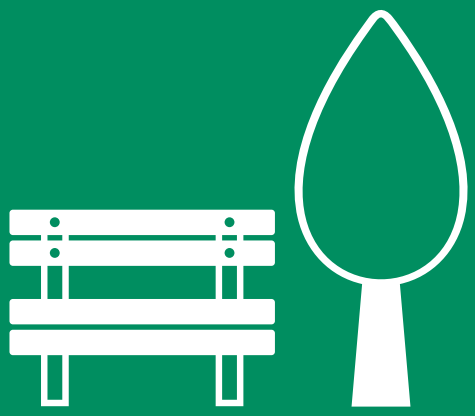

Community Character

Chapter 4

City of Fremont General Plan

Adopted December 2011

CITY OF Fremont

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Introduction

Community character refers to the natural and built features that shape a city's identity. In Fremont, that character is varied and diverse, reflecting the City's geography, history, architecture, and natural setting. The City has evolved over the last 50 years from a collection of small towns and farms to one of the Bay Area's largest and most diverse communities. Its identity has been shaped in ways its founders could not possibly have imagined—by technology, by cultural and demographic shifts, and by changes in the way its residents live, work, play, and travel. Fremont's character is still evolving today—creating opportunities to further shape its appearance and identity in the coming years.

The purpose of this Element is to provide an overall policy framework for the continued design improvement and evolution of the City. The Community Character Element focuses on the ways in which Fremont's buildings, streets, and open spaces work together to define the City's sense of place. The presence—or absence—of a sense of place affects the lives of those who live and work here on many levels. A strong community identity can build civic pride, make the City more economically competitive, help attain sustainability goals, and ultimately improve the quality of life. As Fremont aspires to strengthen its historic town centers and create dynamic new urban places, it has an opportunity to achieve all of these outcomes, making the City a better place.

Fremont's large size, coupled with the particular time period during which most of the city was developed, creates unique urban design challenges. The City epitomizes many of the best aspects of suburban living—convenience, easy auto access, low density, and open space—but these same qualities make it harder to define a unique or cohesive identity. In fact, Fremont has many identities. The challenge is to define a stronger image for the City as a whole while retaining the individuality and special qualities of its centers and neighborhoods.

The General Plan supports the concept of becoming "strategically urban." This philosophy will impact different parts of the city in different ways. Most neighborhoods will continue to evolve slowly and incrementally.

Other areas will change more dramatically, particularly the Priority Development Areas in the City Center, near BART, along major transit corridors, and in the study areas or areas of interest identified in the Land Use Element. A stronger policy foundation is needed to ensure that these areas

Music Pavilion, Central Park

Public Art in Fremont

Niles Streetscape

ENVISION FREMONT BOULEVARD

Many of the concepts in this element, particularly those related to corridors and centers, originated as part of a community design workshop entitled "Envision Fremont Boulevard".

The event included visits to several locations on Fremont Boulevard, followed by design professional-led discussions and visioning. This element is another example of community influence on the General Plan.

are developed with memorable buildings, high-quality architecture, and beautiful public spaces. The policies in this Element will preserve the best qualities of Fremont while helping to create new places that will reshape the city for future generations.

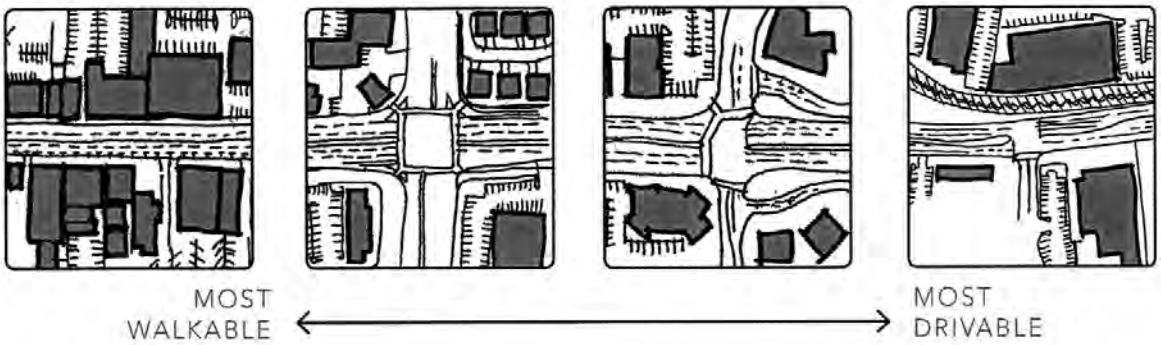
Community Character is not a State-required element of the General Plan. However, policies on this topic are particularly important to achieve Fremont's vision for its future. The Element addresses six key topics:

- City Form and Identity
- Sustainable Design and Construction
- Building Design and Site Planning
- Public Space
- City Beautiful
- Historic and Cultural Resources

The policies apply broadly to all geographic areas of the City, with general references to neighborhoods, centers, corridors, and open spaces. Policies that apply to specifically named places, streets, and buildings are generally found in the Community Plan Element or under separate area plans or specific plans. This Element also includes a Place-Type Design Manual which is meant to be a tool-kit for design solutions when reviewing development proposals in the City.

Diagram 4-1 indicates the regional context for the City by using an oblique aerial perspective (e.g., a "birds-eye" view). The diagram illustrates the City's position on the broad plain between the bay and the hills and provides an overview of major landscape features.

Development Strategies for a Range of Typical Patterns on Arterial Streets



Excerpt from *Envision Fremont Boulevard,* Field Paoli, 2008

Transect Based Approach

The transect based approach to planning and design is based on a series of habitats or "ecozones" that are placed on a continuum from rural to suburban to urban core. The zones are distinguished by varying density and character of the built and natural environment. Development in each zone is regulated by design standards for building setbacks, height, scale, as well as parking locations, streetscape design and relationship to public spaces. Regulation of specific uses is limited, primarily to encourage mixed uses and reduce the need for vehicle travel

Fremont's landscape and position between the Hills and Baylands lends itself to a transect based approach for development regulation. Both these areas contain rural ecozones and transition to suburban and eventually urban zones that are denser in nature. As the City moves forward, infill development can be evaluated using this approach rather than the more traditional zoning approach.

THE TRANSECT CONCEPT

Defines a series of neighborhoods throughout a city,

Illustrates the transition from rural to suburban to urban,

Incorporates a variety of uses into one neighborhood,

Focuses on massing, form, and scale as opposed to land use.

Combined uses reduce Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT) by increasing options,

Highest intensity in core then intensity decreases moving outward.

Transect Diagram
Source: Duany Plater-Zyberk & Company

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General Plan

Community Character

City Perspective

This is an oblique view of the Tri-City area, generated from USGS Digital Elevation Model data and Fremont GIS data, looking northwest from the southern Fremont-Milpitas border.

Fremont is largely defined by its open space frame, including the Fremont hills to the east, the baylands to the west (Don Edwards National Wildlife Refuge) and open space to the northwest.

Its overall position within the urban context of the Bay Area is defined by adjacent communities; Union City to the north, Milpitas to the south, and Newark to the west.

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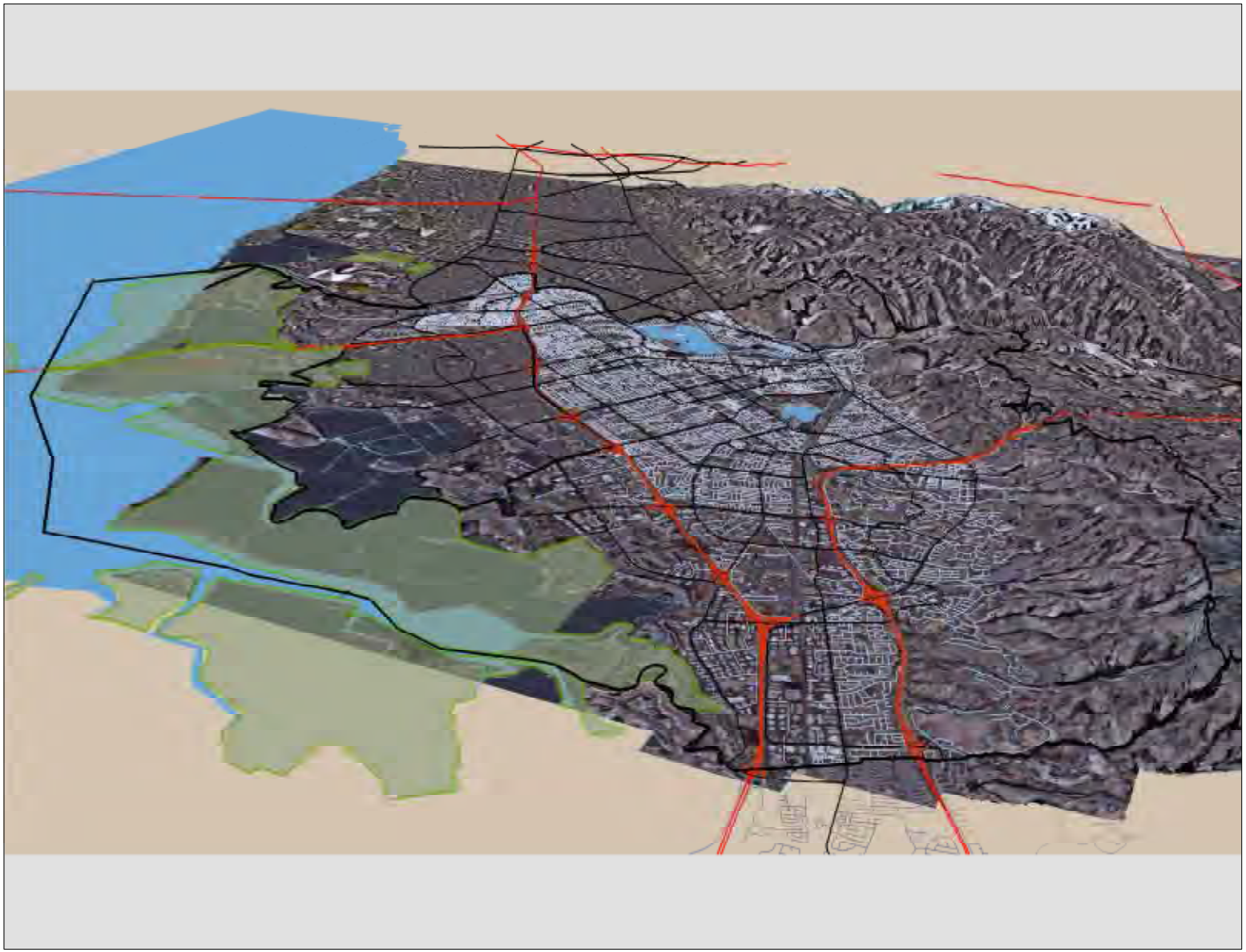

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Diagram 4-1 City Perspective

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Community Design

Community Character is about design, aesthetics and place-making. The first two goals of the Community Character Element focus broadly on Fremont's identity and environmental sustainability while the next four goals focus on its visual and aesthetic qualities. The goals seek to improve the quality of architecture and site planning in the City, creating great places. While Fremont has many individual examples of good architecture, it also has examples of buildings that have not stood the test of time. This Element strives for a more cohesive design vision for the City. It emphasizes the notion that new development should be compatible and respectful of the environment without compromising the capacity for innovation, urbanism, and cutting-edge design.

The Community Character Element pays particular attention to the design of public space, also referred to as Fremont's "public realm." The public realm includes not only the design of municipal buildings, schools, and parks—but also streets, sidewalks, infrastructure, and other public spaces. Too often, the design of secondary public spaces like medians, planting strips, and sidewalks has been treated as an afterthought. This must change in the future, as the importance of these spaces in defining Fremont's sense of place and visual quality is more fully appreciated.

A host of other topics also affect the visual quality of the City. These include the regulation and control of signs and fences, provisions for street trees and landscaping, the design of utilities, public art, graffiti abatement and code enforcement, public views, buffering of unsightly uses, the design and placement of sound walls, and more. At first glance, these topics may seem unrelated to one another. But they all influence the way people perceive Fremont and "understand" the City. This Element includes policies and actions that provide direction on these topics with the aim of making Fremont a more beautiful city.

Mission San Jose Streetscape

Public Plaza

Centerville Train Depot

Bill Ball Plaza

Historic Preservation and Community Character

The Community Character Element includes a section on Historic Preservation. Although Fremont is a relatively young city, it has a rich human history dating back thousands of years. The City has been home to indigenous Native Americans, early European settlers and missionaries, post-Gold Rush era American settlers and farmers, and 20th Century innovators in the film industry and technology. Past inhabitants have left a legacy of structures, sites, and places that give context to contemporary Fremont, connect residents to their histories, and help influence the City's character and identity.

Fremont places enormous value on its historic and cultural heritage and established policies ensure that this heritage is preserved. The City has worked proactively to identify, preserve, and maintain its historic resources. These resources provide the community with a sense of permanence that fosters civic pride and stewardship. Cities throughout the country have discovered the value of historic resources as a way to revitalize neighborhood commercial districts, promote tourism, educate residents about local history, and enhance their communities.

The City of Fremont has a local historic register for use in preservation planning, education, and implementation. The list is officially adopted by the City Council and contains 153 listed resources as of 2010. Some of the sites are also on the National Register of Historic Places and/or the California Register of Historic Resources. The City also contains potential register resources that may be identified as future additions to the Register.

Community Character Profile

The Elements of Fremont's Form

Fremont occupies a picturesque setting between the East Bay Hills and San Francisco Bay, with Mission Peak providing a distinctive natural landmark from many vantage points. The hills and Bay define an open space "frame" that give identity and form to the City. Within this frame, there are six components that shape the City's identity. These components also provide the basis for the Land Use chapter of the General Plan, and are referenced throughout this document. They include:

Niles Town Center

Fremont Boulevard Corridor

Community Plan Areas

Fremont is a large city with unique issues and planning concerns associated with its various subareas. The City has historically been divided into geographic planning areas to address these challenges and present this information more clearly. The City has created various types of planning documents associated with these areas since adoption of the last General Plan in 1991. This General Plan seeks to further establish and refine the planning areas into Community Plan Areas for long-term planning of specific areas within the City. See the Community Plan Element for more detail about these areas.

Centers

Centers form the heart of Fremont's neighborhoods, and in a few cases may be neighborhoods in their own right. They are the focus for shopping, dining, entertainment, and civic activities. They include "City Center" which functions as Fremont's downtown, "Town Centers" which are the historic settlements that pre-date incorporation, regional centers and neighborhood shopping centers.

Corridors

Perhaps no other feature of the City defines public perception and identity as strongly as corridors do through their streetscape features and surrounding built environment. The City is connected by transportation corridors that link Fremont's neighborhoods and centers to one another and to the region around them. They impart a visual image of Fremont to hundreds of thousands of travelers every day. Fremont's corridors include landscaped parkways, arterials lined with shopping centers and commercial buildings, major thoroughfares lined with mostly residential uses, and other street environments.

Landscaped Residential Street

Ardenwood Technology Park

Lake Elizabeth and Mission Peak

Neighborhoods

Fremont's neighborhoods are described in the Land Use Element as the "building blocks" of the community. They typically contain a mix of housing types and densities, streets of varying functions and volumes, and public uses such as schools and parks. They are the basic physical unit around which life in Fremont is organized.

Employment Districts

Fremont is one of the largest employment centers in the Bay Area. Employment districts encompass more than 3,000 acres of mostly low-scale business parks, with a mix of offices, warehouses, light and heavy manufacturing, and commercial service uses. The appearance of employment districts not only affects the image of the City; it can ultimately influence worker satisfaction, productivity, and economic success.

Open Space

The other key element of the City's urban form is open space. Fremont's identity is shaped by the wetlands, marshes and salt ponds of San Francisco Bay on the west and the Hills to the east. Alameda Creek and Quarry Lakes provide a partial open space buffer to the north. Within this open space frame are numerous parks and green spaces that provide visual relief and interest. Open space not only defines the City's edges, it also provides a visual connection to nature and enhances the overall aesthetic of the City.

City Form

The six features listed here — Community Plan Areas, Centers, Corridors, Neighborhoods, Employment Districts and Open Space — occur throughout the City, in a variety of configurations and settings. Table 4-1 identifies how they are geographically distributed across the city. The table divides Fremont into 11 distinct Community Plan Areas. Most of the Community Plan Areas include one or more neighborhood centers. Some are predominantly open space or employment districts. The City's corridors cross through the different Community Plan Areas, connecting neighborhoods to one another and contributing to the City's image as a single, large city comprised of several districts.

Table 4-1
Fremont's City Form

City Framework	Community Plan Area (*)	City or Town Centers	Neighborhoods	Corridors
Urban Frame	Central	City Center	Downtown, The Hub, Health Care District, Cherry/Guardino, Parkmont	Mowry Ave, Paseo Padre Pkwy, Walnut Ave, Fremont Blvd, Stevenson Blvd, Capitol Ave, Liberty St, State St
	Centerville	Centerville	Centerville, Glenmoor, Cabrillo, Brookvale	Fremont Blvd, Peralta Blvd, Thornton Ave, Central Ave,
	Irvington	Irvington	Irvington, Grimmer, Blacow, Sundale, South Sundale, 28 Palms	Fremont Blvd, Washington Blvd, Bay St, Irvington Ave, Driscoll Rd
	Mission San Jose	Mission San Jose	Mission Hills, Mission San Jose, Mission Valley, Kimber/Gomes, Weibel, Cameron Hills	Mission Blvd, Washington Blvd
	Niles	Niles	Niles, Vallejo Mills, Canyon Heights, Niles Crest	Niles Blvd, Mission Blvd
	Warm Springs	Warm Springs	Avalon, Vineyards, Warm Springs	Warm Springs Blvd, Mission Blvd, Warren Ave
	North Fremont		Ardenwood, Lakes and Birds, Northgate, Decoto	Ardenwood Blvd, Paseo Padre Pkwy, Fremont Blvd
	South Fremont		Warm Springs/South Fremont BART Station Area	Warm Springs Blvd, Osgood Rd, Grimmer Blvd, Fremont Blvd
	Bayside Industrial		Creekside, Baylands, Pacific Commons, East Industrial,	Fremont Blvd, Cushing Pkwy, Warren Ave, Boyce Rd, Auto Mall Pkwy
Open Space Frame	Baylands		Northern Baylands including Coyote Hills Regional Park, Southern Baylands	
	Hill Area		Northern Hill Area, Central Hill Area, Southern Hill Area	

Source: City of Fremont, 2010
(*) The Community Plan Element of the General Plan includes place-specific policies for these areas.
Most of the Planning Areas also have smaller neighborhood centers, and a few have large regional centers.

THE PLACE TYPE DESIGN MANUAL

The final section of the Community Character Element is a "Place Type Design Manual" which includes urban design principles for future development. Using a combination of text and illustrations, the Manual provides broad design guidelines for building heights, façade design, location of building entries and signage, open space, parking, land uses, and streetscape features. The focus is on Centers and Corridors, since these are the places where most of the City's future growth will occur. Among all the places and spaces in the City, Centers and Corridors offer the greatest potential for improvement and the greatest opportunities to redefine the city.

The Place Type Manual identifies four different types of Centers:

- **City Center**, which is the 350-acre mixed use district at the heart of the city
- **Town Centers**, which include the historic centers of Centerville, Irvington, Mission San Jose, Niles, and Warm Springs
- **Neighborhood Centers**, which include the many smaller shopping areas and commercial districts around the city
- **Regional Centers**, which apply to large-scale shopping or office areas such as Pacific Commons and the Warm Springs/South Fremont BART Station area

The Place Type Manual also identifies four types of Corridors:

- **Urban Corridors**, which are streets planned for higher density, pedestrian-oriented mixed use development and multi-modal transportation
- **Suburban Corridors**, which will continue to support auto-oriented development, but still can become more pedestrian-friendly
- **Landscape Corridors**, which are streets that carry traffic along attractive, well landscaped parkways or avenues with limited ingress and egress
- **Main Street Corridors**, which are the historic streets in Fremont's Town Centers, and which typically have smaller-scale, fine-grained development patterns

The Place Type Design Manual should be consulted when developing streetscape plans and design guidelines for the City. The Manual provides a vision for how the Center and Corridor networks should evolve in the future, and where different forms of development or transportation improvements are appropriate. The Manual should be used in combination with policies in the Land Use and Mobility Elements, the General Plan Map, and more detailed design guidelines or standards for individual districts of the City.

Goals, Policies, and Implementing Actions

GOAL 4-1: City Form and Identity

A stronger, more memorable civic identity, shaped by well-kept neighborhoods, distinctive centers and work places, attractive transportation corridors, high-quality public spaces, and the scenic natural backdrop of Fremont's hills and shoreline

This goal seeks to enhance and strengthen the identity of the City by making Fremont a "strategically urban" city. Its policies parallel the "City Form and Structure" section of the Land Use Element and the "Complete Streets" section of the Mobility Element. Together, the goals and policies in these three elements aim to strengthen Fremont's urban form through development and design criteria.

At approximately 90 square miles, Fremont is a large city with many distinct areas. Various centers and neighborhoods, many with recognizable defining features, give parts of the City a strong sense of character. This quality is not shared by all places, however. The City as a whole still lacks a well-defined "center" or downtown. The policies below strive to strengthen the sense of place that characterizes Fremont's original towns as well as the individual neighborhoods that make up the City. The policies also aim to create greater cohesion between these places through unifying design features, clear gateways and edges, and preservation of visual landmarks.

Innovative design and development, coupled with the conservation of heritage resources, are fundamental to this goal. Development projects should be thoughtfully conceived and carefully reviewed to ensure that they contribute to the City's urban design vision and positively shape the image of the City. The overall objective is to establish a more well-defined urban pattern through infill development, redevelopment, and public improvements. Fremont's vision includes a lively city center that serves as a gathering place for all residents, thriving town centers that retain their historical fabric while expressing the City's cultural diversity, and memorable neighborhoods with identities shaped by architecture, landscapes, and open space.

Transect to Shape City Form
The pictures and illustrations in this column depict a series of places from different perspectives. From top to bottom: A well defined center; a pedestrian friendly corridor; building massing and scale; and building form in plan view. Utilization of the Transect approach in conjunction with the Place Type Design Manual will help Fremont achieve its vision to become strategically more urban.

COMMUNITY PLAN AREAS

The Community Plan Areas include:

- Baylands
- Bayside Industrial
- Central
- Centerville
- Hill Area
- Irvington
- Mission San Jose
- Niles
- North Fremont
- South Fremont
- Warm Springs

COMMUNITY CHARACTER AND LAND USE

Policies 4-1.2 through 4-1.7 are the Community Character "counterparts" to policies in the Land Use Element addressing the elements of City Form

See Land Use Policy 2-1.4 which recognizes neighborhoods as the building blocks of the community, and Goal 2-3 for policies on land use issues in neighborhoods.

• Policy 4-1.1: Elements of City Form

Recognize the basic elements of city form— community plan areas, neighborhoods, centers, corridors, employment districts, and open spaces—as the features that contribute to and define Fremont's sense of place. Ensure that land use and transportation decisions, including design review, zoning, capital improvements, and development approvals, improve the visual qualities of these features and strengthen their identity as distinct places.

> Implementation 4-1.1.A: Community Plan Areas

The General Plan also includes a Community Plan Element with more focused policies for subareas within the City. The Community Character Element recognizes that it is difficult to prescribe urban design policies for the entire city, given Fremont's geography. The Community Character Element and its Place Type Manual focus on the shared principles that should guide the planning and design of all development, regardless of location. The Community Plan Element provides an opportunity to tailor these policies to specific places, recognizing their architectural character and visual qualities, as well as the priorities expressed by each Community Plan Area.

Diagram 4-2 shows the Community Plan Areas. These areas are described in more detail in the Community Plan Element of the General Plan.

• Policy 4-1.2: Neighborhoods

Maintain and enhance Fremont's identity as a city of neighborhoods. Planning and design decisions should define neighborhood edges and gateways, build neighborhood pride and recognition, and strengthen the physical qualities that make each neighborhood distinctive. The intent is to preserve the desirable qualities of each neighborhood while allowing them to evolve, grow, and adapt over time.

In 2002–2003, the City engaged residents in an effort to identify and name Fremont's major neighborhoods. Diagram 4-3 shows the results: 28 distinct neighborhoods. Many of these areas are comprised of individual subdivisions that identify as neighborhoods in their own right. The map provides a sense of how Fremont's residential areas are spatially organized and how they relate to one another. Strengthening the identity of each area through signage, streetscape improvements, public investments, and other means can help people develop a clearer understanding of the city's form. This can foster civic engagement and stewardship, and contribute to a sense of community. Also, see Land Use Goal 2-3 and related policies and implementing actions.

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General Plan

Community Character

Community Plan Areas

City Boundary

Community Plan Areas

Community Plan Area	Acres*	Square Miles*
Baylands	20,676	32.31
Bayside Industrial	4,194	6.55
Centerville	3,960	6.19
Central	2,247	3.51
Hill Area (central)	3,218	5.03
Hill Area (northern)	1,608	2.51
Hill Area (southern)	6,073	9.49
Irvington	3,098	4.84
Mission San Jose	4,521	7.06
Niles	1,385	2.16
North Fremont	2,876	4.49
South Fremont	1,467	2.29
Warm Springs	1,687	2.64
Total	*57,009*	*89.07*

* Gross Area includes Right-of-Way, Channels, Bay Water

Fremont is a large City with unique issues and planning concerns associated with its various sub-areas. In order to address these issues and present information more clearly, the City is divided into Community Plan Areas.

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Users should verify designations, policies, regulations, and restrictions before making project commitments.

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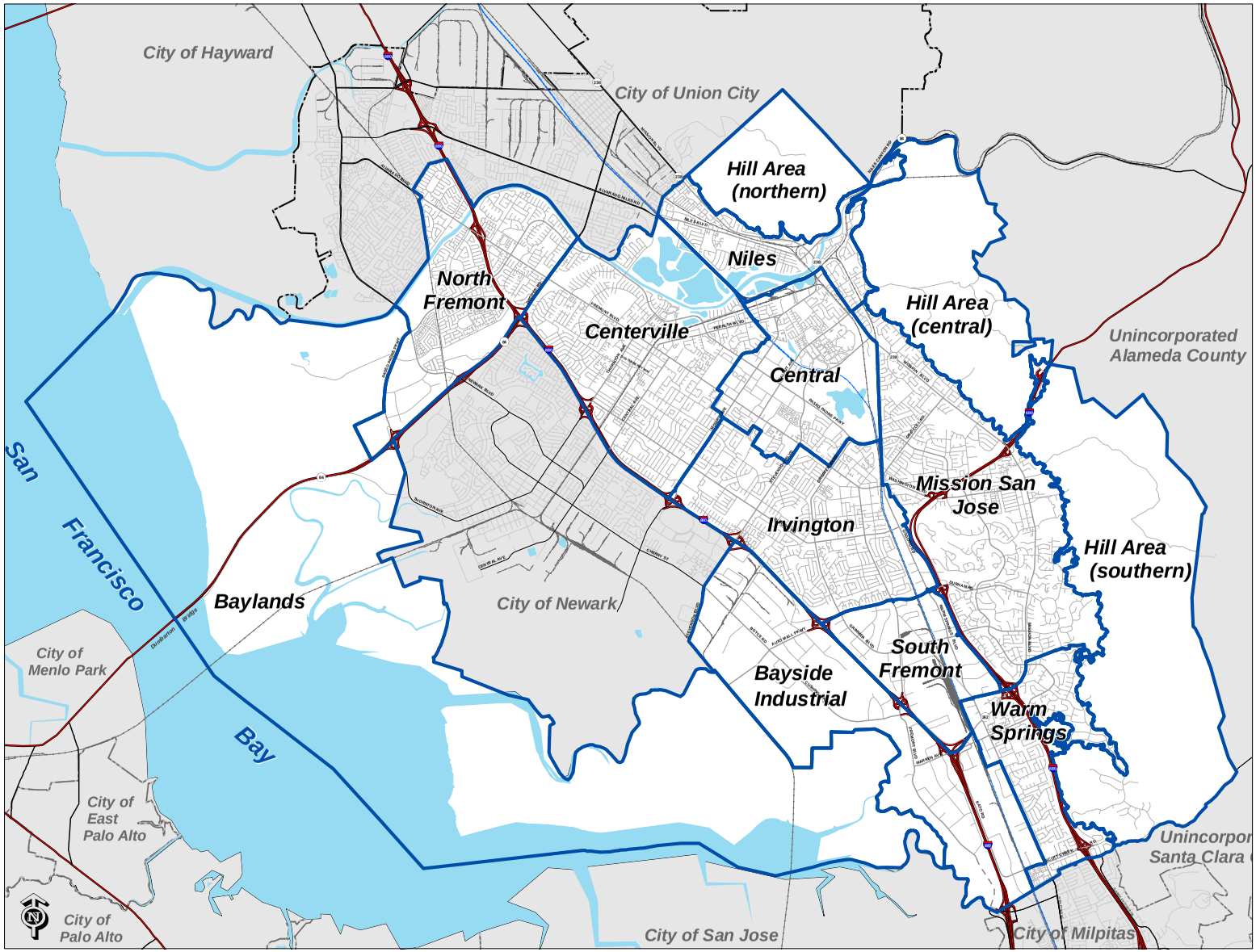

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Diagram 4-2 Community Plan Areas

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General Plan

Community Character

City Neighborhoods

City Boundary

Neighborhood Boundary

Index No.	Neighborhood
1	28 Palms
2	Ardenwood
3	Bayside
4	Blacow
5	Brookvale
6	Cabrillo
7	Cameron Hills
8	Canyon Heights/Vallejo Mills/Niles Crest
9	Centerville
10	Central/Downtown
11	Cherry/Guardino
12	East Industrial
13	Glenmoor
14	Grimmer
15	Irvington
16	Kimber/Gomes
17	Lakes and Birds
18	Mission Hills
19	Mission San Jose
20	Mission Valley
21	Niles
22	Northgate
23	Parkmont
24	South Sundale
25	Sundale
26	Vineyards/Avalon
27	Warm Springs
28	Weibel

Neighborhoods are illustrated on this Diagram. Refer to the General Plan text, Concept Plans, Specific Plans, and/or Design Guidelines for relevant policies and provisions.

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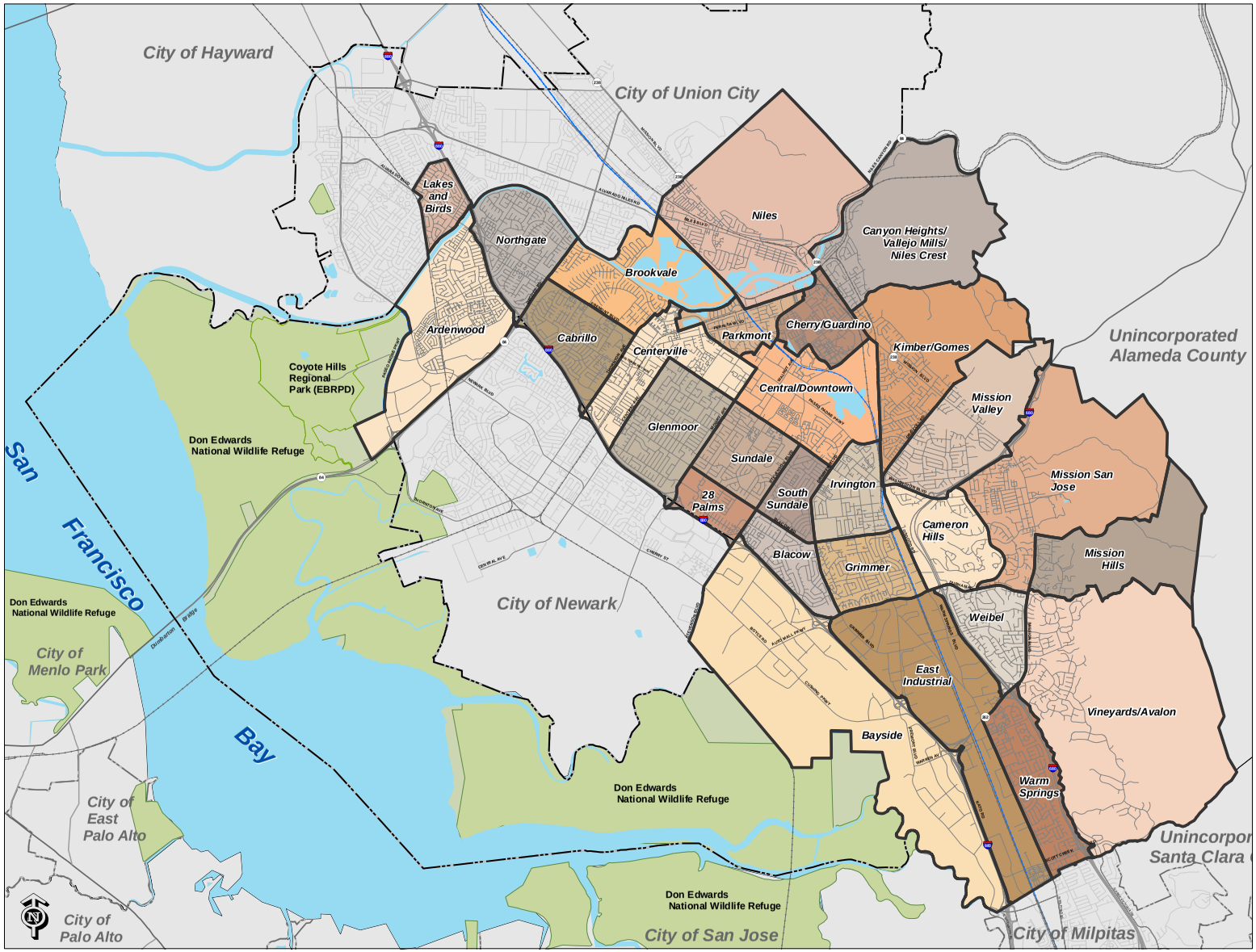

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Diagram 4-3 City Neighborhoods

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• Policy 4-1.3: Centers

Develop Fremont's City Center and five Town Centers as focal points and destinations for the neighborhoods around them. Centers provide focal points for the City and its neighborhoods. Each of these areas should be a memorable place, imparting a positive impression shaped by high-quality architecture, dynamic and thoughtfully-designed public spaces, and a street environment that is comfortable and welcoming to pedestrians.

"City Center" was conceived at the time of Fremont's incorporation and continues to evolve as a major regional activity hub. The five Town Centers were the focal points of the five "districts" that originally formed Fremont. Four of the districts still contain historic commercial areas today and the fifth has the potential to become a more distinct center in the future.

Fremont also has a variety of neighborhood and regional shopping centers which have developed to serve its growing population. These auto-oriented shopping areas are typically located along major thoroughfares, with a design emphasis on vehicle access and visibility. Most are comprised of single-story multi-tenant buildings surrounded by large parking lots. Fremont's regional shopping centers are fewer in number but larger in scale.

As Fremont matures, some of its neighborhood centers may transition to new uses. Others may retain their retail function but will become more pedestrian-oriented places, with better linkages to the residential areas around them. High-quality urban and architectural design will be required, with an emphasis on making centers more compact and walkable. City streetscape improvements will help reinforce and facilitate this transformation. Diagram 4-4 shows the location of Fremont's Centers.

See Land Use Policy 2-1.5 and 2-1.6 on the role of the City Center and Town Centers in shaping Fremont's future and Goal 2-4 for policies on land use issues in centers. See also Economic Development Policies 6-2.6 and 6-2.7.

> Implementation 4-1.3.A: Place Type Design Manual: Centers

Utilize the Place Type Design Manual in this Element to evaluate new development and redevelopment within the City's centers. Consult the Manual when preparing design guidelines for centers throughout the city.

Evolution of a Center: Bay Street in Irvington

Bay Street wtih Streetscape Improvements

Bay Street with Streetscape and Building Improvements

Landscaped Corridor

Main Street Corridor

Transit Corridor

The Place Type Design Manual may be found at the end of this chapter. It includes general principles for the design of City, Town, Neighborhood, and Regional Centers.

• Policy 4-1.4: Corridors

Utilize Fremont's major transportation corridors to connect the city, provide a sense of arrival and departure when traveling through different parts of Fremont, and create a positive impression of Fremont for persons using all modes of travel through the city. The planning and design of corridors should reflect their varied functions and the desire to transform Fremont into a less auto-oriented, more pedestrian-friendly community.

Corridors function as the gateways to the City and its business districts. They often consist of high-volume traffic routes lined with auto-oriented uses, signage, parking lots, and landscaping. Fremont's corridors also include hundreds of residential, commercial, industrial, and public properties. Future development along corridors should recognize the importance of these streets in defining Fremont's image. A greater effort will be made to make corridors more pedestrian-friendly, de-emphasize "front yard" parking, and improve overall appearance. Diagram 4-5 illustrates the location of the City's major corridors.

See Land Use Policies 2-1.7 and 2-1.9 on the role of corridors in supporting transit-oriented and mixed use development and Goal 2-4 for policies on land use issues along corridors. See Mobility Policy 3-1.1 regarding complete streets criteria for corridors.

> Implementation 4-1.4.A: Place Type Design Manual: Corridors

Utilize the Place Type Design Manual in this Element to evaluate new development and redevelopment along the City's corridors. Consult the Manual when preparing design guidelines for corridors throughout the city.

The Place Type Design Manual is located at the end of this chapter. It includes general principles for the design of Suburban, Landscaped, Urban, and Main Street corridors.

> Implementation 4-1.4.B: Fremont Boulevard Corridor

Promote Fremont Boulevard's role as Fremont's "Main Street." Encourage its development as a major transit corridor with distinct areas of different design character. Future development on the corridor should follow the principles in the "Envision Fremont Boulevard Design Study" and should strive to: (a) make the Boulevard a destination; (b) improve transit and non-auto modes of travel; and (c) improve the streetscape through consistent design elements such as artwork, signage, and landscaping.

> Implementation 4-1.4.C: Pedestrian Friendly Corridors

Require the design of new or refurbished development to incorporate features which support the City's goal of being less auto-oriented along corridors. This should include building frontages oriented toward sidewalks, streets or public plazas; and signage scaled for pedestrians rather than fast-moving vehicles.

The Place Type Design Manual and diagrams in this Element should be used as a benchmark for determining those areas where this policy is most applicable. Infill development along the corridors should support the City's goals of growing more compactly, making more efficient use of land, developing at densities that can sustain transit use, and encouraging bicycle and pedestrian use. Moreover, infill development on corridors should establish stronger connections between adjacent parcels, and should avoid the situation where each development on a corridor is treated as an "island" unrelated to nearby uses.

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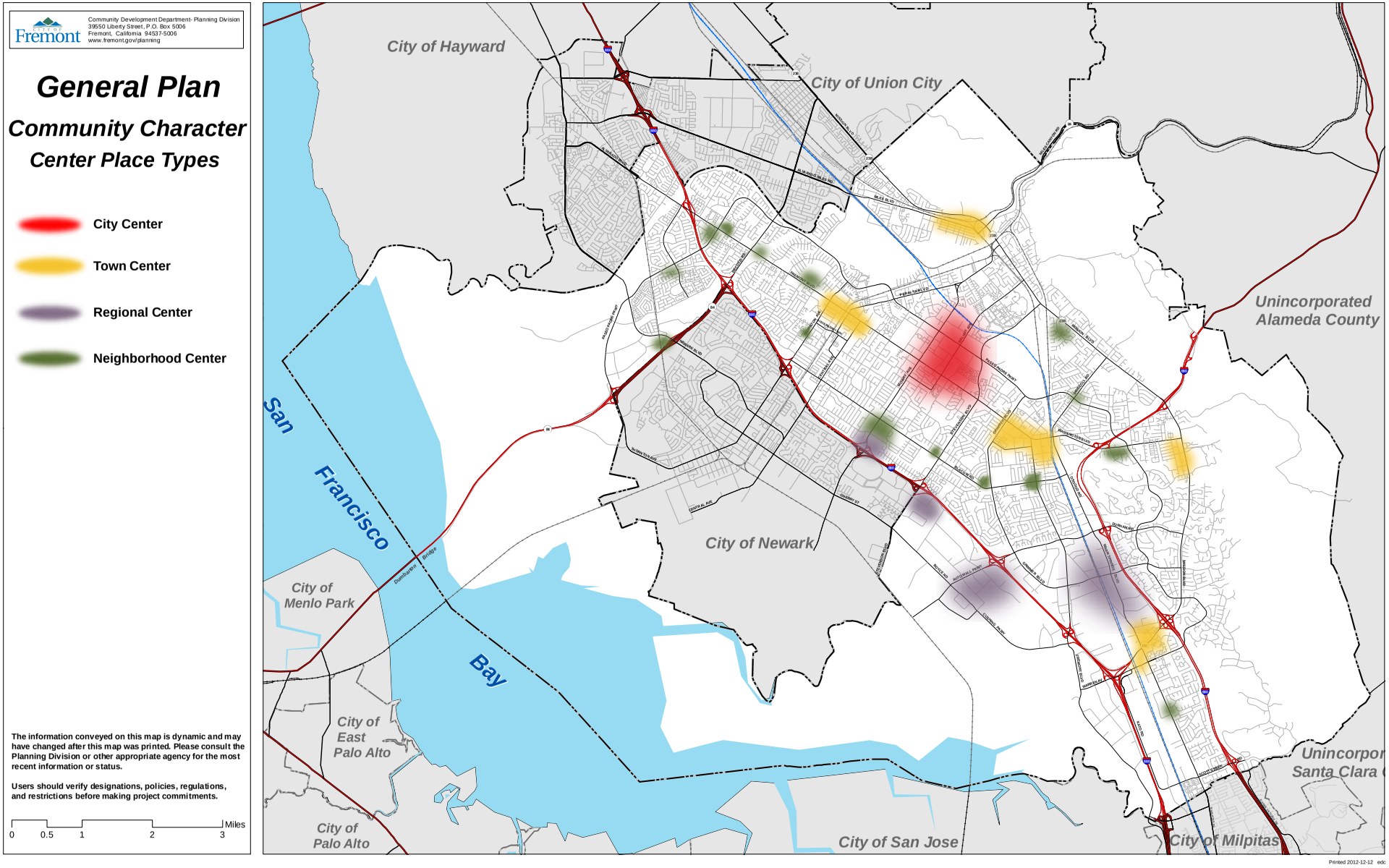

Diagram 4-4 Center Place Types

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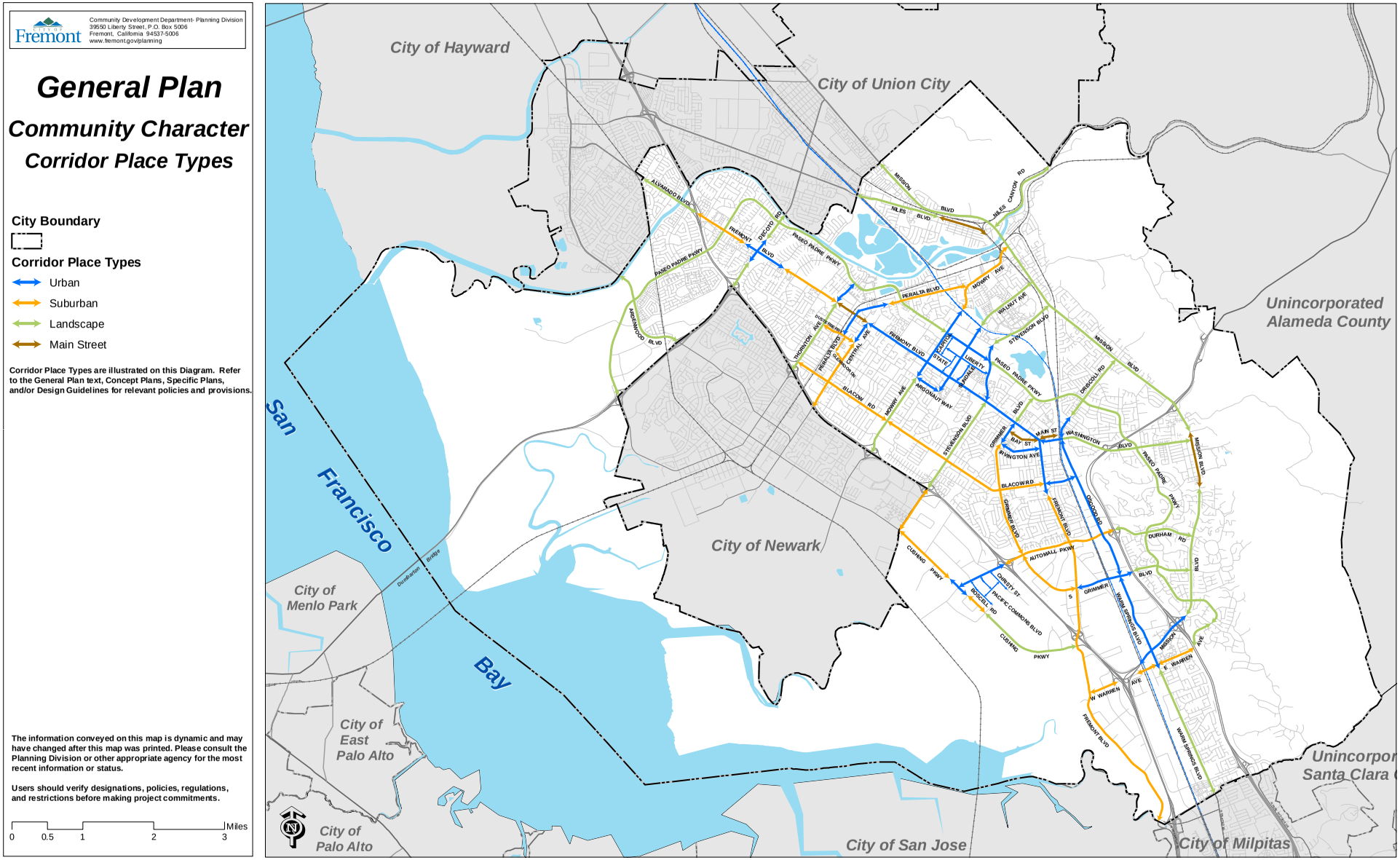

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Diagram 4-5 Corridor Place Types

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
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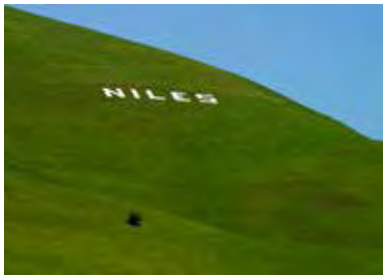
• Policy 4-1.5: Employment Districts

Shape Fremont's employment districts into model workplaces for the 21st Century. The character of the City's workplaces should contribute to Fremont's economic development objectives, enhance the overall image of the City, and reflect the innovative and progressive technology found in Silicon Valley. Workplaces should be both attractive and functional.

The design and character of the City's employment districts are another critical component of the City's built environment. The proximity of Silicon Valley has influenced the business composition of Fremont's workplaces. Its employment districts have developed with low-scale office, warehouse, and manufacturing facilities. Future office development will be focused in the City Center and in the South Fremont Community Plan Area near the Warm Springs / South Fremont BART Sation while future industrial and technology uses will be focused in the North Fremont, Bayside Industrial and South Fremont Community Plan Areas. The identity of these areas can be strengthened through design guidelines, appropriate infill development, streetscape improvements, signage, buffering and screening requirements, and continued investment in the existing building stock. While these areas function primarily as job centers, it is still important to provide attractive work environments through quality urban and architectural design reflective of the City's desired image.

One of Fremont's Employment Districts

Interface between Urban Frame and Open Space Frame



Niles Hillside Sign

• Policy 4-1.6: Open Space Frame

Protect Fremont's hills and baylands as an open space "frame" that gives definition to the City and shapes its image and identity.

See also Land Use Policy 2-1.11 on focusing new development on infill sites rather than expanding the City's urban footprint.

> Implementation 4-1.6.A: Respecting Natural Terrain and Landform

Accentuate Fremont's natural features from public spaces through design and development. Development should be sited and designed to retain public views of hillsides and ridgelines, enhance vistas to natural landmarks and showcase important natural resources such as creeks and the baylands.

Hillside protection has been a priority in Fremont for several decades. The City also recognizes the importance of its baylands and creeks as visual resources. These features should be protected by retaining them as open space.

Center Theater

Irvington Monument

MIssion San Jose

• Policy 4-1.7: Strengthen Identity Through Planning

Conduct planning for Community Plan Areas of Fremont as a way to strengthen the sense of place and identity of various parts of the city and recognize the different histories and physical features of the communities that make up Fremont. Where appropriate, community plans should include design guidelines that express the desired qualities of centers, corridors, and neighborhoods.

> Implementation 4-1.7.A: Design Review/Community Plans

Use the design review process and Community Plans to ensure that development is consistent with the desired character of an area, as expressed through design guidelines and/or a Community Plan.

• Policy 4-1.8: Landmarks

Maintain recognizable built or natural landmarks that create a reference point or means of orientation within the City, and create a positive identity for an area or for the City as a whole.

In the context of this policy, "landmarks" refers not to historic buildings but to the visual features and cues that provide orientation and context within the City.

> Implementation 4-1.8.A: Recognize and Protect Visual Landmarks

Create a list of informal City landmarks for reference. Examples include Mission Peak, the Niles hillside letters, the Niles gateway signs, the Irvington Monument, and Mission San Jose.

• Policy 4-1.9: City and Neighborhood Gateways

Improve entryways into Fremont, and into its individual neighborhoods and districts, to achieve a sense of transition and arrival.

There are two major types of gateways in Fremont. First, gateways exist at the points where major roads, freeways, and transit lines enter the city. Second, gateways exist at the entries to neighborhoods, commercial districts, historic districts, business parks, and other subareas within the city. Both types of gateways can strengthen and reinforce civic identity. Gateways are shown on Diagram 4-6, which appears in the City Beautiful section of this element. (see Goal 4-5).

> Implementation 4-1.9.A: Gateways

Private development located within gateway areas should incorporate public improvements that enhance the identity and image of the City.

> Implementation 4-1.9.B: Gateway Concept Plan

Maintain and periodically update the Gateway Concept Plan which provides guidance for the design and appearance of major gateways into Fremont. Future development within these areas should be designed in accordance with this Plan.

> Implementation 4-1.9.C: Gateways in New Development

Require new development projects to provide gateway features if their location and context warrant such inclusion.

City Gateway

Mission San Jose Gateway

Niles Gateway

GATEWAY CONCEPT PLAN

The Gateway Concept Plan was adopted in 2002. It summarizes the City of Fremont's program to improve major gateways to the community. The intent is to give the City added visibility and identity, while developing a consistent and welcoming image at various entrees into the City.

Neighborhood Barriers
Elevated Rail

Thai Buddhist Temple

Fremont Masjid

• Policy 4-1.10: Neighborhood Barriers

Seek urban design, planning, and capital improvement solutions for minimizing physical barriers that divide the community such as railroad tracks, freeways, wide arterials, and flood control channels. Ensure that land use decisions and transportation projects do not divide neighborhoods or create unnecessary barriers within established neighborhoods.

Projects that would create physical divides within or between neighborhoods are discouraged. While freeways, railroads, and similar features create clear edges and help define neighborhoods, they may also hinder the sense of unity and connectivity that Fremont desires for its future. The City encourages projects that "knit" Fremont together such as greenways and pedestrian bridges over freeways.

> Implementation 4-1.10.A: Grade Separations in Town Centers

Discourage grade separations in Town Centers and residential neighborhoods or other locations where it would divide a neighborhood.

• Policy 4-1.11: Cultural Diversity and Place

Recognize Fremont's cultural diversity as an asset that may be expressed through its community design and architecture. The City has an opportunity to strengthen its identity by creating new or reinvented places that celebrate the architectural traditions of its diverse population and international community.

This diversity is reflected in the built environment in structures such as the Thai Buddhist Temple in Niles, the Masjid Mosque on Old Canyon Road, the Sikh Temple on Gurdwara Road, and the Hindu Temple on Delaware Drive.

GOAL 4-2: Sustainable Design and Construction

A city that becomes more sustainable and walkable through community planning, design, and building.

There is a direct connection between Fremont's physical form and its desire to become a more sustainable community. For most of the 20th Century, Fremont was built and engineered to facilitate auto movement. Today, 96 percent of Fremont's households are car owners and transportation is the leading source of greenhouse gas emissions in the City. Becoming more sustainable will not only require behavioral changes, it will also require changes to the way the City and its neighborhoods are designed and constructed.

Although much of Fremont is built out, there are still opportunities for new transit-oriented neighborhoods in City Center, Irvington, Centerville, and around the Warm Springs / South Fremont BART Station. These neighborhoods will be denser, contain more mixed uses, and be more pedestrian oriented than the subdivisions of the past 50 years.

Existing neighborhoods will need to be "retrofitted" so they also are more sustainable. This will require new provisions for bicycle and pedestrian travel, maintaining a diversity of housing types, accommodating home businesses and telecommuting (to reduce commute lengths and congestion), and encouraging mixed uses (so that trips for goods and services become shorter and can be made without a car). This will help reduce vehicle miles traveled, which is a key climate action goal both in Fremont and California.

The design of the city's buildings and landscapes also has a bearing on Fremont's sustainability. Buildings consume relatively large amounts of energy and natural resources, and the transport of water and electricity is a significant emissions source. Growing "greener" will mean designing buildings to use alternative energy sources such as solar and wind, using more recycled materials, and orienting structures to maximize solar access. By switching to Bay-Friendly landscaping and reducing paved surfaces, development can also reduce potable water use and improve water quality. All of these initiatives have implications for architecture, landscape architecture, and ultimately the character of new construction.

Mixed Use Development

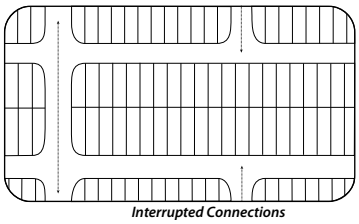
LEED Certified Fire Station

COMPLETE NEIGHBORHOODS CRITERIA

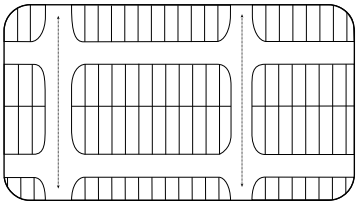
A complete neighborhood promotes livability for residents of all ages, incomes and cultural backgrounds. Complete neighborhoods include, but are not limited to:

- Mix of housing types
- Centers of activity such as parks and schools
- Access to commercial services
- Transit accessibility
- Sustainable building and landscape practices
- Tree cover, landscaping, open space
- Connected pedestrian and street networks

CONNECTIVITY



Interrupted Connections



Continuous Connections

• Policy 4-2.1: Complete Neighborhoods

Encourage walkable, connected neighborhoods with multiple land uses and housing types, rather than self-contained residential subdivisions with a single housing type. Neighborhoods should accommodate safe walking and bicycling to daily necessities, services, and transit lines.

This policy contributes to the City's sustainability efforts by encouraging neighborhoods where walking and bicycling are the preferred modes of travel for short trips. Providing goods and services within walking distance can reduce the number of auto trips a household makes, thereby curbing greenhouse gas emissions. Walkable neighborhoods can also contribute to public health, and can build a sense of community by encouraging interaction between neighbors.

> Implementation 4-2.1.A: Complete Neighborhoods Review

Review plans for new residential development in conjunction with Complete Neighborhoods criteria (see text box).

See also Land Use Policy 2-3.5 about achieving a balanced mix of uses in all neighborhoods

• Policy 4-2.2: Connectivity

Improve the ability to travel through Fremont and between Fremont's neighborhoods on foot or by bicycle. Safe, comfortable sidewalks, bike lanes, trails, and paths should be incorporated for pedestrians and cyclists so that neighborhoods are conveniently connected to nearby community facilities, services, and shopping areas.

> Implementation 4-2.2.A: Pedestrian and Bicycle Master Plan Implementation

Undertake capital improvements that make Fremont's streets safer and more convenient for walking and bicycling, consistent with the Pedestrian and Bicycle Master Plans.

Such improvements could include sidewalks, new or improved pathways that connect dead-end streets and cul-de-sacs to nearby streets or destinations, street trees and planting strips, crosswalks, traffic calming measures, and other design changes which make it easier to travel without a car. The pedestrian network in Fremont's neighborhoods should also reflect universal design principles that make the City more accessible for seniors and others with mobility limitations.

See also Mobility Element Goal 3-1 and its policies on "Complete Streets."

> Implementation 4-2.2.B: Street and Block Patterns

Create a more fine-grained pattern of streets, blocks, and parcels in Fremont, especially in the City Center. Large "superblocks" should be discouraged, since such patterns often lengthen the distance between two points and discourage pedestrian travel.

• Policy 4-2.3: Pedestrian Friendly Design

Reduce greenhouse gas emissions by encouraging, and where appropriate requiring, pedestrian-friendly design. As new projects are developed and as existing development is rehabilitated or updated, incorporate features that make it easier to travel through Fremont without a car. These features could include (but are not limited to) wider sidewalks, crosswalks or crosswalk signals, narrower streets or curb "bulb-outs" at intersections to minimize the distance a pedestrian must walk to cross a street, varied paving materials, window transparencies (to enhance the experience of walking down a street), street trees, landscaping, benches, and mid-block connections to reduce trip lengths.

Pedestrian friendly design treatments can be applied in all areas of the City, but are particularly appropriate in centers and employment districts and along corridors. The access and circulation needs of pedestrians should be a primary consideration in the design of streets, buildings, parking lots, and public spaces. Pedestrian routes should be designed to provide visual interest, safety, convenience, and comfort.

• Policy 4-2.4: Pedestrian and Bicycle Trails

Create and maintain a network of trail corridors that connect Fremont to adjacent cities, link the Hill Area to the Baylands, and provide a convenient means of non-auto travel from neighborhood to neighborhood. Trails should be designed for practical transportation across the city, and not solely for recreational use.

See the Pedestrian Master Plan, Bicycle Master Plan, Mobility Element and the Parks and Recreation Element for additional policies on trails.

> Implementation 4-2.4.A Trail Right-of-Way Dedication

Encourage property owners to dedicate right-of-way for trail access where indicated on the General Plan Recreation Trails Diagram. Require right-of-way dedication for development or improvement projects.

PRIMARY TRAIL CORRIDORS

Primary trail corridors in Fremont include

- Alameda Creek Trail
- Bay Trail
- Ridge Trail
- Union Pacific Corridor Trail
- Sabercat Trail System

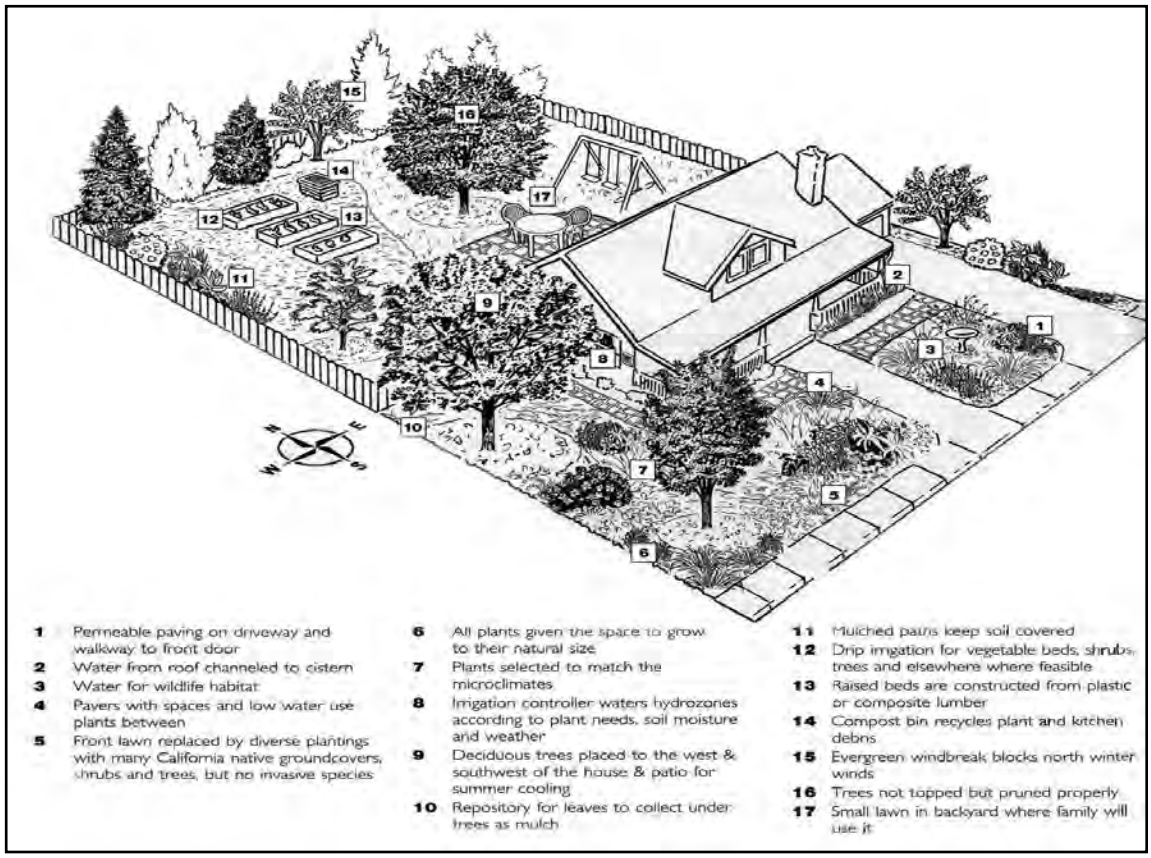
Downtown Street and Pedestrian Network

Pedestrian Oriented Center

• Policy 4-2.5: Sustainable Site Design

Encourage sustainable site design and development practices. New development should incorporate features which result in reduced natural resource consumption and mitigate potential environmental impacts. These features include:

- On-site treatment of stormwater runoff, to protect water quality in area creeks and the Bay and to recharge the aquifer
- Bay-friendly landscaping and drought-tolerant plants to reduce water use
- Building orientation to maximize solar exposure and minimize heating costs
- Use of large canopy shade trees and other shade features to minimize cooling costs
- Reduction of impervious surface area
- Phasing improvements until demand exists



Sustainable Residential Site Design
Source: Modified from Bay Friendly Landscape Guidelines, www.stopwaste.org

• Policy 4-2.6: Sustainable Building Design

Encourage new construction, additions, and remodels to incorporate sustainable building practices. Future buildings should consume less energy, water and other resources, facilitate natural ventilation and lighting, and create a healthy and safe environment for occupants.

Sustainable building design, commonly referred to as "green building" usually incorporates some or all of the following characteristics:

- Use of recycled building materials
- Energy efficient mechanical and lighting systems
- Natural heating and cooling systems
- Water conserving plumbing features
- Energy efficient appliances
- Renewable energy features (such as photo-voltaic panels)
- Solvent and chemical-free flooring and finishes

> Implementation 4-2.6.A: Alameda County Build it Green

Utilize and support the Alameda County "Build it Green" program for residential development.

> Implementation 4-2.6.B: Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED)

Utilize the LEED rating system as an evaluation tool and means to encourage sustainable development in commercial and civic projects.

The text box to the right provides additional information on the LEED rating system. LEED is especially well suited for offices and municipal building construction, since these activities are easily adaptable to energy and water conserving design.

> Implementation 4-2.6.C: Building Codes

Annually update building codes and ordinances as appropriate to incorporate sustainable design and construction practices and updates to the California Green Building Code.

LEADERSHIP IN ENERGY AND ENVIRONMENTAL DESIGN (LEED)

LEED is an internationally recognized green building certification system that provides third-party verification that a building or community was designed and built using resource conservation strategies such as energy savings, water efficiency, carbon dioxide emissions reduction, improved indoor environmental quality, and stewardship of resources and sensitivity to their impacts. LEED applies to all building types. LEED was developed by the U.S. Green Building Council (USGBC).

GREEN ROOFS

A green roof is a roof that is partially or completely covered with vegetation and a growing medium, planted over a waterproofing membrane. It may also include additional layers such as a root barrier and drainage and irrigation systems. Also known as "living roofs", green roofs serve several purposes. They absorb rainwater, provide insulation, save energy create habitat for wildlife, and can help lower urban air temperatures and combat the heat island effect.

COOL ROOFS

A cool roof is as roof that delivers high solar reflectance (the ability to reflect the visible, infrared and ultraviolet wavelengths of the sun, reducing heat transfer to the building) and high thermal emittance (the ability to radiate absorbed, or non-reflected solar energy). Most cool roofs are white or other light colors.

Urban Green Roof

California Academy of Sciences Green Roof

• Policy 4-2.7: Green and Cool Roofs

Encourage the use of "green roofs" or "cool roofs" in new and substantially renovated buildings, particularly in buildings with flat roofs.

> Implementation 4-2.7.A: Green and Cool Roofs

Develop information to assist and inform builders and developers on the merits and cost savings of green and/or cool roofs.

GOAL 4-3: Building Design and Site Planning

Buildings and site plans that create great places of lasting value.

This goal seeks to improve the appearance and quality of Fremont's buildings and ensure that buildings contribute positively to the places around them. If Fremont is to sustain attractive, walkable communities, then basic principles relating to scale, mass, height, façade design, building orientation, exterior materials, parking, open space and other design elements must be followed. From a General Plan perspective, the relationship of buildings to the properties around them is particularly important and is the focus of many of the policies below.

Over the years, Fremont has adopted design guidelines for various places and land uses. These include:

- *Glenmoor Gardens Design Guidelines*
- *Mission Ranch Design Guidelines*
- *Mission San Jose Design Guidelines*
- *Niles Design Guidelines and Regulations*
- *Fence and Wall Guidelines for Major Arterials*
- *Small Lot Single Family Design Guidelines*
- *Multi-Family Design Guidelines*

The City has also adopted policies and regulations for new two-story homes and two-story additions, as well as concept plans that provide design direction for specific areas. The Place Type Design Manual in this chapter rounds out this list and establishes design "ground rules" for Centers and Corridors throughout the city.

Fremont's design guidelines are intended to promote high quality development and address the relationship of buildings to their surrounding context. They are not intended to prescribe exactly how a building must look. They provide sufficient direction to ensure that development is safe, aesthetically pleasing, harmonious with its setting, respects privacy and views, and supports the goal of a more sustainable community. The implications for project design are different in historic areas like Mission San Jose than in emerging areas like South Fremont. In the former case, the emphasis should be on projects that enhance the area's architectural heritage and scale. In

Ohlone College

Parking Garage

Mixed Use Design

Innovative Building Design

Desirable Design Characteristics

the latter case, the emphasis should be on creating a strong identity and higher standard for new development. In both cases, the objective is to create great places of lasting value.

• Policy 4-3.1: Design Excellence

Promote architectural and design excellence as an essential and required component of building, open space and infrastructure projects.

> Implementation 4-3.1.A: Architectural Standards and Guidelines

Utilize urban design guidelines to guide and evaluate remodeling projects, additions, and new construction. Guidelines should address such elements as building height, scale, and massing; building materials, colors, and detailing; and location and neighborhood context.

> Implementation 4-3.1.B: Staff Design Review

Conduct design review of proposed projects in accordance with the requirements of the Fremont Municipal Code.

These requirements are currently located in the Fremont Municipal Code. (Site Plan and Architectural Approval) Design review should be conducted for a wide variety of residential, commercial, office, industrial, and public projects.

> Implementation 4-3.1.C: Design Review by Consultant

Utilize design professionals, as needed, to supplement staff for the purposes of conducting design review in special districts and prominent locations throughout the City.

> Implementation 4-3.1.D: Updates of Design Guidelines

Periodically update the Site Plan and Architecture Approval Ordinance and design review processes to adapt to changes in best development practices.

• Policy 4-3.2: Architecture and Identity

Use architecture to reinforce the desirable design characteristics of an area, consistent with its heritage and the vision for its future as defined in the General Plan or in an area plan. Use architecture and public space to establish defining qualities when an area does not have a clear identity or urban form.

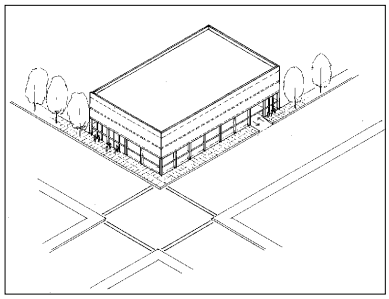
The design of public buildings and infrastructure provide particularly important opportunities to carry out this policy.

> Implementation 4-3.2.A: Design Competitions

Consider architecture and urban design competitions to select designs for public buildings and infrastructure projects.

> Implementation 4-3.2.B: Design Awards

Sponsor annual design awards and/or design tour programs to highlight and incentivize good design.



Preferred Commercial Building Orientation

• Policy 4-3.3: Commercial Building Design

Design commercial building facades, windows, signage, and lighting to create visual interest. Monolithic or window-less street-facing facades are strongly discouraged. In the Town Center and City Center areas, facades should help establish a continuous "street wall" (i.e., buildings constructed to the front setback). This creates a sense of enclosure that can enhance the pedestrian experience and create a stronger sense of place.

Washington West in City Center

New commercial development in the City and Town Centers should include pedestrian-oriented design features, such as transparent windows with display space, awnings, and facades that are articulated to provide visual interest.

LEED Designed Parking Garage

> Implementation 4-3.3.A: Commercial Design Guidelines

Use design guidelines to evaluate the elements of commercial building design. Among the topics that should be addressed by such guidelines are:

- Mass and scale
- Articulation (variations along the walls that form the building)
- Fenestration (window placement)
- Awnings and signage
- Exterior lighting
- Roof lines, pitch and style
- Screening of mechanical and roof equipment

Non-typical Franchise Design

Mission San Jose McDonalds

• Policy 4-3.4: Drive-through and Gasoline Station Design

Where allowed, design drive-through restaurants and gasoline stations so that they will not interfere with vehicular and pedestrian circulation and adjacent uses. When reviewing proposals for future or altered drive-through uses, special attention should be given to landscaping, buffering of abutting residential uses, lighting and signage, and screening of utilities and mechanical equipment.

• Policy 4-3.5: "Franchise" Architecture

Require the architectural character of drive-through businesses, fast food restaurants, chain stores, gas stations, and similar franchise businesses to be designed with sensitivity toward context, particularly in Town Centers and other areas with historic character. The materials, color treatment, roof lines, building mass and configuration, and other design elements should avoid "corporate" or "formulaic" architecture.

• Policy 4-3.6: Industrial and Office Design

Require office and industrial buildings, including both new and refurbished buildings, to incorporate best architectural design and site planning practices. Architectural creativity and innovation should be encouraged without compromising functionality. Consistent design quality should be required on all visible facades. Landscaping should be used to complement architecture, screen mechanical equipment and outdoor storage or service areas, and enhance overall aesthetic quality. As appropriate, site plans should incorporate measures to control lighting, noise, odors, vibration, hazardous materials, truck access and other potential impacts.

• Policy 4-3.7: Massing and Scale

Ensure that the massing and scale of new development, additions, and alterations reflects its context and compatibility with adjacent structures. Require transitions in scale where higher density development abuts lower density development. Overpowering contrasts in scale and height should be avoided by requiring taller buildings to step down or recess as they approach lower density areas. Privacy impacts on nearby side and back yards should be avoided through building design and orientation.

Increasing density at select locations is a key part of Fremont's vision for its future. Individual projects will be evaluated for balancing design compatibility with lower density areas outside of the Priority Development Areas. The relationship between taller, visually prominent buildings and smaller buildings is more pleasing when the transition is gradual rather than abrupt. Site planning and design should

be particularly sensitive to the impacts of large and tall structures on abutting single family homes. Zoning regulations and design guidelines can encourage separations and upper floor setbacks to relate to the lower scale of adjacent properties.

Single Family Home

• Policy 4-3.8: Single Family Homes

Recognize the prevailing design character of Fremont's existing single-family detached residential neighborhoods while allowing these areas to improve and evolve over time. Alterations, additions, and new homes in these neighborhoods should respect the existing neighborhood context and adjacent homes.

The City has implemented this policy by using design guidelines, Neighborhood Conservation Area designations, and other tools which recognize neighborhoods with a consistent scale or building type. Again, the idea is not to require future development to mimic existing development, but rather to maintain the scale and rhythm of established neighborhoods.

> Implementation 4-3.8.A: Single Family Design Guidelines

Utilize the City's Design Guidelines and Standards for Alteration and Construction of Single-Family Homes to guide design decisions for residential construction. Periodically update the guidelines as appropriate.

> Implementation 4-3.8.B: Small Lot Design Guidelines

Utilize the City's *Single Family Small Lot Design Guidelines* to guide the design of single-family homes on lots between 4,000-6,000 square feet.

Multi-Family Housing

Multi-Family Common Area

• Policy 4-3.9: Multi-Family Residential Areas

Design new multi-family housing in a way that creates attractive, quality living environments for a variety of household types and contributes to the overall visual quality of Fremont. Encourage the renovation of older multi-family buildings to more contemporary standards, so that such development contributes positively to community character.

Fremont has many high-quality apartment and condominium developments, often in landscaped settings with recreational amenities for residents. However, some of the older multi-family buildings in the city are in need of maintenance and updating. Some have design qualities which detract from the neighborhood, such as flat roofs or "boxy" designs with facades dominated by walls or garages. Future apartment construction, and renovation of existing construction,

Urban Residential

Mixed Use Streetscape

should strive to improve the appearance of multi-family areas, and showcase Fremont as a city with diverse, high-quality housing. Good design and quality construction does not necessarily mean that housing will be less affordable or more costly to build.

Some of Fremont's most attractive multi-family projects are affordable housing developments. The City has adopted design guidelines to assist in producing quality multi-family development, and to assist staff and the Planning Commission in the review of development proposals.

> Implementation 4-3.9.A: Multi-Family Residential Design Guidelines

Utilize the City's *Multi-Family Design Guidelines* to guide the design and development of new multi-family housing.

• Policy 4-3.10: Development of Urban Residential and Mixed Use Projects

Encourage multi-story residential and mixed use development in Fremont's designated Centers. The most intense development in the City, and the principal location for any high-rise construction, should be the City Center.

The character of urban residential buildings and mixed use projects will vary from Center to Center, but such buildings should share certain common characteristics. For example:

- To create an active street environment and urban character, buildings should be sited close to the street, with little or no front setback and parking lots to the side or rear of buildings
- Where non-residential uses are included on the ground floor, tall first floor ceilings should be included to accommodate retail space.
- Building depth should be adequate for a variety of ground floor uses
- Design details, massing, and scale should create visual interest
- Separate and distinct entrances should be provided for different uses (e.g., housing and retail or office space)
- Utility and service areas should be functionally located and appropriately screened.
- Adequate space should be provided for service and delivery vehicles, including garbage and utility trucks

> **Implementation 4-3.10.A: Mixed Use Ordinance**

Update the City's Mixed Use Ordinance to ensure well designed and functional mixed use development.

• Policy 4-3.11 Well Designed Sites

Ensure that sites are designed in context and relationship to surrounding uses and landscapes; and that they include pedestrian connections with clear definition of building locations, parking lots, landscaped areas and other features included on the site. Ensure the street to building relationship is in context with the scale, setback, form and height of adjacent buildings.

• Policy 4-3.12: Parking Lot Location

Ensure that parking lots are not the prominent feature of a building as seen from its street-facing elevation, particularly in strategically urban areas. Parking lots should be located to the side and/or rear of buildings rather than in the front. In other areas, if parking is appropriate in front of a building, ensure that it is screened by landscaping.

• Policy 4-3.13: Common Areas and Open Spaces

Include community gardens, rooftop decks, common areas, plazas, play areas and open spaces in higher density residential and mixed use projects. These areas shall be carefully and deliberately integrated into project design and sited as a prominent feature of development.

> **Implementation 4-3.13.A: Design Review and Common Open Space**

Utilize the City's design review process to ensure adequate open space and common areas in multi-family development. The siting of such spaces shall be consistent with the R-3 zoning regulations and the *Multi-Family Design Guidelines*.

• Policy 4-3.14: Planned Districts

Allow Planned Districts (PDs) as a way to achieve design excellence and innovation and to respond to site constraints and natural features.

Planned districts—or PDs—allow development to depart from conventional zoning and street standards, land uses and/or dwelling types in order to achieve a product that is more attractive and sustainably designed. The overall number of housing units or square footage is determined by zoning, but the distribution or density of those units around the site can vary from traditional standards. This

Desirable Mixed Use Design

Mixed Use Cross Section

can encourage design solutions that are more responsive to natural terrain and nearby land uses.

> Implementation 4-3.14.A: Planned District Zoning

Update the City's Planned District ordinance to better define desired outcomes, including architectural design and compatibility with adjacent sites.

> Implementation 4-3.14.B: Private Streets

Allow private streets or private vehicle access ways to deviate from established standards when it results in desirable living conditions and emergency and service vehicle access is not compromised.

GOAL 4-4: Public Space

Streets, sidewalks, parks, plazas, civic buildings, and other public spaces that contribute to Fremont's sense of place and visual quality.

Niles Town Plaza

The most familiar public spaces in Fremont are parks, schools, and public buildings. Goal 4-4 includes these uses, but also applies more broadly to the entire public "realm," including streets, sidewalks, medians, planting strips, and all the public spaces one experiences when traveling through the City. The treatment of the public realm is central to the vision of Fremont. It not only shapes community character, it also connects residents in their daily lives.

The policies below strive to create memorable public spaces throughout the City. For city parks and public buildings, this means creating focal points for neighborhoods and centers. Public open spaces such as parks and plazas can help strengthen civic identity and provide important community gathering places. Public buildings such as schools, fire stations, recreation centers and municipal offices likewise should showcase exemplary design. These buildings should reinforce Fremont's image as a forward-thinking, innovative city.

The design of infrastructure provides some of the most important opportunities to shape community character. Fremont will soon have one, possibly two, new BART stations, several additional grade separated rail crossings, and a Highway 84 extension. In the future, the City may have Bus Rapid Transit, a streetcar line, and new bicycle and pedestrian facilities. These projects provide an opportunity to create new gateways, landmarks, and other iconic features that can reinforce—or redefine—Fremont's image.

The most basic infrastructure opportunities involve existing streets and highways. The City has already invested millions of dollars in streetscape improvements, including street lighting, undergrounding of utilities, landscaping, street trees, irrigation systems, signage, and street furniture, to improve the visual quality of its streets and make them safer and more attractive. The design of street space is particularly important to the goal of making the city more pedestrian-friendly. The quality of these public spaces becomes even more important considering that Fremont's corridors will support more high-density housing in the future. These residences will not have the

COMPLETE STREETS

Complete streets are an important feature of community design because streets that offer multimodal access for all users can build stronger communities and reduce dependence on the automobile. Complete streets should feature:

- Sidewalks
- Bike lanes
- Sidewalk bulb-outs
- Raised crosswalks
- Refuge medians
- Audible and count-down pedestrian signals
- Bus shelters
- Special bus lanes where appropriate
- Street trees

Street Furniture

large yards enjoyed by many Fremont homes today, and will rely on public space to a much greater degree.

• Policy 4-4.1: Streets as Public Space

Recognize the importance of streets as public space. Design guidelines, design review requirements, engineering standards, and capital improvement projects should aim to improve the visual quality of street space.

This policy applies to all streets, but most specifically to the major corridors and commercial streets in the Town Centers and City Center. Landscaping, lighting, streetscape elements, pavement changes, signage improvements, banners, and other public realm improvements can enhance the experience of traveling along a corridor without diminishing its functional capacity. Improvements to corridors should be appropriate to the scale and character of each street, reflecting their traffic volumes and intended function. The Place Types Design Manual in this Element should be consulted for guidance in the application of this policy. Although the focus of streetscape improvements should be along "Main Streets" and "Urban" corridors, all Fremont streets should be regarded as important public spaces that contribute to the City's image and livability.

> Implementation 4-4.1.A: Engineering Standards

Review Fremont's engineering design standards and modify if needed to ensure that engineering considerations are balanced with visual and aesthetic criteria. Engineering standards should advance the goals and policies in this Element, and should be consistent with the "Complete Streets" policies in the General Plan Mobility Element and modified if required to meet the goals of the General Plan.

See also Policy 3-1.3 in the Mobility Element on designing streets to facilitate transit use, including the location of bus stops, crosswalks, and building entries.

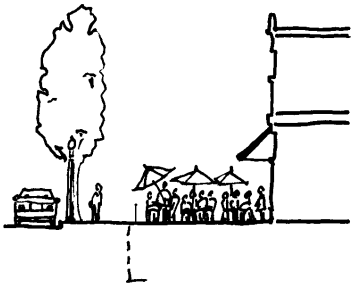
• Policy 4-4.2: Activating the Street

Promote the active use of public space, including sidewalks and plazas, in Fremont's commercial centers. This can be achieved by placing active uses on the ground floor along key streets (or facing plazas or public spaces), and by designing outdoor spaces to accommodate dining, organized activities, and special events.

Active ground floor uses such as retail stores and restaurants can generate pedestrian traffic and stimulate street life. This is especially important along shopping streets in Fremont's City Center and Town Center areas, where more pedestrian activity is desired. As noted in Policy 4-3.12, the design of buildings can also help activate the street. Transparent storefronts and window displays, awnings and signage, building entries facing the sidewalk or public plazas (rather than side yards or interior spaces), and space for outdoor dining can all contribute to the vibrancy of a commercial district. As noted in the earlier policies under this goal, the design of the sidewalk and streetscape are also critical. Organized events such as farmers markets, craft fairs, concerts, and outdoor performances can also help activate public space.

> Implementation 4-4.2.A: Outdoor Dining

Review development regulations to identify and remove constraints to outdoor dining and sidewalk cafes, especially in the City Center and Town Center areas. Ensure sufficient sidewalk width to accommodate outdoor dining and pedestrians.



Outdoor Dining Area

Outdoor Dining Area Along the Street

Historic Streetscape
Mission San Jose

• Policy 4-4.3: Streetscape Design

Enhance the appearance of Fremont's streetscapes through improvements such as landscaping, lighting, upgraded sidewalks, and installation of street furniture (benches, trash cans, kiosks, bicycle lockers, bus shelters, etc.). Streetscape improvements should improve the pedestrian experience, create stronger identity and visual cohesion, and contribute to the desired character of an area.

Streetscape improvements may be undertaken by either the public sector or the private sector. Where appropriate, the City may require new development or major rehabilitation projects to undertake public realm improvements along the adjacent street frontage in order to implement the streetscape plan for an area.

STREETSCAPE FURNISHINGS

Streetscape furnishings to consider include:

- Benches and furniture
- Trash receptacles
- Tree grates and landscape planters
- Bicycle racks
- Decorative fencing
- Street lighting
- Signage and banners
- Bollards
- Newspaper stands
- Paving materials

Directional Signage

• Policy 4-4.4: Directional and Wayfinding Signage

Encourage and maintain high-quality, clearly legible signage throughout the City. Signage should help travelers navigate and understand the city, and should help unify and define centers, corridors and neighborhoods.

> Implementation 4-4.4.A: Wayfinding Program

Create a wayfinding program for the City that consists of directional and informational signage that identifies centers, transit facilities, public buildings and other activity generating uses.

• Policy 4-4.5: Private Signage

Ensure that building signs, property identification signs, and other forms of signage on private property contribute positively to visual character. Signage should be architecturally compatible with associated structures, and designed for energy-efficiency, durability, and quality.

> Implementation 4-4.5.A: Fremont Sign Ordinance

Review signs for compliance with the City of Fremont Sign Ordinance and all other applicable sections of the Fremont Building Codes and applicable design guidelines.

> Implementation 4-4.5.B: Planned Sign Programs

Require Planned Sign Programs for multi-tenant buildings and for commercial, office and industrial projects that include multiple buildings (such as business parks).

• Policy 4-4.6: Lighting

Lighting shall be restrained and targeted to its purpose to protect dark skies, reduce glare and glow and promote sustainability. Ensure that the lighting of exterior spaces, including streetlights and building illumination, contributes to the overall quality of public space. Lighting should be used to improve safety and nighttime visibility, as well as to reinforce the character of corridors, centers, and neighborhoods. Variations in lighting should help define street function, highlight important intersections, and define edges and activity centers.

Lighting should utilize technology and design approaches that minimize energy use and associated impacts.

• Policy 4-4.7: Public Gathering Spaces

Encourage the development of public gathering spaces within new development. Such spaces should be responsive to a project's scale and expected level of activity, and respectful of surrounding land uses. Plazas, pocket parks, and similar spaces should be designed to stimulate pedestrian activity, provide community gathering places, and complement the overall appearance and form of adjoining buildings.

While the design of each public space must be sensitive to its context, all public spaces should share several common design characteristics. These include:

- Locations in prominent, recognizable and accessible locations where they are likely to receive frequent use and be highly visible.
- Seating areas, signage, pedestrian amenities, activity areas and other design features that increase usability and functionality
- A unique identity that enables the space to function independently, while still allowing the space to work in connection with adjacent development
- Accommodation of a variety of users (i.e. arts, cultural, recreational, different ages, abilities, etc.)
- Variations in landscaping, pavement, lighting, public art, and other amenities which improve the quality of each space and define its character
- Protection from wind, sun and noise exposure
- Spaces which utilize a mixture of direct sunlight and shade

The Community Plan Element of the General Plan, along with area plans, specific plans, and design guidelines for individual areas, provide more direction on the design and character of plazas and gathering spaces.

Central Park Summer Concert

Old School Courtyard

Niles Street Fair

Desirable Design Character

Walkway Landscaping

GOAL 4-5: City Beautiful

Protection and enhancement of Fremont's aesthetic and visual character.

In addition to the buildings, landscapes, and public spaces described in the previous goals, Fremont's character is shaped by its vistas, aesthetics, and the physical condition of property. The policies below provide a foundation to protect scenic resources, buffer unsightly uses, plant and maintain trees, designate key roads as "scenic routes," integrate art and sculpture into buildings and landscapes, and beautify the city.

Neighborhoods above Mission Boulevard are largely defined by their panoramic views across the City and San Francisco Bay. Elsewhere in the city, the East Bay hills form a scenic backdrop for neighborhoods and commercial centers. Fremont residents have voted to protect the hills as open space on several occasions, confirming their value as a scenic resource. The designation of scenic routes is another expression of the City and State commitment to maintain Fremont's aesthetic qualities.

Other measures have been implemented to improve visual quality. These include code enforcement, graffiti removal, weed abatement, abandoned vehicle removal, and other programs to control blight. Buffering and screening standards have been adopted to maintain the appearance of local streets, and ensure compatibility between adjacent properties. The City has also worked with local utilities to place overhead utility lines underground. Street tree planting is also critical to civic beautification. Trees not only provide a visual amenity, they provide ecological, economic, and psychological benefits.

Goal 4-5 also encompasses public art, including sculpture, statues, fountains, monuments, murals, and other forms of artistic expression. A broad definition of art is used, including not only art in public places but also elements like window displays and publicly accessible art in private development. When executed well, public art can challenge the imagination, celebrate local culture, commemorate history, and enliven public space. It is an important tool to create a stronger sense place and enrich the City.

• Policy 4-5.1: Buffering and Screening

Provide visual buffers or screening between adjacent uses which are potentially incompatible, such as industrial and residential uses. Buffers may consist of streets, setbacks, open space, landscaping, building design, reductions in height and bulk, and other site planning methods which minimize the impacts of a particular use on its neighbors. On a smaller scale, activities on individual development sites which could detract from the visual quality or enjoyment of a property—such as mechanical equipment and trash collection areas—should be appropriately screened and buffered.

Landscaping makes a good buffer or screen

As noted in the Land Use Element, buffering and screening is not only important for aesthetic purposes—it also helps protect the public from odors, fumes, noise, vibration, hazardous materials, and other impacts associated with certain land uses. The Fremont Zoning Ordinance includes provisions to ensure adequate buffering and separation between potentially incompatible uses.

See also Land Use Policy 2-5.8 on buffering of industrial land uses

> Implementation 4-5.1.A: Guidelines for Buffering

Use zoning, specific plans, community plans, design guidelines, and other tools to improve transitions between different land uses. Where such plans or guidelines do not exist, use the City's development review process to develop site-specific solutions.

> Implementation 4-5.1.B: Performance Standards

Evaluate all projects within the industrial area for conformance with the Performance Standards located in Industrial Districts section of the Zoning Ordinance.

> Implementation 4-5.1.C: Walls and Fences

Use the "Walls and Fences on Major Roadways" design guidelines to properly construct and maintain back-up fencing. Walls and fences should be maintained and upgraded as opportunities allow, especially along landscaped corridors.

Utility Line Clutter

Interstate 680

• Policy 4-5.2: Sound Walls

Design and landscape sound walls to minimize their adverse impacts, maintain aesthetic qualities, and avoid the obstruction of desirable views. When sound walls are proposed, consider potential visual impacts as part of the evaluation process. Alternative means of buffering land uses from noise should be considered where feasible.

• Policy 4-5.3: Undergrounding Utility Lines

Reduce the visual impacts of utility lines and poles along corridors by continuing to underground overhead lines within existing development, and by requiring underground utilities in new development.

> Implementation 4-5.3.A: Utility Lines in New Development

Place utility distribution lines, electrical boxes and transformers underground in new development and substantial redevelopment of existing properties consistent with the City's Utility Underground Ordinance.

> Implementation 4-5.3.B: Impacts of Utilities

Review planned utility undergrounding, sidewalk repair and other infrastructure projects to avoid unnecessary removal of important design features, trees, or historic features.

• Policy 4-5.4: Interstate Highways

Encourage Caltrans to maintain and enhance the aesthetic qualities of Interstates 880 and 680 through Fremont. To the extent possible, the treatment of these corridors should use design techniques that distinguish Fremont from neighboring cities. This could be accomplished through landscaping, signage, gateways, fence and wall design, or design elements such as artwork or signage.

> Implementation 4-5.4.A: Interstate 880 & 680 Edge Treatment

Work with Caltrans to improve freeway sound walls when and where needed, maintain landscaping and irrigation systems, replace dead or dying vegetation, and continue graffiti abatement. Encourage Caltrans to keep freeway interchange rights-of-way open and landscaped, and make it visually clear that a user is transitioning from a limited access freeway to city streets when exiting.

• Policy 4-5.5: Scenic Routes

Maintain a network of designated scenic routes through Fremont. The visual features which contribute to scenic designations should be protected through land use, transportation, and capital improvement decisions, as well as landscaping, operations, and maintenance activities along these corridors.

A particular road or corridor may be considered scenic by virtue of its design or amenities, the terrain and natural features it traverses, or the views and visual importance it commands. In Fremont's case, the designation expresses intent to maintain or improve visual quality but does not necessarily limit abutting uses. For example, the designation of an arterial as a locally scenic roadway could affect the City's decision to use landscaping versus sound walls, or could result in a particular gateway being assigned a higher priority for improvement.

Diagram 4-6 indicates the location of scenic routes in Fremont.

• Policy 4-5.6 Protect Niles Canyon

Recognize Niles Canyon as an important scenic and natural resource. Encourage the protection of Niles Canyon and enforce the Niles Canyon Corridor Protection Plan. Work with Caltrans on future improvements to the roadway to maintain balance of aesthetics and functionality.

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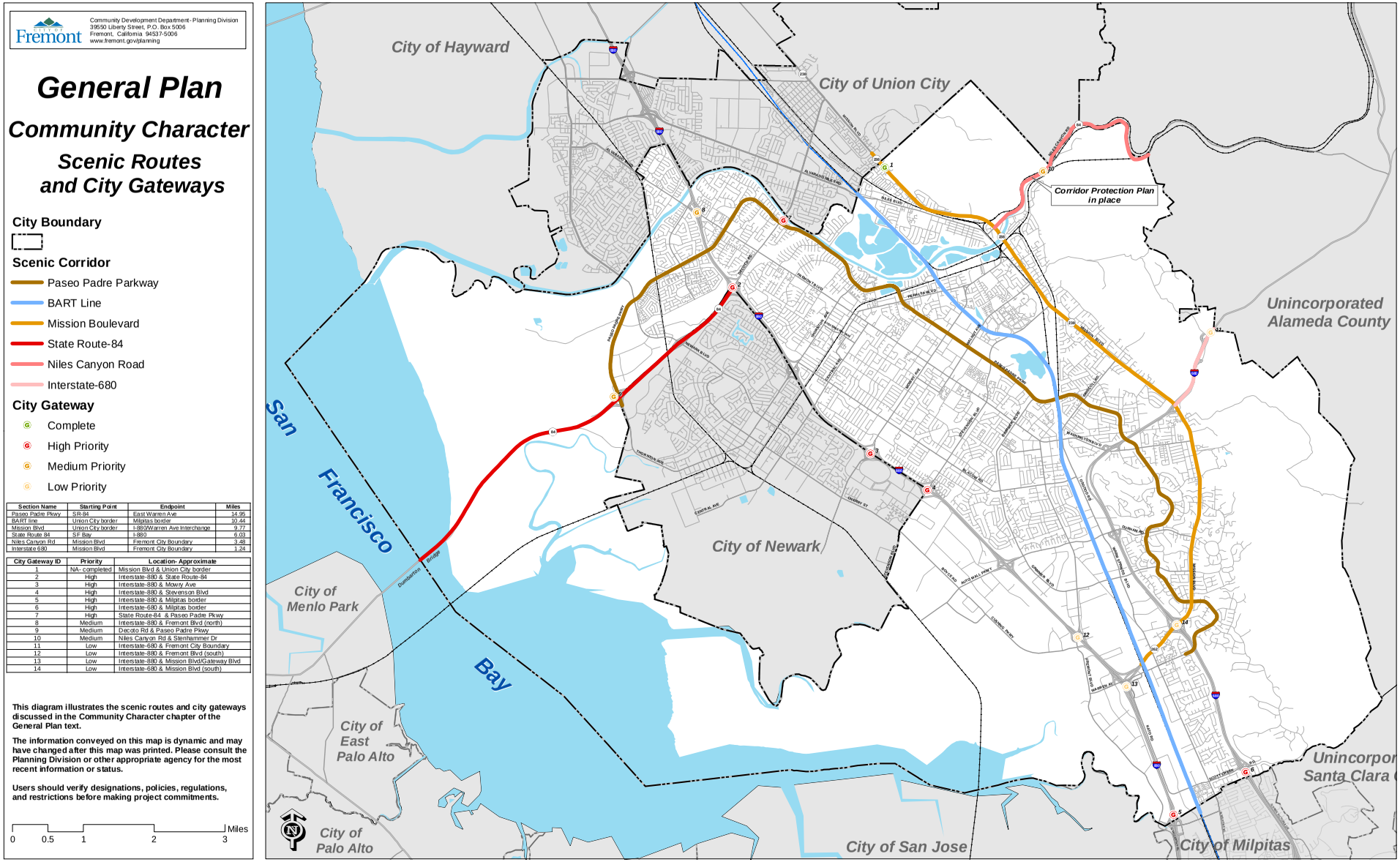

Diagram 4-6 Scenic Routes and City Gateways

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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• Policy 4-5.7: Tree Planting and Preservation

Recognize trees as a valuable aesthetic, ecological, and economic resource. Protect and preserve Fremont's existing trees and grow the City's "urban forest" by planting new trees on public property and promoting tree planting and preservation on private property. New street trees should be appropriate for the function of the street, climate and soil conditions in the planting area, available space for the canopy and root network, expected sidewalk activity, and other factors.

> Implementation 4-5.7.A: Tree Preservation Ordinance

Enforce compliance with the Tree Preservation Ordinance for any development project in the City requiring the removal, preservation or planting of trees.

> Implementation 4-5.7.B: Preservation of Landmark Trees

Maintain Landmark Tree Program and preserve Landmark Trees on public and privately owned lands. Expand the list of Landmark Trees as new trees become eligible or are nominated.

Fremont has 64 landmark trees (some are groups of trees) and nine trees that are designated historic resources.

> Implementation 4-5.7.C: Tree Master Plan

Prepare a Tree Master Plan to promote appropriate tree planting and maintenance practices and to identify appropriate tree species and planting guidelines for key areas and/or street types.

• Policy 4-5.8: Landscape Design

Use landscape design to improve the visual appearance of streets, enhance buildings, create and define public and private spaces, create shade, screen unsightly uses, and provide environmental benefits such as absorption of stormwater and air pollutants and reduction of noise.

Landscaping provides many benefits, including improved visual appearance and shade. It should be designed to enhance surrounding buildings and the natural environment. Sustainable landscape measures such as the use of drought-tolerant planting and rain barrels should be encouraged and should reinforce green practices in the City.

Tree Lined Corridor

Landmark Tree - California Pepper

Landmark Tree - Moreton Bay Fig

Well-Designed Landscape

Public Art

Fountain Art

> Implementation 4-5.8.A: Landscaping Requirements and Standards

Apply the Landscape Development Requirements and Policies for all development projects when appropriate. The standards should be periodically updated to reflect best practices.

> Implementation 4-5.8.B: Stormwater Management

Utilize landscaping cisterns, pervious surfaces and other methods as the primary method to retain, reuse and treat stormwater on private property. Enforce compliance with Municipal Regional Permit regulations for stormwater quality when appropriate.

> Implementation 4-5.8.C: Bay-Friendly Landscaping

Encourage new development and redevelopment to implement and achieve points for the Bay-Friendly Landscaping Guidelines or the acceptable equivalent.

• Policy 4-5.9: Art in Public Places

Utilize public art as a way to strengthen the identity of Fremont's centers and neighborhoods.

Public art can enhance municipal buildings or civic spaces, showcase the work of local artists, highlight landmarks and gateways, celebrate unique cultural, ethnic, and historical aspects of the community, and provide orientation and identity in the city. The City's Art in Public Places Policy governs the provision of public art in Fremont. Under this policy, the Art Review Board makes recommendations to the City Council regarding the selection of artists and artwork and the placement of public art.

> Implementation 4-5.9.A: Art in Public Places Program

Continue the "Art in Public Places Program" as a way to increase the amount of public art in the City.

> Implementation 4-5.9.B: Arts Zones

Create designated "arts zones" or districts where public art and cultural arts venues may be concentrated. Such zones should be pedestrian-oriented activity centers such as the Town Centers and City Center, city parks, and key corridors such as Fremont Boulevard.

• Policy 4-5.10: Public Art in Private Development

Encourage private developers to incorporate artwork, such as sculpture, fountains, murals, or other visual displays, into their projects.

> Implementation 4-5.10.A: Private Development Art in the City Center

Require private development in the City Center and designated Art Zones to provide art as part of new construction. The contribution level should be determined by the Art in Public Places Policy or through more focused community planning efforts.

> Implementation 4-5.10.B: Art Review Board

Continue to designate an Art Review Board to provide assistance and advice to private developers regarding artwork.

• Policy 4-5.11: Engaging the Arts Community in Civic Beautification

Engage local artists, businesses and educational institutions in the display of art and beautification of the city.

> Implementation 4-5.11.A: Art Displays

Create a process for the public display of artwork throughout the City. Such displays could include displays that are rotated from one location to another, including city parks and sculpture gardens.

> Implementation 4-5.11.B: Art in Windows

Work with Business Associations and others to create an "Art in Windows" program for the City Center and Town Center areas.

The program would enable established Business Associations or multiple business owners to create art displays in store windows. Displays could promote local artists, either amateur or professional, allowing residents of all ages to showcase their talents. Displays also can fill vacant storefronts to create a more inviting pedestrian experience.

> Implementation 4-5.11.C: Fremontia as a Symbol for Fremont

Where appropriate, use the Fremontia flower in public landscape design projects as one example of a symbol of Fremont. Fremontia is a California native plant, and its yellow and orange flowers have become a symbol for the City of Fremont. This drought-tolerant plant can be incorporated into local landscaping projects to further define Fremont's identity.

Public Art in Another Form

Street Furniture as Art

Window Art Improves Vacant Building Space

Fremontia Flower

HISTORIC RESOURCES

The City adopted a revised Historic Resources Ordinance and Historic Overlay District in 2008. Together, these tools provide regulations and implementation guidelines for preserving and protecting Fremont's historic sites, buildings, structures, and objects.

Niles Depot

GOAL 4-6: Historic Preservation and Cultural Resources

Conservation and enhancement of Fremont's historic sites, buildings, structures, objects, and landscapes into the 21st Century and beyond.

Historic, cultural and archaeological sites and resources enrich a community by providing it with a unique identity and connection to its past. The maintenance, rehabilitation, and continued use of historic resources can provide economic benefits, support tourism, engender civic pride, and create a stronger sense of place in the City. In 2008, the City of Fremont adopted an updated Historic Resources Ordinance to advance its preservation policies.

General Plan policies promote historic preservation on a number of levels, including:

- Discouraging demolition of historic buildings, structures, or objects
- Encouraging appropriate remodeling and alteration of older structures
- Requiring development on properties adjacent to historic structures or in historic areas to be sensitive to historical setting
- Updating and expanding inventories of historic resources
- Improving historic preservation education and awareness
- Protecting historic landscapes, as well as buildings, structures, or objects
- Applying for grants and tax credits to promote historic preservation
- Developing clear and consistent criteria for identifying historic resources

Preservation is not just about saving the past—it is also about shaping the future. This is particularly important in the Town Centers of Centerville, Irvington, Niles, and Mission San Jose. The General Plan calls for increased awareness of historic resources in these areas and throughout the City through adaptive reuse, heritage tourism, and infill development that respects architectural tradition.

The General Plan recognizes cultural resources include more than just historic buildings or the sites of historic events. Cultural resources also include the notable individuals and many different eth-

nic groups that have called Fremont home over the years. Programs that honor the history and tradition of these individuals and groups can inspire people of all backgrounds.

Shinn House

Washington High School

• Policy 4-6.1: Protection of Historic Resources

Identify, preserve, protect and maintain buildings, structures, objects, sites and districts which are reminders of past eras, events, and persons important in local, state, or national history.

Historic structures which provide significant examples of architectural periods and styles of the past are irreplaceable assets. They should be protected to provide present and future generations with examples of the physical environments in which past generations lived and worked. The needless destruction and impairment of significant historic resources must be prevented so that opportunities for public enjoyment and economic utilization of such resources are not diminished or lost.

> Implementation 4-6.1.A: Demolition, Alteration or Relocation of Historic Resources

Evaluate all applications for demolition, alteration or relocation of buildings, structures or objects constructed prior to 1955 to determine if there is sufficient significance and integrity to merit classification as a Potential Fremont Register Resource or formal designation as a Fremont Register Resource.

> Implementation 4-6.1.B: Evaluation of Historic Context

Develop a "mid-century" historic context report for Fremont to provide direction and criteria for evaluating post-1955 buildings, structures, objects, sites, and districts to determine their historical significance. Until such a report is complete, establish interim standards and criteria

> Implementation 4-6.1.C: Historic Overlay Districts and Neighborhood Conservation Areas

Create Historic Overlay Districts (HOD) and Neighborhood Conservation Areas (NCA), where appropriate, to protect and support rehabilitation of Fremont's historic resources. NCAs and HODs should be applied to specific areas and historical settings that warrant formal recognition and designation.

The Historical Overlay District (HOD) is a zoning designation applied to areas with particular historical significance. Currently Mission San Jose and Niles are designated as such. HODs usually contain a mix of Register Resources, Contributing Resources, and Non-Contributing Resources. Construction and demolition

HISTORIC BUILDING REHABILITATION

The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation address historic building materials in terms of individual components, systems, settings, new additions, and other considerations,

The Standards are to be applied to specific rehabilitation projects in a reasonable manner, taking into consideration economic and technical feasibility.

in HODs is subject to review to ensure that historic resources are not compromised. Neighborhood Conservation Areas (NCAs) have been designated in neighborhoods which may not fully meet the criteria for HOD designation, but have architectural qualities that warrant special design review considerations.

> Implementation 4-6.1.D Fremont Register

Maintain the Fremont Register as the official list of Fremont Historic Register Resources. Update the list as appropriate and maintain a GIS database of Register resources.

> Implementation 4-6.1.E Review and Approval of Demolition, Alteration, and Relocation

Continue the role of HARB as advisors to the City Council regarding demolition, alteration, and relocation affecting Fremont Register Resources. The City Council is the final body for review and approval of applications affecting Fremont Register Resources.

• Policy 4-6.2: Construction and Alterations within Historic Areas

Require new construction or alterations to Register Resources or Potential Register Resources located within a designated HOD or NCA to be subject to review and approval by the Historical Architectural Review Board (HARB). However, single-family residential properties (other than Fremont Register Resources and Potential Register Resources) located within an HOD or NCA are not subject to review by HARB.

> Implementation 4-6.2.A: Secretary of the Interior Standards

Review proposed alterations to Register Resources and Potential Register Resources in a manner that is consistent with the recommended procedures and best practices provided in The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties, including guidelines for preserving, rehabilitating, restoring and reconstructing historic buildings.

AN OVERVIEW OF HISTORIC RESOURCES IN FREMONT

Pre-European Period

There is evidence that the Fremont coastal plain was occupied by hunter-gatherers as far back as 2,000 years ago. Archaeological sites in the city include shell mound sites at Coyote Hills, and several former Ohlone villages.

Mission Era (1770s to 1840s)

Between 1769 and 1776 several Spanish expeditions passed through Ohlone territory. Mission San Jose was established in 1797 on a former Ohlone village called Oroysom. A complex of adobe buildings was constructed, including a church, a girls' dormitory, a barracks/guardhouse, schoolrooms, workshops, and dwellings for families and the padres. A cemetery was also dedicated. Most of the original structures were destroyed by the 1868 earthquake and by fires in later years. However, much of the complex has been reconstructed and a few original parts still survive today. Other surviving resources from this period include the Vallejo Adobe in Niles and the Galindo-Higuera Adobe site in Warm Springs.

Early Settlement (1850 to 1950)

Following the Gold Rush and California statehood, Alameda County was created and subdivided into six townships, including Washington Township. By the 1870s, the township was the center of a prosperous farming region. Three of its earliest towns were Centerville, Mission San José, and Washington Corners (later Irvington). After the arrival of several rail lines in the late 1860s and early 1870s, additional towns developed near train stations, including Vallejo Mills (later Niles) and Warm Springs.

By the late 1800s, Irvington included several general stores and blacksmith shops, a hotel, and several saloons. Niles became home to a flour mill and several nurseries and quarries. From 1912 to 1916, Niles was a center of the American silent film industry. Centerville became a canning, shipping, and produce packing center. Warm Springs initially developed as a resort and one of the state's first wineries, but evolved into a small farming community by the early 20th Century.

Mission San Jose became a commercial center for the surrounding farms. All of the towns featured commercial buildings and residences, some of which still exist today.

Fremont retains many fine examples of historic sites, structures, and districts from this period. Some, such as Washington High School, are listed on the National Register of Historic Places. Many are protected in public ownership, including the Patterson House and Ardenwood Historic Farm, the Chadbourne Carriage House at the Hub Shopping Center, the Shinn House on Peralta Boulevard, the former Southern Pacific Railway Depots in both Niles and Centerville, and the former California Nursery in Niles. Others are in private ownership, including a number of buildings in the commercial districts of Niles, Centerville, Irvington and Mission San José; the former Palmdale Estate in Mission San José, and the former Leland Stanford Winery site in Warm Springs.

The Recent Past (1950-Present)

The Fremont Register does not currently list any post-1950 resources. It is likely that historic resources relating to Fremont's post-1950 history, as well as structures that are particularly good representatives of mid-century architecture, will be identified in the coming years.

HISTORIC REGISTER PROPERTIES

National Historic Register properties in Fremont include:

- Mission San Jose
- California Nursery Co.
- George Washington Patterson House
- Washington High School
- Niles Canyon Transcontinental Railway

State designated Historic Landmarks in Fremont include:

- Mission San Jose
- Vallejo Flour Mill
- Leland Stanford Winery

Leland Stanford Winery

• Policy 4-6.3: Resource Documentation and Funding

Identify and record significant historic and archaeological resources, and maximize the use of all potential funding sources, including those available through State and federal programs, for the preservation, rehabilitation, restoration and enhancement of such resources.

The City has an ongoing program of evaluating potential historic resources. In addition, project applicants may be required to evaluate historic resources as part of the development process. Property owners and the general public may also apply for listing of historic resources on the Fremont Register.

> Implementation 4-6.3.A: Document Historic Properties

Conduct historic resource evaluations as part of the development review process based upon considerations such as the age, character-defining features, location and setting of the property.

> Implementation 4-6.3.B: Fremont Register GIS Database

Identify all documented historic and archaeological resources in the City's Geographic Information System (GIS). A complete listing of Fremont Register Resources, as amended from time to time, shall be attached to the Fremont General Plan as an appendix. Such listing is for informational purposes and shall not require subsequent amendment of the Fremont General Plan if or when revisions to the listing occur.

> Implementation 4-6.3.C: Designation of Fremont Register Resources

The HARB shall consider and recommend designation of proposed Fremont Register Resources, including buildings, structures, objects, sites, and districts. Such designations are subject to review and approval by the City Council.

• Policy 4-6.4: Historic Settings and Landscapes

Identify and pursue measures to protect the historic settings and landscapes that contribute to Fremont's historic resources. The City shall review proposed development and redevelopment projects to ensure their compatibility with existing historic settings. In particular, such review shall address the scale, massing and on-site improvements of proposed development as it relates to historic settings.

This policy recognizes that the historic value of a site may extend beyond structures and include the landscape and setting around a structure. This could include heritage trees, gardens, historic plant-

ings, significant landscape elements, fences and outbuildings, and other character-defining features.

• Policy 4-6.5: Design Compatibility

Preserve the architectural continuity and design integrity of historic districts and other areas of strong architectural character. New development within such areas does not need to replicate prevailing architectural styles exactly but should be complementary in form, height, and bulk.

• Policy 4-6.6: Historic Preservation Regulations

Observe local, State and federal historic preservation laws, regulations and codes to ensure conservation of Fremont's significant historic resources. These laws include but are not limited to Mills Act Historic Property contracts, the California Historical Building Code, and State laws related to archaeological resources.

> Implementation 4-6.6.A: Mills Act

Encourage and facilitate the use of Mills Act historic property contracts.

> Implementation 4-6.6.B: State Historical Building Code

Encourage and facilitate the use of the State Historical Building Code for alteration, rehabilitation and retrofit of Register Resources, Potential Register Resources and other qualifying historic buildings, structures and objects.

• Policy 4-6.7: Infrastructure Improvements within Historic Districts

Assess the potential impact of infrastructure improvements and other public improvement projects within HODs, NCAs, or other areas that warrant special considerations to ensure that the historic setting is not compromised as a result of the project, and to provide appropriate mitigation in the event that an adverse impact is projected to occur.

> Implementation 4-6.7.A: Public Improvement Design Standards

Allow modification of standard specifications to protect significant historic settings and context.

THE MILLS ACT

The Mills Act is a state law allowing cities to enter into contracts with the owners of historic structures. Such contracts require a reduction of property taxes in exchange for the continued preservation of the property. Property taxes are recalculated using a formula in the Mills Act and Revenue and Taxation Code. Mills Act contracts require HARB and City Council approval.

Patterson House

Shinn House - Landmark Tree

• Policy 4-6.8: Historic Resource Education and Awareness

Promote a greater understanding and awareness of historic resources in Fremont, and greater appreciation and knowledge of local history. Use historic markers, plaques, walking tours, museums, and other tools to educate residents and visitors about Fremont's history.

Educational and informational resources include the Museum of Local History (housed in a former fire station in Mission San Jose), the Niles Depot Museum and Niles Canyon Railway, the Jim Sullivan Memorial Library, the Niles Essanay Silent Film Museum and Edison Theater, and the Mission San Jose complex, among others. There are also local organizations and non-profits such as the Niles Main Street Association that promote historic revitalization and restoration.

• Policy 4-6.9: Adaptive Use of Historic Properties

Encourage the adaptive use and rehabilitation of historic buildings, structures and objects when original use of the historic property has become obsolete or is no longer feasible.

> Implementation 4-6.9.A: Adaptive Use Feasibility Studies

For properties that include historic structures, conduct feasibility studies to evaluate adaptive reuse options as part of the development approval process. Evaluate options as a form based process rather than by use and zoning standards.

• Policy 4-6.10: Protection of Native American Remains

Coordinate with representatives of local Native American organizations to ensure the protection of Native American resources and to follow appropriate mitigation, preservation, and recovery measures in the event such resources could be impacted by development.