2005 *Irvington Concept Plan*, but has been abridged to reflect the broader focus of the General Plan.

## 12 GOALS FOR IRVINGTON FROM THE 2005 CONCEPT PLAN

The 2005 Irvington Concept Plan established 12 goals for Irvington's future. These goals were developed through workshops that engaged community members, local business owners, and City staff.

1. Develop an identity that reflects Irvington's history and distinguishes it from other Fremont districts.
2. Improve the overall appearance of the Irvington neighborhood and commercial district.
3. Protect and enhance Irvington as one of Fremont's key commercial centers.
4. Encourage revitalization of underutilized parcels and buildings, including historic buildings and neighborhood features.
5. Attract unique shopping, dining and neighborhood services.
6. Provide a safe and well designed pedestrian and bicycle network, including access to Laguna Creek, Central Park and other recreational amenities.
7. Minimize the impact of vehicular through-traffic while meeting circulation needs.
8. Improve streetscape design.
9. Develop parking facilities that meet commercial and residential needs.
10. Improve bus service and scheduling to meet the needs of Irvington residents.
11. Integrate a future BART station and accompanying residential and commercial development into Irvington.
12. Add housing in a way that respects Irvington's role as one of Fremont's important commercial centers.

## *Irvington Town Center (Five Corners)*

The Irvington Town Center has historically been a major crossroads. Its "Five Corners" intersection is one of the defining elements of Fremont's urban form.

The vision for the Town Center is to link the historic business district to the new BART station along a pedestrian-oriented axis defined by Bay Street, a short segment of Union Street, and several blocks of Main Street. Fremont and Washington Boulevards will continue to function as major arterials through the area, providing a different character and scale of development than Bay and Main Streets, but remaining vital parts of the business district.

Improvements to Bay Street have created the framework for a great neighborhood shopping street. Future development should reflect the scale and ambiance of the historic buildings that front onto Five Corners. New buildings should produce a more unified character, with consistent and well articulated facades and amenities such as awnings, trellises and landscaping. Any new private redevelopment on Bay Street will be required to build to the sidewalk edge and have ground floor commercial uses. Municipal off-street parking has recently been provided, enabling some of the existing "front yard" parking along the street to be converted to buildable space or private outdoor space for landscaping, outdoor dining, or entry plazas.

The 6-acre Monument Shopping Center at the corner of Fremont Boulevard and Bay Street has been the subject of several redevelopment proposals, although none have come to fruition. The site's size and strategic location make it critical to the future of Five Corners. Future efforts should reinforce the pedestrian-oriented retail environment on Bay Street, with an emphasis on new commercial activities. Future development should use high-quality design and materials, and should incorporate parking that not only serves on-site development, but also adjacent businesses.

Across Fremont Boulevard from Bay Street is a block bounded by Washington Boulevard and Main Street on the long sides and Union Street and Roberts Avenue on the shorter sides. The block contains long narrow parcels that extend through the block with frontage on both Washington and Main. The corner of Washington and Union presents an especially important opportunity for a new building that helps shape the future identity of the business district. Potential uses might include a museum, an art gallery, a restaurant or a popular retail tenant.

The Washington Boulevard frontage will retain its commercial character from Five Corners to the railroad overpass. Restoration or adaptive reuse of the historic Leal Theater is strongly encouraged, potentially including upper floor residential. The Theater embodies the architectural vocabulary and details seen on historic Irvington buildings and can provide cues for new buildings in this area.

On the "back" side of this block, the Main Street frontage should be developed with residential or live-work uses with the option for ground-floor retail or office uses. Ground floor retail is particularly important in any new building at the corner of Union and Main Streets. Future development should reinforce pedestrian-oriented activity, with street trees, wide sidewalks, retail space built out to the sidewalk, on-street parking, and off-street parking lots to the rear. A potential plaza site has been identified at the northwest corner of Union Street and Fremont Boulevard, providing public open space and outdoor seating while visually relating to the Irvington Monument Plaza across the boulevard.

As a result of the Washington overpass, there is now sufficient clearance for a new street extending from the end of Main Street southward into the new BART station parking lot. The streetscape along Main Street should be further enhanced using similar design treatment as Bay Street. A multi-use pedestrian and bicycle path should extend from the new BART station north to Paseo Padre Parkway and Central Park.

## *BART Station Area*

The Irvington BART station will be located just south of the Washington Boulevard overpass on the west side of Osgood Road. The station will have two primary access points—one on the west side, leading to High and Main Streets in Irvington, and a second along Osgood Road which is more regionally oriented. Planning for the station and its environs must consider several factors, including earthquake hazards, impacts on established neighborhoods, and protection of nearby cultural resources.

Irvington is considered an "optional" station by BART, and its construction is dependent on funding through the City of Fremont. Original plans were for the Warm Springs Station to open in 2014, with Irvington added later as an "infill" station. The City is currently evaluating options for construction financing, and the opening date is uncertain. In 2009, the estimated cost of the station was $120 million. Preliminary engineering work has begun and property has been acquired for the station and future parking areas.

The primary parking facility for the Irvington BART station will be located east of Osgood Road, with access to the station provided by a pedestrian bridge. Additional parking opportunities may exist west of the station, depending on private development proposals in this area.

North of the future BART station, the relocation of a Union Pacific rail segment has resulted in the approval of a residential neighborhood. Central Park South includes 145 townhomes and a 40-unit apartment building. A private open space area traversing the Hayward Fault zone will serve the development and a new bicycle and pedestrian trail will be developed along the eastern side of the project within the alignment of the former railroad. It will serve as a critical bicycle and pedestrian link between the Irvington Town Center and Central Park.

## Osgood Road

Construction of the new BART station will also create development opportunities along the Osgood Road corridor. The area immediately adjacent to the station will support surface parking lots and a parking structure. The road itself is being reconstructed with four traffic lanes, a continuous left turn lane, bicycle lanes in each direction, and new curbs and sidewalks.

South of the BART station area, under-developed properties along Osgood provide opportunities for transit-oriented development. The General Plan designates this area for high density residential use, creating the opportunity for additional housing within a ten-minute walk of the new station. South of Blacow Road, the Osgood corridor is projected to remain industrial, with a continuation of existing uses.

Blacow Road does not currently cross the Union Pacific Railroad, and consists of two stubbed dead-ends on either side of the tracks. The feasibility of a grade separated crossing should continue to be studied, as it would improve access to BART and relieve congestion at nearby intersections.

## Grimmer Boulevard

Grimmer Boulevard is one of Irvington's major thoroughfares. South of Fremont Boulevard, the west side of Grimmer includes a narrow strip of commercial uses, with offices, restaurants, a pet hospital, and an eclectic mix of retail and service uses. The commercial strip is paralleled by a PG&E transmission line easement, which doubles as parking for many of the businesses. On the east side of Grimmer, a number of former commercial uses have been replaced by large multi-family housing and town-

home developments (Irvington Terrace and Park Lane). Other commercial uses remain active, including an older shopping center and bowling alley at the corner of Fremont and Grimmer.

There may be opportunities to redevelop some of the Grimmer Boulevard parcels during the coming years. Some of these sites, particularly those near Grimmer and Bay Street, are well situated for projects that combine residential uses above (or behind) ground floor retail uses. Development here can provide a western gateway to Bay Street and help invigorate the Irvington business district. Active ground floor uses facing Grimmer can generate foot traffic and create a safer, more walkable street environment. As in the adjacent Town Center, parking should be placed within structures, shared lots, or in the interior of larger parcels.

North of Fremont Boulevard, Grimmer forms the edge of a well-established neighborhood. The east side of the street is solidly residential. The west side includes a linear open space extending up to Paseo Padre Parkway, with a creek channel and transmission lines parallel to the street. Grimmer will be redesigned as a landscaped boulevard through this area. The "Grimmer Greenway" also includes reconfigured medians on Paseo Padre Parkway, bike lanes, curb ramps, and improvements to the Grimmer/Paseo Padre intersection.

## *Fremont Boulevard*

The *Irvington Concept Plan* included recommendations for the segment of Fremont Boulevard extending from Five Corners south to Carol Avenue. The future of Fremont Boulevard is particularly important to Irvington. It is both the northern and southern gateway into the Town Center. It is the primary arterial connecting Irvington to Central Fremont and Warm Springs and it is the area's major commercial thoroughfare. The street has already been enhanced with gateway signs, palm trees, and streetscape improvements but it can become an even more memorable place through high-quality infill development.

During recent years, a number of former commercial properties on Fremont Boulevard have been redeveloped with apartments and condominiums. Similar opportunities may be available in the future. Such projects should be two to four stories in height, with parking placed in rear yards or in garages. Where feasible, driveway access should be provided from side streets to minimize the number of curb cuts on Fremont Boulevard. Building design should create a more distinctive identity for Irvington,

provide greater continuity along the boulevard, and reinforce the perception of Five Corners as the heart of the community.

## Shopping Centers

The Irvington Community Plan Area includes several shopping centers developed during the late 1950s and 1960s. The shopping centers reflect the design philosophies of their era, with large parking lots, linear strips of storefronts set far back from the street, few architectural design amenities, and limited physical connections to the neighborhoods around them.

As shopping trends have changed, these centers have struggled with high vacancy rates, rapid turnover, and declining physical condition. Some have adapted by leasing space to non-retail tenants such as religious facilities or service providers. Others have attracted thrift shops and discount retail tenants. Unless these centers invest in significant revitalization, it is unlikely that they can be sustained for the next 20 years, particularly in light newer retail choices in other parts of the city and region.

The General Plan Map assigns a Mixed Use designation to the shopping centers at Stevenson and Blacow, Grimmer and Blacow, Fremont Boulevard at Blacow, and Fremont Boulevard at Grimmer. This designation provides the flexibility for these centers to stay retail or transition to mixed use. Those centers that remain may need to adapt to emerging shopping trends and changing demographics. In some cases, this could mean replacement or major rehabilitation of existing structures. Shopping centers that are replaced by new uses are encouraged to become a mix of housing and retail uses. Retaining some local-serving retail and service uses as part of the mixed use projects would be in the best interest of the neighborhood's long-term sustainability. At the same time, the amount of new retail space should be fairly small in these centers in order to foster the success of the Town Centers, City Center, and other established shopping districts.

Shopping center reuse plans should respect the scale and character of nearby uses. Projects should be designed to avoid significant increases in auto or truck traffic on nearby residential streets. Pedestrian and bicycle connections to nearby neighborhoods should be improved. If feasible, some degree of neighborhood retail should be retained in these projects, along with open space, public facilities, and other amenities that help them retain their roles as neighborhood gathering places.

### *Irvington Residential Neighborhoods*

A majority of Irvington's land area is comprised of stable residential neighborhoods in good physical condition. A continued effort will be made to improve these neighborhoods, support beautification projects, maintain schools and parks, and encourage homeowner investment, property maintenance, and community standards. Future development in Irvington's neighborhoods is subject to the policies in the citywide elements of the General Plan. These policies ensure that infill development will be compatible with nearby uses, and that the public will be involved in future planning and development decisions.

## Area of Interest: Mowry Gateway

The area along both sides of Mowry Avenue between Interstate 880 and Blacow Road is designated an "Area of Interest" on the General Plan Map. This is one of Fremont's most prominent gateways and defines first impressions of the city for thousands of travelers each day. Mowry Gateway currently has a suburban character, with large auto-oriented shopping centers, fast food restaurants, gas stations, hotels, and tall signs designed for fast-moving traffic. While there are no immediate plans to redevelop this area, the long-term vision is to make Mowry Avenue a more dramatic and distinctive gateway into the city.

The General Plan Map for the Mowry Gateway area largely reflects existing uses. Areas between the freeway and Farwell Drive are designated for Regional Commercial, while areas between Farwell and Blacow are designated for General Commercial. The former area includes several hotels, restaurants, gas stations, the Elks Lodge, a former multiplex cinema, the Mowry Landing and Mowry East Shopping Centers, and a portion of the Hetch Hetchy aqueduct. The latter area includes two neighborhood shopping centers, each with a mix of large and small tenants. The shopping centers contain neighborhood-serving uses such as grocery stores, restaurants, banks, and personal services.

The Mowry Gateway is attractively landscaped and its buildings are generally in good condition. However, the scale and character of development immediately brands Fremont as an auto-oriented city. Although the city's focus in the next decade will be on its Priority Development Areas (PDAs), the General Plan acknowledges the long-term potential for the Mowry Gateway to be more than it is today.

Looking beyond 2020 or even beyond 2035, new employment-generating uses such as a medical center, a university satellite campus, a corporate headquarters, a conference center, or even an urban mixed use development could be considered here. Such uses would impart a more dynamic and forward-looking image for Fremont. Given the probable long horizon for such a change, existing uses will be maintained for the foreseeable future.

## Special Study Areas

No Special Study Areas have been designated within the Irvington Community Plan Area.

# Policies and Implementing Actions

The policies below are specifically directed to the neighborhoods and business districts in the Irvington Community Plan Area. Future development in these areas is also subject to broader citywide policies that may be found in other elements of the General Plan. Both this element and the citywide elements should be consulted when evaluating development proposals or making land use decisions. For example, the design of mixed use development in Irvington Town Center should adhere not only to the policies below, but also to policies in the Community Character Element and other relevant sections of the General Plan.

As appropriate, the policies and implementing actions below carry forward the recommendations of previous studies, including the *Irvington Concept Plan* (2005) and Envisioning Fremont Boulevard (2008). Because of the broad scope of the General Plan, the policies do not include the detailed design guidelines contained in these past studies.

The policies are organized under the following five major sub-headings:

- Irvington Town Center
- BART Station Area (including Osgood Road)
- Grimmer Boulevard
- Fremont Boulevard
- Other Irvington Neighborhoods (including Mowry East and other shopping centers)

## Irvington Town Center

### • Policy 11-6.1: Five Corners

Strengthen Five Corners (Fremont Boulevard, Washington Boulevard, Bay Street, and Union Street) as the center of Irvington. Encourage new development on underutilized parcels, more active use of existing buildings, and architecture and site planning that creates a more vital, walkable town center.

#### > Implementation 11-6.1.A: Irvington Design Guidelines

Retain illustrated building design guidelines for Irvington and use these guidelines to evaluate future new construction and rehabilitation projects.

Design guidelines are organized into three categories, including: (a) Bay Street; (b) Pedestrian-Oriented Streets; and (c) Major Streets. More refined guidelines may be adopted in the future as part of Planned Districts such as Bay Street.

#### > Implementation 11-6.1.B: Irvington Public Realm Improvements

Continue efforts to enhance the appearance of Irvington's commercial streets with amenities such as landscaping, wider sidewalks, benches and street lamps. These features should reflect Irvington's history, create a stronger sense of identity, and make streets safer and more walkable. Of particular importance will be streets like Main Street which provide access to the Irvington BART station.

**> Implementation 11-6.1.C: Irvington Concept Plan**

Retain illustrated concept plans for the various development subareas in Irvington to illustrate potential options for development activities and ensure that new projects further the policies of this General Plan.

**> Implementation 11-6.1.D: Land Assembly**

Support continued assembly of multiple small parcels in the Irvington Town Center to facilitate redevelopment.

## • Policy 11-6.2: Irvington's Development Focus

Focus Irvington's future development along a pedestrian axis defined by Bay Street, Union Street, Main Street, and High Street, terminating on the east at the entrance to the new Irvington BART Station. Development along this axis should be complemented by new mixed use and commercial development along Fremont Boulevard and Washington Boulevard.

**> Implementation 11-6.2.A: Bay Street**

Continue the transformation of Bay Street between Chapel Way and Fremont Boulevard into a walkable shopping street. Recent streetscape and parking improvements should be leveraged to encourage private investment. This should include infill development with ground floor retail uses, and additional pedestrian amenities such as outdoor dining areas and façade improvements.

**> Implementation 11-6.2.B: Monument Shopping Center Reuse**

Encourage redevelopment or rehabilitation of the Monument Shopping Center in a way that provides new shopping and dining opportunities and contributes to the pedestrian-oriented environment along Bay Street.

**> Implementation 11-6.2.C: Union Street and Main Street**

Continue the mixed use pedestrian character of Bay Street across Fremont Boulevard and along Union Street and Main Street. This can be supported by:

- Encouraging a distinctive new building such as a museum or major retailer at the northeast corner of the Five Corners intersection (Washington and Union)
- Providing a plaza at the northwest corner of the Five Corners (Fremont and Union) that complements the Irvington Monument Plaza across the street
- Requiring ground floor retail in any new mixed use development at the northeast corner of Union and Main
- Retaining a mostly residential character along Main Street, but providing the flexibility for ground floor retail uses in new projects
- Improving the streetscape along Main Street and the first block of Union Street
- Improving crosswalks across Fremont Boulevard at the Five Corners intersection
- Providing a street and sidewalk extension from the east end of Main Street under the Washington Boulevard overpass and into the new BART station.

## • Policy 11-6.3: Retail Development

Attract additional retail uses to the Irvington Town Center, particularly restaurants, specialty shops, and uses which recognize the multi-cultural demographics of the surrounding neighborhoods.

### > Implementation 11-6.3.A: Supporting Irvington's Small Businesses

Strengthen the capacity of Irvington's small businesses through workshops, commercial rehabilitation loans, façade improvement grants, and continued collaboration and partnerships with local organizations such as the Irvington Business Association (IBA).

### > Implementation 11-6.3.B : Marketing and Business Attraction

Work with property owners and tenants to develop marketing and business attraction strategies for Irvington, highlighting the unique qualities of the District, the vision for its future, development opportunities, and the public investments that have been made in the area.

### > Implementation 11-6.3.C: Business Improvement District

Consider establishing a Business or Property Owner Improvement District for the Irvington Town Center.

Such districts require a vote of more than 50 percent of the property owners to establish a special assessment on parcels each year. The funds generated can provide for higher levels of maintenance and security, marketing, and other services.

## • Policy 11-6.4: Historic Preservation in Irvington

Encourage the preservation and adaptive reuse of Irvington's historic buildings. New development should respect the scale and context of historic structures.

## • Policy 11-6.5: Irvington's Transportation System

Ensure that land use, transportation, and urban design decisions in Irvington maintain the function of Fremont Boulevard and Washington Boulevard as major cross-town arterials. Conversely, Bay Street, Union Street and Main Street should function as local streets, creating an attractive environment for shoppers and safe pedestrian access to the new BART station.

### > Implementation 11-6.5.A: Traffic Calming

Take appropriate steps to mitigate the traffic impacts of development in the Irvington Town Center on nearby residential streets. Traffic calming measures should discourage neighborhood cut-through traffic and reduce vehicle speeds. Changes to the directional flow of traffic on Bay Street may be considered, subject to future traffic studies.

Main Street will eventually be extended to the BART station (via High Street), so its design should discourage non-local traffic from filtering into residential neighborhoods. Such measures could include stop signs, mandatory turns or limits on through-traffic. Traffic-calming facilities also should be considered for the Union Street intersections with Lee Street, Lincoln Street and High Street.

### • Policy 11-6.6: Irvington Parking

Provide additional on-street and off-street parking to serve the Irvington Town Center. Off-street parking should be shared by multiple users where feasible, and should be placed to the rear of buildings or within structures to create a more pedestrian-friendly street environment.

#### > Implementation 11-6.6.A: Parking Districts

Consider expanding the use of parking districts in Irvington to enable the development of additional off-street parking lots. As new parking lots are created, consider reductions or waivers to the parking requirements for nearby businesses.

#### > Implementation 11-6.6.B: Parking Structure

Support development of a new parking structure on the block bounded by Main, Washington, Union, and Roberts. Such a structure could serve future BART patrons as well as visitors to the Five Corners area.

Depending on its height and location, the top of the parking structure might be directly accessed from the Washington overpass, while the ground level would be accessed from Main Street or Roberts Avenue. The structure would serve BART patrons as well as those working, shopping, or dining in Irvington. The design of any future parking facilities in this area should minimize curb cuts across sidewalks, and maximize commercial frontage along Washington and Main.

#### > Implementation 11-6.6.C: Monument Center

In the event the Monument Shopping Center is redeveloped, explore opportunities for new off-street parking facilities that serve the Bay Street shopping district as well as new development on the site.

## Irvington BART Station Area

### • Policy 11-6.7: Irvington BART Station

Develop a new BART station at Osgood Road south of Washington Boulevard. Land use decisions for the station's surroundings should reflect the need for BART parking, vehicle ingress and egress, pedestrian and bicycle access, and connections to the Irvington Town Center, as well as opportunities for transit-oriented development.

### • Policy 11-6.8: Irvington Station Access

Provide primary vehicle access to the Irvington BART Station from Osgood Road on the east side of the station. Construct a secondary access route on the west side of the station from the end of Main Street under the Washington Boulevard overpass.

#### > Implementation 11-6.8.A: BART Parking

Develop the primary parking facility for the Irvington BART station east of Osgood Road, with station access provided by a pedestrian bridge across Osgood Road.

#### > Implementation 11-6.8.B: Minimizing Neighborhood Traffic Impacts

Use directional signs, speed limits, access restrictions, traffic control devices, landscaping and other measures to slow traffic and reduce neighborhood cut-through trips in the area between BART and nearby arterials.

### • Policy 11-6.9: Station Area Design Considerations

Ensure that the design of the BART station and surrounding development considers natural hazards, environmental conditions, cultural resources, and surrounding land uses.

#### > Implementation 11-6.9.A: Hayward Fault

Minimize hazards associated with the Hayward Fault in site planning for the BART station. The "no build" zone along the fault trace should be retained as open space or used for surface parking.

The Irvington BART Station area is bisected by the Hayward Fault and would be subject to ground rupture as well as violent ground shaking in the event of a major earthquake. Parts of the area are within the Alquist-Priolo Special Studies Zone. Geologic studies are required in this area, and new structures are prohibited in areas adjacent to the fault.

#### > Implementation 11-6.9.B: Gallegos Winery Site

Protect the historic Gallegos Winery site and ruins from possible damage or vandalism as BART-related development takes place. Although the winery itself was destroyed by the 1906 earthquake, the site should be recognized as a Fremont Register Historic Resource and an important element of Irvington's cultural landscape.

### • Policy 11-6.10: North of Irvington Station Area

Capitalize on growth opportunities resulting from the realignment of the Union Pacific Railroad between Washington Boulevard and Paseo Padre Parkway. This area should function as an extension of the residential area to its west. The highest densities should be at the south end of this area, close to the new station, with undeveloped setbacks as needed near the Hayward Fault.

#### > Implementation 11-6.10.A: Multi-Use Path to Central Park

Develop a multi-use pedestrian and bicycle path along the former Union Pacific Railroad line between the new Irvington Station and Central Park and beyond.

### • Policy 11-6.11: Osgood Road Corridor

Encourage high-density residential development along Osgood Road south of the new BART station. Development should be designed to facilitate safe, convenient pedestrian access to the station. The area along Osgood Road south of Blacow Road should remain Service Industrial.

#### > Implementation 11-6.11.A: Osgood Road Improvements

Complete improvements to Osgood Road to facilitate BART access and improve north-south circulation between Irvington and South Fremont. This should include sidewalks, additional travel lanes, and bicycle lanes in both directions.

> **Implementation 11-6.11.B: Blacow Road Extension**

Continue to seek funding for a grade-separated Blacow Road crossing of the Union Pacific tracks between Osgood Road and Roberts Avenue.

# Grimmer Boulevard

## • Policy 11-6.12: Grimmer North

Improve the appearance and design of Grimmer Boulevard between Paseo Padre Parkway and Fremont Boulevard.

> **Implementation 11-6.12.A: Grimmer Greenway**

Create a landscaped greenbelt along the west side of Grimmer Boulevard between Paseo Padre Parkway and Fremont Boulevard, using the flood control channel, PG&E right of way, and City right-of-way. A multi-use path along the creek should connect Fremont Boulevard to Central Park.

> **Implementation 11-6.12.B: Grimmer Boulevard Redesign**

Reconfigure Grimmer Boulevard between Paseo Padre Parkway and Fremont Boulevard.

## • Policy 11-6.13: Grimmer South

Improve the quality and character of development along Grimmer Boulevard between Fremont Boulevard and Irvington Avenue. Support the reuse of underutilized commercial sites with new multi-family residential, commercial, or mixed use development. Such development should support the goals for the adjacent Town Center, and help achieve the vision of Irvington as a more urban, pedestrian-oriented center.

> **Implementation 11-6.13.A: Grimmer South Beautification**

Develop a beautification program for Grimmer Boulevard south of Fremont Boulevard.

# Fremont Boulevard

## • Policy 11-6.14: Fremont Boulevard

Enhance Fremont Boulevard as a multi-modal thoroughfare and gateway into the Irvington District. A mix of multi-family residential and commercial uses is encouraged along the corridor between Grimmer Boulevard and Carol Avenue. This area should become more pedestrian-oriented in the future, with connected sidewalks and crosswalks, buildings placed closer to the street, less prominent surface parking, and retail uses which complement those on Bay Street.

# Other Irvington Area Neighborhoods

## • Policy 11-6.15: Mixed Use Development at Former Shopping Centers

Support the reuse of older shopping centers in the Irvington Community Plan Area with new development that creates housing opportunities, improves visual quality and architectural character, and integrates these sites with the neighborhoods around them. The reuse of shopping centers for housing should be balanced

with the desire to provide "complete neighborhoods" with shops and services close to all residents. Reuse plans should include a local-serving retail component to achieve this balance.

- **Policy 11-6.16: Mowry Gateway**

  Recognize Mowry Avenue as an important city gateway and a long-term opportunity for new uses which create jobs, generate revenue, and help redefine Fremont's image. Ensure that land use and development decisions do not preclude this area's eventual transformation from an auto-oriented commercial area to higher-intensity land uses.

- **Policy 11-6.17: Laguna Creek**

  Consider improvements to Laguna Creek as it passes through Irvington. This could include day-lighting buried sections of the creek or creating passive recreation areas along its course. Future development along the creek should recognize its function as a historic part of Irvington's landscape and take appropriate restoration and conservation measures.

  A Master Plan has been prepared for Laguna Creek to guide these improvements.

- **Policy 11-6.18: Irvington Residential Areas**

  Encourage continued private and public investment in Irvington's neighborhoods, continued maintenance of community facilities such as schools and parks, and other activities that enhance neighborhood character and quality of life.

General Plan Map designations for the Irvington Community Plan Area are shown in Diagram 11-7.

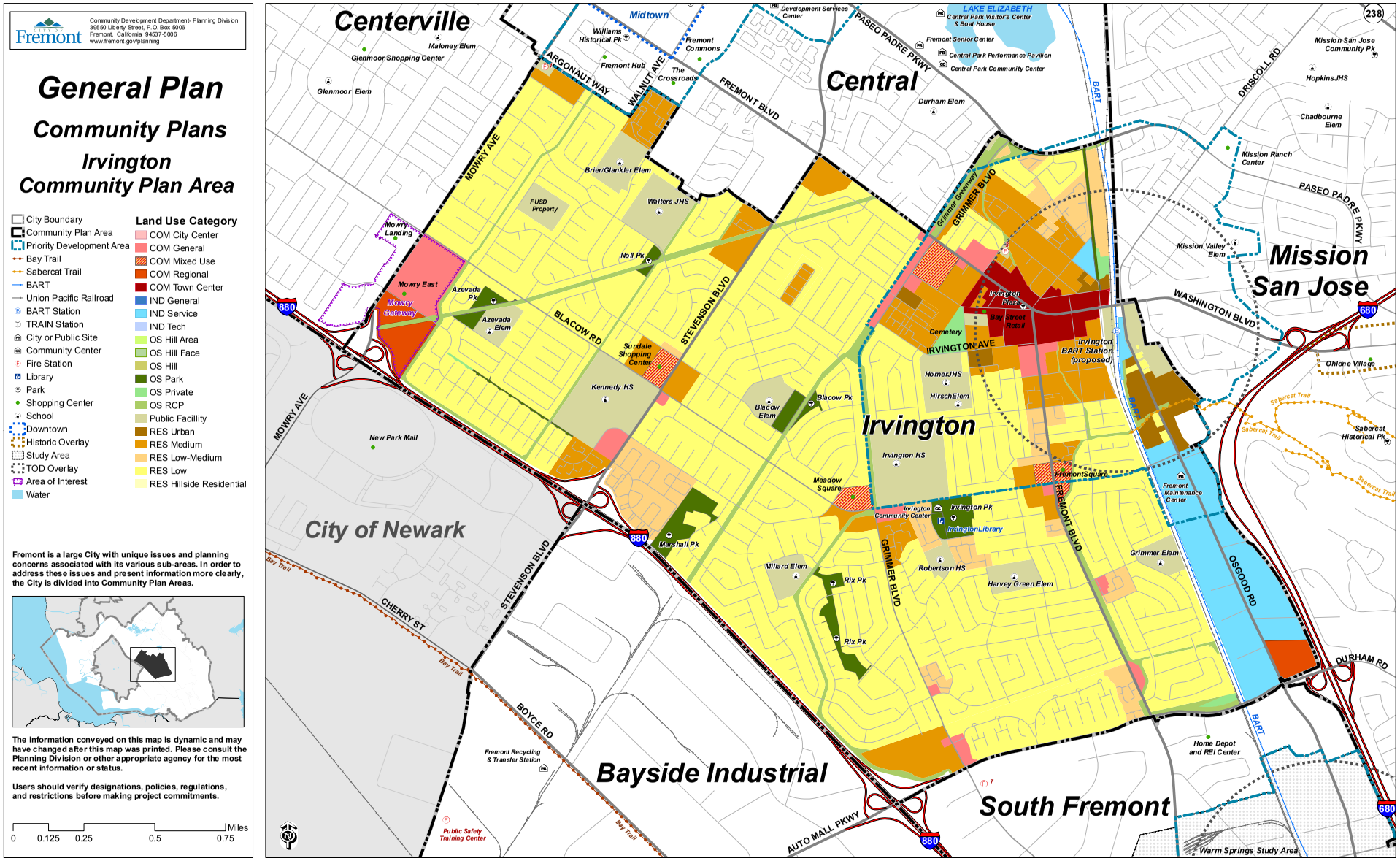


Diagram 11-7 Irvington Community Plan Area.



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# Mission San Jose

## Profile

The Mission San Jose Community Plan Area encompasses 7.1 square miles on Fremont's east side. The Community Plan Area extends from Morrison Canyon Road southward along both sides of Mission Boulevard for approximately five miles. The eastern boundary is defined by the toe of the Fremont Hills. The western boundary follows Mission Boulevard to the eastern edge of Central Park, continues south to the Osgood Road corridor, and follows I-680 to the Mission interchange. The southern boundary extends east from the Mission interchange to the toe of the hills, roughly along Stanford Avenue.

Mission San Jose is one of the five towns that incorporated to form Fremont in 1956. The heart of the Community Plan Area is the business district near Washington and Mission Boulevards, anchored by the historic Mission San Jose church and museum. This area includes important historic resources and has a strong sense of identity and architectural character. Mission San Jose was the first European settlement in Alameda County, dating back to 1797.

The remainder of the Community Plan Area is characterized by single family residential neighborhoods, some of which are interlaced with greenbelts and private open space. Neighborhoods include Antelope Hills, Cameron Hills, Kimber/Gomes, Mission Highlands, Mission Hills, Mission Valley, Vineyard Hills, and Weibel. Densities are generally lower than in other parts of Fremont, particularly on the east side of I-680. The terrain provides many of the homes with canyon vistas, scenic views of the nearby Fremont Hills, and panoramic views across Fremont and the lower reaches of San Francisco Bay. Much of the development took place in the 1970s, 1980s, and 1990s and the architectural styles and character are reflective of that period. Homes tend to be larger than in other parts of Fremont, with many neighborhoods featuring Mission or Mediterranean-inspired designs and numerous amenities.

While densities are typically low in Mission San Jose, there are multi-family areas along the eastern end of Washington Boulevard, near Driscoll and Paseo Padre, and along Mission Boulevard near Las Palmas. Some of these areas, including Driscoll/Paseo Padre and Mission/Las Palmas are adjacent to neighborhood shopping centers (Mission Ranch and Mission Valley). Other neighborhood shopping areas include Ohlone Village at

### GOALS FOR MISSION SAN JOSE

- Retain the Mission San Jose Town Center's eclectic, architecturally diverse character
- Maintain the low-scale of the residential streets around the Town Center
- Leverage local institutional uses such as Ohlone College and the historic Mission San Jose
- Maintain a strong cultural arts presence
- Protect historic landscapes, structures, and archaeological resources
- Maintain the high quality of established residential neighborhoods
- Preserve views of hillsides, arroyos, and other natural features
- Enhance the greenway and park system.

Washington and Luzon and the historic commercial district along Mission Boulevard between Washington Boulevard and Pine Street. The Plan Area includes a number of local-serving office buildings along Mission Boulevard, and several large religious facilities.

The Mission San Jose Community Plan Area includes some of the largest public and institutional uses in Fremont. These include Ohlone College, a community college enrolling about 10,000 students on its Fremont campus. There is also a complex of adjoining public schools including Mission San Jose High, Hopkins Junior High, and Chadbourne Elementary. The area also includes the Mission San Jose, Mission Valley, and Weibel Elementary Schools. Local parks include Cameron Hills, Arroyo Aqua Caliente, Mission San Jose, Gomes, Buena Vista, and Sabercat Creek Historic Park. The Mission San Jose area is crossed by a number of utility corridors, including PG&E transmission lines and the Hetch Hetchy Aqueduct. The Alameda County Water District has several water storage facilities in this area, including its water treatment facility.

The easternmost portion of the Mission San Jose Community Plan Area is covered by Measure A, the 1981 Fremont voter initiative which called for open space preservation in the Fremont Hills. Measure A applies to land on the east side of Mission Boulevard north of I-680, and the east side of I-680 from Mission Boulevard south. This area is governed not only by policies in the Mission San Jose Community Plan, but also by policies in the Hill Area Community Plan as appropriate.

A Hillside Combining (H-I) District was developed in the late 1970s to regulate development in Fremont's hillside areas. In 1981, Fremont voters approved Measure A and in 1982 the City amended the Hillside District to further incorporate voter-approved development regulations. In 2002 the voters passed Measure T, which led to further changes to the H-I District. The H-I District establishes standards addressing hillside development issues including grading, retaining walls, drainage, and increased minimum lot sizes based on prevailing slope. The H-I District also limits the overall height of structures to 30 feet (accessory structures are limited to 12 feet) and establishes architectural design standards to ensure visual compatibility.

## Planning Issues and Vision

The Mission San Jose Community Plan Area will experience relatively slow growth during the time frame of the General Plan. Growth opportunities are concentrated in the Mission San Jose Town Center, on older commercial sites along the major thoroughfares, and on remnant agricultural and rural residential parcels.

A primary objective in this area is to strengthen the Mission San Jose business district as an attractive, historic mixed use center. Guidelines and regulations for the area were adopted in 1998 (see text box). The intent of the guidelines was not only to protect historic buildings, but also to unite these buildings through infill development which incorporates the area's traditional design elements.

### MISSION SAN JOSE DESIGN GUIDELINES AND REGULATIONS

In 1998, the City of Fremont adopted design guidelines and regulations for the Mission San Jose historic district. The guidelines address the following aspects of new development, additions, and alterations:

**Commercial Properties**

- Setbacks
- Courtyards and public landscaped areas
- Floor area ratios
- Parking
- Areas for service loading and mechanical equipment
- Building form and height
- Design styles
- Commercial facades
- Signs and lighting
- Materials and colors
- Landscaping

**Multi-Family Residential Properties**

- Neighborhood compatibility
- Design styles and materials
- Privacy
- Adjustments and exceptions

***The guidelines/regulations are a freestanding document and should be consulted for projects in the historic center of Mission San Jose.***

The guidelines envision Mission San Jose as a "distinctive and vital village" with preserved and restored historic sites, thriving commercial establishments, and an inviting environment for pedestrians. This vision includes new commercial establishments that complement existing cultural resources such as Ohlone College, local art studios and galleries, reception venues such as the Palmdale Estates, and the historic Mission. Conservation of older structures is an important part of the vision. This includes not only iconic landmarks like the Mission but also character-defining homes along Bryant Street, Ellsworth Street, and other side streets near the Town Center. Protection of historic landscapes, including heritage trees and tree plantings, is also an important part of this vision.

Beyond the historic district, the Mission San Jose Community Plan Area will continue to be predominantly residential. The area's high quality housing stock will be maintained and enhanced, with continued investment in the area's schools, parks, roads and public facilities. New development will be carefully managed to limit impacts on adjacent neighborhoods, preserve and enhance aesthetic character, conserve environmental quality, and respect historic resources.

The following section focuses on three areas:

- Mission San Jose Town Center
- Town Center Perimeter
- Other Mission San Jose neighborhoods

## *Mission San Jose Town Center*

For its first 150 years, the Mission San Jose District was a rural settlement surrounded by ranches, farms, and orchards. After Fremont's incorporation in 1956, it evolved as a commercial center serving the growing population on the city's east side. The development of the Ohlone College campus in the early 1970s provided further impetus for the District's growth. The reconstructed Mission church, which was destroyed by the earthquake of 1868 and rebuilt in 1985, provided a new appreciation for the area's historic significance.

Today, the Town Center has an eclectic character that reflects its historic evolution. There are archeological remains from the Ohlone days, including a Native American burial ground. There are Spanish Colonial buildings from the Rancho era, Western false front buildings from the Gold Rush era, painted Victorians from the late 19th Century, Mission Revival buildings from the early 1900s, craftsman cottages and commercial storefronts

from Fremont's agricultural heyday, and contemporary buildings from the 1950s and later.

Despite major fires in 1884 and 1894, structures from the 19th Century survive throughout the district. Such structures are complemented by newer construction from the 20th Century, including numerous homes, businesses, and institutional uses. Most of the commercial buildings are small, with wood or stucco exteriors. The few larger buildings, such as the historic Old School, are articulated into smaller units that reduce their apparent scale. Most buildings have rectilinear floor plans and simple, gable roofs.

Structures in Mission San Jose are complemented by landscapes that in some cases are as historic as the buildings themselves. Palm trees from the 1920s line Mission and Washington Boulevards, creating a strong sense of arrival from the north and west. Other important landscapes includes the large, informally spaced trees at 43344 Mission Boulevard (second Washington Hotel), the numerous heritage trees on the grounds of the Sisters of the Holy Family and the Dominican Sisters property, a double row of olive trees (some of which date to the late 1800s) along Mission Boulevard in front of Ohlone College, and the palms along Mission Creek just north of St. Josephs parish house. There are also eucalyptus trees from the late 1800s and citrus trees from the early 20th Century. The synergy between landscapes and structures creates a semi-rural "village" environment which sets Mission San Jose apart from the more traditional "main street" environments of Centerville, Niles, and Irvington.

The visual character of the core area reflects the dominance of the Mission and other large religious institutions. These uses are complemented by small shops and offices along Mission Boulevard, cultural facilities such as the Olive Hyde Gallery and the Museum of Local History, and single family bungalows and Victorian era homes. Newer shopping centers and multifamily housing developments are located further south along Mission, west along Washington, and along Ellsworth Street, one block west of Mission. Ohlone College, while a strong presence in the area, is set back far enough from Mission Boulevard that it is not visually connected to the historic district. However, the college helps sustain the commercial district, and its students and staff rely on local businesses and services.

Parcels facing Mission Boulevard are typically long and narrow, with small commercial buildings constructed up to the sidewalk. Interspersed between some of these buildings are residences with large front setbacks. In

some cases, the residences have been converted to offices and other businesses, and their front yards have been turned into courtyards.

The *Mission San Jose Design Guidelines* seek to retain the District's eclectic character rather than imposing a uniform architectural style on the area. They also seek to continue the existing pattern of varied front yard setbacks, mixed residential and commercial land uses, and buildings of varying heights, façade details, and roof lines. Floor area ratio incentives are provided for buildings that include small courtyards and open air spaces. Such spaces are encouraged for outdoor dining, cafes, and other uses which take advantage of the area's pleasant climate.

Improvements to the public realm—in other words, the streets and public spaces within the business district—are an essential part of the vision for Mission San Jose. Ultimately, the entire area should have continuous sidewalks with amenities such as street trees, directional signage, bicycle racks, and gateways at key entrances into the Town Center. Additional pedestrian linkages should be created between courtyards, parking areas, and sidewalks. As infill occurs, new off-street parking areas should be provided.

## Town Center Perimeter

The neighborhood immediately west of the Mission San Jose business district is one of the oldest residential areas in Fremont. Until the 1970s, it was characterized by small one-story homes dating from the late 1800s to the 1930s. In the 1980s and 90s, a number of these homes were demolished and replaced with multi-unit structures, changing the character of the streetscape. In the 1990s, the City Council adopted a set of policy and zoning changes to minimize further erosion of neighborhood character. These changes include a General Plan Map Amendment that protected the remaining single family homes in the area.

Ultimately, two Neighborhood Conservation Overlay Districts were adopted for the area: the Mission Jose and Bryant Street Conservation Districts. The Conservation Area accommodates expansion of existing residences and construction of new residences up to a maximum of two units per parcel. In place of the spacious yards that once characterized this neighborhood, the current objective is to develop mid-parcel outdoor areas such as courtyards, screened patios, decks and balconies, wherever there are multiple units on a site.

There are also large institutional uses just beyond the Town Center, including religious facilities on both sides of Mission Boulevard north of

Washington. These properties contain historic resources and are zoned as Planned Districts to ensure that any future changes can be evaluated in the context of their historic settings.

Ohlone College prepared a 15-year Facilities Master Plan (FMP) in 2010. While the campus covers 534 acres, a large portion of this area is above the toe of the hill and is considered permanent open space. According to the FMP, about 118 acres of the site is considered usable. Much of this area is developed with parking lots, campus buildings, and recreational facilities, but portions are underutilized. Daily enrollment is projected to increase by approximately 2,000 students in the next 15 years, creating demand for new academic space and support facilities.

The 2010 FMP includes a long-term building program to meet enrollment and modernization needs, address current deficiencies, and add new projects to help the college fulfill its academic mission. Open space improvements also are proposed, including new plazas and spaces for outdoor activities as well as new athletic fields and landscaping. A number of changes to the circulation and parking system are proposed, including new internal roads and parking lots. The Master Plan raises the possibility of eventual development along the Mission Boulevard frontage. Such development would require an amendment to the General Plan and additional environmental review and community input. Further integration of the Ohlone campus with the Mission San Jose Town Center would be desirable but must be achieved in a way that minimizes impacts on nearby homes and businesses, historic resources and landscapes, and the circulation system.

## *Other Mission San Jose Neighborhoods*

The Mission San Jose Community Plan area is large and geographically diverse. Because of the area's hilly terrain, geology, hydrology, and vegetation, it is particularly important that development is sensitive to potential natural resource impacts.

As noted earlier, development on the east side of I-680 and the east side of Mission Boulevard north of I-680 will continue to be subject to Measure A and related hillside zoning standards. Most of this area has been designated Hillside Residential on the General Plan Map. The intent is to preserve the character of the existing hillside neighborhoods while limiting further increases in density. Any new parcels in these areas must be at least 20,000 square feet. Some of the semi-rural parcels on the east side of Mission Boulevard have been designated Low Density Residential and have somewhat greater potential. Low Density designations have been applied to

properties that are bracketed by single family subdivisions. Development on these sites would close gaps in the development pattern below the toe of the hills and provide a limited number of opportunities for additional single family homes on lots between 5,000 and 20,000 square feet.

Other developable sites in this area include a 12-acre parcel at the northeast corner of Durham Road and I-680. The property has been designated for General Commercial use on the General Plan, which could accommodate a neighborhood shopping center, a similar commercial use, or a mixed use project. A mixed use project incorporating multi-family housing, a parking structure, and ground floor retail use has been approved for the site but has not been constructed.

Continued efforts should be made to conserve and restore the natural ecology of the Mission San Jose Community Plan Area, particularly its creeks and arroyos. A restoration project is now underway along Sabercat Creek. The project will reduce erosion, restore habitat, and improve public access via new and repaired trails. The Sabercat Creek project will also improve use of the surrounding parkland, facilitate access for persons with disabilities, and support the ultimate goal of building a continuous trail from the Irvington District to neighborhoods in the Fremont hills.

There are other opportunities to improve open space in this area. The City has acquired a 20-acre parcel on Palm Avenue just north of I-680 using parkland impact fees. Portions of the site are currently leased to an adjacent wholesale nursery for agricultural and nursery use. The site is intended to become a future community park.

## Special Study Areas

No Special Study Areas have been designated within the Mission San Jose Community Plan Area.

# Policies and Implementing Actions

## Mission San Jose Town Center

### • Policy 11-7.1: Mission San Jose Design Guidelines and Regulations

Maintain design guidelines and regulations for the Mission San Jose Historic District to ensure that future buildings and landscapes contribute to the historic village setting.

The area covered by the *Mission San Jose Design Guidelines* is mapped as historic overlay district on the Fremont Zoning Map. It covers Fremont Register Resources, all commercial and institutional development, and all multi-family development within this area. The overlay excludes the Ohlone Village shopping center on Washington Boulevard east of I-680, and does not apply to single family homes unless those properties also are Fremont Register Resources or are within a Conservation District. The Guidelines should be used to inform developers of the City's expectations for future projects, and will be used by staff and City officials to measure the acceptability of new projects.

### • Policy 11-7.2: Historic Resources

Protect historic and archaeological resources in the Mission San Jose Town Center area, both by preserving important sites and structures, and by ensuring that new development is sensitive to its historic context.

**> Implementation 11-7.2.A: Fremont Register Resources**

Continue to identify historically important buildings and sites in Mission San Jose as Fremont Register Resources. Expand the list of designated buildings as additional information on historical resources is compiled.

Consistent with the Community Character Element of the General Plan, alterations to registered resources shall be subject to the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation and Illustrated Guidelines for Rehabilitating Historic Buildings.

**> Implementation 11-7.1.B: National Historic District Nomination**

Consider the nomination of the historic core of Mission San Jose as a National Register Historic District.

**> Implementation 11-7.2.C: Preservation Incentives**

Use the State Historical Building Code, the Historical Architectural Review Board, tax incentive programs such as the Mills Act, and other mechanisms available to the City to encourage the preservation of Mission San Jose's historic resources.

### • Policy 11-7.3: Variable Building Setbacks

Maintain special zoning regulations within the Mission San Jose Town Center area that complement the existing historic pattern of variable building setbacks. The use of setbacks as courtyards or publicly accessible landscaped areas or outdoor seating areas is encouraged. The use of front yard setbacks for surface parking along Mission Boulevard is prohibited.

Setbacks are the areas on a property which must be left as open space. They include areas such as front, side, or rear yards. Historically, commercial buildings along the west side of Mission Boulevard were built to the front property line while houses were set back from the street. The *Mission San Jose Design Guidelines* provide further detail on where variations in setbacks are encouraged, where new buildings should be located at the front property line or at various distances back from this line, and where projections into the setback are encouraged.

## • Policy 11-7.4: Courtyards in New Development

Encourage open-air courtyards within new development in the historic commercial district. Courtyards should have amenities such as natural light and comfortable seating, and should accommodate activities such as outdoor events, outdoor dining, and open-air vendors. Ground floor uses are encouraged in the structures framing courtyards to help activate these spaces.

Among the defining characteristics of the Mission San Jose commercial district are its courtyards. Courtyards are typically framed by adjacent buildings and provide pleasant outdoor spaces for a variety of activities. They can also facilitate pedestrian access through the interior of a block, and create a stronger sense of place and architectural interest. The *Mission San Jose Design Guidelines* include specific direction on the design of courtyards, including their shape, degree of enclosure, amenities, security, landscaping, and pedestrian access features.

### > Implementation 11-7.4.A: Increase in FAR

Permit increases in floor area ratios as an incentive to create usable outdoor courtyard spaces.

Provisions for these increases may be found in the *Mission San Jose Design Guidelines* and related zoning regulations.

## • Policy 11-7.5: Building Form and Height

Encourage simple rectilinear buildings in the Town Center, similar to existing historic structures. Larger structures should be broken into smaller sized units or should have facades that are articulated to make buildings seem less massive. The Mission San Jose shall remain the dominant structure in terms of both height and prominence along the Boulevard.

Consistent with the *Mission San Jose Design Guidelines*, new commercial buildings in this area should generally not exceed 30 feet in height. The *Mission San Jose Design Guidelines* also address the importance of active ground floor uses facing the street, transparent storefronts and window displays, pedestrian-scaled signage and lighting, exterior access to second stories, awnings, and screening of electrical equipment.

## • Policy 11-7.6: Architectural Diversity

Recognize the diversity of historic architectural styles present in Mission San Jose and ensure the respectful use of these styles in the design of new buildings and the rehabilitation of existing buildings. Contemporary architectural styles are acceptable, provided they are responsive to the context of a site and its surroundings.

The context of a site includes the mass, scale, form, proportions, materials, colors, and historic styles of surrounding buildings as well as the landscape character of surrounding sites. The Guidelines provide ad-

ditional direction on materials and colors, particularly for Mission Revival, American Period, and Victorian era structures.

### • Policy 11-7.7: Parking

Provide flexibility in administration of parking requirements in the Mission San Jose historic district in order to maintain its pedestrian character. Parking policies in the General Plan Mobility Element should be applied here, with an emphasis on shared parking, parking to the rear of structures rather than the front, landscaping to screen parking areas from the street, and clear pedestrian connections between parking areas, sidewalks, and nearby businesses.

**> Implementation 11-7.7.A: Additional Parking Facilities**

Consider ways to create additional public parking facilities in the Mission San Jose Town Center.

### • Policy 11-7.8: Historic Landscapes

Protect and enhance heritage trees and plantings in the Town Center and environs. Similar and compatible trees should be planted on nearby properties to promote continuity of the established landscape character.

Mission San Jose includes a number of heritage trees and tree plantings. The continued use of established species such as olive, live oak, buckeye, walnut, almond, sycamore, and California pepper can help sustain the area's historic character.

## Town Center Perimeter

### • Policy 11-7.9: Neighborhood Conservation District

Maintain the Neighborhood Conservation Districts in the area west of the Town Center. The Districts should emphasize smaller-scale buildings, front yard setbacks of at least 20 feet, semi-private mid-parcel outdoor areas, and enclosed parking areas. Future development in this area should be limited to one and two-unit homes which respect the vernacular architectural styles that have historically defined these blocks.

Design guidelines have been prepared for the Bryant Street and Mission San Jose Conservation Areas. These guidelines shall be consulted for future projects. The guidelines include specific provisions for including mid-parcel outdoor areas (shared patios, courtyards, decks, etc.) in new projects including more than one detached residential unit. The guidelines emphasize designs that ensure that each housing unit is individually distinguishable, especially when such units are contiguous or adjacent to one another.

### • Policy 11-7.10: Ohlone College

Recognize Ohlone Community College as an important part of the Mission San Jose community and work with the college to address impacts associated with ongoing operation, modernization, and expansion.

The General Plan Map reflects the current public/institutional use of the college property. Any non-institutional use along the Mission Boulevard frontage would require a General Plan Amendment and would be subject to further study, analysis, and environmental review. Additionally, the Fremont Register olive tree

landscape must be integrated and preserved as part of any development proposal. Incorporation of this historic resource will likely result in the need to vary from the *Mission San Jose Design Guidelines*.

**> Implementation 11-7.10.A: Design Guidelines for Ohlone College Frontage**

Adopt design guidelines (or amend the *Mission San Jose Design Guidelines*) to address the Mission Boulevard frontage of Ohlone College, in the event that future development is proposed here over time. Alternatively, incorporate unique design guidelines as part of a Planned District rezoning for the non-institutional development area.

# Other Mission San Jose Neighborhoods

## • Policy 11-7.11: Measure A

Continue to administer and enforce special zoning and design review requirements in those portions of the Mission San Jose Community Plan Area subject to Measure A, the Hillside Protection Initiative of 1981.

In addition to protecting the hill face and ridgeline areas, Measure A established development limits on constrained land and design review requirements for much of the Mission San Jose area. Measure A requirements are codified within the Hillside Combining Zoning District applicable to much of this area.

## • Policy 11-7.12: Creek Restoration and Access

Protect and restore creeks and other hydrologic features in the Mission San Jose Community Plan Area. Where feasible and consistent with environmental objectives, creek restoration projects should include trails and other features that promote environmental education and improved access between Fremont neighborhoods and the hills.

General Plan Map designations for the Mission San Jose Community Plan Area are shown in Diagram 11-8.

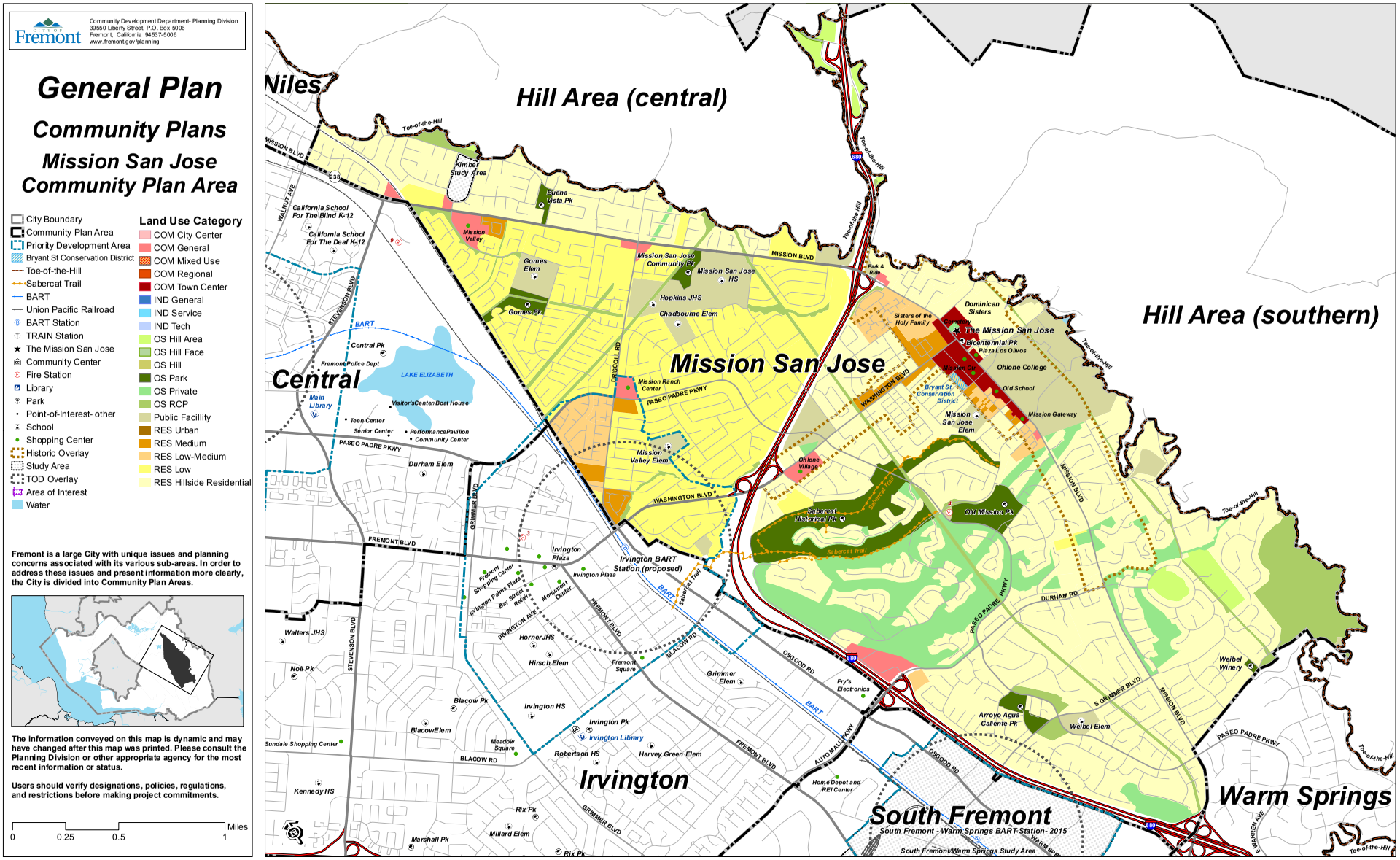


Diagram 11-8 Mission San Jose Community Plan Area



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# Niles

## Profile

The Niles Community Plan Area encompasses 2.2 square miles and is located in the northeast part of Fremont. It is bordered by the Fremont Hills on the north and east, and Alameda Creek and the Quarry Lakes on the south and west. A portion of the Community Plan Area extends up Niles Canyon, backing up to the Fremont Hills on both sides. The Plan Area also includes the area south of Alameda Creek and above Mission Boulevard, extending to Walnut Avenue.

Niles is one of the five original towns that consolidated in 1956 to form Fremont. It has an especially strong sense of community, in part due to its physical separation from the rest of the city, its well-defined geographic boundaries, and its unique history. Alameda Creek and the nearby foothills provide clear edges to the Niles District. The area's large concentration of historic buildings, traditional pedestrian-oriented business district, old railroad lines, and relatively low traffic volumes give Niles a distinct identity and small town character. Beyond the historic core of Niles, the area includes residential neighborhoods dating from the mid 20th century to recent times. These include the Niles Glen and Canyon Heights communities, as well as numerous single family subdivisions and several apartment and townhome developments.

Streets in Niles are generally oriented parallel or perpendicular to the hills, affording hillside vistas from many points. The major streets are Mission Boulevard (Highway 238) and Niles Boulevard, both of which run from northwest to southeast. Niles Canyon Road (Route 84) begins at Mission Boulevard and winds northeastward through the hills, eventually reaching Sunol and Interstate 680. Within the historic center of Niles, streets are laid out on a rectangular grid. By contrast, most of the adjacent neighborhoods are characterized by suburban street patterns, with short winding streets and cul-de-sacs.

## Planning Issues and Vision

Niles began as an agricultural and horticultural center for the Bay Area. A flour mill was built at the base of Niles Canyon in 1850 and one leg of the intercontinental railroad was completed nearby in 1869. As part of the railroad's construction, a freight terminal was developed and the town was developed around it. Numerous orchards and nurseries were established

### GOALS FOR NILES

- Maintain and enhance the unique historic character of the Town Center
- Attract infill development that complements existing uses and is compatible in scale with existing development
- Create new workplaces, thereby increasing the daytime population
- Expand heritage tourism and other activities which celebrate Niles' history
- Attract a more balanced mix of Town Center businesses, including additional retail stores
- Create a stronger sense of community through fairs, special events, and Town Plaza activities
- Remediate remnant industrial parcels and convert to more productive uses
- Protect the scenic character of Niles Canyon and the North Fremont Hills

Continued next page

## GOALS FOR NILES

Continued from previous page

- Enhance Mission Boulevard as a community gateway
- Improve connections to the rest of Fremont, particularly for bicycles and pedestrians

in the surrounding area and gravel pits were developed along Alameda Creek. The town also served as the center of the silent film industry from 1913 to 1916 and was once home to Charlie Chaplin and Bronco Billy.

Today, the compact, seven-block long commercial district that borders Niles Boulevard retains its historic integrity. Businesses in turn-of-the-century buildings line the street, many selling antiques and other objects from California's past. Opposite the row of historic storefronts is the railroad, Town Plaza, and Niles Depot, creating a street scene reminiscent of a bygone era in California history. The residential streets abutting the commercial area have numerous examples of houses dating from the 1880s to the 1930s, from Victorians to California bungalows.

Limited access has had both positive and negative impacts on Niles. On the positive side, its "off-the-beaten path" location has contributed to its charm and helped preserve its character. The area includes numerous historic landmarks, including Vallejo Mills Historical Park, California Nursery Historical Park, Vallejo Adobe, the old Belvoir Hotel and the 1901 Niles Train Depot. It has been an established center for the antique trade for many years, and its Niles Canyon Railroad carries on a historic tradition and attracts thousands of visitors. Niles also hosts special events throughout the year, including an annual antique fair and a classic car show.

Niles also draws strength from its diversity. Over the years, it has been home to Portuguese, Hispanic, East Asian, and South Asian immigrant groups, and it is truly a multi-cultural community today. It is close to open space and recreational areas, and is adjacent to Mission Boulevard and Niles Boulevard, providing easy connections to Central Fremont and nearby interstate highways.

Niles also faces challenges. These include constrained access and limited visibility of the core retail area, the configuration of stores on only one side of the street (due to the railroad), and the need for a more balanced mix of neighborhood serving uses. While the district has attracted niche businesses (e.g., antique and curio shops), it is not the vibrant mixed use center it could be. Many of its historic buildings require significant reinvestment. Niles is also not a "blank slate"—given the well-established nature of the community, it is important that infill development is compatible with adjacent uses. A Redevelopment Area has been created to encourage reinvestment and provide a mechanism for financing infrastructure.

## *A Vision for Niles*

A Concept Plan for Niles was adopted in 2001. The Plan established a long-range vision, along with planning and development policies and specific implementation measures. Some of the implementation measures have been completed and others continue to be relevant. The policies in this Community Plan carry forward and update the key directives in the Concept Plan.

The vision for the Niles Area is to retain its historic, eclectic character. Revitalization will be encouraged through the adaptive reuse of older buildings along with infill development that respects the scale and character of the existing community. Achieving this vision means reinforcing the entryways to the commercial district, fostering the success of local businesses, retaining visual connections to the hills and Alameda Creek, and providing public spaces and parking areas that are safe, clean and accessible.

The text box below, adapted from the 2001 Concept Plan, presents a summary of the vision for Niles.

### KEY ELEMENTS OF THE VISION FOR NILES

- A diverse and healthy mix of regional and local serving businesses which complement existing uses.
- An increased daytime population, as more office and high-tech workers discover Niles, and an increased number of residents patronize its shops.
- Community events, fairs, and informal gatherings centered around the new Niles Town Plaza.
- Cultural and historic entertainment venues that attract people from all over the Bay Area.
- A re-established railroad depot, with a centrally located stop for passenger rail service.
- Improved directional signage, including enhanced gateway signs.
- Preservation of the unique, historic character of the town's residential and commercial areas, including views to the hills
- An enhanced Mission Boulevard, with landscaping, new commercial uses, and streetscape improvements between the Sullivan underpass and Alameda Creek
- Improved transportation connections, including new bus connections and pedestrian and bicycle connections to nearby open spaces and trails
- More accessible and safe alleyways which complement future commercial and residential development.
- Increased community safety, including a more diverse mix of night-time businesses which create "eyes on the street."

To achieve this vision, the 2001 Concept Plan identified a series of planning strategies. One of the strategies was to attract additional retail to complement the existing antique and curio stores. This could include smaller-scale activities in historic Niles, such as specialty retail, a bank, a small hardware store, a cafe or a bakery; as well as larger-scale activities on Mission Boulevard, such as a grocery store or drug store. Another strategy was to capitalize on the historic railroad by developing complementary uses such as a new rail museum which has since been established in the train depot. The strategies also included landscaping and streetscape improvements, and design guidelines to ensure that future development is consistent with the business district's historic character. One outcome of the 2001 strategies was the development of a new public plaza in the center of business district which was completed in 2010.

Concept Plan strategies also addressed transportation, marketing, community resources, and land use regulation. The transportation strategy called for intersection improvements, new parking areas, and pedestrian and bicycle connections. The marketing strategy called for better communication with the public, along with continued promotion of the antique businesses and special events. The community resources strategy addressed local schools, public safety, and services. The land use strategy focused on specific planning and zoning policies.

The discussion below focuses on five sub-areas within the Niles Community Plan Area:

(1) Niles Town Center

(2) Remnant Industrial Sites

(3) Mission Boulevard Corridor

(4) Niles Canyon and Alameda Creek

(5) Niles Residential Neighborhoods

## *Niles Town Center*

The Town Center is the focal point of the Niles Community Plan area. As noted above, adaptive reuse of historic buildings is strongly supported along with new businesses that complement existing retail uses. In addition, small scale mixed use development should be encouraged on the area's vacant sites. This could include a mix of retail and service uses, along with upper floor office, residential, and live work uses. A continuous ground-floor retail presence is desired on Niles Boulevard to maintain the vitality of the commercial district.

Several sites offer opportunities for infill development. One is a 5+ acre area formerly owned by Union Pacific on the north side of Niles Boulevard. There are also opportunity sites at 37482 and 37682 Niles Boulevard, adjacent to the Niles Town Plaza. The principles and policies laid out in the Community Character Element of the General Plan should be followed as these sites are developed. These policies are supplemented by the *Niles Design Guidelines*.

Niles Boulevard functions as the town's "main street." As such, its streetscape complements the area's historic character while providing a safe environment for pedestrians, bicyclists and automobiles. Use of traffic calming techniques such as raised intersections and slightly elevated crosswalks would create an identifiable "slow zone" for vehicular traffic and alert drivers that pedestrians are present. Other traffic calming measures should be considered on neighborhood streets, especially near the elementary school or in places where cut-through traffic is a problem.

Infill development in downtown Niles may increase the demand for parking. Any new parking should be located behind buildings along Niles and Mission Boulevards. This will help make the area more pedestrian-friendly and make more efficient use of land. The possibility of shared parking also should be explored, so that businesses, offices, and residential uses can use the same spaces at different times of the day.

Pedestrian and bicycle improvements will be needed to achieve the General Plan vision of a more sustainable Fremont. This includes a safer crossing of the Union Pacific railroad, better pedestrian connections to Alameda Creek, and new sidewalks and bike lanes within future development areas.

## Remnant Industrial Sites

Earlier in its history, Niles was home to several small manufacturers and agricultural businesses. Most of these establishments closed in the late 1900s, leaving vacant or underutilized sites behind. It is anticipated that the former industrial sites will be converted to residential or commercial uses in the coming decades. Their redevelopment should enhance Niles' character and visual image, eliminate gaps in the town's development pattern, improve gateways, and complement the Town's heritage and architecture.

One of the remnant industrial sites—the Henkel property—has been identified as a Special Study Area and is discussed in a separate section

later in this chapter. The others are addressed through implementation actions under Policy 11-5.12.

## Mission Boulevard Corridor

Mission Boulevard is a regional arterial extending from Castro Valley to Fremont. In the Niles area, it contains a mix of older homes, auto-oriented businesses, and vacant land. While the General Plan designates the existing homes and vacant land in this area for residential use, some of these parcels may be viable for conversion to non-residential use in the next 20 years. Future General Plan Amendments could be explored, subject to additional analysis and planning. The possibility of new residential development along this stretch of Mission Boulevard also exists, either on vacant land or on sites containing older structures.

Mission Boulevard itself would benefit from landscape improvements. This could include an enhanced median and new street trees between the Sullivan Underpass and Alameda Creek. It could also include landscaped entry features at the intersections with Nursery Avenue, the Sullivan underpass, Niles Boulevard, and the south end of the Alameda Creek bridge abutment. Because Mission Boulevard is under Caltrans jurisdiction, any improvements would have to be coordinated with them. There are also opportunities to improve pedestrian links between Mission Boulevard and historic Niles, including a grade-separated pedestrian/bicycle crossing of the railroad. This would provide pedestrian access to a future rail station and also connect Mission Boulevard to the commercial district.

## Niles Canyon

Niles Canyon is one of four natural gateways into the City of Fremont. Route 84 is designated as a State Scenic Route as it winds through the canyon. This means that highway design along the corridor must protect its scenic qualities and vistas. Niles Canyon Road, and Old Canyon Road which runs parallel to it on the opposite side of Alameda Creek, provide access to residential neighborhoods, a mobile home park, regional parks, and historic sites. The area is relatively well established, with little potential for new development.

About one mile east of Mission Boulevard on the south side of Niles Canyon Road is a 61-acre former quarry and manufacturing site known as Mission Clay. The site was used for brick and clay pipe production from 1908 to 1992. Approximately 19 acres are subject to reclamation. While the site is designated as open space on the General Plan, just over two-thirds of the area is designated with a one-acre minimum lot size (the

remainder is Hill Face Open Space and a 20 acre minimum applies). Following reclamation, it is possible that a proposal for clustered residential development could be made for the site, consistent with allowable General Plan densities. Such a proposal would most likely require two points of ingress/egress into the site for emergency access, and could require a bridge across Alameda Creek. Preservation of the site as permanent open space is also a possibility, if acquisition by a public agency is pursued.

Niles Canyon is also a major transportation corridor, not only for vehicles but also for rail, bicyclists, and hikers. Continued investment in the rail line and related infrastructure is required to ensure the safety of rail traffic through the hills. Improvements to the regional trail system are also needed here to link Fremont to the Vargas Plateau and the Bay Area Ridge Trail. The City does not support Niles Canyon Road as a truck route.

### *Residential Neighborhoods*

Residential areas in Niles range from century-old homes near the commercial center to newer neighborhoods at the base of the hills. Little change is expected in these areas in the next 20 years. A few vacant parcels have the potential for infill development; their designations on the General Plan Map reflect densities that are reflective of surrounding uses. With a few exceptions, most residential areas will remain in the low to medium density range. New homes, in-law units, additions, and remodels will be encouraged and should be designed to respect the scale and character of each neighborhood.

## Special Study Area: Henkel Property

Niles contains one Special Study Area—the Henkel property, located at 37899 Niles Boulevard. This former industrial site represents an excellent opportunity for a gateway project into Niles, including new amenities and access to Alameda Creek. The site is vacant and requires environmental remediation due to former industrial activities. The City supports the site's eventual development with housing, or with a mixed use project that combines commercial, residential, artist studios, or live-work units.

This site is designated Service Industrial on the General Plan Map but may be considered for a future General Plan Amendment to a more intense use with appropriate environmental review.

# Policies and Implementing Actions

The policies below are specifically directed to the neighborhoods and business districts in the Niles Community Plan Area. Future development in these areas is also subject to broader citywide policies that may be found in other elements of the General Plan. Both this element and the citywide elements should be consulted when evaluating development proposals or making land use decisions. For example, the design of mixed use development in Niles Town Center should adhere not only to the policies below, but also to policies in the Community Character Element and other relevant sections of the General Plan.

As appropriate, the policies and implementing actions below carry forward the *Niles Concept Plan* (2001). Because of the broad scope of the General Plan, the policies do not include the *Niles Design Guidelines*. These Guidelines remain in effect.

The policies are organized under the following five major sub-headings:

- Niles Town Center
- Remnant Industrial Sites
- Mission Boulevard Corridor
- Niles Canyon and Alameda Creek
- Niles Residential Neighborhoods

## Niles Town Center

### • Policy 11-8.1: Enhancing the Character of Niles Town Center

Enhance the character of Niles Town Center by preserving and restoring historic buildings, attracting new infill development that is compatible in scale and design with existing development, continuing streetscape and signage improvements, enhancing gateways, and maintaining a comfortable environment for pedestrians.

### • Policy 11-8.2: Opportunity Sites in Niles

Direct development in Niles to key opportunity sites, as identified in this Community Plan. Development on these sites should increase retail activity, provide a mix of housing types, eliminate gaps in the development pattern, and complement historic architectural styles.

#### > Implementation 11-8.2.A: FAR Revisions

Revise zoning for the Niles Town Center to establish floor area ratio standards which reflect the higher intensity of existing development in the core downtown area. Allow further increases only when historic character is maintained.

### • Policy 11-8.3: Niles Retail Mix

Expand the mix of retail uses in Niles, leveraging the District's historic character to retain existing businesses and encourage new retail uses for residents, visitors, and the local workforce.

**> Implementation 11-8.3.A: Niles Retail Recruitment Strategy**

Implement a retail strategy for the Niles Business District to retain existing businesses, recruit new businesses and increase the diversity of retail and service uses.

## • Policy 11-8.4: Historic Character

Preserve and enhance the historic character of the Niles business district through design guidelines, historic preservation incentives, improved community awareness and education of local history, historic markers, special events, and other activities. Historic resources, including the Niles Canyon Railway and Niles' traditional "Main Street" atmosphere, should be seen as assets to attract businesses, customers, and visitors. Complementary uses such as a public marketplace, or other historic museums and exhibits should be encouraged.

## • Policy 11-8.5: Marketing and Communication Strategies

Undertake marketing and communication strategies that promote Niles' unique attributes, special events, antique businesses, and history.

## • Policy 11-8.6: Niles Town Plaza

Promote the new Niles Town Plaza as the heart of the community and a gathering place for residents and visitors. Special events such as farmers markets, community gatherings, and performances should be programmed for the Plaza. Development on the perimeter of the Plaza should help activate the space, while preserving views to the hillsides.

## • Policy 11-8.7: Pedestrian-Oriented Town Center

Maintain a pedestrian-oriented environment along Niles Boulevard and the lettered cross streets extending to Second Street. Consistent with the Community Character Element, new buildings on Niles Boulevard should be constructed to the front setback, with parking located to the rear. In the heart of the business district, the goal should be continuous ground floor storefronts along the boulevard, complemented by an attractive, pedestrian-friendly streetscape.

**> Implementation 11-8.7.A: Gateway Signage and Wayfinding**

Implement an adopted signage program for Niles to improve wayfinding and access.

Part of Niles' identity stems from distinctive signage, including the entry sign at the railroad underpass and the neon entry signs at Niles Boulevard and Sullivan/Mission Boulevard. These signs should be maintained and celebrated as part of the town's history. The City will also work with Caltrans to pursue additional signage and/or banners along Mission Boulevard.

**> Implementation 11-8.7.B: Signage Design**

Ensure that new signs are consistent with adopted sign guidelines and contribute to the character of Niles.

The *Niles Design Guidelines* include provisions for signs on private businesses and other properties in the Town Center. The guidelines ensure that signs complement local architecture and add to the aesthetic quality of the street, while also providing name recognition and identity for local businesses.

**> Implementation 11-8.7.C: Niles Boulevard Streetscape Plan**

Further refine the a streetscape plan for Niles Boulevard by including pedestrian safety improvements and traffic calming measures for the boulevard and its cross-streets. The streetscape plan should identify improvements to be made by the private sector as development occurs along the corridor.

## • Policy 11-8.8: Niles' View Corridors

Protect views of the hills from the Niles Town Plaza, Niles Boulevard, and the lettered side streets.

**> Implementation 11-8.8.A: Building Height Limits**

Limit building heights in historic Niles to two stories to maintain views and respect the historic scale of development. Taller buildings may be considered along Mission Boulevard, provided that views are protected and the height is compatible with surrounding uses. Visual simulation should accompany any plans for new large-scale development in this area.

## • Policy 11-8.9: Creating a Multi-Modal Transportation Network in Niles

Provide balanced transportation solutions as development occurs in Niles. This should include pedestrian and bicycle improvements, and rail and bus improvements, as well as road improvements.

**> Implementation 11-8.9.A: Niles' Alleys**

Work with adjacent property owners to improve the functionality, appearance and safety of the alleyways in historic Niles.

The property owners along Iron Horse Alley in particular could benefit from improved access, paving and lighting. The alley could provide access for commercial deliveries, municipal services (waste and recycling pick-up), and allow for rear entries to businesses and residential units.

## • Policy 11-8.10: Improving Pedestrian and Bicycle Access

Improve pedestrian and bicycle connections from Niles to other parts of Fremont. This should include safe pedestrian access across the railroad tracks (between Niles and Mission Boulevard), improved access to the Alameda Creek Trail, and better connections to Quarry Lakes, Central Fremont, the Vallejo Mills Historic Park, and hillside open space areas.

**> Implementation 11-8.10.A: Pedestrian Crossing of the UP Railroad**

Establish a new crossing of the Union Pacific rail line for pedestrians and bicycles between Mission Boulevard and Niles Boulevard. The crossing should enable passengers on the historic Niles Canyon Railway to more easily visit the historic town center.

The historic Niles Canyon Railway currently operates an excursion train from Niles to Sunol, but the terminus is on the opposite side of the active rail line from the Town Center. Passengers cannot off-board in the Niles Town Center when coming from Sunol, nor can they easily walk to the Town Center due to the absence of a safe rail crossing. The eventual goal is to establish a safe rail crossing that allows passengers to more readily access Downtown Niles.

### • Policy 11-8.11: Parking in Niles

Consistent with the other elements of the General Plan, a greater emphasis should be placed on shared parking rather than individual lots for each business. Parking should be located to the side or rear of buildings rather than in the front.

#### > Implementation 11-8.11.A: Changes to the Niles Parking District

Consider modifying the existing parking district in Niles to allow new businesses and property owners to participate, establish coordinated parking policies, increase parking, and adequately fund parking lot maintenance.

The Niles parking district currently encompasses properties along Niles Boulevard, generally east of G Street. As of 2010, there were 176 parking spaces in two lots on the north (hill) side of Niles Boulevard. Additional development will lead to a demand for more parking. A mechanism is needed to allow property owners to contribute to shared parking solutions, as well as the long-term maintenance of parking areas.

## Remnant Industrial Sites

### • Policy 11-8.12: Conversion of Remnant Industrial Parcels

Encourage collaborative efforts by the City and private property owners to redevelop remnant industrial parcels in the Niles area. When appropriate the City should take the lead role to facilitate the reuse of these sites. Community input should be solicited throughout this process.

#### > Implementation 11-8.12.A: Henkel Property (37899 Niles Boulevard)

Support reuse of the Henkel property with a mix of commercial, residential and/or live-work uses, depending on market conditions and appropriate environmental remediation measures. Access to Alameda Creek should be provided from future development.

For additional information on this site, see the earlier discussion under "Special Study Areas"

#### > Implementation 11-8.12.B: Gummow Property (37000-37048 Niles Boulevard)

Support the reuse of former industrial property near the Sullivan Underpass with medium density residential and commercial service uses.

The Gummow property adjoins the Sullivan rail underpass, one of the two gateways into Niles. It should eventually be converted to medium density residential, live work, or mixed use development. Housing would provide an expanded customer base for the commercial district while providing a transition between the retail area and nearby residential uses.

#### > Implementation 11-8.12.C: Former UP Property

Support mixed use development on the former Union Pacific property adjacent to the railroad tracks on the north side of Niles Boulevard. Such development should respect the scale and character of existing development on the south side of the boulevard, particularly the rhythm established by the 25-foot historic lot pattern.

The original town plan for Niles was based on 25-foot wide lots. Some of these lots were merged as the town developed, resulting in many buildings that are either 25 feet or 50 feet wide, and in a few instances

75 feet wide. While new buildings do not need to replicate this pattern exactly, they should respect this rhythm and avoid designs that are incompatible or monotonous.

**> Implementation 11-8.12.D: Kraftile Road Property (990 Kraftile Road)**

Encourage the development of the former tow yard with single family homes. Should residential use be precluded seek another low intensity use compatible with the surrounding neighborhood.

The site at the end of Kraftile Road has historically been a tow yard and will likely require some environmental remediation prior to development. It is surrounded by lower density residential use and is best suited for single family infill homes.

# Mission Boulevard Corridor

## • Policy 11-8.13: Mission Boulevard as a Community Gateway

Recognize Mission Boulevard as an important gateway into Fremont and the Niles District. The potential for future commercial and mixed use development in this corridor should be explored, particularly in the area abutting the Town Center and at the Niles Canyon intersection. Future commercial uses along Mission Boulevard should complement rather than compete with those in the historic town center.

**> Implementation 11-8.13.A: Mission Boulevard Master Plan**

Work with Caltrans to develop a Master Plan for Mission Boulevard through the Niles District. The Plan should address long-term land use changes in the area between Nursery Avenue and Alameda Creek, changes to road design and intersections, streetscape improvements, and gateway signage. As necessary, the *Niles Design Guidelines* should be amended to include this area.

**> Implementation 11-8.13.B: Mission Boulevard Landscaping and Gateways**

Work with Caltrans to improve the appearance of Mission Boulevard between Union City and Alameda Creek. Additional landscaping and street trees, along with improved signage and gateway treatment, should be pursued.

**> Implementation 11-8.13.C: Intersection Improvements and Pedestrian Crossings**

On an ongoing basis, work with Caltrans to identify possible intersection improvements along Mission Boulevard and to improve pedestrian, bicycle, and vehicle safety. If a pedestrian crossing of the UP Railroad is developed, related improvements should be made to ensure safe pedestrian access across Mission Boulevard.

# Niles Canyon and Alameda Creek

## • Policy 11-8.14: Niles Canyon Gateway

Limit future development along Niles Canyon Road and ensure compatibility with the road's designation as a scenic highway, its proximity to historic and natural resources, and its role as a major gateway into Fremont.

> **Implementation 11-8.14.A: Niles Canyon Road at Mission Boulevard**

Ensure that development at the corner of Niles Canyon Road and Mission Boulevard provides an appropriate gateway for the Niles district, respects the scenic qualities of Niles Canyon, complements the nearby Vallejo Mills Historic Park, and provides an architecturally attractive landmark for the neighborhood.

The southeast corner of this intersection—known as the "Big Daddy's" site—presents an opportunity for a signature project. Development should include improved pedestrian connections across Mission Boulevard and to Alameda Creek. Driveways and parking areas should be sited to avoid conflicts with Mission Boulevard and Niles Canyon Road. Additional roadway improvements to Sycamore Street and Old Canyon Road should be incorporated.

> **Implementation 11-8.14.B: Niles Canyon Road Scenic Corridor Protection Plan**

Utilize the Niles Canyon Scenic Corridor Protection Plan and the Joint Advisory Committee to review projects along Niles Canyon Road for consistency with the Plan. The Joint Committee consists of one planning commissioner from Fremont, Union City and Alameda County.

### • Policy 11-8.15: Alameda Creek

Improve trail connections between the Niles Town Center, Alameda Creek, and the regional park system. The Alameda Creek Trail itself should be improved with landscaping, seating areas, scenic overlooks and directional signage.

Pedestrian and bicycle improvements should be included as the Henkel site is redeveloped. This should include a new sidewalk and bicycle connections on Niles Boulevard connecting to the Alameda Creek Trail.

> **Implementation 11-8.15.A: New Alameda Creek Bridge**

Develop a new pedestrian/bicycle bridge across Alameda Creek between Niles and Central Fremont.

> **Implementation 11-8.15.B: Trail Connections to Regional Parks**

Extend the Alameda Creek Trail and spur trails to improve pedestrian and bicycle access between Niles neighborhoods and the Quarry Lakes Regional Recreation Area, the Vallejo Mills Historic Site, the Vargas Plateau Regional Park, and the Bay Area Ridge Trail.

## Niles Residential Neighborhoods

### • Policy 11-8.16: Maintaining Niles Neighborhoods

Outside the Niles Town Center, maintain the character of established residential neighborhoods in the Niles District. New homes and alterations to existing homes should respect the overall scale and character of established neighborhoods. Infill development and/or subdivision of vacant or underutilized sites should be consistent with General Plan and zoning densities.

General Plan Map designations for the Niles Community Plan Area are shown in Diagram 11-9.

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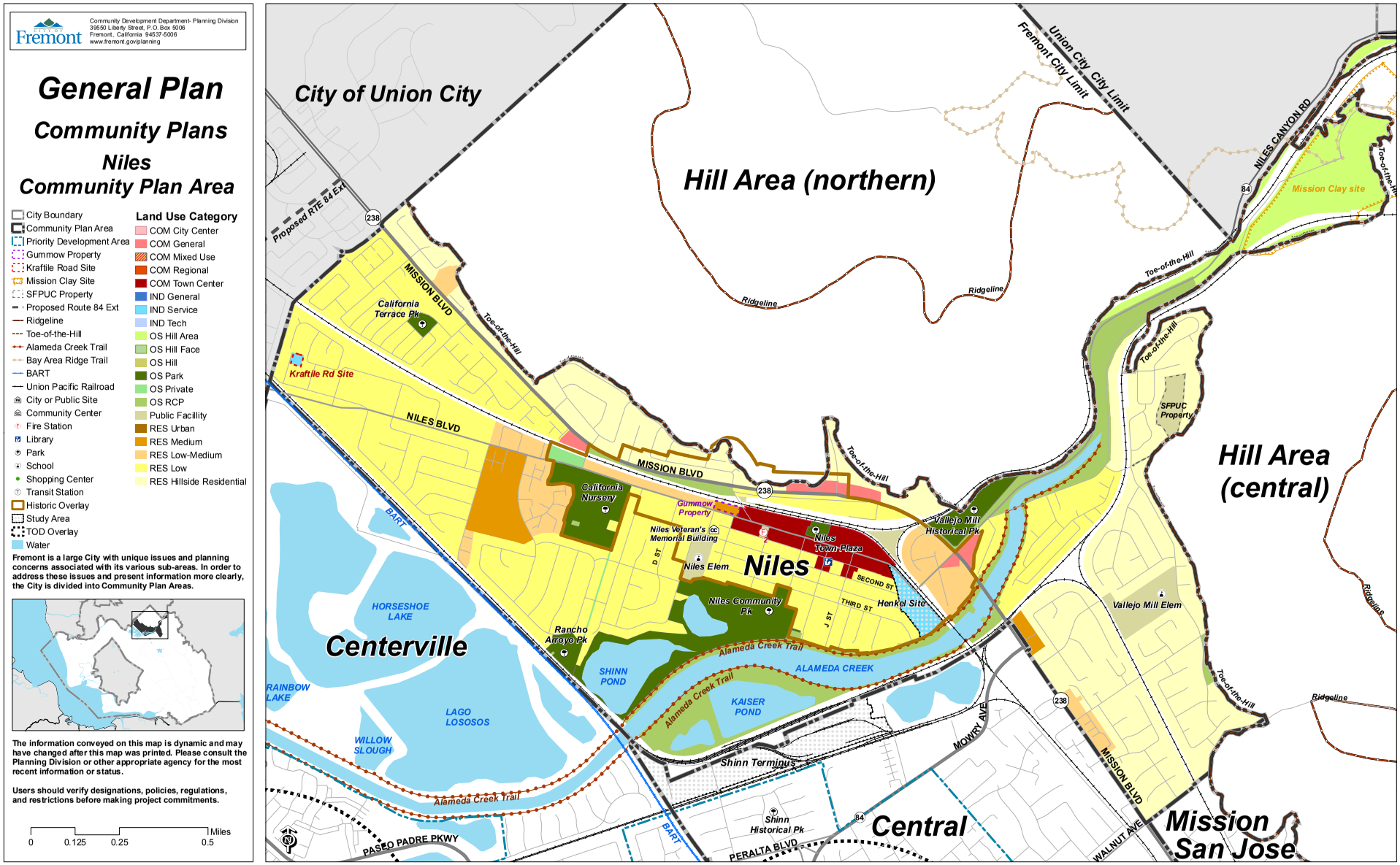


Diagram 11-9 Niles Community Plan Area



This is a reduced image. Please see the most current color full-size maps available at the Fremont Planning Division or online at www.fremont.gov/planning
The information on this diagram is dynamic and may have changed since this page was last printed.

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# North Fremont

## Profile

The North Fremont Community Plan area encompasses just over 5.0 square miles. It is located in the northwestern part of the city along both sides of Interstate 880. The Community Plan Area is bordered by Union City on the north, and Route 84/Decoto Road on the south and east. The western boundary is irregular and generally follows the edge between public open space in the Baylands and privately owned land along Paseo Padre Parkway.

North Fremont was referred to as the "Northern Plain" in previous General Plans. The area is almost completely flat and was used as farmland for most of the 20th Century. The first General Plan for Fremont, prepared in 1956, designated the solely for agricultural uses. By the late 1960s, the area was seen as the next frontier for Fremont's development. The 1969 General Plan re-designated most of the area for suburban development, including low density residential, commercial, and industrial uses. The area east of Interstate 880 along Fremont Boulevard was subsequently developed with single family subdivisions, along with a number of neighborhood shopping centers and apartment complexes.

The area west of Interstate 880 and south of Alameda Creek remained agricultural until the early 1980s. Much of the land was contained in a single large landholding known as Patterson Ranch. During the late 1970s, the ranch was master planned as a new community comprised of Ardenwood Villages and Ardenwood Forest. As plans for Ardenwood moved forward, the Dumbarton Freeway (State Route 84) was constructed, providing an improved connection between North Fremont and the fast-growing employment centers of southern San Mateo and northern Santa Clara Counties. Ardenwood was subsequently developed with over 5,000 homes, along with a 283-acre technology park and a new regional park centered around the Patterson estate and its still operational farm. The portion of the Patterson Ranch generally lying between Paseo Padre Parkway and Alameda Creek was designated as an urban reserve.

Ardenwood introduced a new housing product to Fremont—the small lot single family home—on a large scale. Much of the community was developed with patio homes and zero lot line homes at densities of 11-15 units per acre or more. Other parts of the community were developed at more traditional suburban densities, and a few areas were developed with

### GOALS FOR NORTH FREMONT

- Maintain the high quality of North Fremont's neighborhoods
- Provide gathering places which create a stronger sense of community
- Create a more distinctive identity for North Fremont and Ardenwood
- Provide additional shopping and dining opportunities
- Develop vacant parcels in the Ardenwood Technology Park
- Promote the success of Ardenwood Technology Park
- Improve access to Coyote Hills, Quarry Lakes, Ardenwood Historic Farm, and other open spaces
- Enhance Fremont Boulevard as a City gateway
- Improve connections to other Fremont neighborhoods.

townhomes, condominiums, garden apartments, and two family "duets." Two elementary schools, two neighborhood parks and a small commercial center along Paseo Padre Parkway also have been developed in the Ardenwood area.

The original land plan for Ardenwood Forest envisioned a 14-acre "town center" around the intersection of Paseo Padre Parkway and Ardenwood Boulevard. As market conditions changed during the 1990s and early 2000s, the town center was dropped from the master plan and the site was developed with single and multi-family residential uses.

In addition to Ardenwood and Northgate, North Fremont contains several residential neighborhoods located west of Interstate 880 and north of Alameda Creek, accessed by Alvarado Boulevard (the northern end of Fremont Boulevard). This includes a 1960s/70s era neighborhood on the north side of Alvarado Boulevard in which all streets are named for lakes. The Lakes neighborhood includes a mix of single family homes and attached ranch-style homes. On the south side of Alvarado Boulevard is a newer 1980s-era single-family neighborhood in which all streets are named for birds. There is also a large mobile home park in this area. The "Lakes and Birds" area is adjacent to Union City on two sides, and is somewhat isolated from the rest of Fremont.

The eastern edge of the North Fremont Community Plan area includes the Fremont/Decoto Road intersection. Land uses abutting this intersection are discussed in the Centerville Community Plan.

# Planning Issues and Vision

## *Overview*

Most of North Fremont is fully developed and is not expected to change significantly during the lifetime of the General Plan. The exceptions are the remainder of Patterson Ranch, the vacant sites in Ardenwood Technology Park, and a large tract at the northwest corner of Paseo Padre Parkway and the Dumbarton Freeway (Route 84). The potential for change also exists along Fremont Boulevard and on other commercially zoned sites in the area where older uses may redevelop over the next 20 years.

The vision for North Fremont is to sustain the area's high quality neighborhoods, maintain important community institutions and gathering places such as the Ardenwood Historic Farm, promote Ardenwood Technology Park as one of the Silicon Valley's premier business centers, and ensure that development at Patterson Ranch is complementary with surrounding

neighborhoods. Patterson Ranch will not only create a new neighborhood in North Fremont, it also will provide enhanced access between Fremont's northern neighborhoods and the Baylands. The vision for North Fremont also includes enhancing Fremont Boulevard (including the Alvarado Boulevard segment) as a gateway to the city.

One goal for North Fremont is to establish more community gathering places. Unlike the other residential districts of Fremont, there is no town center or area that has historically functioned as the heart of the community. Some of the existing retail centers in the area are characterized by offices, community services, and other activities that do not meet the day-to-day needs of North Fremont residents. Virtually all commercial development in the area is auto-oriented, and there are few shopping areas within walking distance of most homes. This is particularly true in Ardenwood, where the only retail activities are located adjacent to the freeway park-and-ride lot and in a small strip shopping center at Paseo Padre Parkway and Deep Creek Road. The Lakes and Birds area is similarly underserved, with two small strip centers serving several thousand residents.

Looking to the future, neighborhood retail choices should be improved and new gathering places should be created. A community/senior center proposed for Northgate Park will provide an important new focal point, provided that funding can be secured for its construction and operation. The retail centers on Fremont Boulevard should also evolve over time, becoming more walkable and better connected to adjacent neighborhoods. Because there is no "center" in North Fremont, schools and parks are particularly important to the community. The area includes several high quality parks, as well as Warwick, Forest Park, and Ardenwood Elementary Schools—these should be recognized as essential community resources. The Ardenwood Historic Farm is also very important, not only to the identity of the community but also as a living connection to the area's past.

## *Ardenwood Technology Park*

Economic development is a priority in North Fremont, particularly at the Ardenwood Technology Park. Ardenwood was planned to provide jobs for Fremont residents and capitalize on the overflow of Silicon Valley industries seeking space on the east side of the Dumbarton Bridge. While the business park is home to several major employers, including Johnson & Johnson, Solaria, and NET.com, the vacancy rate as of 2011 is high and several buildings are completely empty. There are also still vacant parcels in the development with the potential to become corporate headquarters,

production facilities, laboratories, office buildings, and other uses that generate jobs and revenue for Fremont.

Ardenwood also has a large daytime workforce, which generates direct economic benefits and tax revenues through local purchases at restaurants, hotels, entertainment venues, and retail stores. The city presently loses some of these potential benefits to Newark and Union City since there are few shopping, dining, or lodging opportunities in this part of Fremont.

Across Paseo Padre Parkway from Ardenwood, a 92-acre vacant tract owned by Cargill provides another major development opportunity. The designation of this site for Tech Industrial uses on the General Plan Map creates the opportunity for a major new employment center at the western gateway to Fremont, subject to appropriate environmental review.

### *Patterson Ranch*

Plans for the remaining 428 acres of Patterson Ranch were approved in 2010. Proposals to develop the site date back to the early 1990s. In 2006, Fremont voters rejected an initiative that would have limited future uses on the ranch to agriculture, recreation, and very low density residential. Subsequent proposals for the site in 2007 included over 800 housing units, an elementary school, and a neighborhood shopping center. These plans were scaled back in 2009, leading to the current approved project.

The approved plans provide for the eventual donation of 316 acres of agricultural land to public agencies for permanent open space. The remaining 112 acres will include 500 single family detached homes on 88 acres, neighborhood parks totaling 14 acres, and two sites reserved for religious institutions on 10 acres. Residential development will be limited to the area east of Ardenwood Boulevard.

## Special Study Areas

No Special Study Areas have been designated within the North Fremont Community Plan Area.

# Policies and Implementing Actions

The policies below are specifically directed to the neighborhoods and business districts in the North Fremont Community Plan Area. Future development in these areas is also subject to broader citywide policies that may be found in other elements of the General Plan. Both this element and the citywide elements should be consulted when evaluating development proposals.

## • Policy 11-9.1: North Fremont Neighborhoods

Maintain North Fremont as a community of high quality neighborhoods, with complementary parks and open spaces, schools, and other public facilities. Encourage continued reinvestment in the area's housing stock.

### > Implementation 11-9.1.A: Patterson Ranch

Support housing, parkland, and open space opportunities in North Fremont through completion of the Patterson Ranch development, consistent with the approved Planned District.

## • Policy 11-9.2: North Fremont Retail Opportunities

Improve retail shopping, dining, and entertainment opportunities in North Fremont, both for local residents and for persons working in Ardenwood Technology Park. Economic development strategies should aim to reduce retail "leakage" from this area to Union City and Newark.

## • Policy 11-9.3: Ardenwood Technology Park

Foster the success of Ardenwood Technology Park as a major employment center, revenue generator, and campus setting for technology-oriented companies.

### > Implementation 11-9.3.A: Route 84 and Paseo Padre Parkway

Encourage development of the vacant sites around Route 84 and Paseo Padre Parkway with employment-generating uses that complement established uses at Ardenwood Technology Park. These sites define a prominent western gateway into Fremont and should create a positive impression of the city as they develop. This applies to the Cargill site as well as vacant land within the Technology Park.

## • Policy 11-9.4: North Fremont Open Space

Support improved access between North Fremont neighborhoods and the regional park system, including Coyote Hills, the Alameda Creek Trail, and Ardenwood Historic Farm. Linear trail and park improvements should be incorporated in the Patterson Ranch development to better connect Ardenwood to the Bay Trail and open spaces in the Baylands.

## • Policy 11-9.5: Community Identity

Create a stronger sense of community identity in North Fremont by sustaining existing community facilities, supporting new facilities such as the proposed Northgate Community/Senior Center, and encouraging retail centers which serve as neighborhood gathering places. North Fremont should be recognized as a distinct and unique part of the city.

**> Implementation 11-9.5.A: Fremont Blvd/Alvarado Blvd**

Improve the North Fremont section of Fremont Boulevard, including Alvarado Boulevard between Union City and I-880 as well as the I-880 to Decoto segment. As a major entry into Fremont, the boulevard should be an attractive multi-modal thoroughfare, with improved bicycle access, sidewalks, and transit service. Streetscape and landscaping improvements should make the street a more comfortable environment for walking.

**> Implementation 11-9.5.B: Gateway Improvements**

Consistent with the Gateway Concept Plan, implement signage and other design improvements at Alvarado Boulevard/City limit, Paseo Padre/Route 84, I-880/Fremont Boulevard, I-880/Decoto Road, and Paseo Padre/Decoto that enhance these areas as major gateways into the city.

## • Policy 11-9.6: Making North Fremont Less Auto-Dependent

Explore ways to make North Fremont neighborhoods less auto dependent, including improved pedestrian and bicycle connections between "self-contained" neighborhoods, better access between residential areas and shopping centers, and safer crossings of major thoroughfares and highways.

General Plan Map designations for the North Fremont Community Plan Area are shown in Diagram 11-10.

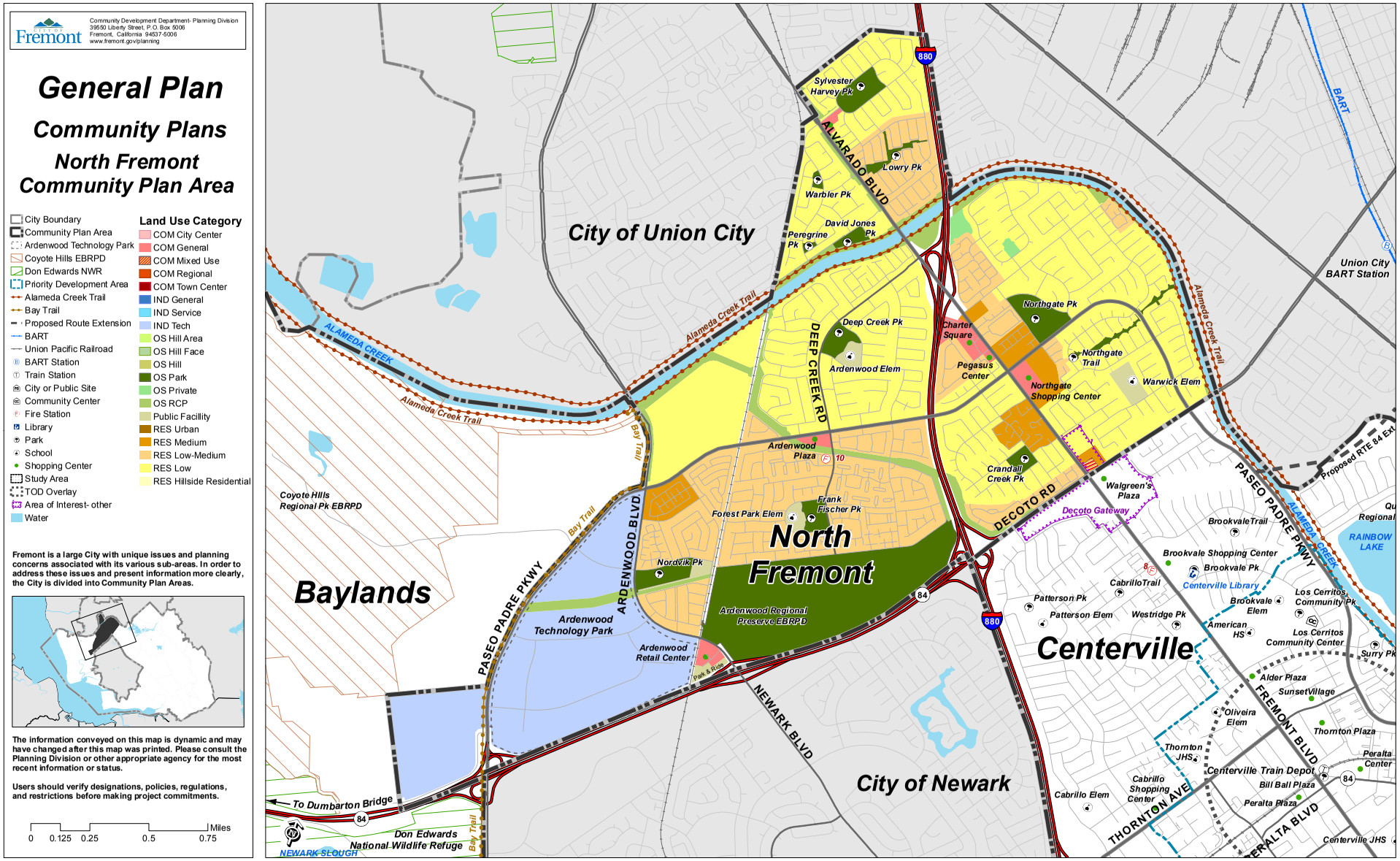


Diagram 11-10 North Fremont Community Plan Area



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# South Fremont

## Profile

The South Fremont Community Plan Area occupies 2.4 square miles in the south central part of the city. It is defined by Auto Mall Parkway on the north, Mission Boulevard and Brown Road on the south, I-880 on the west and I-680 on the east. South Fremont has historically been treated as part of Fremont's "Industrial" Planning Area. It is part of a larger corridor of industrial land uses that extends along Interstate 880 from Stevenson Boulevard south for several miles into Santa Clara County. South Fremont has been identified as a separate planning area in this General Plan due to the potential for future change related to the BART extension.

Almost all of South Fremont is currently zoned for industrial uses. The actual land use pattern is more diverse and includes a mix of industrial, office, retail, service, and public uses as well as vacant land. There are no residential subdivisions in this area and only a few homes left from the area's agricultural past.

## Planning Issues and Vision

South Fremont was an agricultural area at the time of Fremont's incorporation. It was identified as a future industrial area in early city plans and subsequently developed with a mix of light and heavy industry after 1960.

In 1962, General Motors (GM) opened an automobile manufacturing plant on Fremont Boulevard just east of Interstate 880 (then called State Highway 17). This was a catalyst for the area's early development, and sparked spinoff businesses related to the auto plant, along with warehouse and distribution centers nearby. Planned industrial and business parks were developed off of Grimmer Boulevard, Fremont Boulevard, and Old Warm Springs Boulevard to the north and west of the auto plant.

GM ceased operations in 1982 and the plant was reopened in 1984 as New United Motors Manufacturing, Inc. (NUMMI), a joint venture between GM and Toyota. The 5.4 million square foot facility employed 5,000 workers and was one of the largest manufacturing facilities in the state for several decades. It produced an average of 6,000 vehicles a week and over eight million cars and trucks while it was in operation.

In early 2010, the NUMMI facility was closed. Shortly thereafter, the portion of the property containing the assembly plant was purchased by Tesla

### GOALS FOR SOUTH FREMONT

- Enhance South Fremont as a major employment center and vital part of Fremont's tax base and job base
- Maximize opportunities for transit oriented development around the new BART station
- Ensure compatibility of new development with surrounding neighborhoods
- Encourage innovative planning, design, and development which contributes to the overall quality of life in Fremont
- Maintain the long-term viability of existing industrial uses
- Expand South Fremont's open space network, and improve its pedestrian and bicycle network
- Improve the appearance of major thoroughfares, especially Auto Mall Parkway and Fremont Boulevard
- Provide new community facilities as the area develops
- Support development that is economically and environmentally sustainable.

Motors. Tesla plans to use the site for electric vehicle manufacturing, with assembly starting in 2012. In a separate transaction, the former NUMMI tracts to the north and south of the assembly plant were sold to the Union Pacific Railroad in late 2010. The implications of this sale for the future of South Fremont are discussed later in this Community Plan.

Elsewhere in South Fremont, industrial development continues to be the dominant land use. The business parks along Grimmer and Fremont Boulevards support a diverse array of activities, including machine shops, building and plumbing suppliers, auto repair and collision shops, printers and lithographers, importers and exporters, equipment rentals, mini-warehouses, flooring companies, cabinet makers, vocational and technical schools, and more. There are also more intensive industrial and R&D uses, including a concrete batch plant, metal fabricators, an AT&T corporation yard, computer manufacturing and repair facilities, and other small manufacturers. This area also includes the headquarters of the Fremont Unified School District on Technology Drive, a City of Fremont Fire Station, and Alameda County Water District offices.

On the eastern side of the area along Osgood Road/Warm Springs Boulevard, technology corporations like Unigen, Western Digital, and Amax Engineering have become a major presence. Business parks such as Mission Corporate Center provide R&D and office space for a variety of tenants. Ancillary uses such as hotels and retail also have located in this area. Several large vacant properties also exist.

The Auto Mall Parkway corridor has a unique function within South Fremont. The arterial handles over 40,000 vehicles per day, with much of the traffic moving between Interstates 880 and 680. The corridor also serves as a buffer between residential neighborhoods to the north and industry to the south. Because of the large traffic volumes, the corridor has attracted big box retailers such as Wal-Mart, Fry's Electronics, and Home Depot. Smaller-scale retail uses, restaurants, and gas stations also have located in this area. A major PG&E transmission line corridor runs parallel to the arterial.

Many of the buildings in South Fremont's business parks are one-story concrete tilt-up structures. Given the relatively low rents and high vacancy rates, some of the buildings have been leased as office space, off-price retail space, and community assembly space for activities such as martial arts instruction, gymnastics schools, and religious facilities. The proximity of these uses to industrial activities which utilize hazardous materials, or

which generate dust, noise and odors is an ongoing issue, as it is in other industrial districts of Fremont. The General Plan Map designates some of South Fremont for Service Industrial uses, but a majority of the area is designated for General Industrial and Tech Industrial uses. Community assembly uses may be acceptable in the Service Industrial areas but are not appropriate in the other industrial areas.

The vision for the South Fremont Community Plan Area is largely driven by plans for the South Fremont - Warm Springs BART area. Planning for the BART extension has been underway for more than two decades and construction began in 2009. BART will follow the Union Pacific Railroad right-of-way from Irvington, passing under Auto Mall Parkway and temporarily terminating at a new station to be located west of Warm Springs Boulevard and just south of Grimmer Boulevard. A future extension will continue BART service southward to Milpitas, San Jose, and Santa Clara. Service to South Fremont - Warm Springs station is projected to begin in late 2015, with the San Jose extension projected to begin operation in 2018.

An area of 850 acres around the future BART Station, including the Tesla factory and the adjacent Union Pacific parcels, is under study as of 2011. A community planning process for this area will guide development decisions, potentially resulting in a General Plan Amendment and more specific direction for this area. The "Special Study Area" text in the next part of this Community Plan provides background information on this process as well as overarching objectives.

Beyond the BART station area, South Fremont will be enhanced as a major employment center over the next 20 years. There are a number of large vacant and/or underutilized sites in the Grimmer/Fremont Boulevard area and in the business parks off of Osgood Road and Warm Springs Boulevard. The General Plan supports continued infill and intensification of employment-generating uses, and continued investment in amenities that make this area an attractive choice for business and industry.

The portion of Fremont Boulevard that passes through this area was addressed in *Envision Fremont Boulevard* in 2008. This segment of the boulevard has a dedicated bike lane, but has discontinuous sidewalks and few crosswalks. The land use mix, scale of development, and traffic volumes create an environment that is not conducive to walking. Participants in community workshops for this area suggested more uniform streetscape elements, landscaping the Auto Mall Parkway median and roadsides, at-

tracting new development (such as a "lifestyle center" or hotel), improving pedestrian safety through signal timing adjustments, and enhancing Laguna Creek. No lane reconfigurations have been proposed for Fremont Boulevard, recognizing that this is the most auto-oriented section of the street. Additional lanes will be needed on Auto Mall Parkway to handle existing and projected traffic volumes, as it is planned as a 6-lane primary arterial.

## Special Study Area: South Fremont-Warm Springs BART Station and Vicinity

The South Fremont - Warm Springs BART Station provides an unprecedented opportunity for transit-oriented development in Fremont. The presence of relatively large parcels, many of which are vacant or underutilized, creates the potential for development on a scale that would be difficult to achieve around the Irvington and Central Fremont BART stations, or around the Centerville Train Station.

Planning for the area around the future BART station has been underway for many years. In 2004, an Existing Conditions Report was prepared to lay the foundation for a future specific plan. An inventory of land use, transportation, urban design conditions, and real estate market conditions was completed. The specific plan itself was deferred as plans for BART were refined and market conditions changed. The NUMMI closure in 2010 triggered a subsequent study effort.

In May 2010, Tesla Motors Inc. announced their intention to purchase the plant to build their electric vehicles. This purchase only included one of the three NUMMI parcels, totaling approximately 203 acres. In October 2010, Tesla took ownership of the former NUMMI plant. Tesla anticipates rolling out the first production of electric vehicles in 2012.

Because of the significant loss of employment, the federal Economic Development Administration (EDA) awarded Fremont a $333,000 grant to prepare an economic revitalization strategy that would:

- Promote reuse and revitalization of the former NUMMI facility and surrounding area
- Assess market and economic conditions;
- Study land use alternatives, infrastructure, and financial feasibility issues in South Fremont.

An 850-acre study area was defined and three alternative plans were developed.

In December, 2010, the Union Pacific Railroad purchased 168 acres from NUMMI, including a 107-acre tract north of the former auto plant, and a 60-acre tract to the south. Union Pacific is currently evaluating options for these parcels land and has indicated it plans to use the land for facilities to serve freight rail customers in Northern California.

Union Pacific's decisions affect the future of surrounding properties as well as the properties they own. At the time the General Plan was being prepared, the City was evaluating a range of environmental issues such as air quality, noise, and hazardous materials to establish new site planning and land use parameters for the area. Depending on the findings, the land use alternatives developed in 2010 will be refined and additional infrastructure and cost analyses will be completed. A second community plan process will likely follow completion of the current studies.

The 2010 planning process established basic objectives for the future station area that remain applicable regardless of decisions on the former NUMMI site (see text box on the following page). The station area presents an opportunity to enhance Fremont's economic vitality, attract jobs in the innovation and technology sectors, and accommodate transit-oriented development. The City seeks to connect the station to surrounding employment uses with transit, pedestrian and bicycle facilities, and an improved road network. The station also provides an opportunity for "place-making" that sets South Fremont apart from other employment districts in the city.

## SOUTH FREMONT - WARM SPRINGS BART STATION AREA

The following objectives were developed by the City Council to help guide a community planning process for the South Fremont - Warm Springs BART Station area in 2010.

Development around the future Warm Springs BART Station should:

**Community Quality of Life**

- Contribute to the City's overall quality of life
- Maintain the viability of commercial/industrial uses while fostering synergistic relationships with surrounding neighborhoods
- Incorporate buffers to help provide separation between residential/mixed use developments and manufacturing, industrial, research and development and other employment-generating uses
- Consider use of open space at key locations, particularly in areas with higher intensity or density of uses, such as small parks and gathering areas
- Provide schools and other public facilities as well as necessary infrastructure systems to support planned uses

**Circulation**

- Utilize non-vehicular connections, in particular pedestrian and bicycle paths
- Include safe and convenient pedestrian and bicycle connections to the planned BART station and other key area destinations
- Establish new street connections to promote a well-connected street network
- Encourage safe and efficient bus transit circulation that increases the area's transit accessibility
- Provide improved transit capacity, improving ease of travel and connectivity

**Economic Sustainability**

- Enhance the economic base of Fremont
- Encourage uses that increase employment and the city's tax base
- Encourage uses that optimize market dynamics and which capture short-, mid-, and long-term development trends for Fremont, Silicon Valley, and Northern California

**Environmental Sustainability**

- Incorporate sustainable design principles, including use of passive stormwater retention and filtration systems, green buildings, walkable and mixed use developments, bicycle access, and energy-efficient systems

**Future BART Station**

- Recognizing the planned Warm Springs BART station as a catalyst, locate a variety of high density uses, which may include housing, high intensity commercial, and employment as part of a vibrant urban center
- Incorporate a higher intensity and density of urban mixed use in proximity to the BART station with a broader range of commercial, industrial and community-serving uses beyond the ½ mile radius.

**Job Retention and Creation**

- Retain and enhance the existing job base
- Focus on a high number of high paying jobs as well as jobs in growth industries
- Emphasize emerging green technology, manufacturing, and professional jobs which can be filled by Fremont residents

# Policies and Implementing Actions

## • Policies 11-10.1: South Fremont as an Employment Center

Support the continued development of South Fremont as a major employment center. Future development in this area should enhance the city's tax base, create jobs for Fremont residents, maximize economic opportunities to be created by the new BART station, and contribute to the city's overall quality of life.

## • Policies 11-10.2: South Fremont - Warm Springs BART Station

Develop the area around the future Warm Springs BART station with high-intensity land uses that promote the use of BART and encourage walking or bicycling to and from the station.

The Land Use, Community Character, and Mobility Elements of the General Plan include policies and principles for transit-oriented development near BART stations and other transit facilities. Those policies should be followed in future land use and development decisions around the South Fremont - Warm Springs Station. Regardless of the land use mix, the Station should be well connected to the community around it, and easily accessible on foot or by bicycle. The area within a one-half mile radius of the station should be designed and developed in a way that makes the most of the investment in public transportation, reduces the necessity of driving, and creates a vital new employment center that complements other mixed use districts of Fremont.

### > Implementation 11-10.2.A: South Fremont - Warm Springs Planning Process

Continue the planning process for the South Fremont - Warm Springs station area. A specific, community, or area plan should be prepared to address land use, transportation, community design, open space, and infrastructure issues related to the area's future development.

### > Implementation 11-10.2.B: Union Pacific and Tesla Properties

Continue discussions with Union Pacific and Tesla regarding the long-term use of properties to the west and south of the future BART Station.

### > Implementation 11-10.2.C: Station Area General Plan Amendment

Require a General Plan Amendment for any residential development in the South Fremont area, including transit-oriented development around the new Warm Springs BART Station. Ensure that any future residential development is protected from the potential adverse effects of nearby industrial activities. Conversely, ensure that future residential development does not impair the long-term viability of nearby industrial uses.

The station area is designated for General Industrial and Tech Industrial uses on the General Plan map. Additional uses—including housing—could be considered in the future. A General Plan Amendment is anticipated after planning for the station area has been completed. Future zoning changes would follow the Plan Amendment.

## • Policy 11-10.3: Innovation as a Community Design Theme

Promote the concept of "innovation" as a development theme around the South Fremont - Warm Springs BART station.

Innovation was the common theme in all three of the South Fremont land use concepts developed in 2010. The station area provides an opportunity to showcase new technology, promote sustainable design and green infrastructure, and position the city to capture emerging industries and growing sectors of the Bay Area economy.

## • Policy 11-10.4: South Fremont Open Space

Ensure that future development in the vicinity of the BART station includes provisions for open space. Plans for open space should recognize the needs of the local workforce as well as Fremont residents. Open space may include parks, plazas, courtyards, and other public gathering places, and should contribute to a sense of identity in the station area.

## • Policy 11-10.5: South Fremont Community Facilities

Provide for the community facilities necessary to support the level and type of expected growth in the South Fremont - Warm Springs area. This could include schools, neighborhood parks, community centers, public safety facilities, and similar public uses.

## • Policy 11-10.6: Auto Mall Parkway Corridor

Maintain the function of the Auto Mall Parkway corridor as a transition area and buffer between residential areas to the north and industrial areas to the south. Continued development of regional commercial, service industrial, and hospitality uses should be encouraged here. To avoid further traffic delays, ingress and egress to Auto Mall Parkway shall use existing access points or side streets rather than new curb cuts.

## • Policy 11-10.7: Connecting South Fremont

Improve linkages through South Fremont to better connect the Warm Springs District and the Irvington District. This could include additional sidewalks, bicycle trails, greenways, changes to the street system, and other improvements that enhance north-south connectivity.

### > Implementation 11-10.7.A: Southern Fremont Boulevard

Enhance the appearance of the southern stretch of Fremont Boulevard, particularly near the Auto Mall Parkway intersection. This should include streetscape and landscape improvements, additional pedestrian amenities, and new activities that enhance the role of Fremont Boulevard as the city's "main street." Natural features in the area, including the Laguna Creek channel, should be incorporated into plans for the area and restored where feasible.

**> Implementation 11-10.7.B: Truck Routes**

Evaluate truck circulation needs in South Fremont. This evaluation may be used to identify possible new truck routes, reduce conflicts between truck traffic and passenger traffic, and better respond to the needs of business and industry in this area.

General Plan Map designations for the South Fremont Community Plan Area are shown in Diagram 11-11.

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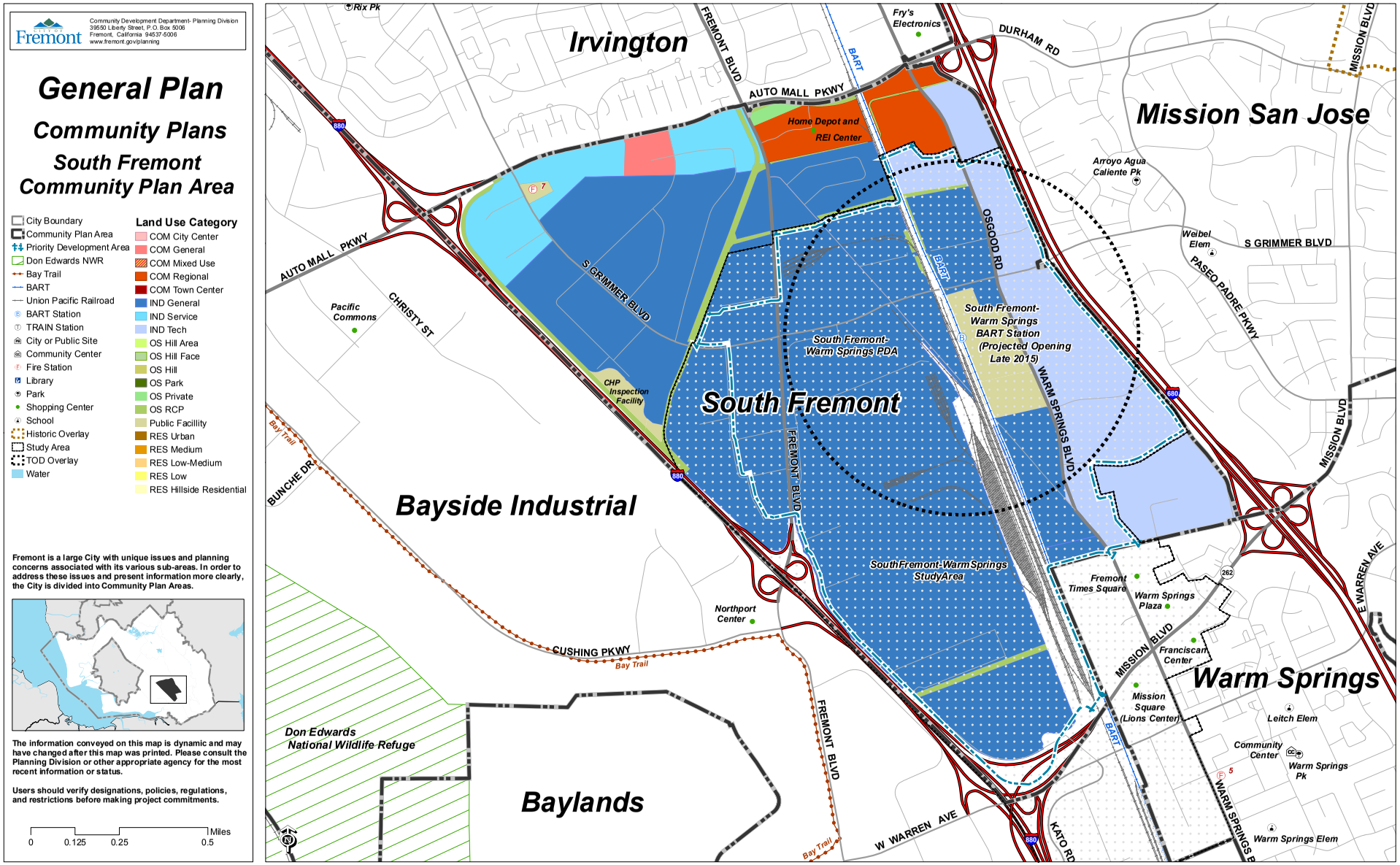




Diagram 11-11 South Fremont Community Plan Area

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# Warm Springs

## Profile

The 2.5 square mile Warm Springs Community Plan Area is located in the southernmost part of Fremont. Its northern border follows Mission Boulevard, Brown Road, and Stanford Avenue. The western border is generally defined by Warm Springs Boulevard, and a short segment of Kato Road and the Union Pacific tracks. The eastern border is the toe of the Fremont hills. The Santa Clara County line and City of Milpitas define the southern border. Interstate 680 bisects the Community Plan Area and also creates a topographic and density divide. Areas west of the freeway are suburban in character, with mixed density housing, neighborhood commercial uses, and public facilities. Areas east of the freeway are less dense, and are similar to the hillside neighborhoods of Mission San Jose.

The Community Plan Area excludes the large industrial area located north of Mission Boulevard between the I-680 and I-880 freeways. While this area has historically been treated as part of the Warm Springs "District", it is discussed separately in the General Plan because of its unique development issues (see the "South Fremont" Community Plan). Areas north of Mission Boulevard are largely industrial and will be addressed through the South Fremont - Warm Springs BART station area planning process. By contrast, the Warm Springs Community Plan Area is mostly built out. The primary opportunities for change are in the cluster of shopping centers around Mission and Warm Springs Boulevards.

Like Centerville, Irvington, Mission San Jose, and Niles, the Warm Springs District is one of Fremont's five original towns. Unlike its sister communities, Warm Springs did not have a well developed commercial district at the time of Fremont's incorporation. The area was transformed from agricultural use to low and medium density suburban neighborhoods in the 1960s and 1970s. Today, there are few reminders of its past.

## Planning Issues and Vision

The area around Warren Avenue and Warm Springs Boulevard was initially settled around 1860 and was called Harrisburgh. Natural hot springs on the Rancho Agua Caliente led to the area's early popularity as a health resort and in 1885 the town was renamed Warm Springs. The original springs still flow in the Hidden Valley area near the top of Stanford Avenue. Early uses in the area included Weibel Winery at the base of the

### GOALS FOR WARM SPRINGS

- Reshape the cluster of shopping centers around Warm Springs and Mission Boulevards into a walkable mixed use "Town Center"
- Create a stronger sense of identity for Warm Springs
- Improve connections between Warm Springs and other parts of Fremont
- Improve north-south circulation for bicycles and pedestrians within Warm Springs
- Ensure adequate buffering from nearby industrial uses and I-680
- Preserve open space on the hills above Warm Springs
- Provide additional community facilities.

foothills founded by Leland Stanford and in operation until 1989, vineyards on the lower slopes of the Fremont hills, and farms and orchards on the Bay plain.

At the time of Fremont's incorporation in 1956, the area was agricultural, with scattered farm dwellings and very few residents. Warm Springs Boulevard, then a rural farm-to-market road, was identified in early city plans as the dividing line between a future industrial district to the west and a future residential district to the east. In the absence of an existing town center, the area around Mission and Warm Springs Boulevards was designated as the area's future commercial hub. It would be designed for auto convenience, with one-story shopping plazas set far back from the street and ample parking lots in front. Interstate 680 was completed through the area in 1963-64, accelerating the pace of development.

## *Areas West of Interstate 680*

In the years after incorporation, the Warm Springs District evolved as a series of residential subdivisions oriented along Warm Springs Boulevard. The development pattern was heavily influenced by man-made features, including a Hetch-Hetchy aqueduct running north-south through the area, drainage channels running east-west, and Interstate 680 along the eastern perimeter. While the area's physical features created clear neighborhood edges, they also resulted in limited north-south circulation through the area. Today, Warm Springs Boulevard functions as a spine providing access to individual neighborhoods, but there is little connectivity from one neighborhood to the next.

Most of the Warm Springs area is developed with single family homes, but there are pockets of higher density residential use at the northern and southern ends. The shopping area around Mission/Warm Springs is bracketed on the south and east by apartment, townhome, and condominium developments. At the southern end, the area west of Warm Springs Boulevard and south of Kato Road was recently developed with a mix of townhomes and condominiums. This area was previously developed with industrial and warehouse uses.

Warm Springs is well served by City parks, with large community or neighborhood parks (Warm Springs, Booster, and Lone Tree) in the northern and central part of the area and the Plomosa linear park in the south. Warm Springs and James Leitch Elementary Schools are the area's only active school campuses and are important civic gathering places. Leitch serves kindergarten through 2nd grade and Warm Springs serves 3rd

through 6th grades. Students travel to other parts of the city for middle school and high school. The area also includes Warm Springs Community Center on Fernald Street, which is another important civic gathering place. Cedar Lawn Cemetery is located in the southern part of the Community Plan Area.

Although the area west of Warm Springs Boulevard is in the Bayside Industrial Community Plan area, it includes a number of facilities which serve Warm Springs residents, residents of the city and region, as well as international students. These facilities include Northwestern Polytechnical University, Wyotech, and a variety of office and service uses.

Warm Springs' physical separation from the rest of the city presents both a challenge and an opportunity. The District is closer to Milpitas than it is to Fremont City Center and is the crossroads between the East Bay and the South Bay. The intervening areas north of Warm Springs are industrial, which makes it feel somewhat removed from the rest of Fremont. On the positive side, this separation creates the potential for a strong sense of local identity. With the creation of a true Town Center and other improvements, Warm Springs can become a more complete and self-sustaining part of the city.

During the lifetime of this General Plan, the Warm Springs area will be impacted by the extension of BART to San Jose. Although the BART alignment is one-quarter mile west of Warm Springs Boulevard in the industrial area, BART may affect circulation and land use patterns nearby. The City will work closely with BART as station area development continues, both in Fremont and in Santa Clara County.

## *Areas East of Interstate 680*

Above I-680, the development pattern consists of a series of hillside subdivisions generally accessed by Paseo Padre Parkway and Warren Avenue. This area is subject to special zoning and design standards in accordance with Measure A, the 1981 Hillside Initiative. Homes are typically large and many feature panoramic views of the South Bay. The 275-home Avalon residential subdivision is partially located above the toe of the hill in the southern part of the Community Plan area. The area above the toe of the hill is covered by Measure T, the 2002 Hill Area Initiative (see Hill Area Community Plan).

The southern end of this area is accessed by Scott Creek Road. There is a large church located at the northeast quadrant of the interchange, and there are several residential subdivisions nearby at the base of the hills.

There are also a number of Alameda County Water District storage facilities in this area. Additional development potential in this area is very limited.

## Special Study Area: Warm Springs Town Center

The Mission/Warm Springs intersection is the nexus of one of the largest concentrations of shopping centers in Fremont. The area serves not only as the primary commercial area for local residents but also as a retail center for the daytime workforce in the surrounding business parks. Warm Springs has also become a regional niche retail area for Asian businesses, restaurants, and services. While Warm Springs Plaza and the Franciscan Shopping Center are conventional neighborhood shopping centers, Fremont Times Square and Mission Square were designed as Asian-focused centers serving a broader market area. A mile to the south along Warm Springs Boulevard, the Galleria Shopping Center has also repositioned itself to serve the growing Asian market.

The retail centers in Warm Springs have a number of functional challenges. They are not physically integrated with one another, and they adjoin some of the most congested and heavily travelled roads in Fremont. Mission Boulevard functions as the primary shopping center access point at the same time it carries 50,000 vehicles a day between Interstates 880 and 680. The centers themselves are almost completely auto-oriented and walking between them is difficult. They are also not well connected to the neighborhoods around them and lack a unifying architectural theme or common design element. While the shopping centers are in good physical condition and collectively provide all the essential services of a town center—supermarkets, pharmacies, restaurants, banks, a post office, personal services, and more—they do not convey the impression that this is the heart of the surrounding community.

There is an opportunity to reshape the Warm Springs shopping area into a true Town Center. Given the function of Mission Boulevard as a regional arterial, this Center may need to focus on streets other than Mission for east-west circulation. More detailed planning for this area may identify the potential for new streets, re-oriented parking areas, relocated buildings, and new civic spaces. Early coordination and collaboration with property owners will be an essential part of this process. The transformation is a long-term prospect, but ultimately can help create a stronger sense of community throughout the Warm Springs District. New land uses such as

high density housing, mixed use, small parks, and civic buildings can help tie the existing centers together and provide the diversity of activities usually associated with a complete Town Center.

# Policies and Implementing Actions

The policies below are specifically directed to the neighborhoods and business districts in the Warm Springs Community Plan Area. Future development in these areas is also subject to broader citywide policies that may be found in other elements of the General Plan. Both this element and the citywide elements should be consulted when evaluating development proposals or making land use decisions.

## • Policy 11-11.1: Maintaining Warm Springs Residential Areas

Maintain and enhance Warm Springs residential neighborhoods and promote continued investment in the area's housing stock, roads, parks, and public facilities.

## • Policy 11-11.2: Warm Springs Town Center

Pursue the long-term transformation of the Warm Springs Boulevard/Mission Boulevard shopping area into a walkable "Town Center" with a more unified design theme, improved pedestrian connections within and between the individual shopping centers, and infill development which creates a stronger sense of place and more diverse mix of uses. A civic park may also be considered for this area.

The Warm Springs Town Center should also be better connected to adjacent residential areas, particularly the area south of Warren Avenue.

### > Implementation 11-11.2.A: Coordination of Planning Activities

Coordinate planning for the Warm Springs Town Center with planning for the new South Fremont - Warm Springs BART Station area.

The new BART station will be located about one mile north of the Warm Springs Town Center. To the extent possible, new commercial uses around the BART station should complement those in the Town Center rather than compete with them. Once BART is operational, shuttle buses and other transit services should be considered to link the Town Center area to the station.

## • Policy 11-11.3: Improving Connectivity

Improve north-south connectivity within the Warm Springs District by creating circulation alternatives to Warm Springs Boulevard, especially for bicycles and pedestrians.

Warm Springs Boulevard is the only continuous north-south thoroughfare in the Warm Springs District. While new north-south road connections through the residential areas may not be feasible, there are opportunities for additional pedestrian and bicycle connections.

### > Implementation 11-11.3.A: Hetch Hetchy Right-of-Way and Flood Control Channels

Consider opportunities for additional pedestrian and bicycle crossings of the flood control channels within this area, and additional linear park improvements along the Hetch Hetchy right-of-way.

There are three neighborhood parks in Warm Springs that abut the Hetch Hetchy right-of-way and several blocks of the right-of-way itself have been converted to a linear park near Scott Creek Road. The potential

for a "Warm Springs Greenway" which creates a linked chain of parks within this area should be recognized as an opportunity in future park planning activities.

See also Policy 8-1.5 in the Parks and Recreation Element regarding the use of utility corridors as linear parks and trails.

## • Policy 11-11.4: Warm Springs Identity

Create a stronger sense of identity in the Warm Springs District through streetscape improvements, signage, gateways, historic markers, and the development of new community gathering places.

### > Implementation 11-11.4.A: Signage and Branding

Develop branding strategies and physical improvements (signs, banners, markers, etc.) to better distinguish the Warm Springs Town Center.

### > Implementation 11-11.4.B: Warm Springs History

Create a stronger awareness of local history and the role of the Warm Springs District in Fremont's development. This should include greater recognition of important historic sites and buildings, such as the Higuera Adobe and the Weibel Winery, as well as the agricultural history of Warm Springs and the area's role in Silicon Valley's early development.

## • Policy 11-11.5: Connecting Warm Springs to Central Fremont

Enhance linkages between Warm Springs and Central Fremont through road improvements, pedestrian and bicycle improvements, and support for better transit service to and from the City Center.

## • Policy 11-11.6: Public and Quasi-Public Facilities

Provide additional public facilities in the Warm Springs area to address existing deficiencies, respond to projected needs, and create a stronger sense of community.

### > Implementation 11-11.6.A: Warm Springs Senior Center

Identify a site and construct and operate a new senior center in the Warm Springs Community Plan Area, as available funding allows.

### > Implementation 11-11.6.B: Public Facilities West of Warm Springs Boulevard

Where compatible with surrounding industrial uses and activities, consider allowing a limited range of additional public and quasi-public facilities in the area between Warm Springs Boulevard and the Union Pacific Railroad/BART Corridor. Uses which serve sensitive populations (such as child care centers) would be excluded.

This action could help create a stronger sense of community within Warm Springs, and provide additional services for Warm Springs residents. The area already includes several technical schools and offices, and could potentially support similar uses, provided compatibility with nearby industrial uses is ensured.

### • Policy 11-11.7: Land Use Compatibility

Continue to regulate and monitor industrial activities west of Warm Springs Boulevard to avoid and mitigate the potential for land use conflicts and/or safety hazards in the residential areas east of Warm Springs Boulevard.

### • Policy 11-11.8: Interstate 680

Work with Caltrans to reduce noise and visual impacts associated with Interstate 680 on Warm Springs residential neighborhoods.

The natural grade in Warm Springs results in I-680 being slightly elevated above the adjacent neighborhoods to the west. This gives the freeway a visible presence in parts of Warm Springs and creates relatively high noise levels. Ongoing efforts should be made to mitigate potential impacts on nearby homes.

### • Policy 11-11.9: Hillside Areas

Enforce the provisions of Measure A and Measure T for land use and development decisions in the portion of the Warm Springs area above Interstate 680. The Hill Area Community Plan should be consulted for additional policies applying to this area.

General Plan Map designations for the Warm Springs Community Plan Area are shown in Diagram 11-12.

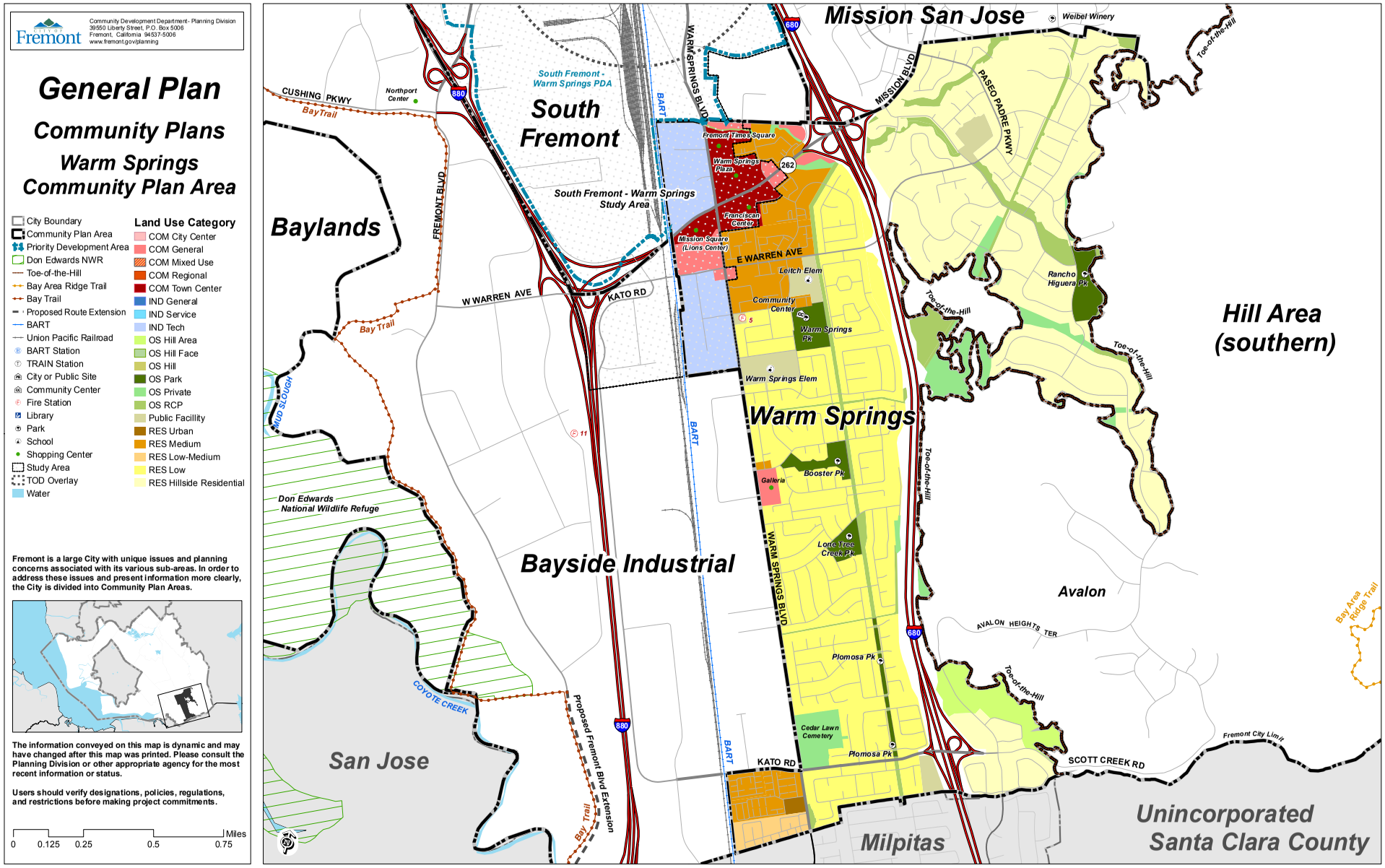


Diagram 11-12 Warm Springs Community Plan Area



This is a reduced image. Please see the color full-size maps available at the Fremont Planning Division or online at www.fremont.gov/planning

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