

**EAST PALO ALTO**

**GENERAL PLAN**

**MAY 1990**

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EAST PALO ALTO  
GENERAL PLAN REWRITE

1.000 INTRODUCTION

The General Plan is an important land management tool for use by community residents and government officials. It provides a common base of understanding in matters related to community conservation and development. It sets forth community goals as well as procedures and policies designed to achieve the goals.

The General Plan of the City of East Palo Alto was adopted in December, 1986. It has been reorganized into its present format in an effort to improve its clarity and usefulness. Portions of the text have been rewritten to improve the plan's consistency, and certain sections containing background information have been shifted to a Technical Appendix which will be separately bound. All of the goals, policies and action statements contained in the 1986 plan have been retained in their exact wording. Therefore, this is not a substantive revision, but rather a technical rewrite of the existing General Plan.

1.100 Historical Background

Although East Palo Alto was not incorporated until 1983, human settlement has occurred in the area for several hundred years. In fact, the remains of the earliest known inhabitants of the San Francisco Bay Area were discovered in what is now East Palo Alto.

Around the beginning of the 19th century, the area comprised a portion of Rancho de las Pulgas which was the largest ranch in the Bay Area. In 1848 the first port in what was to become San Mateo County was built at the end of Bay Road. This facility provided access for shipping, lumber, hay and other cargo from Searsville, Woodside and surrounding areas. The Town of Ravenswood, the first regularly platted town in San Mateo County, arose around the port and flourished during the mid-1800's as the hub of Peninsula shipping. The site of the old Ravenswood wharf is commonly known as Cooley's Landing, named for Lester Cooley who bought the wharf and surrounding properties in 1868.

With the completion of the railroad from San Francisco to San Jose, transportation was diverted from Ravenswood and the decline of the port followed. In 1910, new subdivisions were developed on higher and better drained land than that which had formerly been used. In 1916, Charles Weeks founded the Weeks' poultry colony, a cooperative venture called Runnymede which lasted into the 1930's. Its 600 acres were divided into one and five acre plots. The colonists of Runnymede prospered and by 1925 the population of the area reached 918.

In the 1920's, a dispute broke out concerning the name of the school district which had been Ravenswood since 1882. The Runnymede colonists wanted their own name to be used, but in 1923 the County Board of Supervisors voted to preserve the name Ravenswood. The name of the entire area was also in dispute, and at an informal election on December 12, 1925, the name East Palo Alto, the compromise choice, was selected. At that time there was talk of annexation to the City of Palo Alto, but although enabling legislation was proposed it was never enacted.

In the 1940's, the population of East Palo Alto rose to 8,000 spurred by the influx of World War II veterans into new residential subdivisions. Floriculture became the chief agricultural activity in the large lot areas. The first major industry, an aircraft plant, moved into the area in 1948. However, this section of the community was annexed to the City of Menlo Park in 1949, along with the residential section of Belle Haven. Additional industrial annexations occurred in 1960.

A General Plan for East Palo Alto was adopted by San Mateo County in 1963. In 1982, the San Mateo County Board of Supervisors, upon the recommendation of the East Palo Alto Municipal Council, adopted the East Palo Alto Community Plan and EIR. In December of 1986 the existing General Plan was adopted by the East Palo Alto City Council.

#### 1.200 Existing Setting

East Palo Alto is located at the southern end of the San Francisco Peninsula on the populous bayside. Baylands are located to the east of the City; industrial land uses and the Belle Haven neighborhood of Menlo Park are situated to the north. The Willows section of Menlo Park is located immediately west of the City, and San Francisquito Creek marks the southern boundary of East Palo Alto.

The total population of East Palo Alto was 18,191 according to the 1980 Census. The Department of Finance estimated the City's population to be 18,840 in January of 1989, indicating a fairly stable growth pattern. Nearly four out of five East Palo Alto residents live in Census tracts located east of the Bayshore Freeway based on the 1980 Census distribution.

#### 1.400 Citizen Participation

Each of the General Plan Elements was individually reviewed by the Planning Commission and City Council during 1986. Public hearings were an essential part of this review process. In addition, citizen committees, commissions, outside agencies and city staff all contributed significantly to the process through formal reviews, study sessions and public hearings. This public participation was essential to the creation of a broad-based set of policies which respond to diverse community needs and concerns.

Since this rewrite of the General Plan is not substantive in nature, extensive citizen participation is not appropriate at this stage of the planning process. One public hearing will be held concurrent with the submission of the rewritten General Plan. The substantive revision of the General Plan, which will take place after the completion of this technical rewrite, will feature a much broader approach to citizen participation with multiple opportunities for public input.

#### 1.500 Amending the General Plan

State law permits cities to amend their General Plans up to four times per year. Amendments to the General Plan are typically adopted by resolution of the Planning Commission and City Council. A minimum of two public hearings is required for any amendment, one before the Planning Commission and one before the City Council.

State planning law mandates that General Plans be periodically reviewed and updated. This generally occurs at five to ten year intervals.

#### 2.000 LAND USE ELEMENT

##### 2.100 Purpose

The Land Use Element is the written and graphic statement of East Palo Alto's goals, objectives, policies and programs for the future use of land within the City's jurisdiction. The Element describes the proposed distribution of land for housing, business, industry, open space and other uses.

The purpose of the Land Use Element is not to duplicate the goals and policies of the other General Plan Elements. It will be necessary, however, to reiterate some of the policy language in other elements of the General Plan to show the close relationship between the various elements and to assure that the document is internally consistent.

##### 2.200 Existing Land Uses

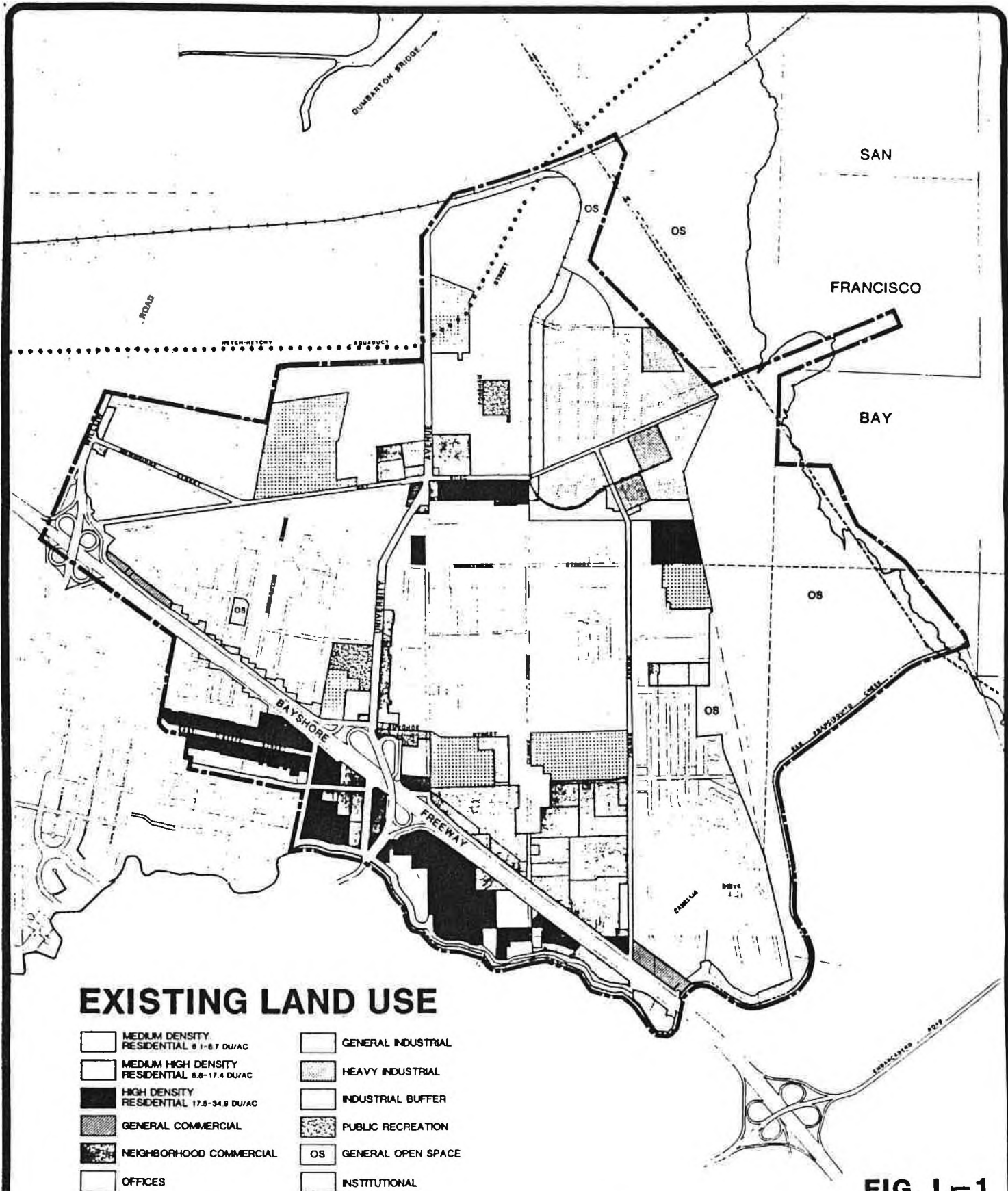
The City's existing land use pattern is shown by Figure L-1. Existing land uses are expressed in terms of acreage in Table L-1. Table L-2 describes the various land use designations. The dominant land use in East Palo Alto is residential, accounting for about half of the City's total acreage. This is followed by open space which represents about 20% of the land area. The remaining properties are comprised of a variety of uses including commercial, industrial, institutional and agricultural. The nature and extent of the various land uses are discussed in greater detail below.

TABLE L-1  
SUMMARY OF EXISTING LAND USE  
EAST PALO ALTO - 1980

<u>Land Uses</u>	<u>Acres</u>	<u>Percent</u>
Low to Medium Density Residential (2.0-8.7 units per acre)	715	44.68
Medium High Density Residential (8.8-17.4 units per acre)	16	1
High Density Residential (17.5-34.9 units per acre)	93	5.81
Commercial	39	2.43
General Industrial	43	2.68
Heavy Industrial	36	2.25
Conservation Open Space	60	3.75
Resource Management	261	16.31
Vacant	93	5.81
Streets	243	15.18
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>1,600</b>	<b>100</b>

SOURCE: San Mateo County Planning and Development Division and  
East Palo Alto Planning Staff





**FIG. L-1**

**EAST PALO ALTO COMMUNITY PLANNING PROGRAM**

PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT DIVISION · DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT · COUNTY OF SAN MATEO · CALIFORNIA

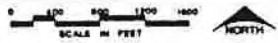


TABLE L-2

EXPLANATION OF LAND USE DESIGNATIONS

<u>Land Use Designation</u>	<u>Description</u>
Medium Density Residential	Single family homes with 2 to 8 units per acre.
Medium High Density Residential	Multi-family residential units such as townhouses and condominiums with 9 to 17 units per acre.
High Density Residential	Multi-family residential units such as apartments and condominiums with 18 to 35 units per acre.
General Commercial	All types of commercial uses including retail outlets, automobile related businesses and service businesses, such as indoor carpenter or plumbing shops. Residences are permitted with a use permit.
Neighborhood Commercial	Limited to retail commercial uses such as grocery, drug stores, beauty shops, banks, clothing stores. Residences are permitted with a use permit.
Offices	Professional and business offices only.
General Industrial	Most manufacturing, assembling processing and storage; heavy industrial such as smelting and refining excluded.
Heavy Industrial	Chemical plants, petroleum refining, stockyards, junkyards and similar uses.
Industrial Buffer	Industrial offices, administration and research uses only; landscaped and set back to provide a transition between residential and general industrial uses.
Resource Management	Publically owned or managed parks and recreation areas.
Conservation Open Space	Areas where low intensity development is allowed to protect the visual and open characteristics of the land.

2.210 Residential. East Palo Alto has a variety of housing types including some of the oldest subdivisions in the county, and modern subdivisions featuring 5,000 square foot lots on cul-de-sacs and curvilinear streets. Housing densities range from 1 to 40 dwelling units per net acre. In 1980, 54% of the housing units were single family dwellings. Nearly all of these units (93%) were located east of the Bayshore Freeway. Over three-fourths of the City's multi-family units were located west of Bayshore in 1980.

Many of East Palo Alto's residential neighborhoods contain vacant parcels which could be developed for single family residential use. In addition, numerous large parcels exist with the potential for multi-family residential development. In the context of the Peninsula's growing jobs/housing imbalance, this land availability makes East Palo Alto a likely location for additional new housing.

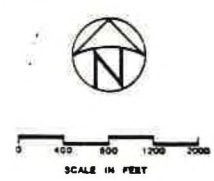
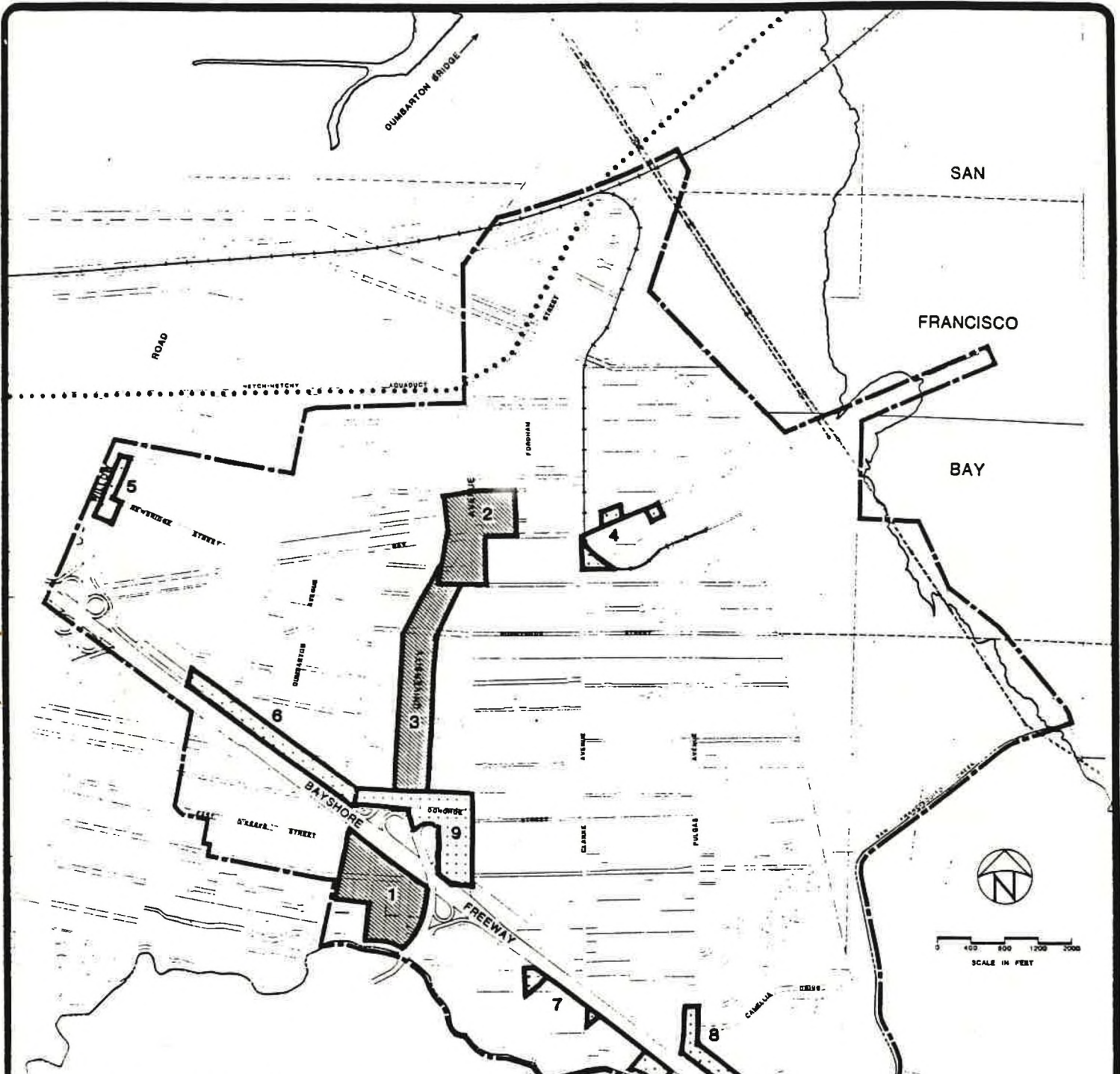
2.220 Commercial. East Palo Alto's main commercial areas are highlighted in Figure L-2. The City has three major retail areas and six smaller commercial groupings scattered throughout the community.

East Palo Alto suffers from a high amount of leakage of retail sales to neighboring communities. As a consequence, the City's per capita sales tax revenues are among the lowest in San Mateo County. There is a general lack of consumer goods and services in East Palo Alto. This problem is most pronounced east of the Bayshore Freeway. The difference between retail capacity and retail trade expenditure by East Palo Alto residents indicates the potential for substantial retail growth in the community.

2.230 Industrial. Most of the City's industrially zoned lands are located in the northeastern portion of the community. This area is known as the Ravenswood Industrial Park and contains approximately 143 acres zoned for light and heavy industrial uses. Slightly more than half of this land is presently in active industrial use, including two chemical plants, a steel fabrication shop and several auto wrecking yards. The remainder of the area is in mixed uses.

Industrial development in East Palo Alto has lagged behind expectations. It is possible, however, that rising land values and the diminishing supply of available industrial land on the Peninsula will result in increased demand for industrial development in East Palo Alto in the coming years.

2.240 Public Facilities. Public facilities land uses include administrative offices, school sites, utilities and infrastructure such as storm and sewer systems. These facilities are situated in various parts of the City as designated on the Land Use Map, Figure L-1.



**LOCATION OF COMMERCIAL USES**

MAJOR COMMERCIAL CONCENTRATIONS

MINOR COMMERCIAL CONCENTRATIONS

- 1 "WHISKEY GULCH" AREA
- 2 BAY ROAD/UNIVERSITY AVENUE
- 3 UNIVERSITY AVENUE STRIP

- 4 BAY ROAD INDUSTRIAL AREA
- 5 WILLOW ROAD
- 6 FRONTAGE ROAD EAST OF BAYSHORE
- 7 FRONTAGE ROAD WEST OF BAYSHORE
- 8 PULGAS/BAYSHORE FREEWAY
- 9 UNIVERSITY AVENUE INTERCHANGE

**FIG. L-2**

2.250 Agriculture. Roughly 80 acres of land in East Palo Alto are currently in agricultural use. Greenhouses comprise 25% of this acreage. The majority of these lands are zoned for single family residential units with agriculture allowed as a nonconforming use. Portions of these lands are designated for industrial use. Primary agricultural products are cut flowers and potted plants. Market forces including the growing demand for developable land cast some doubt on the future of East Palo Alto's floricultural industry.

The continued use of land for agriculture in East Palo Alto is in question. The parcels which remain in agricultural production are small, isolated and surrounded by urban development. Historically, similar sites in other urban areas have been converted to other land uses as a result of increased operating costs, incompatibility with surrounding uses and rising property values which make conversion attractive. It should be noted, however, that approximately 46 acres in East Palo Alto have been designated for agricultural preservation under the provisions of the California Land Conservation Act known as the Williamson Act. Contracts have been executed between the City and the landowners, restricting the land for agricultural use in exchange for taxing at a lower rate. These contracts are renewed annually for ten year periods. Non-renewal, which may be initiated by either party to the agreement and requires a ten year waiting period, is the normal termination method.

2.260 Open Space. East Palo Alto contains over 300 acres of land zoned for open space and resource management. Significant open space resources include the Baylands, San Francisquito Creek and utility company lands and easements. Each of these resources is discussed briefly below. Additional open space areas are identified in the Conservation and Open Space Element.

#### 2.261 Baylands

The Baylands constitute the largest open space resource in the vicinity of East Palo Alto and have considerable value as a nature preserve and ecological habitat. Access improvements such as the Bay Road widening project, public parking areas and hiking or bicycle trails along the levees could increase the value of this resource to the community.

The Baylands are made up of the former salt evaporators, the Cooley Landing Peninsula, the undeveloped Faber and Laumeister tracks and approximately 15 acres of the 29 acre parcel of land located north of the PG&E right-of-way in the Ravenswood Industrial Park. The Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District recently acquired a 150 acre salt pond as well as 4 acres at the eastern end of Bay Road and 40 acres of mostly submerged land north and south of the Peninsula. A 6 acre strip of land which extends down the center of the Cooley Landing Peninsula out to the

Mayfield Slough Channel is owned by the manager of the Palo Alto Yacht Harbor who operates a boat repair facility on the property. The Faber and Laumeister tracks are owned by the City of Palo Alto and are designated as "publicly owned conservation land" by Palo Alto's General Plan.

#### 2.262 San Francisquito Creek

San Francisquito Creek denotes the southeastern border of East Palo Alto and separates it from the City of Palo Alto. West of Bayshore the creek is channeled for flood control purposes, and its greatest open space value is its visual attractiveness and adjacent vegetation. East of Bayshore the channel is less fully improved, but the creek is bordered by levees which are used for informal recreation by neighborhood children. On the south side the creek is bordered by the Baylands Athletic Center, the Palo Alto Municipal Golf Course and the Palo Alto Airport.

#### 2.263 Utility Company Lands and Easements

The Palo Alto Park Mutual Water Association owns a 1.6 acre property southwest of the intersection of Garden Street and Oakwood Drive. The site contains mature visually attractive landscaping. It is inaccessible to the public in order to protect the water company's facilities, but it does provide open space within the largely developed Palo Alto Park neighborhood.

Pacific Gas and Electric owns about 3 acres of land north of the Martin Luther King Junior Park on Daisy Lane. This utility company property and adjacent county-owned land, together with Martin Luther King Junior Park, forms a continuous open space which links San Francisquito Creek, the Baylands and the Ravenswood Children's Center. These sites also provide potential access to the Baylands at the ends of Garden, Cypress and Beech Streets and at the end of Daisy Lane.

Other open spaces within East Palo Alto include the Hetch Hetchy Aqueduct right-of-way which passes through the University Village neighborhood, and a Pacific Gas and Electric Company right-of-way which intersects the Hetch Hetchy right-of-way at the northeast corner of Costano School, terminating at the PG&E substation on the south side of Bay Road. These rights-of-way have potential value as linear parks or as components in a trail system to connect schools with parks and other open space areas.

#### 2.300 Land Use Goals, Objectives and Policies

#### 2.310 Overall Land Use Goals, Objectives and Policies

#### 2.311 GOAL I: THE DISTRIBUTION OF LAND USE WITHIN THE CITY SHOULD REFLECT THE PRESENT AND FUTURE GROWTH NEEDS OF THE CITY.

OBJECTIVE NO. 1: Maintain the existing zoning within the City and provide a mechanism to ensure that changes are made only after full public participation and adherence to adopted standards.

POLICIES:

1. Provide proper public hearing noticing procedures with respect to all land use applications.
2. Only allow land uses that support the long range planning goals of the General Plan and existing zoning.
3. Periodically assess future growth needs of the City and focus on allowing land uses which support these growth needs.

2.312 **GOAL II: FOSTER AND MAINTAIN A NEIGHBORHOOD-FOCUSED PATTERN OF DEVELOPMENT.**

OBJECTIVE NO. 1: Establish and maintain internally consistent planning areas which recognize the neighborhood-based pattern of City development.

POLICIES:

1. Delineate the several planning areas.
2. Designate that mix of land uses in each planning area which will maintain neighborhood identity.
3. Determine the type of facilities needed to serve each planning area.
4. Control the location, size, and timing of public facilities in order that planning for such facilities precedes development within the planning area.

OBJECTIVE NO. 2: Plan for neighborhood development within each Planning Area.

POLICIES:

1. Define neighborhood boundaries and the size and location of each neighborhood.
2. Designate land uses and sites for public facilities so that each neighborhood has access to full contingent of local services:

- A recreation/open space area.
  - A public meeting place.
  - Neighborhood retail services.
3. Design traffic circulation systems to protect neighborhood integrity by limiting the number of intracity arterials in any one neighborhood to the minimum necessary for safe and effective intracity travel. Arterials should serve as neighborhood boundaries.
  4. Design bicycle and pedestrian circulation paths which will link recreation and open space together.

2.313 **GOAL III: TO MONITOR LAND USE NEEDS AND PERIODICALLY DETERMINE WHETHER CHANGES IN LAND USE ARE NEEDED.**

OBJECTIVE NO. 1: For each general land use category, establish standards or guidelines for determining appropriate changes in land use designations. Provide for periodic review and update of these standards.

**POLICIES:**

1. Standards should take into account existing development patterns.
2. Standards should address the size, location, and physical suitability of vacant parcels for development.
3. Standards should consider the demand for various land uses.
4. Ensure that approved development reflects standards set under this policy.

OBJECTIVE NO. 2: Apply standards or guidelines as criteria on which to judge proposed changes in zoning or general plan designations.

**POLICIES:**

1. Determine whether proposed land use changes are appropriate to the subject area with respect to potential environmental impacts.
2. Determine whether proposed land use changes will provide appropriate land uses for the subject site/area, and



determine if those uses produced will meet the long range planning goals of the City.

3. Apply strict architectural review standards in order to produce an appropriate physical makeup for the City.

#### 2.320 Residential Land Use Goals, Objectives and Policies

The residential goals reflect the predominantly residential character of the City and attempt to preserve the residential neighborhoods which characterize East Palo Alto. The residential goals establish guidelines and set general standards for residential density, the designation of residential use categories, the limited mixing of residential with commercial uses, and the location of non-residential uses in residential areas.

#### 2.321 **GOAL I: TO PRESERVE AND PROTECT RESIDENTIAL USES AS THE PREDOMINANT LAND USE IN RESIDENTIAL AREAS.**

OBJECTIVE: Establish within the General Plan and Zoning Regulations specific criteria governing the location of certain non-residential uses in residential areas and the separation of other non-residential uses from residential areas.

##### POLICIES:

1. Establish design, parking and location standards for non-residential uses in residential areas.
2. Establish standards for mixed-use structures and zones.
3. Establish design, parking and location standards for commercial and industrial uses abutting or proximate to residential uses.

#### 2.322 **GOAL II: TO ENCOURAGE NEW RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT AND THE CONSERVATION OF A VARIETY OF HOUSING TYPES TO MEET THE NEEDS OF EXISTING AND FUTURE EAST PALO ALTO RESIDENTS. TO MAINTAIN RESIDENTIAL LAND USE AS THE PREDOMINANT LAND USE ACTIVITY IN THE CITY.**

OBJECTIVE NO. 1: Achieve a mix of housing types, prices and rents in each planning area and neighborhood.

##### POLICIES:

1. Use the City's development review process to achieve a diverse economic mix of housing.

2. Promote residential development of all types through appropriate zoning practices.
3. Utilize the planned unit development process which gives the City flexibility in establishing residential densities and housing types for individual projects.

OBJECTIVE NO. 2: Ensure that sufficient land is available to meet future housing needs.

**POLICIES:**

1. Use the planned unit development process to make the most efficient use of residential land.

OBJECTIVE NO. 3: Ensure that new residential development is allowed at densities appropriate to meet the City's population target for the year 1990.

**POLICIES:**

1. Single family and duplex developments normally should have gross densities of 5 to 9 units per acre.
2. Multiplexes (3-4 units) and small multi-family units normally should have gross densities of 9 to 16 units per acre.
3. Garden apartments, townhouses, and similar multi-family units (2 story, low and medium density) normally should have gross densities of 16 to 25 units per acre.
4. High density apartments (multi-family units of three or more stories) normally should have gross densities of 25-40 units per acre.

NOTE: The above proposed densities should be carefully reviewed and modified to be consistent with zoning regulations, or the necessary amendments should be considered with adoption of this element.

2.323

**GOAL III: TO ESTABLISH STANDARDS FOR DETERMINING THE APPROPRIATE DESIGNATION OF UNDEVELOPED LAND AND THE EVALUATION OF PROPOSALS FOR REDEVELOPMENT OF RESIDENTIAL LAND.**

OBJECTIVE NO. 1: To set and periodically review standards for the designation of areas for single family dwellings and duplexes. The following criteria shall apply:

#### Criteria

1. Parcels abutting or across a right-of-way from existing single family developments on three or more sides.
2. Parcels located on existing local or collector streets.
3. Undesignated parcels adjacent to single family developments.
4. Parcels in which natural or facility constraints (sewer, water, drainage, etc.) would allow only low density development.
5. Parcels on which multi-family high or low density residential uses are allowed.

OBJECTIVE NO. 2: To set and periodically review standards for the designation of areas for multiplexes and small apartments. The following criteria shall apply:

#### Criteria

1. Parcels adjacent to existing multi-family development, and abutting or across a right-of-way from single family or duplex residential uses on not more than two sides.
2. Parcels adjacent to or across a right-of-way from non-residential uses along one or more sides.
3. Parcels greater than two acres and abutting single family or duplex residential uses on no more than three sides.
4. Parcels located on collector streets or arterial streets, and abutting or across a right-of-way from single family or duplex residential uses on not more than three sides.
5. Parcels of at least five acres.
6. Parcels on which natural or facilities constraints preclude higher density multi-family uses.

OBJECTIVE NO. 3: To set and periodically review standards for the designation of areas for garden apartments, townhouses, and similar low and medium density multi-family uses. The following criteria shall apply:

Criteria

1. Parcels located on collector or arterial streets and abutting or across a right-of-way from single family or duplex uses on no more than two sides.
2. Parcels surrounded by multi-family land uses.
3. Parcels of at least two acres in size and abutting or across a right-of-way from single family or duplex uses on no more than three sides.
4. Parcels of at least five acres.
5. Parcels with no significant natural or facilities constraints.

OBJECTIVE NO. 4: To set and periodically review standards for the designation of areas for high density apartments. The following criteria shall apply:

Criteria

1. Parcels surrounded by existing multi-family uses.
2. Parcels on collector or arterial rights-of-way and abutting or across a right-of-way from single family or duplex uses on no more than one side.
3. Parcels of at least two acres and abutting or across a right-of-way from single family or duplex uses on not more than one side.
4. Parcels of at least five acres.
5. Parcels abutting or across a right-of-way from non-residential uses on two or more sides.
6. Parcels with no significant natural or facilities constraints.

2.324

**GOAL IV: TO ACHIEVE APPROPRIATE RESIDENTIAL PROJECT DESIGN WITHOUT IMPOSING UNREASONABLE CONDITIONS ON RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT.**

OBJECTIVE NO. 1: To set appropriate standards for open space, lot size, minimum lot area per dwelling unit, lot coverage, building bulk, parking, and other site design considerations.

To periodically review and update those standards to reflect the need for facilities, and methods of financing those facilities.

POLICIES:

1. The City of East Palo Alto Zoning Regulations will contain standards for each residential zone.
2. Conventional zoning standards may be waived for individual projects through the approval of a planned unit development; however, minimum requirements for lot area per dwelling unit, lot size, open space and parking should not normally be reduced more than the minimum necessary to accomplish the development's objectives as approved by the City.

OBJECTIVE NO. 2: To ensure that residential projects are designed with convenient access to commercial uses, recreational uses, work, public services and other destinations through a combination of motor vehicle, bicycle and pedestrian circulation routes.

POLICIES:

1. Encourage site designs which minimize paved surfaces and roadway lengths while providing adequate access for normal circulation and emergency vehicles.
2. Encourage site designs which minimize vehicular, bicycle and pedestrian conflicts.

2.325 **GOAL V: TO ACHIEVE A TIMING OF NEW RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT CONSISTENT WITH THE TIMING FOR INSTALLATION OF PUBLIC FACILITIES AND WITH A TARGETED CITY POPULATION BY THE YEAR 1990 AS APPROVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL.**

OBJECTIVE NO. 1: Control the rate of new residential development consistent with periodic estimates of internal housing needs.

POLICIES:

1. Tie residential development needs to local and regional employment trends, and projected internal population growth.
2. Encourage master planned projects phased in accordance with the City's schedule for capital improvements.
3. Ensure proper development phasing by relating new housing development to transportation, commercial services and public services.

2.326 **GOAL VI: TO INCREASE INCENTIVES FOR HOUSING MAINTENANCE AND PRODUCTION THROUGH PRIVATE ECONOMIC INCENTIVES.**

OBJECTIVE NO. 1: Allow limited mixing of residential and commercial uses in appropriate locations.

**POLICIES:**

1. Designate appropriate areas in the City for mixing of residential and commercial uses.
2. Establish discretionary standards for identifying such appropriate areas. Standards should address density considerations, traffic volume and circulation, development scale, reduction in potential conflicts between residential and commercial uses within a structure, and reduction in conflicts between residential and commercial uses in separate structures proximate to one another.

OBJECTIVE NO. 2: Allow some non-residential activities in residential units consistent with the policies listed below (such uses are termed "home occupations").

**POLICIES:**

1. Limit home occupations to those uses which do not outwardly change the appearance of a residence.
2. Limit home occupations to those uses which would not disrupt neighborhood characteristics such as traffic patterns and volumes, parking, pedestrian activity and noise.
3. Ensure that the home occupation is maintained in a predominantly residential use.

2.327 **GOAL VII: TO ENCOURAGE APPROPRIATE SPECIAL AND INSTITUTIONAL USES IN RESIDENTIAL AREAS SUCH AS DAY CARE HOMES, HALFWAY HOUSES, HOMES FOR PHYSICALLY OR DEVELOPMENTALLY DISABLED CHILDREN OR ADULTS, NURSING HOMES, CHURCHES AND OTHER SIMILAR USES.**

OBJECTIVE NO. 1: To establish general standards for the location of special and institutional uses, and to periodically review and update these standards.

**POLICIES:**

1. Institutional and other special uses shall be consistent in scale, design and landscaping with residential uses.

2. Adverse effects from traffic, pedestrian activity and noise should be limited.
3. Special setback requirements should be established where necessary to reduce adverse effects on abutting properties.
4. Off-street parking should be sufficient to eliminate overcrowding on curbside parking.
5. The number of institutional or special uses in any one neighborhood or area should be limited so that such uses do not detract from the predominant residential qualities of the areas in which the uses are located.

2.330 Commercial Land Use Goals, Objectives and Policies

2.331 **GOAL I: TO PROVIDE FOR A LEVEL OF COMMERCIAL LAND USE TO SERVE THE NEEDS OF EAST PALO ALTO RESIDENTS TO THE YEAR 1990, TO PROVIDE A FULL RANGE OF COMMERCIAL SERVICES, AND TO PROVIDE EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES FOR EAST PALO ALTO RESIDENTS.**

OBJECTIVE NO. 1: Ensure that sufficient land is available to meet the commercial needs of East Palo Alto residents, and to provide for some surplus for a choice of commercial locations.

**POLICIES:**

1. Maintain sufficient flexibility in the types of uses allowed in commercially designated areas to address changes in market conditions and to foster competition.
2. Designate commercial areas which provide convenient access from all East Palo Alto neighborhoods.

OBJECTIVE NO. 2: Provide employment opportunities for East Palo Alto residents.

**POLICIES:**

1. Encourage commercial uses which will both serve and employ East Palo Alto residents.
2. Periodically prepare an estimate of new residential development needs based on projected employment from new commercial uses.

2.332 **GOAL II: TO ESTABLISH STANDARDS FOR THE LOCATION AND DENSITY OF COMMERCIAL AREAS.**

OBJECTIVE NO. 1: To allow neighborhood commercial centers providing access from each of the City's neighborhoods.

POLICIES:

1. Neighborhood commercial centers should concentrate on convenience goods and serve the limited neighborhood market. Examples include grocery stores, small restaurants, convenience clothing shops, small hardware stores, gasoline/automobile service stations and personal care stores.
2. Neighborhood commercial centers should be located on arterial streets.
3. Neighborhood commercial centers should generally be of a scale consistent with surrounding residential uses.
4. Sufficient but not excessive on-street parking should be provided.
5. Setbacks and landscaping should be used to reduce any adverse visual and noise effects of a neighborhood commercial center on surrounding residential uses.
6. An adequate number of suitable sites should be identified and rezoned to commercial or mixed-use commercial/residential in each neighborhood planning area.
7. Augment security in commercial areas and provide incentives for "Mom & Pop" neighborhood commercial enterprises by encouraging mixed-use commercial and residential.

2.340 Industrial Land Use Goals, Objectives and Policies

2.341 **GOAL I: TO ALLOW LIGHT INDUSTRIAL USES WHICH ARE CONSISTENT WITH OTHER POLICIES IN THIS LAND USE ELEMENT AND WHICH ARE FAVORABLE TO THE COMMUNITY ENVIRONMENTALLY, ECONOMICALLY AND FISCALLY.**

OBJECTIVE 1: To establish in the zoning regulations, and to periodically review, guidelines for the development of performance standards for industrial uses.

POLICIES:

1. Establish, subject to performance standards, permitted uses and conditional uses which do not create dangerous, noxious or objectionable effects.



2. Establish setback and landscaping criteria to limit the effects of noise, visual blight, glare, pollution and other adverse characteristics of the use.
3. Ensure that industrial uses adjacent to or proximate to residential areas do not cause adverse vehicular traffic or parking impacts on those areas arising from the volume of traffic.
4. Establish limits on noise levels for industrial uses.
5. Establish standards to minimize emission odors, smoke, other air emissions and liquid or solid wastes.
6. Limit the amount of light-generated glare emanating from industrial uses.
7. Establish standards for other effects as appropriate.

OBJECTIVE NO. 2: Encourage industrial uses creating few impacts or wastes.

POLICIES:

1. Encourage research facilities, administrative facilities and specialized manufacturing processes of a non-nuisance nature.
2. Establish standards for industrial research facilities that focus on traffic and the reduction of effects from internal operations.
3. Establish standards to allow small, non-nuisance type manufacturing uses that are accessory to a commercial use in a commercial district.

OBJECTIVE NO. 3: To implement the immediate phase out of auto wrecking yards in the M-1 Zoning District in order to facilitate the development of these lands with the highest, best and cleanest quality office, manufacturing, assembly, storage and warehouse uses possible.

2.350 Public Facilities Goals, Objectives and Policies

2.351 **GOAL I: TO PROVIDE ADEQUATE SITES FOR GOVERNMENT ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICES AND LAND USES.**

OBJECTIVE NO. 1: To locate City offices so that they are accessible to all City residents.

**POLICY:**

1. Government legislative and administrative offices should be located to facilitate public access, public interaction among City agencies and interaction among agency staff.

OBJECTIVE NO. 2: To require compatibility between government offices and surrounding land uses.

**POLICIES:**

1. Government administrative offices in or adjacent to a residential district should be designed for consistency in scale, architectural treatment and landscaping with surrounding land uses.
2. Traffic circulation, parking and noise impacts should be minimized.

2.352

**GOAL II: TO PROVIDE ADEQUATE SITES AND SELECT APPROPRIATE LOCATIONS FOR GOVERNMENT SERVICES.**

OBJECTIVE NO. 1: To provide properly located school sites to meet the needs of the community.

**POLICIES:**

1. Work jointly with the Ravenswood City School District to identify the demand, if any, of new school facilities.
2. Maintain a small, neighborhood-based system of elementary and intermediate schools.
3. Allow schools to locate in residential areas subject to design review to ensure compatible building bulk, setbacks, parking, traffic circulation, landscaping and other design features.
4. New schools should be located on minor arterial or collector streets.
5. Consolidate other public uses with school sites to the greatest extent feasible. Such uses include libraries, public meeting halls, parks and recreation facilities and cultural centers.

OBJECTIVE NO. 2: To provide adequate sites for parks to serve as community focal points.

POLICIES:

1. Locate parks throughout the City so that every resident is within a convenient distance of a park.
2. Ensure that each neighborhood has at least one centrally located park with sufficient facilities to serve neighborhood residents.
3. Establish district parks, centrally located to several neighborhoods, with facilities that are not duplicative of neighborhood parks.
4. Establish joint uses with other public facilities where feasible to reduce the costs of providing park facilities.

OBJECTIVE NO. 3: To provide sufficient space for the possible construction of a City corporation yard.

POLICIES:

1. Full development of a corporation yard should proceed according to a long-range plan to include internal City needs.
2. The joint use of corporation yard facilities and other public uses should be encouraged where appropriate.
3. Corporation yard activities should be located and designed to reduce potentially adverse effects on abutting residential properties from noise, traffic, visual clutter and odors.

2.353

**GOAL III: TO ENSURE THAT EAST PALO ALTO RESIDENTS AND BUSINESS USERS ARE ADEQUATELY SERVED BY UTILITIES AND PUBLIC IMPROVEMENTS.**

OBJECTIVE NO. 1: Develop standards for the location and construction of utilities.

POLICIES:

1. Standards for placement and construction of utility lines should be included in the City's subdivision ordinance.

OBJECTIVE NO. 2: Ensure adequate sewer and storm drainage to meet build out projections in all areas of the City.

POLICIES:

1. Include standards for storm drain construction in the City's subdivision ordinance.
2. Review the current capacity and operation of the East Palo Alto Sanitary District and evaluate the advantages, if any, of City contracting to operate the District by absorbing the district.
3. Review current capacity and operation of existing storm drainage districts and evaluate advantages, if any, of City contracting to operate the districts or by absorbing the districts.

2.360 Agricultural and Open Space Land Use Goals, Objectives and Policies

2.361 **GOAL I: ENCOURAGE AN ORDERLY TRANSITION FROM AGRICULTURAL USES TO OTHER, HIGHER INTENSITY USES.**

OBJECTIVE NO. 1: Encourage owners of agricultural land to relinquish Williamson Act contracts.

POLICIES:

1. Provide a variety of incentives to assist owners in relinquishing Williamson Act contracts.
2. Work closely with owners and developers to design suitable alternate uses of agricultural sites.

OBJECTIVE NO. 2: Adopt appropriate zoning classifications to protect prime agricultural lands.

POLICIES:

1. Make public to developers an inventory of prime sites.
2. Develop criteria for at least the following sites: Siri parcels bounded by O'Connor, East Bayshore, Clarke, and Pulgas; Cypress Street parcel adjacent to Sanitary District parcel; Green Street parcel; etc.

2.362 **GOAL II: TO DESIGNATE APPROPRIATE LOCATIONS AND ADEQUATE ACREAGE FOR NON-AGRICULTURAL OPEN SPACES.**

OBJECTIVE NO. 1: Coordinate the location and development of public open spaces with other land uses.

**POLICIES:**

1. Public open spaces should be located in each neighborhood of the City.
2. Public open spaces should be developed for multiple purposes to the extent that is economically, environmentally and physically practical. Examples of various open space uses are: intensive recreation, passive recreation, wildlife habitat and recycling of environmental wastes.
3. Joint use of public recreational open spaces and other public facilities on one site should be encouraged.

**OBJECTIVE NO. 2:** To provide for private and semi-public open spaces in residential development.

**POLICIES:**

1. Establish reasonable lot area per dwelling unit requirements in the zoning regulations.
2. Establish reasonable yard and setback requirements in the zoning regulations.
3. Encourage common open space areas in planned residential developments.
4. Require new common open space areas in planned residential developments to be privately maintained.
5. Set aside an adequate amount of prime agricultural land for neighborhood and community gardens.
6. Develop a Recreation Space Plan containing locational, spatial and feature criteria for the planning areas.

2.370 Special Area Land Use Goal, Objectives and Policies

**GOAL I: TO MAINTAIN THE UNIVERSITY AVENUE AREA AS THE PRIMARY COMMERCIAL/RETAIL AND OFFICE DISTRICT OF THE CITY WITHIN THE LIMITS IMPOSED BY THE AMOUNT OF LAND AVAILABLE FOR COMMERCIAL AND OFFICE EXPANSION.**

**OBJECTIVE NO. 1:** Establish and periodically review land use regulations which reflect the commercial value of the University Avenue area.

**POLICIES:**

1. The City should investigate regulations and incentives which would make maximum use of the City's limited land/building space resources. Options include mixed-use projects, selective redevelopment and parking under structure when economically feasible.
2. Establish the former Nairobi Shopping Center site as the primary retail and commercial district in the City.
3. Establish the former Ravenswood High School site as the City's Civic Center and primary recreational area.

OBJECTIVE NO. 2: To encourage pedestrian circulation.

**POLICIES:**

1. Traffic control should facilitate safe and effective pedestrian travel across streets.
2. All pedestrian routes should be accessible to handicapped individuals.

OBJECTIVE NO. 3: To preserve historically or architecturally significant structures.

**POLICIES:**

1. Zoning and building regulations should be applied flexibly to enhance the feasibility of commercial uses in historically or architecturally significant structures.
2. Replacement or alteration of historically or architecturally significant structures should be discouraged.

**2.400 Land Use Element Action Program**

To effectively implement the Land Use Element goals, the following technical studies are recommended to support specific actions on the part of the City. High priority shall be given to the completion and full implementation of the following:

- 2.401 Determine five-year housing needs, including new construction needs, vacant land needed to accommodate new housing, the number of housing units to be rehabilitated, and the number of low and moderate cost units necessary to meet low and moderate income household needs. These objectives will be accomplished through periodic revisions to the Housing Element.

- 2.402 Prepare a periodic "Land Use Needs" study. This study would project land use needs for a three to five year period based on development patterns in the preceding three years, population and employment trends and the supply of zoned, vacant land. The purpose of the study would be to determine the supply of vacant land necessary to assure choices and competition. The study would also include ongoing analysis of existing land uses by type and acreage.
- 2.403 Maintain a "Capital Improvements Needs" study as part of the City's Capital Improvement Program showing the three to five year facilities and service needs of new development as proposed in pending applications, projects planned by the City and those projected during the period covered by the study. The needs report should be updated biannually and show the types of facilities and alternatives for financing those facilities.
- 2.404 Prepare a "development manual" which explains in easily understandable terms, and with illustrations, the various zoning and other restrictions and how they may apply to a particular property. The manual should include the City's design standards for roads, sidewalks, installation of utilities, landscaping, screening, lighting and other development requirements.
- 2.405 Prepare and periodically revise an "Office Space Needs" report, and relate this to the Land Use Study. The report should be updated biannually and document the existing and approved type, tenure and amount of office space and home occupations. The report should project office space needs for a three to five year period.
- 2.406 Prepare a "Commercial Space Needs" report, incorporating the same points of analysis as the Office Space Needs report. Commercial space demand should be distinguished by location, type and market area. Primary emphasis should be on preservation and enhancement of the University Avenue Area.
- 2.407 Periodically prepare/revise traffic studies showing the origin and destination of trips, the mode of travel and traffic volumes for each type of transit on selected City rights-of-way. The studies should also show the availability and demand for various types of on and off-street parking and project traffic volumes and parking demands for one to three year periods.
- 2.408 Periodically update land use and design plans for each of the City's specially designated areas. The plans should show existing land uses, permitted land uses, report on the progress of programs adopted to implement the plans and show future program actions affecting land uses in the special plan areas.

2.409 Maintain and update a list of designated and nominated historic resources throughout the City. The list should be reviewed annually.

2.410 Periodically update maps of environmental constraints to development, such as areas prone to flooding, environmentally sensitive areas and conservation areas.

2.411 Develop a list of federal and state programs and tax incentives to encourage preservation of significant features. Maintain a list of local craftspersons, artisans, and contractors with expertise in preservation and rehabilitation of historical structures.

2.412 Automated Land Use Information System (LUIS)

This computerized information system will serve to assist Staff in tracking, analyzing and disseminating land use information in an efficient and timely manner.

2.413 City of East Palo Alto Zoning Ordinance

Currently the City is using San Mateo County's Zoning Ordinance as a guideline for land use and development standards. Revised zoning regulations tailored to fit the needs and goals of East Palo Alto will be implemented.

2.414 City of East Palo Alto Subdivision Ordinance

Currently the City is using San Mateo County's Subdivision Ordinance as a guide for the process of land division. A revised Subdivision Ordinance tailored to meet state guidelines and to fit the needs and goals of East Palo Alto will be implemented.

2.415 Specific Plans

There are a number of areas in East Palo Alto that are inherently unique. They require their own special/specific land use and development standards. In each of these areas there is a need to adopt what is called a Specific Plan.

Specific Plans are commonly used in areas of transition such as in the developing periphery of urban areas and in central city areas designated for rehabilitation or redevelopment. Some cover small areas like a few blocks while others cover many areas. Their main advantages are that they set forth very specific policies which serve to facilitate focused land uses in combination with clearly articulated development and design



standards. These plans are fully meant to support the goals of the General Plan and serve to coordinate public and private efforts in the development of an area. Areas where Specific Plans will be implemented include:

- The 1900 block of University Avenue
- The Ravenswood Industrial Park and Buffer Zone Area
- The University Avenue strip
- The Donohoe/East Bayshore Strip

### 3.000 CIRCULATION ELEMENT

#### 3.100 Purpose

The Circulation Element describes facilities for the efficient transportation of goods and the safe and efficient movement of people throughout the City. It includes a plan of the streets and highways in addition to facilities for pedestrian, bicycle and other modes of transportation.

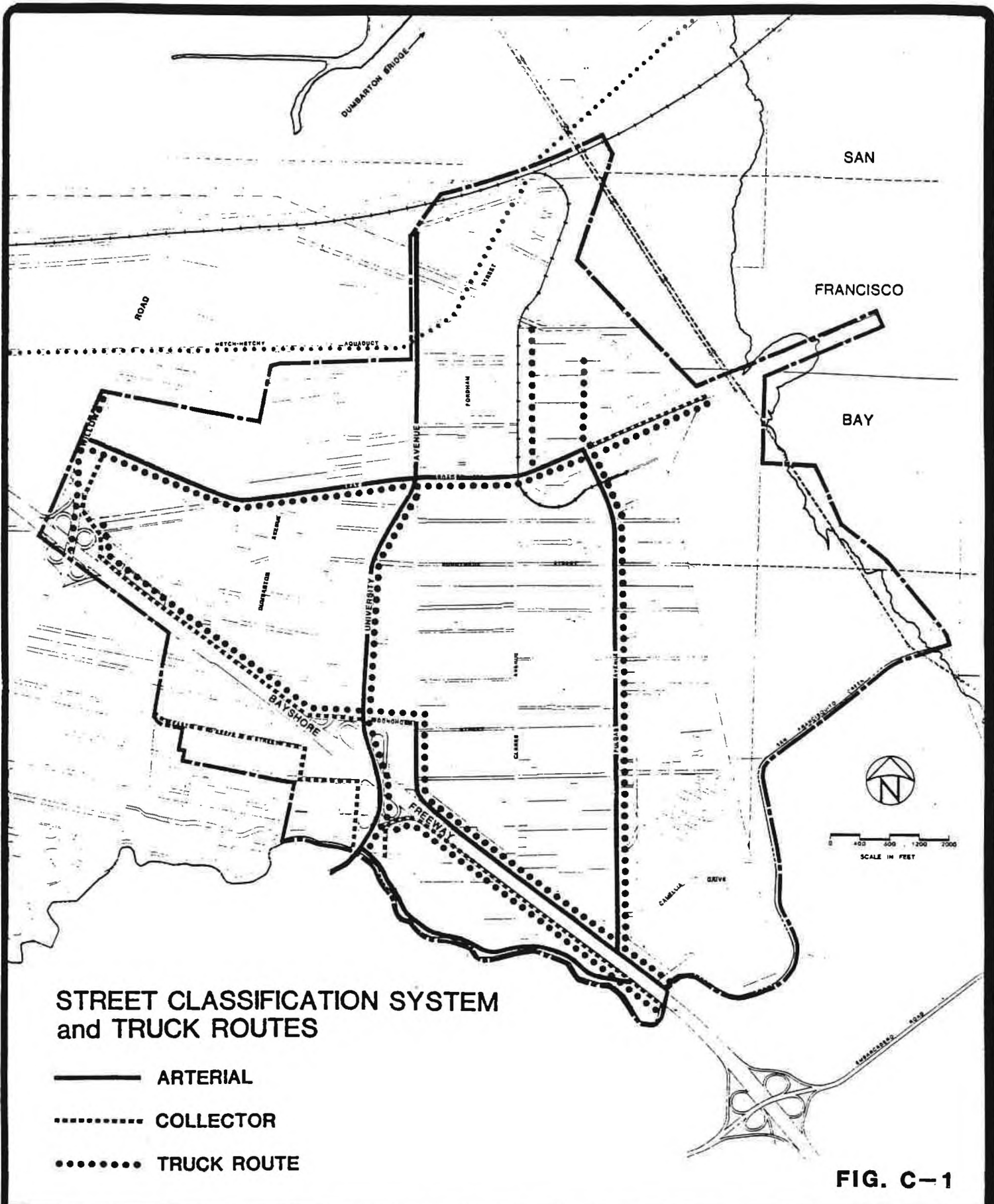
The goals, objectives and policies contained herein are closely coordinated with those of the Land Use, Housing and Noise Elements. The overall intent is to assure a balanced circulation system integrated with the regional transportation network and offering a variety of transit options to community residents.

#### 3.200 Existing Circulation Network

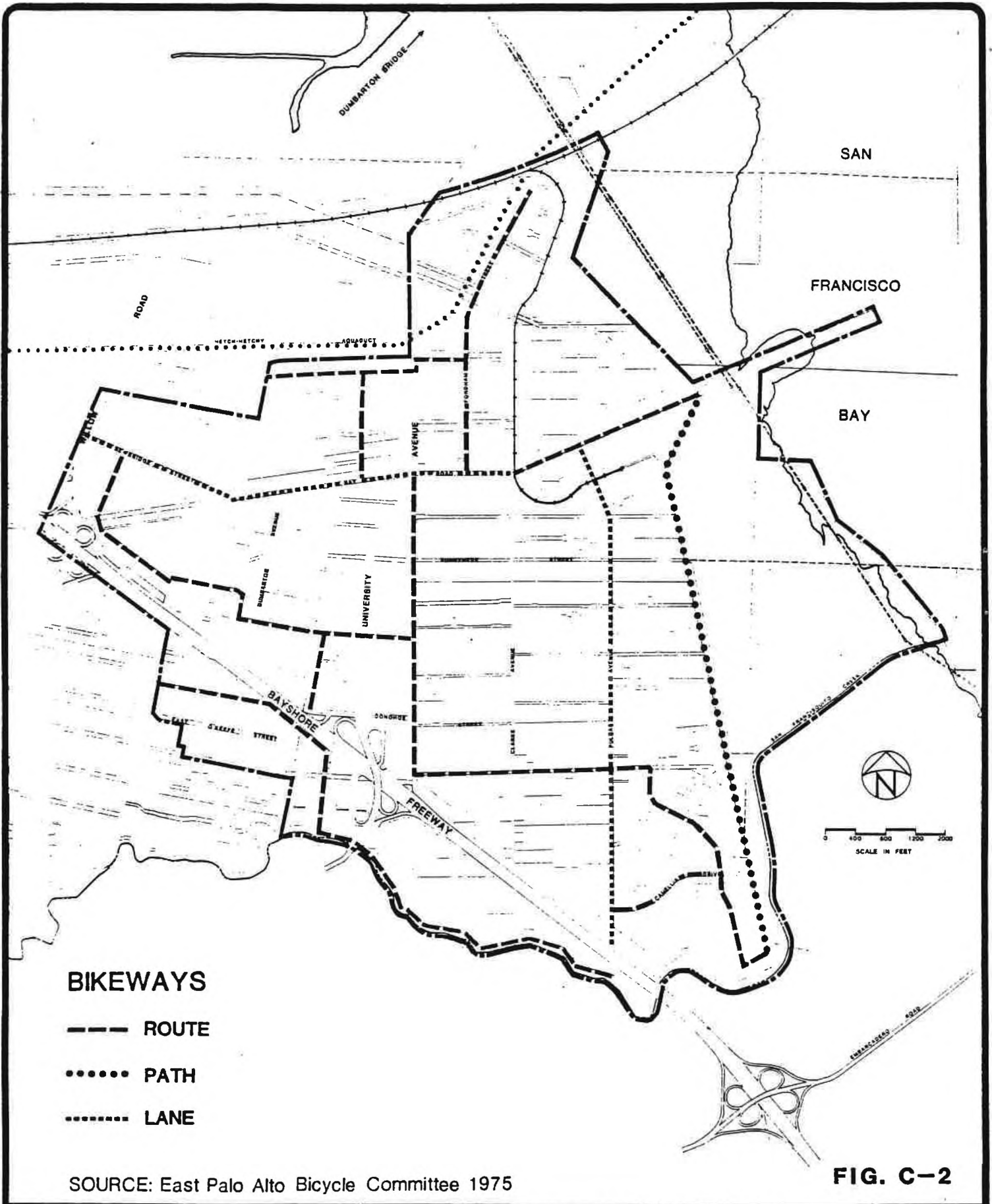
The City of East Palo Alto's existing circulation network is shown in Figure C-1 which illustrates the street classification system. Bikeways are shown in Figure C-2, and bus routes and shelters are highlighted in Figure C-3. Information pertaining to traffic volumes, public transit utilization and additional matters relating to the City's circulation network is provided in the Technical Appendix.

East Palo Alto is a suburban community designed for the automobile as the primary means of transportation. Local streets from residential neighborhoods feed into collectors and arterials which provide access to the Bayshore Freeway via three different interchanges. Although East Palo Alto has a generally efficient transportation network, many streets do not meet present City standards. Figure C-1 highlights streets which lack such features as curbs, sidewalks, paved shoulders and storm drainage facilities.

Traffic analysis conducted in 1979 and included in the General Plan Technical Appendix indicates that at that time the City's existing roadway network was capable of handling present traffic volumes with minimal delays. Congestion was noted during peak hours at the University Avenue



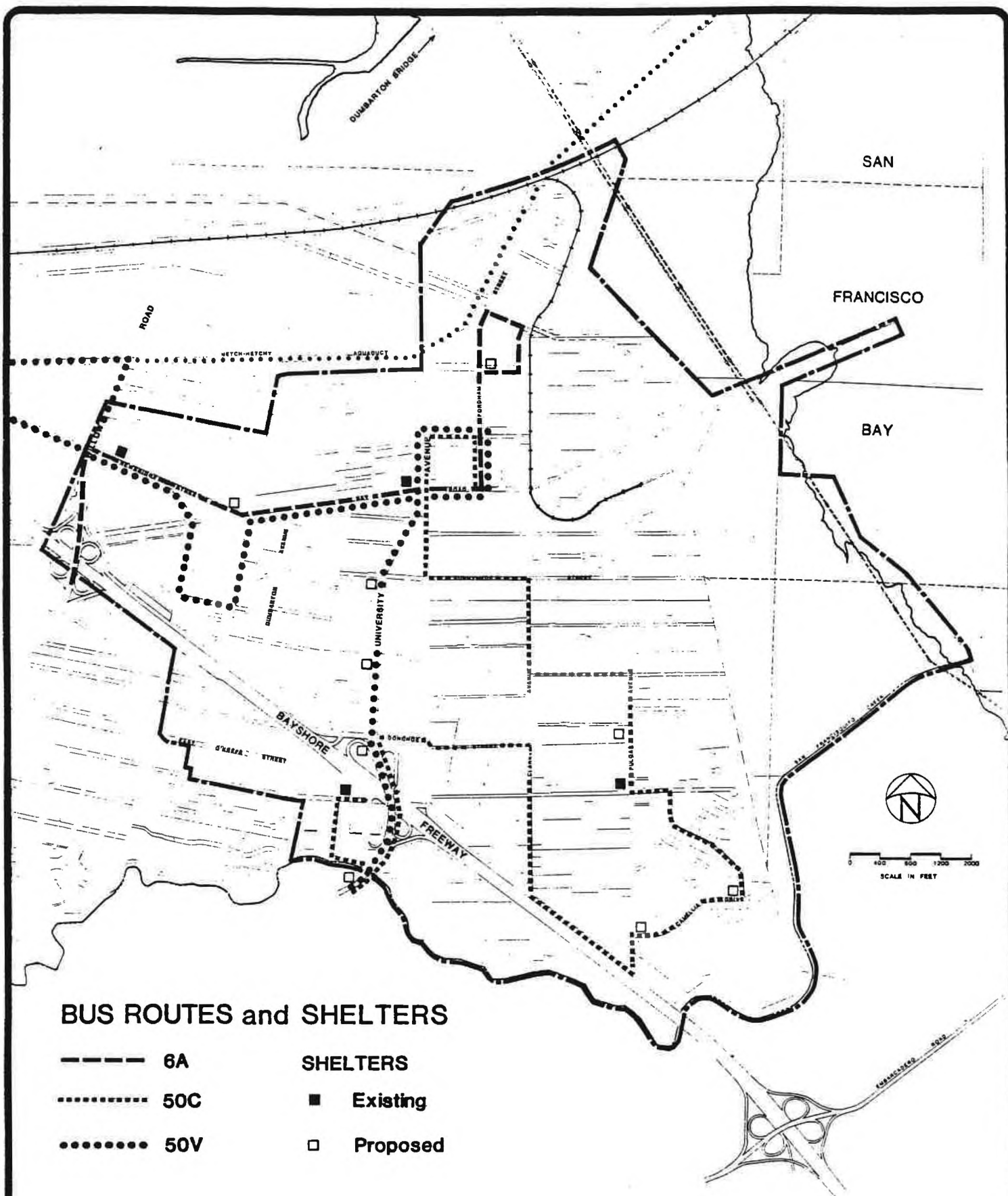
**FIG. C-1**



**FIG. C-2**

SOURCE: East Palo Alto Bicycle Committee 1975

**EAST PALO ALTO COMMUNITY PLANNING PROGRAM**  
 PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT DIVISION · DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT · COUNTY OF SAN MATEO · CALIFORNIA



**FIG. C-3**

interchange with U.S. 101, and along Willow Road approaching the Dumbarton Bridge. West of the freeway high volumes and congested traffic conditions were noted along University Avenue. This short section of University Avenue carries the heaviest traffic volumes found in the City.

Vehicular traffic in East Palo Alto has increased significantly in recent years. Although this problem is increasingly apparent, recent data regarding traffic volumes and service levels are not available. To address this concern, a comprehensive traffic study is called for in the Circulation Element Action Program.

### 3.300 Circulation Goals and Policies

#### 3.310 GOAL I: TO ENSURE THAT THE TOTAL CIRCULATION SYSTEM OF THE CITY OF EAST PALO ALTO PROVIDES MOBILITY AND CHOICE FOR ALL CITY RESIDENTS.

OBJECTIVE NO. 1: Establish and periodically review circulation standards which minimize the amount of paved surfaces necessary to achieve choice and mobility for all East Palo Alto residents, to provide emergency access and to provide access for other public and private purposes.

##### POLICIES:

1. Include reasonable parking standards in the zoning regulations.
2. Review street improvement standards and evaluate methods of reducing the required area of paved surfaces.
3. Encourage clustered residential site design with shared parking and internal circulation patterns.

OBJECTIVE NO. 2: Reduce the adverse effects of traffic and circulation patterns on nearby land uses.

##### POLICIES:

1. Require proper screening of parking areas.
2. Review proposed vehicular ingress and egress between public and private areas to reduce traffic conflicts.
3. Establish and maintain a system of street widths and traffic control devices to reduce traffic impacts on residences and to preserve the domestic tranquility of residential neighborhoods.

3.320 **GOAL II: TO ASSURE A BALANCED CIRCULATION SYSTEM, INTEGRATED WITH THE REGIONAL SYSTEM AND OFFERING A VARIETY OF TRANSIT OPTIONS TO THE COMMUNITY.**

**POLICIES:**

**Public Transit**

1. **Bus Service to Industrial Park**

Encourage SamTrans to extend bus service to the Ravenswood Industrial Park when new development in that area warrants the service.

2. **Bus Shelters**

Encourage SamTrans to install more bus shelters in the community at the locations identified by the East Palo Alto City Council.

3. **Coordination of Bus Schedules with Schools**

Encourage SamTrans to coordinate its bus schedules on routes which take children to and from schools with the school districts so that waiting times are minimized.

4. **Street Lighting at Bus Stops**

Encourage the Ravenswood Highway Lighting District to provide adequate lighting at all bus stops, or, following acquisition of the District by the City, ensure that such lighting is provided.

**Roads**

1. **Street Improvements in Palo Alto Park**

Consider allowing modification of roadway standards as delineated in the City's Development Standards for the Palo Alto Park Area to preserve the quality of the neighborhood and to maintain existing vegetation where safety and drainage allow. For the most part, however, require that street improvements be completed in accordance with common engineering practice and adopted City standards.

2. **Street Improvements in Large Lot Areas**

Develop design criteria for infrastructure improvements (streets and utilities) in the large lot area to address

subdivision and site planning issues such as street layout, traffic, parking, drainage and utility services.

3. University Circle-Highway 101 Improvements

Continue to work with CalTrans to modify the University Avenue-Highway 101 interchange to reduce congestion and improve safety while preventing economic dislocation for businesses in the University Circle area.

4. University Avenue North of Highway 101

(a) Examine the elimination of on-street parking during peak hours and reassess traffic signal timing on University Avenue between Highway 101 and Notre Dame Avenue in order to attain smoother traffic flows and less congestion.

(b) Examine techniques and devices to control traffic spilling during peak hours onto side streets from University Avenue.

(c) Explore the option of allowing University Avenue between Highway 101 and Notre Dame Avenue to become a part of the CalTrans Highway System.

5. Truck Route

Consider allowing that portion of University Avenue between Bay Road and Notre Dame Avenue to become a truck route as a means of promoting new development in the Ravenswood Industrial Park. Alternatively, develop a more effective means of enforcement for trucks illegally using this strip.

6. Traffic Capacity Improvements

Review the present and future status of traffic and circulation within the City, based upon growth and development potential. This study shall set forth mitigation measures which shall be considered for implementation along with the identification of funding sources for recommended improvements.

7. Dumbarton Bridge Connection

Explore the potential of extending either Pulgas Avenue or Demeter Street in a northwesterly direction, connecting to University Avenue, allowing access between the Ravenswood Industrial Park and the Dumbarton Bridge. Alternatively,

extending either street or constructing a new one directly to Highway 84 rather than to University Avenue should be considered.

8. Capital Avenue/Donohoe Street/Highway 101 Interchange

Explore potential modifications to the Capital Avenue/Donohoe Street/Highway 101 interchange with CalTrans to reduce congestion and improve safety while preventing economic dislocation for businesses in this area.

Bikeways Plan

1. Recommend that the East Palo Alto Bicycle Planning Committee's Plan be adopted as the City's Bikeways Plan.
2. Recommend that the City Public Works Department install facilities as shown on the East Palo Alto Bikeways Plan (with the exception of Pulgas Avenue, which should be a bike route).
3. Bike Path Along the Bayfront

Cooperate with the City of Palo Alto and other appropriate jurisdictions in developing the Baylands Bicycle Trail Project.

Pedestrian Circulation

1. As a general procedure, continue to require sidewalks in all new developments.
2. Ensure that sidewalks are creatively designed to emphasize safe and pleasant pedestrian use.
3. Review and improve pedestrian accommodations at major intersections on arterials, including ramps for the handicapped, baby carriages, etc.
4. Actively lobby with appropriate jurisdictions for construction of a safe and efficient pedestrian walkway on the University Avenue 101 overpass.

3.400 Circulation Element Action Program

This section of the element lists the actions and timing which will assist in supporting and implementing its goals and policies.



- 3.401 Within two years, require that a City-wide Traffic and Circulation Study be completed in order to assess present and future traffic and circulation impacts based upon development potential for the City and its surrounding environment.
- 3.402 Obtain existing traffic counts at critical points in the circulation system and include these data with appropriate text changes in the Circulation Element at the earliest practicable date.
- 3.403 Adopt the East Palo Alto Bicycle Planning Committee's Bikeways Plan with desired changes during calendar year 1987.
- 3.404 Require sidewalks in all new developments, but allow for alternate street improvement standards where deemed feasible.
- 3.405 Prepare a work plan and survey for the Palo Alto Park area to determine the feasibility of assessment district funding for desired street improvements.
- 3.406 Develop alternative semi-rural street standards for application in the Palo Alto Park and large lot areas when determined to be appropriate.

#### 4.000 HOUSING ELEMENT

##### 4.100 Purpose

The Housing Element is intended to evaluate the existing and projected housing needs of all economic segments of the community, and to develop policies and programs aimed at the preservation, improvement and development of housing. The Element includes an assessment of overall housing needs as well as analysis of special needs groups. Additional background data is provided in the Housing Element Technical Appendix. Unlike most General Plan Elements which are designed to cover a period of ten years or more, the Housing Element uses a five year frame of reference. This is consistent with Article 10.6 of the Government Code which specifies that analysis of local housing needs should take place at five year intervals.

##### 4.200 Relation to Other Elements

The Housing Element is closely related to the Land Use, Open Space and Circulation Elements. In the Housing Element, residential land use is translated into terms of household units to be accommodated in the future. Lands designated for residential use are identified in the Land Use Element; the location, site area and terrain suitable for housing is

related to both open space and land use; and the capability of serving residential neighborhoods by an efficient circulation system is discussed in the Circulation Element.

#### 4.300 Assessment of Housing Needs

#### 4.310 Population and Household Characteristics of East Palo Alto

The population of the City of East Palo Alto grew from 17,837 in 1970 to 18,191 in 1980 according to the U.S. Census. In January of 1989 the State Department of Finance estimated the City's population at 18,840. Thus the population has increased by roughly 1,000 over the past 19 years. This is a very slow growth rate relative to the overall Bay Area average, but is somewhat typical of many Peninsula communities. Table H-1 summarizes population changes in East Palo Alto between 1950 and 1980.

The racial characteristics of East Palo Alto's population are described in Table H-2. While a substantial majority of the City's residents are black, East Palo Alto also has significant percentages of Hispanic, white, and Asian residents. In terms of the distribution of racial groups within the City, 93% of East Palo Alto's black residents live east of the Bayshore Freeway, while more than two-thirds of the white residents live west of the Bayshore.

Average household size declined from 2.94 persons in 1970 to 2.75 in 1980. The Association of Bay Area Governments (ABAG) estimates that it will increase slightly until 1990, then decline to an average of 2.68 by 2005. Larger households tend to be located in the eastern portion of the City, with the area west of Bayshore characterized by one and two person households.

#### 4.320 Housing Characteristics of East Palo Alto

In 1980, East Palo Alto's housing stock consisted of 6,848 units, 55% of which were single family dwellings. Table H-3 illustrates the number of housing units by type and location. In general the west Bayshore area consists primarily of multi-family units while single family homes are predominant east of the freeway.

Table H-4 indicates that nearly two-thirds of the City's housing units were built prior to 1960. A substantial number of these homes are in need of rehabilitation. The majority of these units are located in the single family residential areas east of the Bayshore Freeway. In addition to physical deterioration, East Palo Alto's housing units have a high incidence of overcrowding. Table H-5 provides U.S. Census estimates of the number of overcrowded units which existed in 1980. Based on this data, nearly one in five residential dwellings were overcrowded at that time.

TABLE H-1  
POPULATION GROWTH IN EAST PALO ALTO

Census Tract/Area	1950	1960	1970	1980
<b>East of Bayshore</b>				
6118	N/A	3,421	3,609	3,455
6119	N/A	6,022	6,100	6,282
6120	N/A	4,434	5,136	4,614
Subtotal	N/A	13,877	14,845	14,351
<b>West of Bayshore</b>				
6121	N/A	1,142	2,992	3,840
Total	7,123	15,019	17,837	18,191

SOURCE: U.S. Census

TABLE H-2  
RACIAL AND ETHNIC CHARACTERISTICS, EAST PALO ALTO, 1980

Census Tract/Area	White	Black	American Indian, Eskimo & Aleut	Asian & Pacific Islander	Other Races	Total	Spanish Origin (All Races)
<b>East of Bayshore</b>							
6118	160	3,038	2	82	173	3,455	224
6119	981	4,339	16	499	447	6,282	922
6120	854	2,959	22	180	599	4,614	1,076
Subtotal	1,995	10,336	40	761	1,219	14,351	2,222
Percent	(13.9)	(72.0)	(0.3)	(5.3)	(8.5)	(100.0)	(15.5)
<b>West of Bayshore</b>							
6121	2,639	771	38	231	161	3,840	346
Percent	(68.7)	(20.1)	(1.0)	(6.0)	(4.2)	(100.0)	(9.0)
TOTAL	4,636	11,107	78	992	1,380	18,191	2,568
Percent	(25.5)	(61.0)	(0.4)	(5.5)	(7.6)	(100.0)	(14.1)

SOURCE: 1980 Census

NOTE: In contrast with previous census data the 1980 Census used a "self-identification" method to determine racial and ethnic counts. Persons who identified themselves of "Spanish Origin" (an ethnic designation), are also included in one of the "race" classifications, i.e., "white", "black", "other races", etc.

TABLE H-3

HOUSING UNITS BY TYPE AND LOCATION  
EAST PALO ALTO -- 1970 AND 1980

Area and Housing Type	1970 <sup>1</sup>	(%)	1980 <sup>2</sup>	(%)	Percent Change
<b>SINGLE FAMILY</b>					
East of Bayshore	3,583 <sub>3</sub>	(55.6)	3,499	(51.1)	- 2.3 <sub>3</sub>
West of Bayshore	320 <sub>3</sub>	( 5.0)	194	( 2.8)	-39.4 <sub>3</sub>
Subtotal	3,903	(60.6)	3,693	(53.9)	- 5.4
<b>MULTI-FAMILY</b>					
East of Bayshore	852 <sub>3</sub>	(13.2)	764	(11.2)	-10.3 <sub>3</sub>
West of Bayshore	1,688 <sub>3</sub>	(26.2)	2,391	(34.9)	41.6 <sub>3</sub>
Subtotal	2,540	(39.4)	3,155	(46.1)	24.2
<b>TOTAL HOUSING UNITS</b>	<b>6,443<sup>4</sup></b>	<b>(100.0)</b>	<b>6,848</b>	<b>(100.0)</b>	<b>6.3</b>

SOURCES: U.S. Census Data: San Mateo County Planning and Development Division.

NOTE:

1. U.S. Bureau of the Census, Census of Population and Housing: 1970, Census Tracts, Final Report PHC(1)-189, San Francisco-Oakland, California, SMSA, Table H-1.
2. Based on 1980 Census Counts of total housing units by Census Tract. Single Family and Multi-family breakdown estimated by San Mateo County Planning and Development Division.
3. The 1969 Special Census reported 6,485 housing units in East Palo Alto, which approximated the 1970 Census Tract findings of 6,443. However, the breakdown by housing type and location varied substantially for the two data sources. Research conducted by the County Planning staff indicated the 1969 Special Census breakdown was more accurate. Specifically, the 1969 Special Census found substantially fewer (231) single family housing units and substantially more (2,041) multi-family units West of Bayshore.
4. 1970 Census Tract Data indicated total housing units as 6,443; however, final revised total housing count figures released by the Census Bureau were somewhat higher, 6,546.

TABLE H-4

AGE DISTRIBUTION OF HOUSING UNITS, EAST PALO ALTO<sup>1</sup>

Year Built	Location		Total
	East of Bayshore	West of Bayshore	
Before 1940 (%)	372 (8.1)	64 (2.8)	436 (6.4)
1940 - 1949 (%)	886 (19.4)	166 (7.3)	1,052 (15.3)
1950 - 1959 (%)	2,350 (51.4)	551 (24.2)	2,901 (42.4)
1960 - 1969 (%)	827 (18.1)	1,227 (53.9)	2,054 (30.0)
1970 - 1979 <sup>2</sup> (%)	138 (3.0)	267 (11.8)	405 (5.9)
TOTAL (%)	4,573 (100.0)	2,275 (100.0)	6,848 (100.0)

SOURCE: U.S. Census Data

- NOTES: 1. There are slight discrepancies in housing units prior to 1969 as a result of some units having been demolished.
2. Based on net units added between 1970 and 1980 as compiled by County Planning Department staff from Building Department records.

TABLE H-5

OVERCROWDING - 1980 HOUSEHOLDS

<u>Persons Per Room</u>	<u>Renters</u>	<u>Owners</u>	<u>Total</u>
1.00 or less	2,955	2,445	5,400
1.01 - 1.50	205	279	484
1.51 or more	<u>404</u>	<u>188</u>	<u>592</u>
Total "Overcrowding"	609	467	1,076

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SOURCE: 1980 U.S. Census

#### 4.330 Income to Cost Correlation

In 1982, the median price of a home in East Palo Alto ranged from \$72,000 to \$78,000. In 1981, average monthly rents ranged from \$260 for studio apartments to \$700 for three-bedroom homes. Although housing costs in East Palo Alto tend to be lower than the San Mateo County average, overpayment for housing is not uncommon. The data presented in Table H-6 suggests that more than one-fourth of all homeowners and nearly half of all renter households were overpaying for housing in 1980 based on the generally accepted standard of 30% of household income as the maximum affordable housing expenditure.

#### 4.340 Determination of Housing Needs to 1990

In 1983, ABAG estimated the number of housing units which would be needed in East Palo Alto by 1990. These estimates are shown in Table H-7. It is the intent of the City to achieve the housing production levels specified by ABAG within the planning period using methods identified in the Action Program of the Housing Element.

#### 4.350 Special Needs Groups

4.351 Physically Disabled. The 1980 Census estimated that 317 East Palo Alto residents had a disability which prevented them from using public transportation. This is a good indicator of disabilities which might reflect special housing needs. Such needs may include accessible units, proximity to services and special construction features. Characteristics of the City's disabled population are provided by Table H-8.

4.352 Elderly. The 1980 Census estimated that 704 households in East Palo Alto were headed by a person over the age of 65. However, fewer than 10% of these households had incomes below the poverty line, indicating that the elderly have a lower poverty rate than the City's population as a whole. This suggests that their need for affordable housing may be less acute than that of other special needs groups.

4.353 Large Households. The number of large households (5 or more members) stood at 1,169 in 1980, representing 18% of all East Palo Alto households. Family sizes have declined slower in East Palo Alto than in other parts of the county. An indication of the extent to which the needs of large households are being met by the existing housing stock is provided by Table H-9 which compares the distribution of dwelling units by number of bedrooms to the number of persons per household. This Table is suggestive of a significant unmet need for housing for large households.



TABLE H-6

PERCENT OF HOUSEHOLD INCOME PAID FOR HOUSING, 1980

<u>Annual Income</u>	<u>% Income Paid for Housing</u>	<u># of Renter Households</u>	<u># of Owner Households</u>
Below \$10,000	Less than 15%	0	8
	15.0-29.9	204	131
	30% or More	1,276	366
	Not Computed	70	31
\$10,000- 19,999	Less than 15%	84	263
	15.0-29.9	803	330
	30% or More	415	205
	Not Computed	17	9
\$20,000+	Less than 15%	381	638
	15.0-29.9	293	333
	30% or More	32	65
	Not Computed	24	0

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SOURCE: U.S. Census

TABLE H-7

HOUSING NEEDS AS ESTIMATED BY ABAG

<u>Income Category</u>	<u>1980-1990 Increase</u>	<u>Percent of Increase</u>
Very Low	167	25%
Low	114	17%
Moderate	140	21%
Above Moderate	<u>247</u>	<u>37%</u>
TOTAL	668	100%

TABLE H-8

DISABLED PERSONS IN THE WORK FORCE  
IN EAST PALO ALTO IN 1980

	Male	Female	Total
# of Persons in EPA Work Force (16-64)	6,920	6,153	13,073
# of Persons in EPA Work Force that are prevented from working because of a disability	335	439	774
# of Persons in EPA Work Force that work with a disability	641	654	1,295
# of Disabled Persons in the EPA Work Force that could work, but have removed themselves from the Work Force	345	483	828
# of Disabled Persons in the Work Force that can use public transportation	---	---	317
# of Disabled Persons in the Work Force that cannot use public transportation but work anyway	---	---	294
# of Persons 65 or older with a public transportation disability	---	---	183

SOURCE: 1980 Census

TABLE H-9

PERSONS PER HOUSEHOLD COMPARED WITH DWELLING UNIT SIZE

<u>Number of Bedrooms</u>	<u>Renter Occupied</u>	<u>Owner Occupied</u>	<u>Persons Per Household</u>	<u># Renter Households</u>	<u># Owner Households</u>
0	729	46	1	1,540	436
1	1,665	320	2	964	680
2	793	863	3	376	510
3	355	1,518	4	272	509
-----					
4	22	129	5	185	321
5+	0	36	6+	227	436

SOURCE: U.S. Census. Dotted line added to illustrate the shortage of large units relative to the number of large households.

4.354 Female-Headed Households. A significant number of East Palo Alto households are headed by women as indicated by Table H-10. The number of female-headed households increased by 12.4% between 1970 and 1980. The fact that over 50% of all impoverished families with children in East Palo Alto are headed by females provides evidence that such households are likely to face serious housing affordability problems.

4.355 Farm Workers. According to the 1980 Census, 279 East Palo Alto residents were classified in the "farming, forestry and fishing" occupational category. Substantial expansion of agriculture in East Palo Alto is unlikely to occur in the future. In fact, analysis contained in the Land Use Element suggests that agricultural land uses are likely to decline in future years. Consequently, no increase in unmet housing need for farm worker households is expected.

4.356 Homeless. Recent estimates of the homeless population in San Mateo County indicate that there are roughly 6,000 homeless county residents. Information on the homeless in East Palo Alto suggests that their numbers, though not precisely known, are substantial and are likely to be increasing. The Bayshore Community Resource Center, for example, processes at least five requests each day for emergency shelter assistance for families and between ten and fifteen daily requests for single men and women. Based on available information, it is estimated that the minimum unmet need of the homeless is at least 240 units. This number would provide sufficient space for thirty days shelter to each household requesting assistance from the Bayshore Resource Center. Actual unmet need could be as high as 900 units.

#### 4.400 Analysis of Constraints to Affordable Housing Production

The production of housing in East Palo Alto and in the Bay Area in general is constrained by a variety of market and non-market forces. The governmental and non-governmental constraints to affordable housing in East Palo Alto are discussed below.

#### 4.410 Governmental Constraints

The primary local government policies which can be viewed as potential constraints to affordable housing development are found in the General Plan Land Use Element, the Zoning Ordinance, Building Standards and Permit Procedures.

4.411 Land Use Policies. Density standards contained in the Land Use Element place limits on the number of dwelling units which can be

TABLE H-10

FEMALE-HEADED HOUSEHOLDS

Families with Female Householder, no Spouse	Above Poverty	Below Poverty	Total	Average Household Income
Children 0-5	77	49	126	
Children 6-17	393	110	503	\$11,707
No Children	<u>181</u>	<u>13</u>	<u>194</u>	<u>13,244</u>
TOTAL	651	172	824	\$12,237

Female Householder:

With Children, no Spouse	679
Without Children, no Spouse	<u>357</u>
TOTAL	1,036

SOURCE: 1980 Census

placed on an acre. Other General Plan land use designations can be viewed as constraints to residential development to the extent that they restrict the use of land for housing.

- 4.412 Zoning Regulations. Density constraints contained in the Zoning Regulations include minimum lot sizes and maximum limits on lot coverage. Minimum lot sizes range from 500 square feet to 5,000 square feet. Lot coverage is restricted to 50% of the lot area. In general these limits pose minimal constraints to affordable housing development.
- 4.413 Building Standards. East Palo Alto's building standards are comparable to those of surrounding communities. Requirements for new units include ceiling and wall insulation, door and window infiltration control, efficiency requirements for heating and air conditioning and lighting and appliance standards. Because of their similarity to standards in nearby communities, the City's building standards are not considered to be significant constraints to affordable housing construction.
- 4.414 Permit Approval Process. One of the most significant factors constraining affordable housing construction in East Palo Alto is the length of time associated with the permit approval process. Applications for rezoning, text amendments and subdivision maps can take as long as 74 days to approve, while lot line adjustments, design review of projects and variances average between 30 and 45 days processing time. Analysis of a hypothetical multiple permit project consisting of rezoning, planned unit development, subdivision and zoning applications and environmental review indicates that such a project would take over 400 days from the submission of the completed application to the issuance of building permits.

Compared to other nearby cities, the development review process in East Palo Alto can take twice as long or more. Therefore, the time involved in the permit approval process must be viewed as a major constraint in the development of affordable housing units.

#### 4.420 Non-governmental Constraints to Housing Production

The primary non-government constraints to producing affordable housing are interest rates, mortgage availability and construction and land costs.

- 4.421 Interest Rates and Mortgage Availability. High interest rates and a shortage of lendable funds have posed perhaps the greatest constraints to housing production in recent years. Conventional mortgage rates increased to as high as 19% in 1982 before declining to between 11 and 12% in 1986. High interest rates

contribute to increased home ownership costs and increased rents as well. For example, on a \$1,000,000 loan to finance 25 rental units, each 1% rise in interest rates would require a monthly rent increase of \$32 per unit to cover the increased debt service.

In addition to high interest rates, East Palo Alto home buyers were confronted by limited mortgage availability during the early 1980's. Credit was particularly tight during 1981 and 1982. There are limits to what localities can do to address this problem as it is largely a function of fluctuations in the national economy.

4.422 Construction Costs. Housing construction costs have increased in recent years. According to a recent cost study by Bank of America, construction costs for a standard quality single family home in the Bay Area averaged \$38.46 per square foot in 1982 excluding permit fees and overhead. Multi-family construction costs on the Peninsula rose 8.9% between 1980 and 1981. Construction costs can be reduced through flexible building code enforcement and the use of alternative construction methods.

4.423 Land Costs. Bank of America has estimated that the value of Peninsula land rose by nearly 13% from October 1980 to October 1981. This is symptomatic of the rapid escalation which has occurred throughout this decade. Land costs are affected by market factors as well as local policies regulating residential land use. Rising land values pose a growing constraint to affordable housing production in East Palo Alto.

4.500 Availability of Sites Suitable for Residential Development

The City's assessment of available housing sites is based on a study by Naphthali Knox published in 1982 and entitled "A Little About Lots". This study identified 23 potential housing sites encompassing 100 acres in East Palo Alto. The total holding capacity of these sites was estimated at between 740 and 2,060 units. All of the sites are located in areas designated for residential use or ultimately intended for such uses. It appears clear, therefore, that sufficient sites exist upon which to locate the number of housing units which have been identified as being needed.

4.600 Housing Element Goals and Policies

4.601 GOAL I: TO PROVIDE NEW HOUSING OPPORTUNITIES.

Provide new housing opportunities in a suitable living environment to meet both the City's internal and a reasonable share of regional needs for all economic segments of the community.



## POLICIES:

1. Promote new residential development of all types: site-built single family units, rental apartments, condominiums, mobile homes, manufactured housing and limited equity housing cooperatives.
2. Require through development review a housing mix of different prices/rents in new developments and the dispersal of lower, moderate and higher cost housing throughout the City, each planning area and each subdivision where feasible.
3. Through appropriate land use regulations, agricultural preservation, and development review regulations, guide new development into those areas which can best accommodate growth, such as areas which are currently served by municipal facilities and services.
4. Control the rate of new residential development consistent with: (a) periodic estimates of internal needs arising from such factors as new employment; and (b) periodic estimates of the City's share of regional growth needs; (c) the rate at which municipal services can be expanded to accommodate new development; (d) the overall community size which will occur given the amount of land reserved for urban use; and (e) the environmental consequences of new development on agricultural lands.
5. Maintain design review procedures for multi-family residential developments and attached single family subdivisions to assure that new housing meets community standards and that a variety of housing designs are produced.
6. Continue to use the planned unit development zoning process to encourage creative solutions to housing design and orientation, consolidation of open spaces, and both sensitive and reasonable increases in residential densities.
7. Encourage increased densities through planned unit developments, mixed-use zones, and where appropriate, to reduce new housing costs, convert prime agricultural land, allow more efficient siting and orientation of buildings and consolidate open spaces.
8. Require the mixing of residential and commercial uses in appropriate transitional areas.

9. Encourage an adequate supply of housing (in line with projected estimates found in this report).
10. Encourage ownership housing opportunities for low income households earning fifty percent to eighty percent of the County median income.
11. Place emphasis on housing as shelter, a basic human need.

4.602 **GOAL II: MAINTAIN PLANNED GROWTH.**

Achieve an orderly pattern of residential development which considers internal and external growth needs, environmental protection, the provision of municipal services and accessibility to residents' daily activities.

**POLICIES:**

1. Preplan areas prior to development.
2. Relate new housing development to transportation needs and patterns, existing and future municipal service and facility capacities, employment, recreation, schools and shopping.
3. Continue to coordinate City housing policies and actions with those of San Mateo County and the Association of Bay Area Governments.
4. Encourage redevelopment of underused land in all areas of the City currently designated for residential use.

4.603 **GOAL III: PRESERVE THE EXISTING HOUSING STOCK AND INCREASE HOUSING OPPORTUNITIES WITHIN THE EXISTING STOCK.**

Prevent neighborhood blight throughout the community with a combination of code enforcement and assistance to residents and property owners who are financially unable to maintain their properties. Increase housing opportunities within the existing stock of housing.

**POLICIES:**

1. Use local, state and federal resources when available to assist low and moderate income homeowners as well as landlords renting to low and moderate income tenants in maintaining their units in sound condition.

2. Allow second units in single family areas, subject to appropriate development standards for size, parking, setbacks and other aspects of the zoning ordinance, to increase the supply of affordable housing and make better use of the land and existing stock of housing.
3. Periodically survey housing conditions to identify substandard houses.
4. Use a dual program of incentives, such as public assistance and code enforcement of health and safety standards to maintain private residential property.
5. Establish and update criteria for maintaining rental housing.
6. Work with builders to assist low and moderate income tenants displaced by private projects in locating affordable housing.
7. Preserve housing in commercial/residential transition areas.

4.604

**GOAL IV: ADDRESS SPECIAL HOUSING NEEDS OF EAST PALO ALTO RESIDENTS.**

Assure that adequate and affordable housing opportunities exist for the elderly, low and moderate income households, students and physically disabled households.

**POLICIES:**

1. Encourage an adequate supply of housing, such as second units, for senior citizens.
2. Investigate methods of assisting elderly homeowners in maintaining their homes.
3. Investigate incentives that encourage builders to construct housing meeting needs of the elderly.
4. Pursue local strategies to assist low and moderate income households in obtaining affordable housing. These include, but are not limited to, the following: use of local, state and federal resources when available; incentives to builders to produce affordable housing; investigation and support of limited equity cooperatives; approval of higher residential densities; control of resale prices on publicly assisted designated low price units; and approval of second units in single family areas.

5. Encourage the production and conversion of housing accessible to and usable by physically disabled households and assist these households in locating such accessible housing units.
6. Encourage the production and preservation of affordable family housing.
7. Utilize the City's Rent Stabilization Ordinance as a device to stabilize rents and accomplish affordable housing for persons of low and moderate income.

4.605 **GOAL V: MAINTAIN NEIGHBORHOOD QUALITY.**

Enhance the quality of life for all East Palo Alto residents through the creation and maintenance of well designed and appropriately served residential environments.

**POLICIES:**

1. Encourage housing plans and subdivisions which facilitate cohesive neighborhood development.
2. Encourage housing designs which provide for smooth transitions and complementary relationships among neighborhoods.
3. Identify and preserve important neighborhood or community features such as historic structures, significant trees or other vegetation, special open spaces or views, special architectural features and significant orientation and layouts of structures and circulation routes.
4. Plan for the convenient location of basic neighborhood services such as convenience shops, parks and schools.

4.606 **GOAL VI: ENCOURAGE ENERGY CONSERVATION.**

Maintain development and construction standards which encourage energy conservation in residential uses.

**POLICIES:**

1. Require energy conserving siting, construction, air conditioning, appliances and lighting in new residential development.
2. Require minimum energy conserving measures in existing housing such as weatherization.

3. Encourage the use of solar energy equipment on all proposed construction of single family and multifamily residential developments and existing residential units.

#### 4.700 Housing Element Action Program

In this section are the City's specific programs to meet its share of new housing needs and to address specially identified housing problems. Table H-11 summarizes the range of strategies to be employed by the Action Program.

#### 5.000 OPEN SPACE AND CONSERVATION ELEMENT

##### 5.100 Purpose

In order to eliminate duplication, the Conservation and Open Space Elements of the East Palo Alto General Plan have been consolidated here into a single document, a procedure authorized by Government Code Section 65301 and 65302. The intent of the Conservation Element is to describe the natural and nonrenewable or scarce resources of East Palo Alto and to identify appropriate methods for protecting, conserving, maintaining and/or using these resources. The purpose of the Open Space Element is to inventory privately and publicly owned open spaces and to identify measures for preserving, conserving and managing open space. Programs and policies outlined in the Open Space and Conservation Element are to be coordinated with state and regional open space and conservation programs.

##### 5.200 Existing Resources

Substantial portions of the lands of East Palo Alto remain in their natural state. The preservation of open space and other natural resources is of utmost importance to the well-being of City residents. Existing conditions within the City with respect to several of these key resources are discussed in the following sections.

##### 5.210 Open Space

East Palo Alto has approximately 321 acres designated as open space. Because of the vulnerability of open space areas to urban encroachment, it is important that the City establish policies to facilitate the long term use of these properties as open space. An inventory of open space areas is provided by Figure O-1 which highlights the locations described below.

- 5.211 Ravenswood High School Site. 19.2 acres of the approximately 29.6 acres of land once occupied by Ravenswood High School have been earmarked for open space uses. The lands at this location contain facilities for various recreational activities including tennis, volleyball, baseball, football and track and field.

TABLE H-11

ACTION PROGRAM ELEMENTS

A. Increasing New Housing Development

<u>Action</u>	<u>Responsible Agent</u>	<u>Time Frame</u>	<u>Number of Units</u>	<u>Funding Source</u>
1. Continue to encourage increased residential densities for single family and mixed-use projects by planned unit development zoning.	Community Development/ City Council	Ongoing	50	Private Funding and possible use of State Housing Funds
2. Approve second units in single family areas.	Planning Commission/ Community Development	Ongoing	20	Private Funding
3. Continue to approve mobile homes/manufactured housing on permanent foundations in single family areas subject to design review.	Community Development/ Planning Commission	Ongoing	40	Private Funding Non-Profit and Church Sponsored
4. Review appropriate timing for phasing lands out of agricultural reserve and rezoning them for residential development.	City Council/Community Development	Ongoing	30	Combination of Public and Private Funding

B. Preserve and Increase Opportunities in Existing Housing Stock

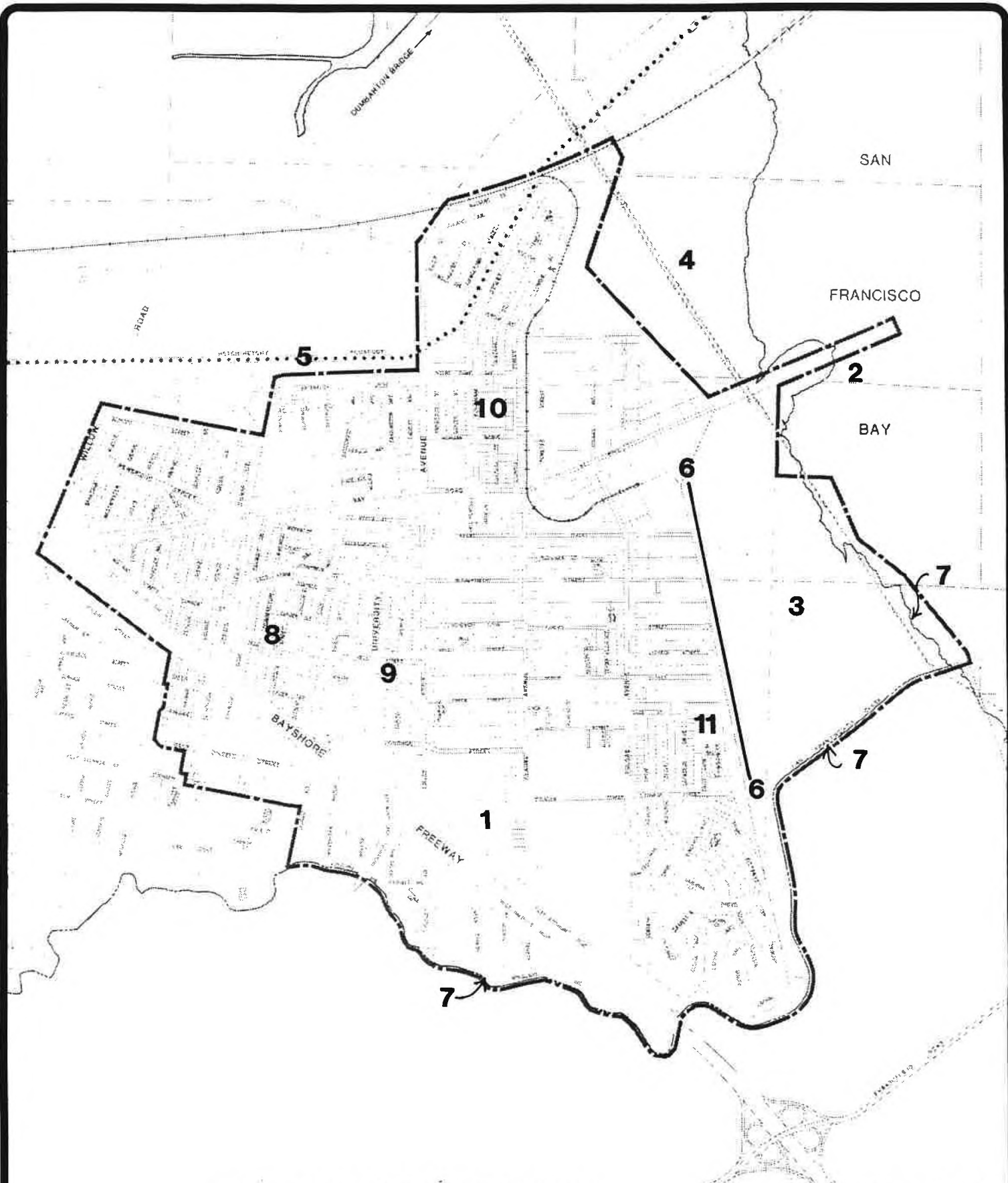
1. Encourage the rehabilitation, repair and replacement of substandard units (includes approximately 700 units).	East Palo Alto and San Mateo County Community Development Departments	Ongoing	50 to 75	Community Develop- ment Block Grant Funds
2. Use mixed-use zoning in commercial core areas.	Private Property Owners	Ongoing		
3. Approve second units as a means of providing additional housing for lower income residents.	Planning Commission/ Community Development	Ongoing	20	Private Funding

<u>Action</u>	<u>Responsible Agent</u>	<u>Time Frame</u>	<u>Number of Units</u>	<u>Funding Source</u>
4. Investigate relocation service for low income residents displaced by private development projects.	City Council/Community Development	Ongoing	N/A	Private Sources
<b>C. <u>Addressing Special Housing Needs</u></b>				
<b>1. <u>Elderly Households</u></b>				
a. Encourage use of second units to meet elderly needs for affordable housing.	Planning Commission/Community Development	Ongoing	20	Private Funding
b. Implement builder incentives to provide small, affordable units for low income and elderly.	City Council/Community Development	Begin 1986	25	Private Funding
c. Investigate other funding for low income and elderly households.	City Council/Community Development	Ongoing	35	California Housing Finance Agency
<b>2. <u>Very Low, Low and Moderate Income Households</u></b>				
a. Designate lower price unit set aside through the affordable housing program.	City Council/Community Development	Ongoing	40	Private Funding
b. Pursue tax-exempt financing for low and moderate income renters and ownership units.	City Council/Community Development	Ongoing	25	California Housing Finance Agency
c. Facilitate establishment of a non-profit housing corporation to establish self-help and other housing assistance programs.	City Council/Community Development	Begin 1986	N/A	City Redevelopment Agency
d. Investigate acquisition of surplus public land for the development of affordable housing.	City Council/Community Development	Begin 1986	25	Various Public and Private Sources

<u>Action</u>	<u>Responsible Agent</u>	<u>Time Frame</u>	<u>Number of Units</u>	<u>Funding Source</u>
e. Facilitate the development of housing for female-headed single family households in poverty.	Planning Commission/ Community Development	Begin 1986	10	City Redevelopment Agency
<u>3. Physically Disabled Residents</u>				
a. Enforce handicap access standards.	Community Development	Ongoing	Applies to all units developed	Built into Existing Building Code Requirements
b. Investigate other funding sources for low income families.	Community Development	Ongoing	20	Other Grants and State and Federal Funding Sources
<u>D. Preserve Neighborhood Quality</u>				
1. Design review all multi-family projects and single family subdivisions.	Community Development/ Planning Commission	Ongoing	Applies to all units developed	Depends on Developer
<u>E. Energy Conservation</u>				
1. Enforce State Energy Conservation Standards.	Community Development	Ongoing	Applies to all units	Various Funding Sources depending upon Developer
2. Support weatherization assistance programs.	Non-profit Agencies in cooperation with the PG&E Zip Program	Ongoing	Applies to all units developed	Various Funding Sources depending upon Developer

To the extent that the City's resources allow and the findings are not contrary to City policies, the findings of studies listed in the Housing Element will be implemented.





**OPEN SPACE INVENTORY**

**FIG. 0-1**

**EAST PALO ALTO GENERAL PLAN**

DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT - CITY OF EAST PALO ALTO, CA.



STREET NAMES COURTESY OF DE MONET INDUSTRIES, INC

- 5.212 Cooley Landing. This unimproved site located at the end of Bay Road represents one of the most ecologically valuable unimproved open space resources in the community. The area contains baylands, marshes, salt ponds and tidal zones and is home to a variety of plants and wildlife. It provides natural scenic beauty along the northeastern boundary of the City.
- 5.213 Marshland Area. This is the largest natural open space area in the City. It runs alongside the eastern edge of the City from U.S. 101 north to Bay Road. The area consists of baylands, marshes, salt ponds and portions of San Francisquito Creek and is home for significant amounts of vegetation and wildlife. It is the City's intent to designate this area as part of a future shoreline park, including provisions for an improved trail system and a marshland study area. It is also the City's intent to connect this area to Martin Luther King Park located west of the area at the end of Daisy Lane.
- 5.214 Salt Pond. Located outside of the City limits on the edge of the bay, the salt pond supports a variety of wildlife species. Birds use the pond as a resting and breeding area. Various rodents may be found in the area along with substantial vegetation on the bay side of the marsh. Although not located within the City's boundaries, it is a valuable open space which must be maintained.
- 5.215 Hetch Hetchy Aqueduct. This facility is located underground running through the northern corner of the City. The land above the aqueduct is owned by the City and County of San Francisco and is required to be maintained in open space to facilitate access for repairs.
- 5.216 Pacific Gas & Electric Company Easement. Located in the eastern portion of the City, the PG&E easement contains large transformer towers and power lines along its entire length. Although inaccessible to the public, the easement provides a significant open space within the City.
- 5.217 San Francisquito Creek. San Francisquito Creek borders the City's southern end from Euclid Avenue to the Pulgas Avenue/West Bayshore intersection. From this point it flows in a northeasterly direction toward the San Francisco Bay. The creek serves as a levee and drainage channel for the area. The City intends to maintain the creek in its natural state.
- 5.218 Bell Street Water Tower Site. Owned by the Palo Alto Mutual Water Company, the Bell Street water tower site is located in the western part of the City at the west end of Bell Street between Oakwood Drive and Addison Avenue. Although this site is not open to the public, it provides significant open space in a part of the City that has few open space areas.

- 5.219 Bell Street Park. This facility provides an abundance of open space and recreational activities to East Palo Alto residents. Centrally located on the southwest corner of University Avenue and Bell Street, it contains a gymnasium, swimming pool and playfields, and serves as the community's main recreational facility.
- 5.2111 Jack Farrell Park. Located on Fordham Street between Notre Dame and Michigan Avenues, this park contains a baseball field, basketball courts, open space for various field sports, picnic areas and a tot lot. This facility primarily serves the surrounding neighborhood.
- 5.2112 Martin Luther King Junior Park. Largely undeveloped, this park is located on Daisy Lane near the eastern terminus of O'Connor Street. This site will be improved for public use and linked with the proposed shoreline trail system.

#### 5.220 Air Quality

East Palo Alto is located in the southern half of the San Francisco air basin. The meteorology of the basin is dominated by the Pacific Ocean and San Francisco Bay which acts as a trap for air pollutants. Local air quality is strongly influenced by global weather patterns. When strong jet stream winds or storm tracks dominate the air basin, air pollution concentrations are low. Conversely, when high pressure systems dominate, pollution concentrations are high. The dispersion of pollutant concentrations is dependent upon the wind speed and the amount of vertical mixing. A thermal inversion occurs when air temperatures rise at higher altitudes preventing the normal flow of air upward. Consequently, pollutants in varying concentrations become trapped near the ground.

Five pollutants are measured by the Bay Area Air Quality Management District (BAAQMD) at the nearest monitoring station in Redwood City. Table O-1 provides a summary of air quality measurements from this station between 1975 and 1980. Only ozone, carbon monoxide and suspended particulates reach levels high enough to violate air quality standards. Ozone concentrations have exceeded BAAQMD's standards over a dozen times per year during the recent past. Carbon monoxide also exceeds BAAQMD's eight hour standards a number of times each year, and suspended particulates exceed standard levels a few days a year. Ozone and carbon monoxide reach their highest levels in late fall and winter.

The current air quality in East Palo Alto is not readily distinguishable from other urban Peninsula locations except that the area is subject to breezes from the bay and thus may be marginally less polluted than more urbanized land areas. This is especially true when viewing air quality in the regional context. A pollution problem is not merely a local one. More involvement and guidance at the regional, state and federal levels is necessary to tackle the problem.

TABLE O-1

SUMMARY OF RECENT AIR QUALITY IN PROJECT AREA  
(Redwood City Monitoring Station)

Pollutant Occurrence	Year				Bay Area Standard	Measurement Units
	1975	1976	1977	1980		
Ozone - Maximum	13.0	17.0	14.0	15.0	8****	pphm*, 1-hour days/year
Exceedances	14.0	16.0	3.0	2.0	1	
Carbon Monoxide Maximum	10.1	10.2	8.1	8.2	35	ppm**, 1-hour
Exceedances	2.0	10.0	0.0	0.0	1	days/year
8-hour Exceedances	2.0	10.0	0.0	0.0	1	days/year above 9 ppm** average
Nitrogen Dioxide- Maximum	24.0	21.0	15.0	15.0	25	pphm*, 1-hour
Exceedances	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	1	days/year
Sulfur Dioxide- Maximum	14.0	7.0	5.0	0.0	50	pphm*, 1-hour
Exceedances	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	2	percent days/year
Total Suspended particulates-Mean	42.0	59.0	52.0	46.0	60	ug/m3***, Annual Geometric Mean
Maximum Exceedances	1.7	13.0	1.9	1.0	2	percent days/year above 100 ug/m3***

SOURCE: Bay Area Air Pollution Control District, San Francisco.

- \* Parts per hundred million
- \*\* Parts per million
- \*\*\* Micrograms per cubic meter
- \*\*\*\* in 1979, this standard was revised to 12 pphm for 1 hour.

NOTE: The years 1975, 1976 and 1977 represent worst case situations which had not been surpassed up to 1982.

### 5.230 Water Quality

Water is a highly valuable resource which needs to be protected and properly utilized. Water pollution is caused primarily by surface runoff which carries pesticides and other contaminants into streams, wells and the San Francisco Bay. These contaminants kill off wildlife in and around the bay while damaging valuable fresh water supplies. Table 0-2 contains a summary of typical water quality problems related to surface runoff.

The quality of ground water in the community is considered poor due to contamination from local industry. Currently in East Palo Alto, ground water resources are being used by approximately 600 private, domestic and irrigation wells. Following several years of low precipitation, increased ground water use, extensive polluting and colonization of stream beds, the ground water levels have dropped, allowing sea water to filter into some lower aquifers beneath the East Palo Alto area. Although ground water is used only to a limited degree, its value is becoming more important. The economic importance of ground water resources cannot be overlooked. The continued urbanization of East Palo Alto in combination with the occurrence of water shortages will ultimately place a premium on the ground water supply. However, it will be useless if it continues to be polluted.

### 5.240 Mineral Resources

East Palo Alto is underlain by alluvial sediments consisting of clays, sands and gravels. Surface soils found in the community generally fall within three categories: Sonora-Pleasanton association, Sunnyvale-Castro association, and the Reyes-Alviso association, (Figure 0-2). Development of remaining open areas is generally feasible from an engineering and geologic viewpoint following individual site investigations.

The primary mineral resources in the area are sand, gravel, rock and salt. In the past, some salt evaporators did exist in the area adjacent to the San Francisco Bay, but now all are abandoned. Given the fact that better and more economically feasible deposits of these materials are available elsewhere in the region, the significance of East Palo Alto's mineral resources are relatively minor. However, the destruction of the natural beauty of Cooley Landing in which most of these deposits are located make utilization of local mineral resources an unacceptable alternative.

### 5.250 Agriculture

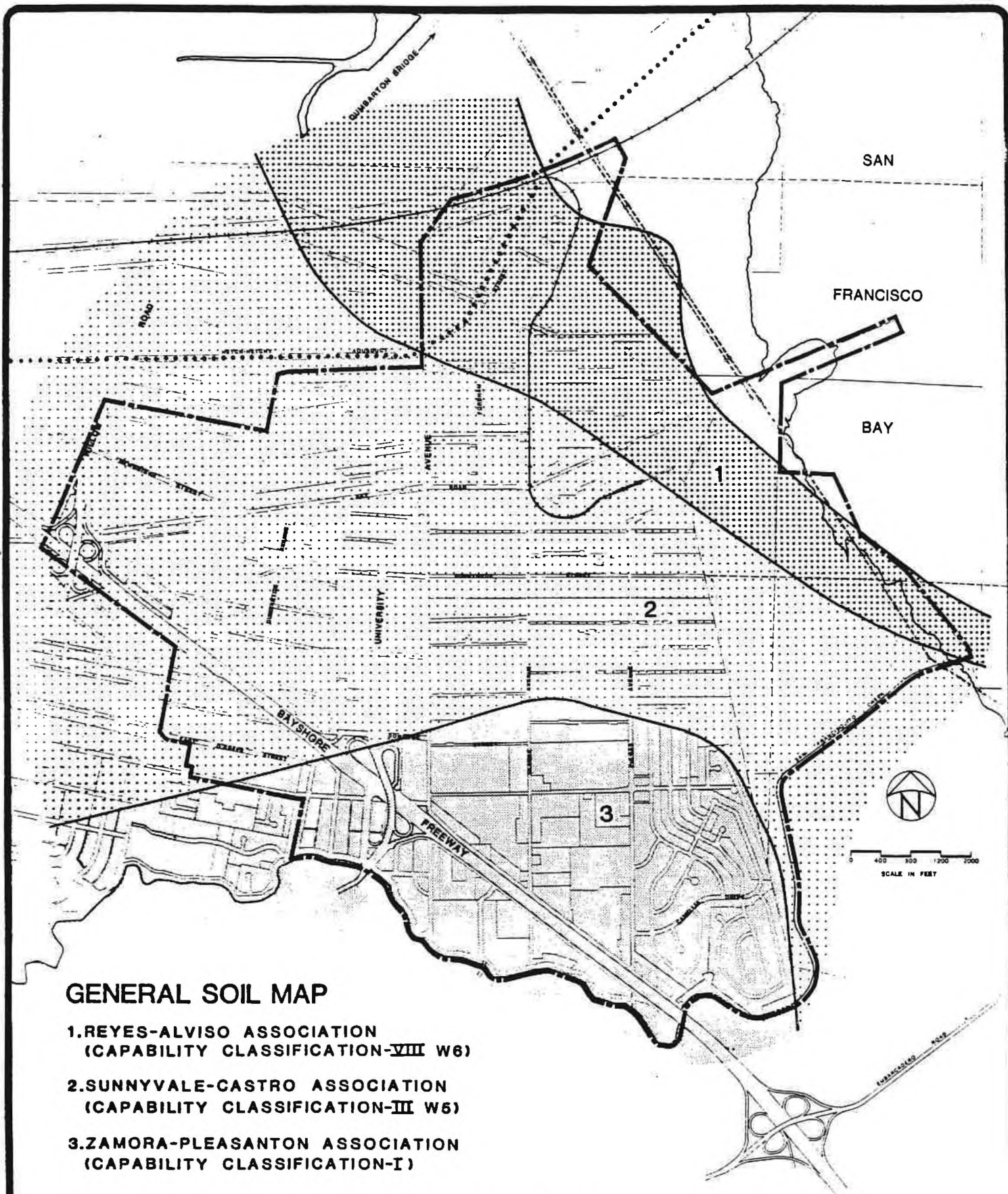
In the past, agriculture played an important role in East Palo Alto's economy. Today, only a relatively small amount of the community's prime agricultural land remains. Although the economic return from agriculture is small, the significance of agricultural use is in the fact that it provides open space within the community. Conversely, agricultural lands under Williamson Act contracts produce lower property tax revenues to the City. Some agricultural preserves should be maintained to insure that these lands are utilized for open space.

TABLE 0-2  
TYPICAL WATER QUALITY PROBLEMS RELATED TO SURFACE RUNOFF  
IN SAN MATEO COUNTY

PROBLEM	EFFECT	CAUSE
SILTATIONS/ EROSION	Makes water more turbid. Covers fish spawning beds. Generally clogs streams. Reduces reservoir capacity.	Improper construction or agricultural practices. Any practice which exposes bare soil to rain and runoff or any soil to excessive runoff.
GREASE & OIL	Unsightly. Coats birds and aquatic life. Makes recrea- tional use undesirable. Toxic to aquatic life.	Industrial activity. Traffic. Dumping of motor oil and other floating substances.
DEBRIS & LITTER	Unsightly. Coats birds and aquatic life. Makes recrea- tional use undesirable.	Improper dumping and refuse disposal and general littering where material can be washed off.
BACTERIAL CONTAMINATION	Indicative of presence of fecal material. Contact/ ingestion can cause disease. Contaminates aquatic life in specific areas, especially shellfish. Eliminates recreational uses depending on level of contamination.	Deposit of animal fecal matter in areas subject to runoff. Cross connec- tions with sanitary sewers. Malfunctioning septic tanks.
NUTRIENT/ ALGAE GROWTH	Algae can cause taste & odors in drinking water. Can result in low concentrations of dis- solved oxygen. Some is good; too much is bad. Hard to control once started in rela- tively confined water.	From natural organic material, fertilizers, industrial runoff, traffic.

PROBLEM	EFFECT	CAUSE
HEAVY METALS PESTICIDES AND OTHER TOXIC CHEMICALS	Toxic to aquatic life. Tendency to magnify in food chain, i.e., lower forms have relatively low concentrations in body tissue, higher forms (fish & aquatic birds) have high concentrations.	Automobile operation, runoff from industrial uses. Runoff from refuse and garbage. Leaching of mine tailings.

SOURCE: Association of Bay Area Governments, San Francisco Bay Area Environmental Management Plan, Volume 1, June, 1978.



**GENERAL SOIL MAP**

- 1. REYES-ALVISO ASSOCIATION  
(CAPABILITY CLASSIFICATION-VIII W6)**
- 2. SUNNYVALE-CASTRO ASSOCIATION  
(CAPABILITY CLASSIFICATION-III W5)**
- 3. ZAMORA-PLEASANTON ASSOCIATION  
(CAPABILITY CLASSIFICATION-I)**

SOURCE: U.S.D.A. SOIL CONSERVATION SERVICE 1974

**FIG. O-2**



## 5.260 Wildlife

Despite urbanization, the East Palo Alto area still possesses a considerable variety of wildlife. In order to maintain this wildlife, it is necessary to preserve those areas critical to the natural habitats of the species. Of particular importance is the maintenance of the baylands and open space corridors which allow wildlife a means of entering and leaving the area. Isolated islands of open space do not allow the various species of wildlife to replenish their numbers when decimated by domestic animals, hunters, cars and people. At present, a number of natural corridors exist where development and roads should not be allowed to penetrate. These include San Francisquito Creek, the Hetch Hetchy right-of-way, the Pacific Gas & Electric right-of-way, and the baylands including Cooley Landing. Also important to the maintenance of wildlife is the preservation of the salt ponds and natural streams which provide the water supply critically needed to sustain certain species. Development should not be allowed to destroy these water sources nor isolate them from wildlife corridors. Those areas of East Palo Alto with high wildlife value have been identified and will be used as one of the factors determining open space preservation, but wildlife preservation will focus on two rare and endangered species in East Palo Alto: the California Clapper Rail and the Salt Marsh Harvest Mouse. Both of these species are protected by state and federal legislation. The Salt Marsh Harvest Mouse is known to inhabit the salt marshes of East Palo Alto. Its endangered status is due to the loss of habitat through diking and filling of the tidal marsh on which the mouse is dependent for cover. This animal has federal "endangered" designation and a state "rare and endangered" designation. The California Clapper Rail inhabits the tidal salt marshes of East Palo Alto. Like the Harvest Mouse, its endangered status is due to loss of habitat throughout the bay. The California Clapper Rail has both federal and state "endangered" status.

Most qualitative evaluations of the abundance of each species of amphibians, reptiles, birds and mammals are relative and subjective. Nevertheless, the following general comments can be made about each classification:

- 5.261 Amphibians. The amphibians that reside in East Palo Alto do not comprise a great portion of the wildlife. However, the baylands do provide for their living space and, therefore, must be maintained.
- 5.262 Reptiles. The number of reptiles is low compared to birds and mammals; however, various species of garter snakes and lizards are not uncommon.
- 5.263 Birds. Birds are the most common animal found in East Palo Alto. Although in relative abundance, migratory patterns and nesting characteristics vary greatly among species. Local residents are fortunate to have several hundred species of resident and migratory birds. The baylands represent the main area inhabited by birds.

5.264 Mammals. No mammal is endemic to East Palo Alto's environs. However, the encroachment of human habitation restricts the movements and territories of existing mammals. Only those species which tolerate man's aggression toward them proliferate. Several species exist readily in man's presence living on his wastes and in niches provided by various types of development.

#### 5.270 Vegetation

East Palo Alto's residential areas are characterized by a large number of mature trees. Most of these were introduced with urban development. Planting is random throughout the community giving the appearance of natural groves. With urbanization the once present native species characteristic of grassland and estuarine habitats have been eliminated except for a few vacant areas. Non-native vegetation is generally of little habitat value except for species tolerant of human activity, including a variety of birds, rodents, reptiles and insects.

As might be expected, the areas having the highest natural vegetation coincide to a great degree with the high wildlife value areas. Thus, the areas of East Palo Alto containing the most important stands of vegetation are included in the areas to be preserved in the Open Space Element.

The only known endangered plant in East Palo Alto is the Point Reyes Bird Beak. However, this species was last sighted prior to 1945 and the location of the sighting is not precisely known, although it occurred on Cooley's Landing. With continual development of the area since that time, the status of the Point Reyes Bird Beak is unknown.

#### 5.280 Visual Resources

Although the concept of natural scenic beauty is somewhat subjective, its impact upon the livability and desirability of a community is very real. East Palo Alto possesses a great deal of natural beauty highlighted by the presence of the baylands. San Francisco Bay is a major natural resource for East Palo Alto providing a wide range of visual amenities.

#### 5.300 Open Space and Conservation Goals and Policies

The overall framework of the goals and policies of the Open Space Element are oriented towards protection, preservation, accessibility and expansion.

#### 5.301 **GOAL I: TO PROTECT EAST PALO ALTO'S OPEN SPACE RESOURCES FROM DEVELOPMENT ENCROACHMENT.**

##### POLICIES:

1. Any action by the City involving the use of designated open space lands must be consistent with the Open Space Element of the General Plan.

2. No building permit may be issued, no subdivision map approved and no open space zone rezoned to any use other than open space, unless the proposed construction, subdivision or rezoning is consistent with the Open Space Element of the General Plan.
3. Protect designated open space areas from the adverse effects of urbanization by discouraging land uses that are inconsistent with uses prescribed by the zoning ordinance.

5.302 **GOAL II: TO PRESERVE EAST PALO ALTO'S EXISTING OPEN SPACE RESOURCES.**

**POLICIES:**

1. Preserve and restore existing natural and improved open space lands in order to meet the open space needs of the City.
2. Seek to acquire and establish special preservation areas in order to protect the habitats of rare and endangered species, wildlife and plants within the City, and to preserve these areas in their natural states.
3. Seek to acquire through purchase or donation, land rights or rights in land in order to facilitate the protection and preservation of wildlife and vegetation in designated open space areas.
4. Maintain and enhance East Palo Alto's image of being a bayfront community by maintaining the baylands for open space and recreational uses.

5.303 **GOAL III: TO ENSURE ACCESSIBILITY TO EAST PALO ALTO'S OPEN SPACE RESOURCES.**

**POLICIES:**

1. Make designated open space lands accessible and available to the public to the extent allowed by the sensitivity and susceptibility to damage of these lands.
2. Minimize visual obstruction of the baylands, vistas and open space areas of the City.
3. Promote public access to open space areas, where possible, by providing pathways, access points, trailways and bridges while protecting the privacy and security of adjacent residents, and while protecting and enhancing the open spaces themselves.

5.304

**GOAL IV: TO EXPAND AND ENHANCE EAST PALO ALTO'S OPEN SPACE RESOURCES.**

**POLICIES:**

1. Identify opportunities to expand the City's open space resources in order to create more available open space within the City.
2. Explore alternatives and options that will allow the City to purchase the marshland area.
3. Cooperate with and consider joint ventures with appropriate agencies (both public and private) in order to provide more open space in the City.
4. Acquire land or land rights in order to provide more open space within the City.
5. Acquire through donation and purchase, land or rights in land in order to plan and develop a City-wide walking trail system. Such acquisition should primarily involve trails in the baylands and just outside the urbanized area.
6. Through donations and purchase, acquire land or rights in land in order to plan and develop a City-wide bicycle trail system which connects the various open spaces throughout the City.
7. Complete a plan which will facilitate the development of a shoreline park in the City.
8. Enter into cooperative programs with public agencies and private groups in order to provide a trail system which ties together the urban area with the major open space recreational resources within the region.
9. Cooperatively plan for recreational facilities and open space preservation of the baylands with adjacent communities, including the Cities of Menlo Park and Palo Alto, the Mid-Peninsula Regional Open Space District, the Bay Conservation and Development Commission, and other agencies with jurisdiction over the planning of the baylands.
10. Provide public open space within every planning area in the City through the consideration of rezoning lands not currently zoned for open space activities. In addition, the City shall seek to fulfill this policy through acquisition or donation of land identified to have rezoning potential.

11. Require through intensified zoning and development standards that all proposed developments provide significant amounts of landscaping throughout the project site and that all existing mature, attractive vegetation be incorporated into the project to the greatest extent possible.
12. Through the "right of first refusal", seek to acquire (through purchase or donation) abandoned school sites for future open space and recreational uses.
13. Provide landscaped median strips in the City's streets to the greatest extent possible.
14. Make allowances through revised zoning standards or through the creation of a specific plan for the provision of a mini zoo within one of the City's designated open space areas.

5.305 **GOAL V: TO PRESERVE AND MAINTAIN AIR QUALITY.**

**POLICIES:**

1. Development projects shall be located and designed in a manner which will conserve air quality and minimize direct and indirect emissions of air contaminants; e.g. direct emissions should be reduced through energy conserving construction which minimizes space heating; indirect emissions should be reduced from motor vehicle travel generated by the project.
2. Development projects which, separately or cumulatively with other projects, would cause air quality standards to be exceeded or would have significant adverse air quality effects through direct and/or indirect emissions, would not be approved unless the City of East Palo Alto, after consultation with the Bay Area Air Quality Management District, explicitly finds that the project incorporates feasible mitigation measures or that there are overriding reasons for approving the project.
3. Encourage transportation modes which minimize single passenger motor vehicle use and the resulting contaminant emissions. Alternate modes to be encouraged include: public transit, ride-sharing, shortened and combined motor vehicle trips to work and to services, use of bicycles and walking. (Also in Circulation Element)
4. Encourage employers to foster employer-based transportation control measures such as ride-sharing, use of public transportation, bicycling and walking for employees. (Also in Circulation Element)

5. Encourage new residential development to include housing affordable to employees of work places in East Palo Alto and its immediate environs in order to minimize commuting and the motor vehicle emissions generated thereby. (Also in Housing Element)
6. This plan shall be interpreted and implemented consistently with the Bay Area Regional Air Quality Management Plan, as updated from time to time.
7. Guidance\* of the Bay Area Air Quality Management District shall be sought in the review of major or significant projects, through the referral to BAAQMD of such Environmental Impact Reports and Negative Declarations for consultation.

\* Amended June 18, 1986, see attached Table 0-3, listing thresholds for referral.

5.306 **GOAL VI: TO IMPROVE AND MAINTAIN WATER QUALITY.**

**POLICIES:**

1. As a means of controlling both air and water pollution, heavy industrial uses should be discouraged in the City's industrial zones and light industrial uses should be encouraged.
2. Maintain some agricultural land within the City to the greatest extent possible.
3. Actively monitor and help to enforce water discharge requirements of the Regional Water Quality Control District.
4. In order to utilize the available water supply more effectively, the City should make greater use of native plant materials in landscaping public lands and should encourage private landowners and residents to do so as well.
5. An education program should be started to make the general public aware of how utilization of pesticides and fertilizers for yards and gardens pollutes the natural streams.

5.307 **GOAL VII: TO PRESERVE AND PROTECT THE CITY'S MINERAL RESOURCES.**

**POLICIES:**

1. Mining uses shall be discouraged within the City.

5.308 **GOAL VIII: TO MAINTAIN A REASONABLE BALANCE OF AGRICULTURAL LAND WITHIN THE URBAN ENVIRONMENT.**

TABLE 0-3

THRESHOLDS FOR REFERRAL OF ENVIRONMENTAL DOCUMENTS TO BAAQMD

<u>Land Use Category</u>	<u>Size Unit</u>	<u>Threshold Levels, See Note A</u>
<u>Housing</u>		
Single Family	Dwelling	200 units
Apartments	Unit	300 units
<u>Parking Space</u>	250 spaces	
<u>Shopping Center</u>		
Regional	Square Feet	60,000 ft <sup>2</sup>
Neighborhood	Floor Area	or 6 acres
Individual Store	or acres	of land area
<u>Industry - See Note B</u>		
Undifferentiated	Acre	15 acres
Mass Production	Acre	15 acres
Industrial park	Acre	20 acres
Administration	Acre	20 acres
Warehouse	Acre	20 acres
Research & Development	Acre	40 acres
<u>Office Building</u>	Square Feet	100,000 ft <sup>2</sup>
<u>Government Building</u>	Square Feet	30,000 ft <sup>2</sup>
<u>Motel</u>	Unit	200 units
<u>Restaurant</u>		
Full-serve	Seat	700 seats
Fast-Food	Employee	40 employees
Drive-in	Square Feet	4,000 ft <sup>2</sup>
<u>Theater</u>		

Any Facility Attracting or Generating: 2000 motor trips/day  
(1000 vehicles in and out)

Any Airport, Port or Marina, Sports Stadium, Hospital, Major Road Project, Major Transportation Project

NOTE A. These values are abridged from Table III-A-1 of the BAAQMD Report titled AIR QUALITY AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT; GUIDELINES FOR ASSESSING IMPACTS OF PROJECTS AND PLANS, November 1985.

NOTE B. Industrial sources typically are direct emitters of air contaminants and may require a permit from the BAAQMD. Developers should contact the Bay Area Air Quality Management District, Permit Services Division, (415) 771-6000.

POLICIES

1. The City shall attempt to retain some portions of its agricultural lands for open space purposes. (Also in the Open Space Element)
2. The City shall carefully review all applications for cancellation of Williamson Act Contracts to ensure that open space, industrial and fiscal objectives are reasonably met.

5.309 GOAL IX: TO PROTECT THE COMMUNITY'S WILDLIFE.

POLICIES:

1. A spay and neuter education program should be put into action as a means of controlling the pet population and easing the impact of pet attacks on wild animals.

5.310 GOAL X: TO PRESERVE MAJOR VEGETATION.

POLICIES:

1. The City shall encourage the maintenance of trees and other major forms of plant life to the greatest extent possible through the Design Review and Public Hearing Process.
2. The City shall vigorously enforce provisions of the Heritage Tree Ordinance.

5.311 GOAL XI: TO MAINTAIN AND ENHANCE THE CITY'S SCENIC BEAUTY.

POLICIES:

1. The City will work together with the Mid-Peninsula Open Space District to create a Specific Plan to protect the baylands.
2. Channelization of creeks shall be limited. They shall be left in their natural states.

5.312 GOAL XII: TO CONSIDER ENVIRONMENTAL CONSTRAINTS IN MAKING LAND USE DECISIONS AND TO BALANCE THE NEED FOR ACCOMMODATING NEW DEVELOPMENT WITH THE NEED TO REDUCE ENVIRONMENTAL DAMAGE FROM DEVELOPMENT.

OBJECTIVE NO. 1: Identify natural environmental constraints to development and apply appropriate conditions in development approval to address those constraints.



POLICIES:

1. Identify areas prone to flooding and with unstable soils, or containing other geologic hazards. Provide standards in the City's zoning, subdivision and other land use regulations to address these constraints.
2. Reduce the effects of human-created environmental constraints with standards addressing traffic and parking, light and glare, landscaping, noises, etc.

OBJECTIVE NO. 2: Encourage energy conservation in land use.

POLICIES:

1. Encourage site plans which minimize paved surfaces.
2. Encourage, where appropriate, housing clusters with common walls.
3. Enforce state energy standards for new structures.
4. Develop City energy conservation standards to address weatherproofing, heat loss through surfaces, appliance efficiency and other factors.
5. Encourage the preservation of healthy, mature vegetation.

5.313

GOAL XIII: TO PRESERVE HISTORICALLY, ARCHITECTURALLY, CULTURALLY AND EDUCATIONALLY SIGNIFICANT FEATURES IN THE CITY OF EAST PALO ALTO.

OBJECTIVE NO. 1: Establish a citizen's advisory body to identify significant features.

POLICIES:

1. Maintain an inventory of designated historical resources.
2. The advisory body should identify and recommend potential historical resources based on criteria which address the historic and architectural (or other) uniqueness of the site; its cultural and educational value to the City; the condition of the feature (the importance of the historic event or period represented by the potential historic resource); and the age of the site.
3. The advisory body should review land use and construction applications which involve historical resources. Standards of review should address the extent of any alteration or addition, and its effect on the architectural style or history of the structure.

OBJECTIVE NO. 2: Establish standards for preservation of historical structures and districts.

POLICIES:

1. The designation of an historical resource should be based on criteria which consider the uniqueness and importance of the area to be designated, the cultural and educational value of the area, the age of natural or artificial features in the proposed district, and the willingness of property owners to participate in preservation of designated historical resources.
2. Encourage restoration and use of historic structures in a manner compatible with the historic value of the structure.
3. Regulations governing the use of an historic structure should allow a reasonable return to the property owner.
4. The City should, if requested, assist property owners in obtaining technical assistance in restoring significant features.

OBJECTIVE NO. 3: Encourage public awareness of landmarks and historical artifacts.

POLICIES:

1. Publicize the existence of landmarks with appropriate displays, monuments, plaques, brochures, etc.
2. Encourage the development of a City of East Palo Alto museum to store, display and showcase items of historic, architectural and cultural significance, as well as any other appropriate contributions from the community.

OBJECTIVE NO. 4: Undertake incentives for historic preservation.

POLICIES:

1. Assist property owners in obtaining tax credits for preservation.
2. Establish historic preservation easements, where appropriate, to preserve historical resources.
3. In rare instances, purchase historic structures.

5.400 Open Space and Conservation Action Program

Section 65562 of the Government Code requires that the Open Space Element contain a program of specific measures which the legislative body intends to

pursue in implementing its open space goals and policies. This section of the element lists the implementation measures which will assist in supporting and implementing its goals and policies.

- 5.401 All lands in the City presently zoned COSC (Community Open Space Conservation District) and RM (Resource Management District) are to be maintained as open space. Any proposed rezoning of the lands to any other land use must be discouraged.
- 5.402 Promote the acquisition of open space lands by initiating bond issues on the ballots, by pursuing grants from state and federal governments as well as from individuals and foundations, and by identifying new and innovative revenue sources.
- 5.403 Promote and encourage the efforts of private nonprofit organizations to receive grants of money to purchase land or take out options on land for the expansion of the City's open space resources (where the City cannot move quickly enough to buy or otherwise prevent the loss of these resources).
- 5.404 Promote educational programs for local residents to expand their knowledge and interest in the value of open space and parks and the opportunities for enjoyment and personal development through such means as slide shows, movies, discussion programs between organized groups and Staff, as well as working with the various schools in the area and the media.
- 5.405 Promote land use standards which require extensive and more intensive landscaping on all development projects through zoning text revisions and through the use/creation of Specific Plans.
- 5.406 Promote and encourage the dedication and donation of land (from both private and public sources) to the City ultimately for open space and recreational uses.
- 5.407 The Heritage Tree Ordinance should be reviewed and upgraded as necessary to ensure maximum protection for the City's major vegetation.
- 5.408 An inventory of the City's current biological and mineral resources will be developed for inclusion in the next amendment to the Conservation Element of the General Plan.
- 5.409 The City shall investigate other programs for resource conservation and work with other appropriate jurisdictions for their implementation.

## 6.000 NOISE ELEMENT

### 6.100 Purpose

The Noise Element is intended to describe the existing and projected future noise environments in East Palo Alto so that harmful and annoying sound levels can be avoided. In the Noise Element, major noise sources are identified, noise levels throughout the community are recorded, the effects of noise on the community are discussed and ways to minimize unwanted noise are outlined.

### 6.200 Definition and Measurement of Noise

Noise is defined as "unwanted sound" and is broadly recognized as a form of environmental degradation. Relative sound levels are measured using the decibel scale. Because the decibel scale is logarithmic, small changes in decibel levels represent large changes in noise intensity. However, it usually takes a change of about ten decibels before a doubling of loudness is perceived by the human ear. Table N-1 illustrates the typical decibel levels generated by a variety of different activities.

Noise levels fluctuate constantly over time and in duration. Community noise consists of sources both distant and near to the listener. In order to determine the cumulative average impact of all noise sources at a given location, all of the individual noise readings must be averaged over a 24-hour period to give an equivalent level. This equivalent level expressed as CNEL (community noise equivalent level) can then be plotted on the map to illustrate noise levels throughout the community. Figure N-1 illustrates the City's CNEL contours as projected for 1995.

### 6.300 Noise Compatibility Standards

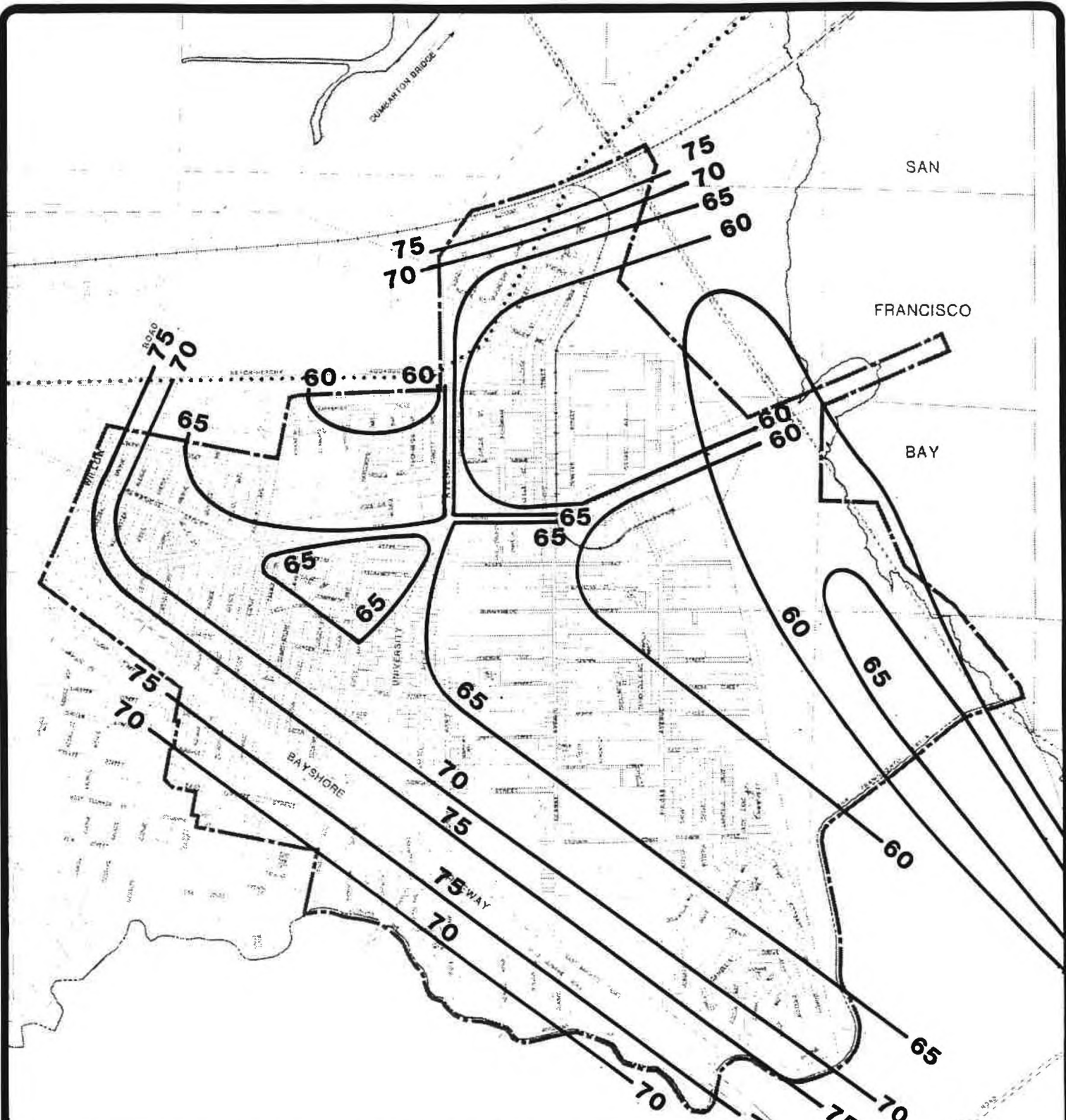
The noise control guidelines indicated by the land use compatibility chart (Table N-2) identify realistic and attainable noise standards for the community. The chart provides guidance as to the need for site specific noise analysis of proposed projects. An interpretation of the land use compatibility chart is provided below.

6.310 Normally Acceptable. The range of noise levels in this category is compatible with the specified land use type. No special noise insulation is required in buildings of conventional construction.

6.320 Conditionally Acceptable. The range of noise levels in this category is higher than those normally acceptable for the specified land use type. A detailed acoustic study should be undertaken to set forth design features that will reduce exterior noise levels, and/or for construction to control the amount of exterior noise reaching interior use spaces.

TABLE N-1  
TYPICAL A-WEIGHTED SOUND LEVELS

<u>SOUND SOURCE</u>	<u>dBA READING</u>	<u>RESPONSE</u>
CARRIER DECK OPERATION	145 130	painfully loud limit amplified speech
JET TAKEOFF (listener at 200 feet)	120	
AUTO HORN (listener 3 feet) DISCO	115	maximum vocal effort
JET TAKEOFF (listener at 2000 feet) GARBAGE TRUCK	100	
NEW YORK SUBWAY STATION HEAVY TRUCK (listener 50 feet away)	90	very annoying loudness
ALARM CLOCK	80	annoying
FREIGHT TRAIN (listener 50 feet away) FREEWAY TRAFFIC (listener 50 feet away)	70	telephone use difficult
AIR CONDITIONING UNIT (listener 20 feet away)	60	intrusive noise levels
LIGHT AUTO TRAFFIC (listener 100 feet away)	50	quiet
RESIDENTIAL LIVING ROOM	40	
LIBRARY (soft whisper at 30 feet)	30	very quiet
BROADCASTING STUDIO	20 10 0	just audible threshold of hearing



**PROJECTED 1995 CNEL CONTOURS**

**FIG. N-1**

EAST PALO ALTO GENERAL PLAN  
 DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT - CITY OF EAST PALO ALTO, CA

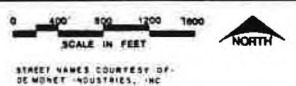



TABLE N-2  
**LAND USE COMPATIBILITY  
 FOR  
 COMMUNITY NOISE ENVIRONMENTS**

LAND USE CATEGORY	COMMUNITY NOISE EXPOSURE LEVEL (CNEL)					
	55	60	65	70	75	80
<u>Residential</u> - Low Density, Single Family Homes, Duplex and Mobile Homes	Normally Acceptable	Normally Acceptable	Conditionally Acceptable	Normally Unacceptable	Unacceptable	Unacceptable
<u>Residential</u> - Multi-family	Normally Acceptable	Normally Acceptable	Conditionally Acceptable	Normally Unacceptable	Unacceptable	Unacceptable
Motels and Hotels	Normally Acceptable	Normally Acceptable	Conditionally Acceptable	Normally Unacceptable	Unacceptable	Unacceptable
Schools, Libraries Churches Hospitals and Nursing Homes	Normally Acceptable	Normally Acceptable	Conditionally Acceptable	Normally Unacceptable	Unacceptable	Unacceptable
Sports Arenas, Outdoor Spectator Sports	Normally Acceptable	Normally Acceptable	Conditionally Acceptable	Normally Unacceptable	Unacceptable	Unacceptable
Playgrounds and Neighborhood Parks	Normally Acceptable	Normally Acceptable	Conditionally Acceptable	Normally Unacceptable	Unacceptable	Unacceptable
Golf Courses, Riding Stables, Water Recreation, Cemeteries	Normally Acceptable	Normally Acceptable	Conditionally Acceptable	Normally Unacceptable	Unacceptable	Unacceptable
Office Buildings	Normally Acceptable	Normally Acceptable	Conditionally Acceptable	Normally Unacceptable	Unacceptable	Unacceptable
Industrial, Manufacturing, Utilities and Agriculture	Normally Acceptable	Normally Acceptable	Conditionally Acceptable	Normally Unacceptable	Unacceptable	Unacceptable

INTERPRETATION

 Normally Acceptable

 Conditionally Acceptable

 Normally Unacceptable

 Unacceptable

- 6.330 Normally Unacceptable. New construction or development of the specified land use type should be discouraged. If development is to proceed, a detailed acoustic study must be prepared and needed noise insulation features incorporated into the design.
- 6.340 Unacceptable. New development of the specified land use type should not be undertaken when the site falls within the range of noise levels in this category.

#### 6.400 Noise Mitigation Methods

In situations where the range of noise levels is higher than that considered normally acceptable for a specified land use type, it may be possible to reduce the effective noise level to achieve better compatibility. Each site has its own characteristics and problems. Thus, mitigation measures which are effective for one project may not apply to another. For this reason, it is not appropriate to predetermine the method by which noise levels should be reduced or controlled throughout the community. Regardless of the mitigation measure or combination of measures which is used, it is almost always less costly to include the mitigation in the design phase rather than dealing with the problem later.

Noise mitigation measures fall into four general categories: (1) site planning; (2) architectural treatment; (3) noise barriers; (4) construction modification.

- 6.410 Site Planning. By taking advantage of the natural shape and contour of sites, it is often possible to orient buildings and other uses in a way that will reduce or eliminate noise impact. Cluster development is conducive to noise reduction. The ways in which site planning can be used to reduce noise impacts are as follows:
- 6.411 Increase the distance between the noise source and the receiver.
- 6.412 Place non-noise sensitive land uses (parking lots, maintenance facilities, utility areas) between the source and the receiver.
- 6.413 Use non-noise sensitive structures (garages) to shield noise sensitive areas.
- 6.414 Orient buildings so outdoor areas are shielded from noise.
- 6.420 Architectural Layout. By attention to the types of uses being accommodated in a structure, the noise sensitive uses can be moved to the quiet side of the building. Some typical examples include:



- 6.421 Put bedrooms on the side of the house farthest from roadways.
- 6.422 Do not locate outdoor balconies facing major roadways.
- 6.423 Design U-shaped buildings to shield patios.
- 6.430 Noise Barriers. Solid barriers between the noise source and the noise sensitive area block out sound waves. The minimum acceptable surface weight for an effective noise barrier is four pounds per square foot (equivalent to 3/4" plywood) with no cracks or openings. To be effective, the barrier must interrupt the line of sight between the noise source and the receiver. Noise barriers are created by topographical features in some situations. Earth berms can be created by grading to achieve the same result. It should be noted that short barriers are not effective regardless of height because sound waves will pass around the end of them and still reach the receiver. This effect, called flanking, can be minimized by bending the wall or barrier back from the noise source at the ends of the barrier.
- 6.440 Construction Modification. Indoor noise levels due to exterior noise sources can be controlled by the noise reduction characteristics of the building's shell. In general, windows and doors are the weakest links in the acoustic skin of a building. The amount of insulation and ceiling required depends on the amount of noise reduction required. The following approaches may be considered:
  - 6.441 Use solid core doors having an acoustic door gasket.
  - 6.442 Use double paned glass for gasketed window systems.
  - 6.443 Add insulation material to walls, ceilings and floors.
- 6.500 Noise Element Goals and Policies

The following goals and policies are encouraged to establish a sound attenuation program for East Palo Alto.

6.510 **GOAL I: TO CONTROL NOISE GENERATED BY TRANSPORTATION FACILITIES AND OTHER NOISE SOURCES.**

POLICIES:

1. Support legislation regulating noise produced by motor vehicles.
2. Evaluate new transit systems to ensure that they do not worsen the noise environment.

3. Reduce roadway noise through the design of roads, use of quiet pavement surfaces, and application of traffic management techniques such as rerouting, controlling intensity and speed, and reduction of stopping points.
4. Continue to work with local airport officials to further minimize flight pattern noise and urge modifications to aircraft design or the use of other aircraft to reduce noise production.
5. Control individual sources of noise, including industrial machinery, through the design review process.

6.520 **GOAL II: TO CONTROL THE PATH OF NOISE FROM THE SOURCE TO THE RECEIVER.**

**POLICIES:**

1. Use barriers or buffers along roadways to reduce the noise in adjacent areas.
2. Encourage the State, County and City to install sound walls along freeways and heavily used streets where they abut residential uses.
3. Use the California Environmental Quality Act and Design Review processes to establish the exact type and level of noise control appropriate to specific projects.

6.530 **GOAL III: TO TAKE MEASURES TO REDUCE ADVERSE EFFECTS OF NOISE ON THE RECEIVER OF THE NOISE.**

**POLICIES:**

1. When determining land use, consider the associated noise levels and their adverse effects on the occupants of adjacent properties.
2. Educate the public on the effects of noise through the use of pamphlets, brochures and other media.

6.600 **Noise Element Action Program**

Section 65302(g) of the Government Code requires that the Noise Element contain a program which specifies how the goals, policies and standards are to be implemented. This section of the Element lists the implementation measures which will assist in supporting its goals and policies.

- 6.601 Zoning regulation revisions will be made to include specific noise emission standards by various land use categories.
- 6.602 Zoning regulation amendments will define areas which are noise impacted and which would require that a noise study be prepared prior to site approval and development. The enforcement of such provisions shall be accomplished through the Design Review process or through the Planning Commission's Public Hearing process.
- 6.603 Update the noise control ordinance prepared by the County and adopted by the City in order to establish noise standards for source noise levels in residential, commercial, industrial and public property uses.
- 6.604 The requirements of the California State Code respecting acoustical review of certain types of new residential structures shall be adopted by the City, and such regulations will be considered for application to all types of new residential structures.
- 6.605 An active program of enforcement of the California Vehicle Code regulations concerning excessive vehicle noise should be considered for implementation by the Police Department.
- 6.606 The City's roadway facility program will be reviewed relative to the use of signalization, surface maintenance and equipment used in work to reduce noise impacts.
- 6.607 The City will diligently work towards a joint agreement with other local governments to establish a cooperative program with the Airport Committee of the Palo Alto Municipal Airport and the Federal Aviation Administration to help abate unnecessary noise from that airport.
- 6.608 Any Environmental Impact Reports prepared for either public or private projects shall address noise impacts, and should propose feasible mitigation measures for abating or alleviating any noise activities created by such projects.
- 6.609 A public information program on noise should be instituted. Such program could include noise information to interested persons regarding methods that might be used to reduce noise levels in noise impacted areas and prevent high noise levels in other areas.
- 6.610 Engage the assistance of the City of Menlo Park to reduce the noise from industrial operations located adjacent to residences in East Palo Alto.

6.611 Review and report by no later than September 1987 on appropriate cost-effective noise standards for equipment operated by public agencies.

## 7.000 SAFETY ELEMENT

### 7.100 Purpose

The Safety Element is intended to describe natural and man-made threats which may pose a hazard to the residents of East Palo Alto, to plan for the elimination or mitigation of potential hazards where feasible, and to help organize coordinated operations in the event of an emergency. Primary topics are fire prevention and control, crime prevention, hazardous materials, emergency services and evacuation procedures.

### 7.200 Existing Setting

Although East Palo Alto has not had a history of natural disasters, this should not lead to the assumption that no safety hazards exist in the community. Among the more prominent threats to the safety of City residents are fire hazards, seismic threats, flood risks and hazardous materials.

### 7.210 Fire Hazards

In an urban-industrial community, dangers posed by fire, chemical mishaps, accidents and other disasters are always present. In East Palo Alto, responsibility for preventing these occurrences and reacting accordingly to them is held by the Menlo Park Fire Protection District. The City and District work cooperatively to develop programs to prevent damage due to these kinds of emergencies.

A strong emphasis has been placed on fire prevention, including Code requirements for broken fire suppression mechanisms and automatic alarms, and a diligent building inspection program. The priority placed on increased fire detection and automatic fire control through built-in protection features reduces dependence upon traditional "reactive" fire protection. The Fire District also provides emergency medical services in support of the County Paramedic Program.

Structural, chemical and grassland fires constitute the three major categories of fire threats in East Palo Alto. Although major structural fires have been avoided with the exception of a blaze involving portions of the former Nairobi Shopping Center, the age of most of the City's structures suggests that emphasis should be placed on insuring the installation of smoke detectors in existing residential dwellings on commercial buildings. The presence of two major chemical plants within

the City's boundaries holds the potential for an explosion or chemical fire of major proportions. Finally, undeveloped grassland located in the baylands, along with large undeveloped lots, have the potential for brush fires which could threaten public safety.

#### 7.220 Geologic and Seismic Hazards

East Palo Alto is on the northern edge of an area which has experienced about 2.5 feet of subsidence since 1934 due to the withdrawal of underground water. A ground water recharge program was implemented in the Santa Clara Valley, and has virtually eliminated subsidence in the East Palo Alto area. There seems to be little likelihood of further subsidence under present ground water management practices.

East Palo Alto lies in an area which is susceptible to the effects of earthquake activity. The four major faults are located sufficiently near the City to have the potential to shake the area during an earthquake. Figure S-1 shows the location of these faults in relation to East Palo Alto.

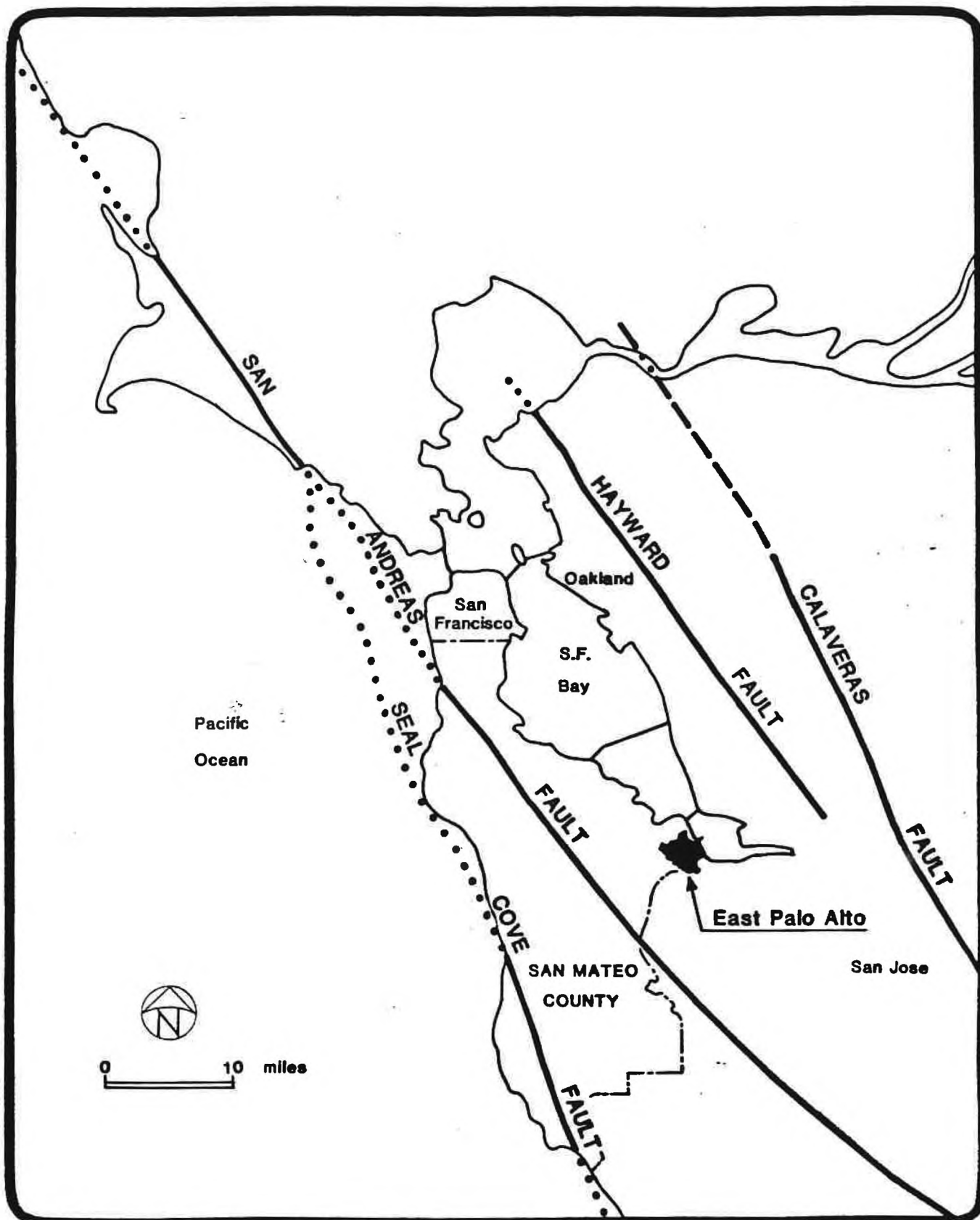
The most damaging potential earthquake for East Palo Alto would likely be produced along the San Andreas fault. The maximum predicted earthquake on this fault is 8-plus on the Richter Scale. An earthquake of this magnitude could potentially cause severe ground shaking in East Palo Alto. The maximum credible earthquake on either the Hayward or Calaveras fault systems would be from 6 to 7 on the Richter Scale. Such an earthquake would probably result in moderate to severe ground shaking in the General Plan area.

The possibility that a maximum tsunami (tidal wave) resulting from seismic activity in the Pacific Basin would reach the Golden Gate at the same time that a maximum tide occurred is very remote. If this were to occur, however, the eastern portions of the community would be inundated. It is more probable that the bay front levees in East Palo Alto would not be overtopped in the event of a tsunami occurrence.

In the event of strong ground shaking, damage to buildings, utility lines and bridges could occur with resulting access problems and fire potential. Lurching of buildings may occur where weak foundation soils are present with damage to chimneys, masonry, brickwork, foundations, retaining walls and other rigid elements.

#### 7.230 Flooding

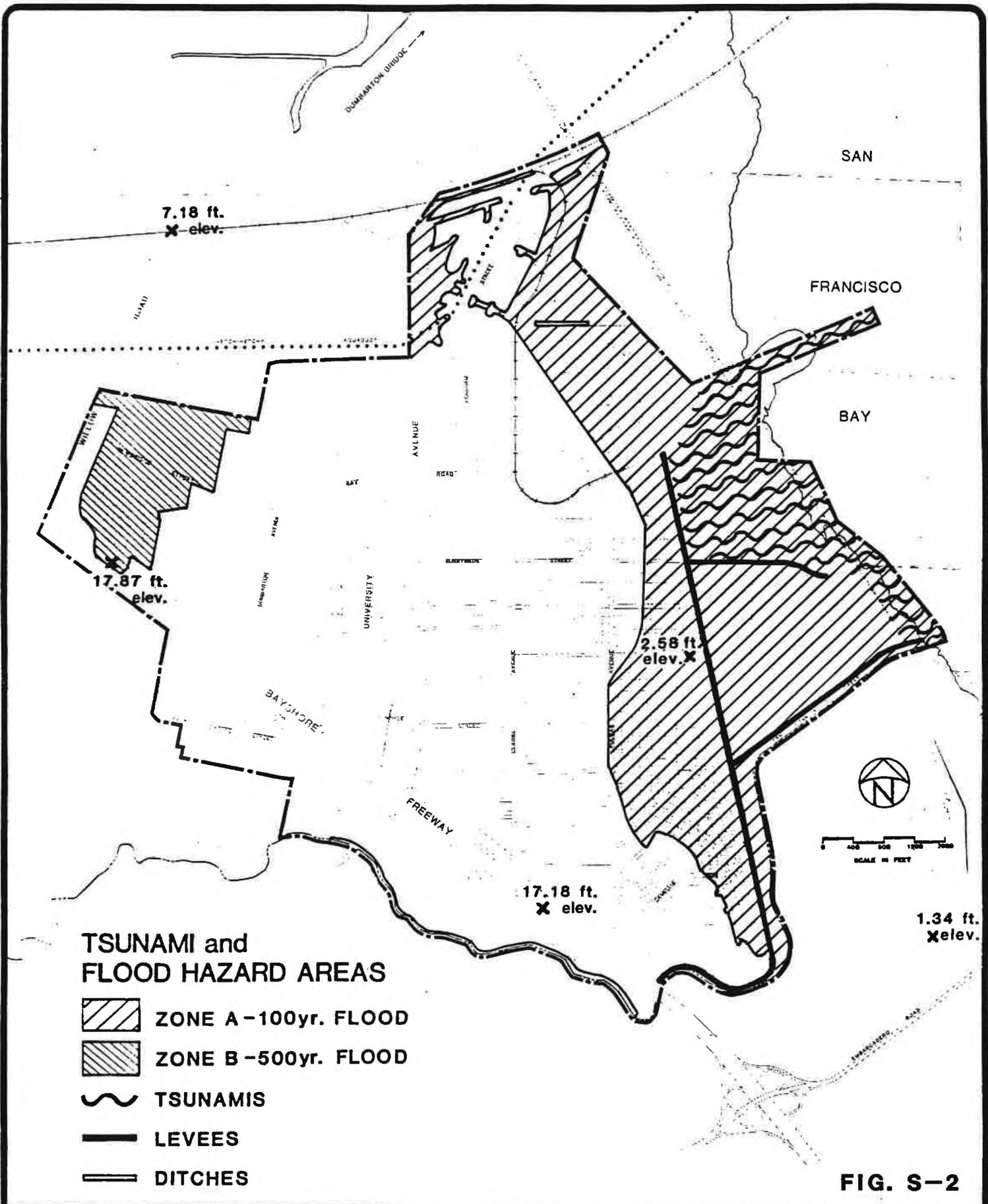
East Palo Alto is subject to flooding due to its location on low lying lands adjacent to San Francisco Bay and San Francisquito Creek; the possible accumulation of surface runoff from adjacent communities during storms; and the presence of a high water table (5-10 feet below ground surface). The flood hazard areas in East Palo Alto are depicted by Figure S-2.



Source: SAN MATEO COUNTY SEISMIC AND SAFETY ELEMENT (1976)

ACTIVE FAULT SYSTEMS IN BAY AREA

FIG. S-1



**EAST PALO ALTO COMMUNITY PLANNING PROGRAM**  
 PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT DIVISION · DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT · COUNTY OF SAN MATEO · CALIFORNIA

Source: TUDOR ENGINEERING CO.

The area between Pulgas Avenue and the baylands and lands located along San Francisquito Creek are in the 100 year flood zone. The Federal Emergency Management Agency classifies these areas as Zone A and requires flood insurance on individual property in compliance with mandatory management standards. The area between Willow Road and Manalito Avenue is in the 500 year flood zone. The Federal Emergency Management Agency classifies this area as Zone B. Flood insurance is not required here, and although management standards are recommended they are not mandatory. Development in East Palo Alto is resulting in more impervious road surfaces and increased runoff. However, the potential for flooding from this source is considered to be minimal.

#### 7.240 Hazardous Materials

Numerous public safety concerns are raised by the possible presence of hazardous materials associated with the diverse industrial activities which take place in East Palo Alto. In fact, one location, the Sandoz Corporation site, has been included on the Environmental Protection Agency's superfund list. The state water quality control board has approved a program for monitoring ground water in the surrounding area. Because of the presence of various hazardous materials within the planning area, the City should maintain its active posture on this problem to insure maximum protection for its residents.

#### 7.250 Crime Reduction

The incidence of crime in the community has a direct bearing on the perceived and actual quality of life. It is also an important consideration in capital investment decisions. The need for economic development in East Palo Alto and the desire of its citizens to improve their quality of life have led to the emergence of crime reduction as a policy priority for the City Council.

There are various measures that a community can take to reduce the level of crime. These include technological applications, education, training, personnel, capital and design. The most effective policy would seem to be one that combines all of these measures in a manner that produces the greatest reduction of crime for the least cost. Assuming that a moderate amount of development will occur in East Palo Alto, special attention should be focused on design, because it offers the potential for best satisfying these two criteria simultaneously.

#### 7.260 Evacuation

In the event of either a natural or man-made disaster, it may become necessary to evacuate residents and occupants of commercial establishments. The City has maintained an excellent cooperative relationship with agencies and organizations that specialize in evacuation



methods and techniques. Since incorporation, only two small scale evacuation actions have been taken, both of which were related to chemical spills. One large scale evacuation alert was issued but not implemented for the 1986 winter storm. The City is currently preparing its disaster plan, an operations guide for handling evacuation and related activities in the event of a disaster.

#### 7.300 Safety Element Goals and Policies

The setting described in the foregoing sections of this element identifies areas of specific need, is responsive to the requirements of State Law for this Element, and reflects certain priorities of the community. The following section of this Element specifies goals and policies to address those identified needs. An Action Program for detailed implementation is also included.

The framework of the Safety Element is oriented around protection of the community from fires and a variety of other hazards. All of the policies and the Action Program that follow support this effort. The policies articulate the direction indicated by the goals for each area.

7.310 **GOAL I: TO PROVIDE A LIFE SAFETY AND FIRE PROTECTION SYSTEM, WHERE A COMBINATION OF PUBLIC SERVICE AND PRIVATE RESOURCES IS CAPABLE OF ACHIEVING A COMMUNITY-DEFINED LEVEL OF SERVICES AND ASSOCIATED RISKS.**

#### POLICIES:

1. Strive to prevent loss of life and injuries due to fire and other emergencies.
2. Minimize the direct and indirect losses due to fire.
3. Establish and maintain levels of fire protection service, including public and private responsibilities.
4. Enforce building codes designed to make homes relatively safe.
5. Implement fire safe practices including proper road construction and adequate water systems.
6. Utilize proper land use planning and zoning which will designate where and under what conditions people should live in areas relative to their exposure to the hazard of fire.
7. Define the related acceptable risks which meet community needs at a cost the community is willing to incur.

8. Assure the reliability of fire protection programs through an ongoing program of public education and code enforcement, and strive to create a community consciousness of the need to improve fire safety.
9. Assure that occupancies which exceed the established acceptable risks provide the necessary fire protection systems to reduce those risks to a level consistent with established acceptable fire risks.
10. Work cooperatively with the Menlo Park Fire Protection District to ensure that the above policies are effectively carried out.

7.320

**GOAL II: TO IDENTIFY SEISMIC AND GENERAL HAZARDS, REDUCING EXISTING HAZARDS THROUGH MITIGATION MEASURES WHERE POSSIBLE.**

1. Consider seismic conditions in the review of building plans, development proposals, precise plans, zoning action, etc.
2. Modify construction requirements where hazardous site conditions are identified.
3. Inventory existing buildings in classes of high to moderate risk for potential hazards (signs, architectural elements, etc.) and develop programs to reduce these hazards giving critical structures first priority.
4. Continue multi-family housing inspection for Building and Safety Code violations, also including evaluation of deteriorated or inadequate foundations and support systems.
5. Consider implementing inspection of the City's unreinforced masonry construction commercial buildings.
6. Continue to make building code amendments which promote building safety while protecting historical structures and the housing supply.
7. Promptly adopt the latest Uniform Building Code.
8. Required geologic studies shall be prepared by an engineering geologist.
9. The City shall maintain a comprehensive file of geologic reports and an updated Investigation Zones Map.
10. New construction shall be designed to eliminate flood hazards and the City will support flood control measures to eliminate flood hazard areas.

11. Continue monitoring ground water level and consider using City wells in emergencies.

7.330 **GOAL III: TO CONDUCT DISASTER EDUCATION AND PLANNING AS AN ONGOING PROCESS, INTEGRATED WITH REGIONAL ACTIVITIES.**

**POLICIES:**

1. Design and implement the City's Disaster Plan to deal with seismic and other natural disasters, including establishment of emergency water supplies for fire fighting, cooking and drinking within Class 2 risk structures.
2. Institute programs to educate the public about the existence of seismic hazards and about appropriate actions to be taken in case of a seismic emergency.
3. Maintain effective relationships with other appropriate agencies to minimize community exposure to risk in the event of disaster.

7.340 **GOAL IV: TO PROTECT THE CITY FROM FLOOD HAZARDS.**

**POLICIES:**

1. Require that all new development in the City be constructed at levels of elevation that take these structures out of risk of being flooded.
2. Improve and maintain the City's storm drainage system to the extent that flood waters can be taken without risk of hazard to persons, property and buildings.
3. Institute programs to educate the public about the pros and cons of insurance purchases relative to property location and structure.
4. Encourage the consolidation of all drainage and flood control functions and facilities, including the levees, under one district.

7.350 **GOAL V: TO ENSURE THAT ROADS ARE CONSTRUCTED TO STANDARDS THAT ALLOW THE MOVEMENT OF TRAFFIC AND EMERGENCY VEHICLES THROUGHOUT THE CITY IN AN EFFICIENT, EFFECTIVE AND SAFE MANNER.**

**POLICIES:**

1. Require that all roads be constructed to City standards, allowing consideration for creative road design only when it can be proven to be safe, effective and efficient.

2. Encourage City residents to park their vehicles on their property and out of the public right-of-way on collector and arterial streets.
3. Continually seek outside sources of funding to ensure that major streets are adequately maintained.

7.360 **GOAL VI: TO ENSURE AN ADEQUATE SUPPLY OF WATER FOR PURPOSES OF DRINKING, FIRE PROTECTION AND EMERGENCY USE.**

**POLICIES:**

1. Encourage the consolidation of all water companies in the City to improve and standardize the level of service within the entire City.
2. Encourage the preparation of a capital improvements program for the overall water distribution system, identifying both long-term and short-term improvements needed, sources of funds and a schedule of improvement.
3. Encourage the vigorous conservation of water in households and businesses through an educational program and the adoption of appropriate regulations.
4. Develop and maintain effective working relationships with existing water service providers to assist local residents and facilitate consolidation.

7.370 **GOAL VII: TO REDUCE THE THREAT TO LIFE AND PROPERTY FROM HAZARDOUS MATERIALS.**

**POLICIES:**

1. Ensure that businesses and organizations handling hazardous materials in East Palo Alto are in compliance with all applicable statutes.
2. Continually monitor the regulatory process for hazardous materials to ensure that the City is aware of and in compliance with changes as they occur.
3. Ensure that the community is adequately protected from existing hazardous material contamination and during its eventual removal.

7.380 **GOAL VIII: TO ENSURE AN ENVIRONMENT THAT IS CONDUCIVE TO CAPITAL INVESTMENT AND A HIGH QUALITY OF LIFE THROUGH THE REDUCTION OF CRIME.**

POLICIES:

1. Support a vigorous crime prevention program including neighborhood watch as a major component.
2. Implement an educational program of crime prevention in the local schools and with senior citizens of the community.
3. Ensure that adequate lighting is provided in the public right-of-way and in new developments.
4. Explore the use of cable television as a means to further prevent crime and provide public information.
5. As projects are submitted to the City, plans should be reviewed in detail for the following considerations:

Exterior Features

- A. Surface Irregularities. Areas where a person could be concealed should be eliminated.
- B. Points of Entry. Points of entry to structures should not be obscured by walls or landscaping.
- C. Ability to Climb. Access to roofs should be eliminated by insuring that surface materials and ornamental features, including landscaping and fences, are not designed to permit climbing.
- D. Size of Windows. In order to reduce the propensity for crime, windows are ideally very narrow or extremely large.
- E. Doors. The hardware of doors, door jambs, locks and hinges should be of sufficient strength to withstand severe forces. Metal doors and jambs are recommended on commercial and office buildings.
- F. Storage Facilities. Storage facilities or housing for air-conditioning equipment should not permit access to any structure, its roof or underside. When possible, these facilities should be located on the interior of structures.
- G. Roof. Whenever possible, roofs should not allow concealment. Ideally, roofs would be free of skylights, electrical equipment, and have at least a moderate pitch. Mansard style roofs should be avoided.

## Interior

- A. Interior Areas. Interior walkways, atriums and uncovered spaces should be secured.
- B. Underground Garages. Stairwells and elevators leading to underground garages should be designed in such a manner to prevent concealment. Preferably, stairwells and elevator entrances would be free from hidden corners.
- C. Lighting. Irregular surfaces and entryways should be lighted in a manner to prevent concealment. Two-foot candles on ground surfaces are recommended. Danger areas should be illuminated at approximately 4 to 6-foot candles.
- D. Access to Underneath Structures. Access to the underside of structures should be eliminated.

## Landscaping

- A. Use of the "high-low" concept should be encouraged. Access to roofs via trees should be avoided.
6. Ensure an adequate allocation through the budget process to maintain an effective Public Works Staff and police force.

### 7.400 Safety Element Action Program

The activities listed in the Action Program for the Safety Element of the General Plan are intended to ensure attainment of the goals and policies of the Element, and facilitate future revisions of the Element as required. They are more specific in nature than the policies and in most cases included a targeted completion date.

- 7.401 For purposes of review with the Fiscal Year 1987-88 Program Budget, an acquisition plan for special districts serving the City shall be prepared.
- 7.402 A technical supplement for the Safety Element shall be prepared by no later than April 1988 containing updated statistics for relevant portions of the Element to establish acceptable levels of service and related cost measurements.
- 7.403 The City shall implement the provisions of AB2185 and AB2187 in a timely manner and in full compliance with the State Office of Emergency Services.

- 7.404 The City will continue to coordinate with the State Department of Health and the Regional Water Quality Control Boards to ensure speedy and effective cleanup of contamination at the Sandoz site.
- 7.405 By no later than July 1987, the City will adopt a completed Disaster Plan.
- 7.406 By no later than July 1987, the City will adopt its completed Hazardous Materials Ordinance.
- 7.407 The City will design and implement a comprehensive Code enforcement program that focuses on public health and the adopted neighborhood standards. It is expected that the systematic implementation of this program can be underway by late spring, 1987.
- 7.408 The Public Safety Commission will prepare and recommend the adoption of a comprehensive, long-term public safety master plan for the effective utilization of local residents in the delivery of public safety services and the prevention of crime.
- 7.409 Ensure that a program of CPR training is made readily available for local residents.
- 7.410 Expand the Neighborhood Watch Program throughout the City.
- 7.411 Develop and implement a plan to ensure that funds are generated for needed improvements, that the tax base is increased and that a budget is established for emergency supplies and equipment.

8.000 ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ELEMENT

8.100 Purpose

The purpose of this element is to promote land uses which facilitate achievement of the City's economic development goals. Priorities are set forth for land uses and proposed development projects. Goals and policies are outlined along with an Action Program for realizing the specified objectives.

8.200 Existing Conditions

The local economy of East Palo Alto is characterized by a number of problems including low household incomes, inadequate commercial facilities and limited opportunities for employment.

### 8.210 Household Income

Most East Palo Alto households have incomes below the poverty level. In 1980, 72% of the City's households were classifiable as low income. More than two-thirds of these households were classified as very low income. Poverty incidence of this magnitude reduces the aggregate demand for goods and services in East Palo Alto.

### 8.220 Inadequate Commercial Facilities

The East Palo Alto retail trade area is inadequately served. As a consequence, approximately \$60,000,000 in annual local consumption expenditures occur outside of the trade area. Viable retail space in East Palo Alto is estimated at 170,000 square feet, as much as 20,000 of which is currently vacant or underutilized. Despite the area's low household incomes, substantial excess demand exists for retail goods and services in East Palo Alto.

### 8.230 Employment Development

Employment generating land uses in East Palo Alto are relatively unproductive. This is illustrated by the fact that there are only .2 jobs per household in the City, compared with 1.3 jobs per household within a twelve mile radius of East Palo Alto. Moreover, East Palo Alto residents hold only 12% of local jobs compared to 30% in the City of San Mateo.

### 8.300 Economic Development Priorities

#### 8.310 Land Use Priorities

Different land uses offer different economic benefits and involve different public service costs. Keeping an economic balance between public service costs and public revenues depends on the land use mix of projects. The following land use priorities should effect an appropriate balance between costs and revenues.

8.311 Commercial Land Uses. Give priority to areas for neighborhood commercial uses.

8.312 Industrial Land Uses. Give priority to areas planned for light and labor intensive heavy industry uses.

8.313 Residential Uses. Give priority to areas for housing development that meet the housing needs of existing residents; but provide market support for neighborhood shopping centers; and that best reduce the overall burden of City services to residential areas.



### 8.320 Project Priorities

The project that offers the potential for producing the most jobs, the most local neighborhood retail business and the most revenues per dollar of City expenditure should be assigned the highest priority ranking. The following projects have potential for creating the economic benefits set forth in the goals for economic development.

- 8.321 Development of a centralized neighborhood shopping district at the University and Bay Road sites.
- 8.322 Development of industrial lands that have the fewest development constraints adjacent to Bay Road.
- 8.323 Development of high intensity residential sites within walking distance of the University Avenue and Bay Road intersection.
- 8.324 Cooley Landing.
- 8.325 Related infrastructure and beautification projects.
- 8.400 Tools for promoting economic development.

Mechanisms for accomplishing community economic development which have been incorporated into the General Plan are discussed briefly below. Additional discussion of these methods appears in the Economic Development Appendix.

### 8.410 Specific Plans.

Specific Plans, authorized by Government Code Section 6541, combine the City's planning and zoning regulations into a single document relating to a particular project site. They contain the regulations, conditions, programs and legislation necessary to implement all of the mandated elements of the General Plan.

### 8.420 Density bonuses for affordable housing.

Authorized by Government Code Sections 65915-65918, the density bonus provision allows for increased residential densities for housing developers who allocate at least 25% of the proposed units for low and moderate income households. A list of additional bonus incentives provides an avenue for open negotiation between developers and the City.

### 8.430 Designation of employment and economic incentive areas.

The City will seek designation of certain lands within its boundaries as an employment and economic incentive area. If these areas are so designated, the City will be eligible to offer certain incentives to

businesses located within them in return for hiring unemployed area residents. State incentives include tax credits and deductions against state income tax liability. The City is expected to contribute additional incentives such as public financing of infrastructure, reimbursement for on the job training, small business loans and waivers or reductions in local development fees.

8.440 Redevelopment plans.

Redevelopment plans are an increasingly employed economic development tool. California redevelopment law provides local legislative bodies with the authority to establish a redevelopment agency for the purpose of formulating a redevelopment plan. Such plans must be written in conformance with the adopted General Plan and must be approved by the local Planning Commission. The City of East Palo Alto has established a redevelopment agency which is in the process of implementing redevelopment plans for the East Palo Alto area.

8.500 Economic development goals, objectives and policies.

8.510 **GOAL I: TO RAISE EAST PALO ALTO'S AGGREGATE HOUSEHOLD INCOME TO A LEVEL WHICH ALLOWS FOR AND SUPPORTS MODERATE AND EFFICIENT CONSUMPTION OF BASIC NEIGHBORHOOD GOODS AND SERVICES.**

OBJECTIVE: To increase aggregate household income by at least \$49,000,000 annually and the income of low and moderate income households by an average of \$10,400 per household per year.

8.520 **GOAL II: TO REVITALIZE NEIGHBORHOOD COMMERCIAL ACTIVITY IN EAST PALO ALTO TO THE SCALE, TYPE AND QUALITY REQUIRED FOR EFFICIENT EXPENDITURE OF DISPOSABLE INCOME BY HOUSEHOLDS IN THE EAST PALO ALTO TRADE AREA.**

OBJECTIVE: Initiate a five year program of neighborhood commercial revitalization which provides 150,000 square feet of additional neighborhood retail space. In the first three years of the program, upgrade at least 20,000 square feet of existing neighborhood retail space and develop at least 130,000 square feet of new neighborhood retail facilities.

8.530 **GOAL III: TO PROMOTE LAND USES IN EAST PALO ALTO THAT GENERATE EMPLOYMENT AT LEVELS COMPARABLE TO COUNTY LAND-JOB PRODUCTIVITY.**

OBJECTIVE I: To achieve at least a 30% level of local resident employment to locally produced jobs;

OBJECTIVE II: Initiate land use regulations, development agreements and incentives that create at least 900 jobs for local residents, particularly existing unemployed residents of East Palo Alto.

8.540 **GOAL IV: TO ACHIEVE ECONOMIC AND PHYSICAL GROWTH AND SOCIAL VIABILITY AND SECURITY AMONG EAST PALO ALTO RESIDENTS; TO EFFECT DEVELOPMENT WITHOUT DISPLACEMENT.**

OBJECTIVE I: Promote an economic and housing development policy to accommodate an optimum population base of 25,000 of whose median income would equal the County's;

OBJECTIVE II: Promote the development of up to 2,270 additional housing units and insure that at least 25% of them are made available to low and moderate income households in East Palo Alto.

8.550 **GOAL V: TO ACCOMMODATE NEW DEVELOPMENT WHICH IS ADEQUATELY PROVIDED WITH MUNICIPAL IMPROVEMENTS AND SERVICES.**

OBJECTIVE I: To plan for capital improvements timed to meet new development demand.

POLICIES:

1. Establish facility use, standards and determine facility capacities so that the need for new facilities can be projected in advance of development.
2. Identify current areas of the City which are inadequately served by facilities and services or which may be inadequately served in the future.
3. Require developers to pay reasonable fees for the installation of necessary improvements internal to and primarily serving new development such as local streets, local drainage and sewer connections, traffic control devices and other internal facilities.
4. Seek to reduce the cost of providing such facilities through standards which address a specified level of performance rather than prescribe types of improvements. An example is the use of narrower street widths.
5. Encourage the use of assessment districts, industrial development bonds, capital facilities districts and other techniques for financing improvements serving existing and new development.

OBJECTIVE II: To balance commercial, industrial and residential development.

POLICIES:

1. Encourage new commercial and light industrial uses to provide employment for East Palo Alto residents.
2. Encourage new commercial uses which will provide goods and services to East Palo Alto residents.

- 8.600 Economic Development Action Plan.
- 8.601 The City Council should assign highest priority to the development of a centralized neighborhood shopping center at the University Avenue and Bay Road site. Development priority for other undeveloped and underutilized lands in the City should include commercial uses that have highest potential for capturing the leakage of local disposable income; residential development affordable to the low and moderate income household should be supported; job creating industries which do not pollute or produce other negative neighborhood impacts should be emphasized.
- 8.602 Certain parcels of vacant surplus or underutilized land should be designated as sites for new affordable housing development. These parcels should be assembled in a manner which affords the variety of housing qualities and designs that can accommodate the variety of household types represented in East Palo Alto. These sites and the types of residential developments proposed in them should be set forth in the Housing Element of the revised General Plan.
- 8.603 Multifamily construction and mortgage revenue bonds should be issued to qualified housing developers whose project proposals are responsive to the housing needs of current residents.
- 8.604 Housing project areas should be delineated and adopted under the redevelopment plan and/or Specific Plan provisions of state law. Project and specific plans should be prepared and adopted for each potential site for new housing development in the City as identified in the Housing Element.
- 8.605 Cooley Landing and portions of Bay Road improvements should be developed through the means and requirements of the State Coastal Conservancy. Preliminary analysis indicates that the type and intensity of project alternatives compatible with the Conservancy's criteria, guidelines and conditions for financial and technical assistance are also consistent with the City's physical and economic development objectives.
- 8.606 The capital improvements which are integral to the success of the economic development projects should be included as components of the City's capital improvement program.

- 8.607 The City Council/Redevelopment Agency should proceed with the preparation, review and adoption of a final redevelopment plan. Project plans should be developed for each of the key improvement sites. Specific Plans should be prepared for these sites. The final redevelopment plan should be adopted as the official community economic development plan for the City of East Palo Alto.
- 8.608 The City Council should appropriate funds for the administration and implementation of the final redevelopment plan in accordance with the provisions of Article 33610 of California Redevelopment Law. The funds should be a loan to the Redevelopment Agency to be repaid from revenues generated by redevelopment of the key improvement sites. A minimum annual administrative fund of approximately \$50,000 is recommended.
- 8.609 The Redevelopment Agency should initiate the negotiation of owner participation agreements with the owners of each of the key improvement sites to be designated as redevelopment project areas, and in the final redevelopment plan in accordance with the provisions of California redevelopment law. When owners fail to or cannot perform to the standards set by the redevelopment plan, the agency should prepare and implement alternative plans as required by community redevelopment law.
- 8.610 Development financing and assistance should be tailored to the requirements and funding eligibilities of the various projects. Since tax increment financing is the major substantial revenue claiming authority provided to redevelopment agencies in California, the City Council/Redevelopment Agency should utilize the following: tax increment financing to cover redevelopment costs; economic development and mortgage revenue bonds for redevelopment projects; urban development action grants and other federal and state sources of funds for financing infrastructure and related improvements where available and appropriate; and private sources of social investment including corporations and foundations.
- 8.611 The City and Redevelopment Agencies should develop an aggressive program for expanding the base of local entrepreneurs.
- 8.612 Through the use of first source agreements and other techniques, the City and Redevelopment Agency should insure that local resident employment goals are met.