### D. Goals and Policies

The Implementation Measures associated with each policy are described at the end of this chapter.

Goal CD1: A city organized and designed with an overall attractive, positive image and "sense of place."

### **Policies**

### **Implementation Measures**

- **CD1.1** Neighborhood Character. Preserve and enhance the character of existing residential neighborhoods by limiting encroachment of new buildings and activities that are out of scale and character with the surrounding uses.
- Development Review
- Design Guidelines
- Street Tree Program
- Development Regulations (zoning)
- CD1.2 Design Concept. Plan and construct development within development activity centers and neighborhood commercial centers according to an overall design concept for each center.
- Specific Plans
- Design Guidelines
- Grant Funds
- CD1.3 High-Quality Design. Encourage higherquality design through the use of wellcrafted and maintained buildings and landscaping, use of higher-quality building materials, and attention to the design and execution of building details and amenities in both public and private projects.
- Development Review
- Design Guidelines
- Development
   Incentives
- Development Regulations (zoning)
- **CD1.4 Utility Lines.** Encourage the undergrounding of utility lines where possible.
- Underground Utility Districts
- **CD1.5 Landmarks Preservation.** Inventory and designate potential sites and structures of architectural, historic, archaeological, and cultural significance.
- Historical Inventory and Designation
- **CD1.6** Entrances to the City. Improve the major entrances into the city with landmark entry features, signs, and gateways to enhance the sense of community and improve the City's image.
- City Entry Design Program

- **CD1.7 Views and Vistas.** Preserve and enhance major views and vistas along major streets and open spaces, providing areas to stroll and benches to rest and enjoy views.
- **CD1.8 Edges.** Preserve and enhance El Cerrito's well-defined edges along the hillside open spaces, the eastern border along the regional park, and the I-80 freeway.
- CD1.9 Building Design. A variety of attractive images will be achieved by encouraging a variety of building styles and designs, within a unifying context of consistent "pedestrian" scale along streets and compatibility among neighboring land uses.

- Development Regulations (zoning)
- Beautification
   Program
- Intergovernmental Coordination
- Development Review
- Design Guidelines
- Development Review
- Specific Plans

Goal CD2: A city with attractive, safe, and functional streets, parking areas, and pedestrian walkways.

### **Policies**

### **Implementation Measures**

- CD2.1 Street Frontages. Encourage street frontages that are safe, by allowing for surveillance of the street by people inside buildings and elsewhere, and are interesting for pedestrians. Require buildings in development centers and neighborhood commercial centers along San Pablo Avenue to be directly abutting sidewalks, with window openings and entries along the pedestrian frontage.
- Specific Plans
- Design Guidelines
- Development Review
- Development Regulations (zoning)
- Grant Funds

# CD2.2 San Pablo Avenue. Develop a design concept for San Pablo Avenue that includes street landscaping and improvements, and design guidelines that create an overall coordinated image and character of the street from north to south. Establish physical design standards for development in cooperation with Caltrans and, where required, subject to acceptance by Caltrans.

- Design Guidelines
- Parking Districts
- Specific Plans

### CD2.3 Streetscape Improvements.

Maintain an active program of street tree planting and improved roadway landscaping through both public and private means. Design guidelines shall describe appropriate types of trees for commercial areas – to enhance the shopping experience rather than detract from it.

- Street Tree Program
- Design Guidelines
- Development Regulations (zoning)
- Capital Improvements Program
- Beautification Program

### CD2.4 Multi-Modal Transportation

Network. Ensure that streets, paths, and bikeways contribute to the system of a fully connected transportation network to all major destinations in the City. The design of these streets and pathways should encourage pedestrian and bicycle uses by being spatially defined by buildings, trees, lighting, and street furniture. Pedestrian and bicycle pathways and auto routes should be compatible.

- Design Guidelines
- Street Tree Program
- Beautification Program

- CD2.5 Signs. Scale and orient signs to both pedestrians and drivers along the street frontage. Building signs should be designed to fit within the scale and character of buildings.
- Design Guidelines
- Sign Ordinance
- Development Review

- **CD2.6 Parking Layout.** Encourage the development of common parking areas and common access for adjoining lots.
- Design Guidelines
- Parking Districts
- Specific Plans
- Development Regulations (zoning)
- CD2.7 Accessible Design. Site and building design must meet basic accessibility needs of the community and not be exclusively oriented to those who arrive by car.
- Design Guidelines
- Development Review
- Specific Plans
- CD2.8 City Sidewalk and Pedestrian Walkways. City streets and pedestrian walkways should be designed to be safe, accessible, convenient, comfortable, and functionally adequate at all times, including the design of pedestrian crossings, intersection design, sidewalk widths, street tree planting, street furniture, and signal timing.
- Streetscape Improvement Program
- Street Tree Program
- Beautification Program
- Specific Plans
- Design Guidelines

Goal CD3: A city with attractive landscaping of public and private properties, open space, and public gathering spaces.

### **Policies**

### Implementation Measures

- CD3.1 Tree Preservation. Preserve existing significant trees and tree groupings where possible. Replace trees removed due to site development.
- Development Regulations (zoning)
- Development Review
- CD3.2 Usable Open Spaces. Require the provision of usable open space in the form of ground-floor patios, upperfloor decks, and balconies, as well as common recreational facilities.
- Development Regulations
- Design Guidelines
- Development Review

- CD3.3 Site Landscaping. Improve the appearance of the community by requiring aesthetically designed screening and landscaping on public and private sites. Ensure that public landscaping includes entry areas, street medians, parks, and schools. Require landscaping for all private sites, yard spaces, parking lots, plazas, courtyards, and recreational areas.
- Development Regulations (zoning)
- Design Guidelines
- Development Review
- Capital Improvements Program
- CD3.4 Fencing. Require that residential streets maintain open front yards and not be enclosed with fences that exceed three feet in height. Allow fences up to six feet in height to enclose front yards along major arterials, heavily used pedestrian ways or to protect yards from deer and other animals.
- Development Regulations (zoning)
- Design Guidelines
- Development Review
- CD3.5 Creek Preservation. Where possible, preserve and restore natural drainage ways as parts of the storm drainage system, coordinating with recreational and trail use.
- Specific Plans
- Development Regulations (zoning)
- Design Guidelines
- Grant Funds
- Joint Watershed Goals
- CD3.6 Cerrito Creek. Where possible, open the Cerrito Creek channel, providing access and recreational opportunities along the creek in conjunction with its flood control function.
- Specific Plans
- Grant Funds
- Capital Improvements Program
- Joint Watershed Goals
- CD3.7 Landscape Maintenance. Require ongoing maintenance of landscaping on private property (except single-family residences).
- Beautification Program
- Development Regulations (zoning)

- **CD3.8 Public Spaces.** Create specialized Avenue – Del Norte, Midtown, and El Cerrito Plaza. Encourage the design of these public spaces to accommodate activities that encourage the presence of people at all hours of the day and evenings.
- outdoor gathering places in the three main activity centers along San Pablo
- CD3.9 Ohlone Greenway. Enhance the usability and aesthetic appeal of the Ohlone Greenway by integrating it into the fabric of the City. Design buildings with entries, yards, patios, and windows to open onto and face the Ohlone Greenway. Avoid blank walls, backs of buildings, and large parking lots adjacent to the greenway.
- CD3.10 Greenway Spur Trails. Develop greenway spur trails for creekside access and access to the Bay for recreational use and environmental protection.
- CD3.11 Streetscape Design. Streetscape design (street trees, lighting, and pedestrian furniture) should be used to lend character and continuity with commercial districts and residential neighborhoods.
- CD3.12 Landscape Species. Indigenous and drought-tolerant species that reduce water usage and are compatible with El Cerrito's climate are encouraged.

- Specific Plans
- Design Guidelines
- Development Review
- **Development Incentives**
- Redevelopment Program
- Design Guidelines
- Development Review

- Capital Improvements Program
- Joint Watershed Goals
- Grant Funds
- Streetscape Improvement Program
- Specific plans
- City Entry Design Program
- Sign Ordinance
- Design Guidelines
- Development Review

### Goal CD4: Well designed buildings that are compatible with their surroundings.

### **Policies**

### Implementation Measures

### **CD4.1** Compatibility in Building Scale.

Avoid big differences in building scale and character between developments on adjoining lots.

- Design Guidelines
- Development Review
- **CD4.2** Building Articulation. Ensure that

buildings are well articulated. Avoid large unarticulated shapes in building design. Ensure that building designs include varied building facades, rooflines, and building heights to create more interesting and differentiated building forms and shapes. Encourage human scale detail in architectural design. Do not allow unarticulated blank walls or unbroken series of garage doors on the facades of buildings facing the street or the Ohlone Greenway.

- Design Guidelines
- Development Review

- **CD4.3** Front Yards. Provide front yards in residential areas with structures and parking lots stepped back along public streets in keeping with the character and setbacks of surrounding buildings. Ensure that yard spaces are landscaped appropriately to fit the surrounding context.
- Development Regulations (zoning)
- Design Guidelines
- Development Review

### **CD4.4** Natural Lighting and Ventilation.

Ensure that building design takes into consideration air circulation, natural lighting, views, and shading areas to interior and exterior spaces.

- Design Guidelines
- Development Review
- **CD4.5** Energy and Resources. Integrate good design with the use of energy efficient techniques and equipment, and with materials and construction practices that minimize adverse

environmental affects.

- **Building Code**
- Development Incentives
- Development Regulations (zoning)

### **CD4.6** Sustainable Building Materials.

Encourage the use of "green" and non-toxic building materials, and advise builders to apply for regional, state and national incentives programs.

- **Development Incentives**
- Grant Funds
- Design Guidelines

Goal CD5: A design process that achieves design objectives while being efficient and allowing for flexibility.

### **Policies**

### **Implementation Measures**

- CD5.1 Design Review Process. Continue design review and approval process for all new development, changes, additions, and modifications of existing buildings (except for singlefamily homes on existing lots).
- Design Guidelines
- Development Review
- CD5.2 Planned Development. Encourage planned development projects and other techniques that cluster open spaces, views, and other
- developments to create and preserve amenities.
- CD5.3 Design Guidelines and Regulations. Make development and design regulations more understandable with use of illustrations, photos, drawings, diagrams, or other graphic and visually oriented regulations, such as a "form code."
- Development Regulations (zoning)
- Development Review
- Design Guidelines
- Design Guidelines
- Development Regulations (zoning)

Goal CD6: An urban form that sustains a vital commercial community to meet the diverse needs of the local and regional population.

### **Policies**

### **Implementation Measures**

CD6 Affordable Commerce. El Cerrito's urban form should allow site opportunities for commerce by local entrepreneurs – small business spaces in close proximity to other businesses with easy visibility from the street and close to abundant

pedestrian traffic.

- Development Regulations (zoning)
- Design Guidelines
- Specific Plans

### **HOUSING**

The Housing Element is one of the seven required General Plan elements and is an integral part of the El Cerrito General Plan. Because the majority of El Cerrito's land use is in housing, the Housing Element is a key component of the City's future plans. The Housing Element is subject to more state guidance and review than the other required elements. State law requires it to be revised every five years, based on the periodic regional housing needs determination made by the Association of Bay Area Governments (ABAG). Because of budgetary constraints; no new needs determination has been published since 1989; therefore, the Housing Element is not being updated as part of the 1999 General Plan Update Program.

The Housing Element was last updated in 1991 and adopted by amendment as part of the El Cerrito General Plan. Among other things, the element takes into consideration the city's housing needs as determined by ABAG and the potential for meeting those needs based on land use designations and an inventory of vacant and under-utilized properties. The regional allocation of 1989 was 722 units. Of those required, 339 units had been produced by the end of 1998. At the time the Housing Element was adopted in 1991, it was determined that, although the supply of vacant residentially zoned land in El Cerrito is limited, there remained adequate capacity to meet the city's share of projected regional housing needs. Of the total projected 1,183 additional units that could be built:

- 165 (44 multifamily and 121 single family) could be accommodated through infill development on vacant land in the city limits; and
- 1,018 (all multifamily) could be accommodated through development in the city's redevelopment project areas (principally around the city's two BART stations).

El Cerrito is expected to adopt a new Housing Element in 2001. In the meantime, the existing adopted Housing Element is included as Appendix A to this General Plan.

### **GROWTH MANAGEMENT**

### A. Setting

The Growth Management Element establishes a comprehensive, long-range program that matches demand for public facilities generated by new development with policies and standards for traffic level of service (LOS) and performance criteria for fire, police, parks, sanitary facilities, water supplies, and flood control. The Growth Management Element is concerned with maintaining defined urban service levels; it is not intended to limit growth or to direct growth into certain areas of the community on a priority basis. Most importantly, the Element's policies ensure that new development impacts that threaten to degrade established traffic performance or public service thresholds are mitigated through project modification, capital improvement programming, or contributions to improvements.

The Growth Management Element is part of the General Plan because Contra Costa County voters approved a one-half (.5%) percent sales tax increase in November 1988, commonly known as "Measure C," that includes both Transportation Improvement and Growth Management Programs. The overall goals of the Measure C program are:

- To relieve congestion created by past development through road and transit improvements funded by the proceeds of the sales tax increase.
- To prevent future development decisions resulting in deterioration of public services and acceptable traffic performance levels.

The Growth Management Element concerns itself primarily with the latter goal of the countywide growth management program. To be eligible for its share of revenue generated under Measure C, the City must commit itself, as matter of public policy, to carrying out the following objectives:

- Manage congestion by adopting and applying traffic service standards for streets, roads and Regional Routes.
- Adopt standards for fire, police, parks, water, flood control, and sanitary sewer services which will be met as the city grows, accomplished by 'Performance Standards' for provision of necessary facilities.
- Reduce dependency on single-occupant automobile travel through adoption of a local and countywide Transportation Systems Management (TSM) program applied to large-scale employers in the city.
- Anticipate needed investments by adopting a five-year Capital Improvement Program that lists projects, their costs and funding mechanisms.
- Ensure that new development "pays its own way" through mitigation and fee programs.
- Reduce the number and/or length of automobile commute trips by enhancing El Cerrito's housing and job opportunities.

### B. Traffic Service Standards

Projected increases in travel have the capacity to influence disproportionately the shape and character of El Cerrito, if traffic congestion and improvements to the travel network are not managed through local and cooperative regional policy implementation. The Land Use Element (Community Development and Design chapter) establishes the timing and density of future growth within the city. The Transportation Element (Transportation and Circulation chapter), supplemented by the Growth Management Element's defined levels of intersection performance and policies for mitigation of traffic impacts, are useful sources of options and strategies to influence regional growth patterns that extend their influence beyond El Cerrito's borders.

### Routes of Regional Significance

Measure "C" requires that all freeways and selected arterials in the county be designated as Routes of Regional Significance, or "regional routes." These roadways experience extreme levels of congestion, and carry significant levels of throughtraffic to other parts of the Bay Area. There are many obstacles to improving conditions on these regional routes, including the high cost of expanding physical capacity and the uncertain role of outside agencies' funding decisions. Within El Cerrito, these regional routes include Interstate Freeway 80, San Pablo Avenue, and Cutting Boulevard.

### Characteristics of El Cerrito's Regional Routes

### Interstate Freeway 80

The freeway consists of three lanes in each direction through West County, with a 55 MPH speed limit. Interchanges serving El Cerrito include Central Avenue, Carlson Boulevard, Potrero Avenue, and Cutting Boulevard. Interstate 80 is the most congested of all regional routes. Congestion extends from Pinole Valley Road south to Central Avenue during the AM peak period and from Central to the Carquinez Bridge tollbooth during the PM peak period. Congestion on 1-80 causes high traffic volumes and consequent delays on San Pablo Avenue, the primary parallel route.

I-80 has one of the highest percentages of through traffic in the west county corridor, with 52% of AM peak hour direction travel, measured at the Carquinez Bridge. Ninety-two percent of that traffic originates in Napa and Solano counties. Truck traffic, which contributes to travel delay, makes up 9% of total AM Eastbound (non-peak direction) volume, much of which enters or leaves the freeway on the San Pablo Avenue corridor.

The West Contra Costa County Action Plan identifies a number of improvements to the I-80 corridor needed by the year 2000 to alleviate the expected breakdown of capacity. Those improvements of most significance to El Cerrito include:

 HOV interchange at Cutting Boulevard to serve the El Cerrito Del Norte BART station (constructed)

- Parallel route improvements on San Pablo Avenue including signal upgrades (Phase I is under construction. Phase II will implement transit preferential signal timings and include physical enhancements to transit operations on San Pablo Avenue.)
- Transportation Management Plan to include transit, ride sharing, public information/marketing and vehicle monitoring.

### San Pablo Avenue

In El Cerrito, San Pablo Avenue is an urbanized thoroughfare between the south City limit at Cerrito Creek Carlson to the north city limit just south of McDonald Avenue with two lanes in each direction. At most intersections there are left turns operating with left-turn signal phasing. The speed limit is 35 MPH. Average daily traffic volumes on San Pablo Avenue are greatest at its southerly extreme in the County. Near Cutting Boulevard, the highest average daily volume is 29,900 vehicles. During the AM peak period, the highest volumes occur near Potrero Avenue at 2,275 vehicles per hour. The highest PM peak hour period volumes occur near Barrett Avenue in Richmond, and frequently cause traffic backup into El Cerrito.

The San Pablo Avenue Corridor has been studied on a regional and local basis to determine the improvements necessary to maintain the routes as a parallel to I-80 and to serve locally approved uses. Coordination of improvements is difficult given the number of jurisdictions through which the street passes, and variety of volumes and functions that it serves. Alameda and Contra Costa counties are currently installing signal interconnect along San Pablo Avenue to improve inter-jurisdictional and intra-jurisdictional signal coordination.

### Cutting Boulevard

The portion of Cutting Boulevard in El Cerrito designated as a regional route extends from Key Boulevard to the westerly city limit. It links San Pablo Avenue and the Del Norte BART station to I-80. The road encompasses two lanes in each direction with improved medians and left-turn pockets, except for a segment which is one-way westbound between the BART station and San Pablo Avenue. Most significant congestion occurs east of Carlson Boulevard. Measured delays at San Pablo Avenue have been relatively minor during the PM peak hour, and no improvements within El Cerrito are specified.

### Regional Action Plans

Local jurisdictions are expected to participate in the development of programs to control regional traffic impacts on these routes through a series of Action Plans approved by one of the Regional Transportation Planning Committees created under Measure C. El Cerrito has been working closely with the WCCTAC (West Contra Costa County Traffic Advisory Committee) to develop an action plan for the west county area. Once approved, the Action Plan will be combined by CCTA with other regionally recommended Action Plans to create a countywide comprehensive transportation plan. The City recognizes that the success of attaining Action Plan

objectives depends upon participation of other jurisdictions in both planning and funding of necessary improvements.

### Basic Routes

All roads not indicated on the map of Routes of Regional Significance are Basic Routes. The Growth Management Element is required to assess the operating capacity of signalized intersections on Basic Routes, estimate future service impacts resulting from significant, foreseeable increases in home building and job-formation, according to the city's General Plan land use and housing policies.

### Level of Service - General

Measure C requires adoption of traffic level of service (LOS) standards for basic routes, which are related to existing and projected land use. These standards are then applied throughout the remaining General Plan elements to ensure consistency in development decision-making. The Growth Management Element uses traffic LOS as an indicator of present levels of congestion at signalized intersections and as a measuring device to determine the success of congestion relief strategies. Measure C has standardized the criteria for intersection performance related to land use, based on the categories described in Table 4-3.

Table 4-3: Infrastructure Performance Related to Land Use

Land Use Type	LOS Standard	Volume/Capacity (V/C) Ratio
Rural	LOS C (Congestion)	0.70 to 0.74
Semi-Rural	LOS C (Congestion)	0.74 to 0.79
Suburban	LOS D (High congestion)	0.80 to 0.84
Urban	LOS D (High Congestion)	0.85 to 0.89
Central Business District	LOS E (Near Capacity)	0.90 to 0.94

Characteristics of Land Use Types					
Rural	Use:	Agricultural or Open Space designation in			
		General Plan			
_	Land Area:	Characterized by large parcel sizes (10 to several			
		thousand acres)			
	Population:	One person/acre or 500 persons/sq. mi.			
Semi-Rural	Use:	Agriculture on small to medium sized lots or low-			
		density ranchettes; very low density housing			
	Land Area:	Parcel sizes not less than 2 to 3 acres			
	Population:	1 to 1.5 persons/acre or 500-1,000 persons/sq. mi.			
Suburban	Use:	Low and medium density single family-and multi-			
		family housing; community oriented			
		commercial/industrial uses; 1 to 3 story building			
_		heights			
	Land Area	6,000 sq. ft. to 3 acres			
	Population:	1.5 to 12 persons/acre or 1,000-7,000 persons/sq. mi.			
Urban	Use:	Medium and high density multi-family housing or			
Cibali	030.	single-family condominiums; low to moderate			
		density commercial/industrial uses; 3 to 4 story			
		building heights			
_	Land Area:	Not specified			
	Population:	12 persons/acre or 7,500 persons/sq. mi.			
	•	minimum			
_	Employment:	15 jobs/acre minimum			
Central Business	Use:	High intensity commercial and residential nodes,			
District (CBD)		characterized by large concentrations of jobs and			
,		clusters of buildings of 4 or more stories.			
		Includes major commercial centers.			
	Land Area	Not specified			
	Population	Not specified			

El Cerrito has connected these terms to the local street hierarchy in the Transportation Element, which classifies vehicle routes according to the character of surrounding development and their linkage to sources of traffic congestion from other jurisdictions. Table 4-4 describes the city's Basic Route signal controlled intersections and the minimum service level at which the intersection is expected to operate based on future development activity:

Table 4-4: Signalized Intersection Service Standards

Location	Land Use	Intersection Characteristics	LOS Standard
Fairmount/Liberty	CBD	Minor Arterial/Principal Arterial	'E' to 0.94 v/c
Fairmount/Ashbury	Suburban	Collector/Minor Art'l/Principal Art'l	'D' to 0.84 v/c
Fairmount/Colusa	Suburban	Collector/Principal Arterial	'D' to 0.84 v/c
Central/Carlson	CBD	Principal Arterial/Principal Arterial	'E' to 0.94 v/c
Potrero/Eastshore	Urban	Local Street/Principal Arterial	'D' to 0.89 v/c
Richmond/Stockton	Suburban	Minor Arterial/Collector	'D' to 0.84 v/c
Richmond/Moeser	Urban	Minor Arterial/Minor Arterial	'D' to 0.89 v/c
Richmond/Potrero	Urban	Minor Arterial/Minor Arterial	'D' to 0.89 v/c
Cutting/Key Blvd.	Urban	Principal Arterial/Minor Arterial	'D' to 0.89 v/c

### Infrastructure Conditions

As a result of deferred maintenance, local streets have deteriorated to the point where reconstruction now is necessary in some cases. The existing traffic signals on Richmond Avenue have the oldest controllers in Contra Costa County, and parts no longer are available to repair them. Additionally, the Public Safety Commission has identified three problem intersections that may require the installation of new signals at a future date (Richmond and Fairmount, Richmond and Schmidt, and Key and Cutting). A program to reconstruct streets in the city's network will emphasize arterial and collector streets. The streets to be reconstructed first would be the lower portion of Barrett Avenue and Potrero Avenue between Arlington and Navellier. Reconstruction will include removal and replacement of deteriorated curbs, storm drain inlets and catch basins, new pavement, and installation of access ramps where feasible.

### Level of Service and Future Land Use

Nearly all significant new increments of housing and employment will occur on parcels located within the San Pablo Avenue corridor, or in joint use with BART station facilities. Expanding jobs and housing opportunity inside El Cerrito's borders will not necessarily eliminate commute travel to and from the region. However, it will offer an alternative to the commuter lifestyle and enhance options for El Cerrito's economic development that do not burden the regional roadway network.

While most of the direct traffic impact of local land use intensification will fall upon Regional Routes such as San Pablo Avenue and Cutting Boulevard, it is equally important that such activity not burden the basic route system and degrade the minimum service levels for signalized intersections described above.

The city is committed, as part of the region-wide effort to reduce traffic congestion and improve the efficiency and safety of its local street system, to monitor traffic conditions on a systematic basis and develop programs to maintain established service standards. El Cerrito is a "mature" city with only limited growth potential. However, even the relatively small increment of growth potential described in this Element can burden local and regional transportation facilities without a prescribed means of measurement and defined mitigation programs.

### C. Urban Service Performance Standards

### Park and Recreation Facilities

### Service Function

The City of El Cerrito provides a rich diversity of parks and recreational opportunities. Parklands include approximately 32 acres of City-owned parks, 100 acres of City-owned open space used for recreation and conservation purposes, 23 acres of other City-maintained recreation facilities, and 27 acres of School District-owned and maintained recreation areas. More details are provided in Chapter 6.

### Service Standard

Five (5) acres of publicly owned parkland for each 1,000 residents.

### Fire Suppression and Related Emergency Services Service Function

The El Cerrito Fire Department provides first response to structural, vehicular and wildland fires, medical emergencies, hazardous materials, incidents and natural disasters. The Department's ability to meet to these needs is facilitated through active participation with Richmond, Kensington, and the West County fire departments in an automatic response agreement that uses the combined resources of all four agencies to serve these needs irrespective of jurisdictional lines. The departments share the costs of dispatch and training services and have established common standards for staffing, apparatus and equipment.

### Service Standard

The interagency agreement specifies the following response protocol for all emergency service requests:

- Maximum response time for first engine arrival of six (6) minutes including one
   (1) minute dispatch time and three (3) minute-travel time from responding station.
- Three (3) person engine company is minimum response.
- Minimum training level of responders shall be Firefighter 1 and Emergency Medical Technician 1.

### Police Emergency Services

### Service Function

The El Cerrito Police Department's mission is to respond to requests for law enforcement emergency services, deter criminal activity, investigate crimes against persons and property and undertake proactive programs to reduce the opportunity for criminal activity. The department also acts proactively to reduce dangerous motor vehicle operating practices and offers community education outreach programs about personal and neighborhood security.

### Service Standard

The Police Department is committed to maintaining a level of personnel and capital equipment for first-unit response in three (3) minutes to requests for emergency service. The City's resources alone are insufficient to meet the multiplicity of demands upon a modem police agency. Hence, the Department contracts with the City of Richmond for emergency dispatching, and with various state and county agencies for specialized investigative support services.

### Sanitary Sewer and Treatment Services

### Service Function

Two agencies work together to serve El Cerrito's sanitary sewer needs. Stege Sanitary District provides the underground lines leading from customer discharge sites to the regional treatment plant. That plant, operated by the East Bay Municipal Utility District at Point Isabel, provides tertiary level treatment to RWQCB standards for discharge to the Bay.

### Service Standard

Service capacity planning is based on a 130-gallon daily increment per person.

### Domestic Water Services

### Service Function

East Bay Municipal Utility District provides domestic water service to residential and institutional customers in the city. Past droughts, which curtained water service in some areas, have reminded people of the need to conserve water whenever possible.

### Service Standard

250 gallons/day for each residential household to 4 (four) persons +62 gallons for each additional person in the household. 90% of 1986 use for commercial connections and 95% of 1986 use for institutional uses, to be reevaluated upon improvement in prevailing drought conditions.

### Flood Control

### Service Function

Flood hazards arise from natural rainstorms, failure of water storage facilities, and from the secondary effects of landslides. Storage tanks for East Bay MUD located south of Potrero Avenue below Bay Vista Court are considered at minimal risk of failure in a seismic event; however, their safety can be improved by installation of flexible couplers and check valves. Because the watersheds in El Cerrito's foothills are relatively small, risk of flood damage through the sudden release of accumulated water behind a collapsed mass of landslide debris is also small. The greatest flood hazard risk is posed by the current condition of the storm drain system that is under study for long term and comprehensive remediation.

Only a small portion of Cerrito Creek is subject to inundation in the 1% (100 year event). Property damage from such an event is predictable, but would be confined to isolated locations in the flood path. The Contra Costa County Flood Control District establishes maintenance and development standards in the floodway. The City has also established restrictive development policies in its Municipal Code as a condition of continued eligibility for participation in the National Flood Insurance Program.

### Service Standard

Containment of the 100-year flood event according to the federal Flood Insurance Rate Maps. Continued restriction on construction within flood hazard zones through establishment of minimum floor level elevations above the projected 100-year flood event level, as established by the Flood Control District.

### D. Goals and Policies

The Implementation Measures associated with each policy are described in the following section of this chapter.

Goal GM1: A coordinated regional and sub-regional planning system that provides better service and less congestion for residents of El Cerrito

### **Policies**

### Implementation Measures

### **GM1.1** Cooperative Transportation Planning.

Participate in subregional transportation planning activities of the West Contra Costa Transportation Advisory Committee, including development of Regional Route Action Plans. Cooperate in remediation of intersections in other jurisdictions operating at a level of service below the desired minimum threshold when it is demonstrated that El Cerrito's actions contribute substantially to adverse operating conditions at such intersections. Such cooperative action shall only be considered in the context of an application by the other jurisdiction for a Finding of Special Circumstances in accordance with application procedures established by the Contra Costa Transportation Authority.

Intergovernmental Coordination

### GM1.2 Implementation of Action Plans.

Implement in a timely manner specific local actions of the Regional Route Action Plan following its adoption by the West Contra Costa Transportation Advisory Committee and the Contra Costa Transportation Authority.

 Intergovernmental Coordination

- GM1.3 Conflict Resolution Services. Seek the services of the Contra Costa
  Transportation authority's conflict resolution process when needed to resolve disputes with other jurisdictions related to the development and implementation of Actions Plans and other programs described in the Growth Management Element.
- Intergovernmental Coordination

Goal GM2: Compliance with applicable level of service standards.

- GM2.1 Application of Standards. Strive to maintain the minimum V/C performance standard for each signalized intersection as described in Table 4-4. Level of Service Standards are considered to be met if measurement of actual conditions at the intersection indicates that operations are equal too or better than the specified minimum performance standard, or if El Cerrito's Capital Improvement Program includes projects which, when constructed, will result in performance better than or equal to the specified minimum standard.
- Capital Improvements Program
- Development Regulations (zoning)

### GM2.2 Achieving Level of Service Standards.

Consider amendments to the General Plan Land Use Element or Map, Zoning Ordinance, or other relevant plans and policies to alter land use intensity or vehicle trip activity so that any Basic Route signalized intersection which does not meet the minimum service level standard in Policy GM2.2 can be brought into compliance with said standard.

Alternately, consider amendments to the Capital Improvement Program or other relevant programs and policies which will improve the capacity or efficiency of intersections not meeting the service standards through physical construction and improvements.

GM2.3 Findings of Special Circumstances.

Consider requesting from the Contra Costa Transportation Authority a Finding of Special Circumstances for any Basic Route signalized intersection that may not meet level of service standards as described in Policy GM2.1 when it can be demonstrated that the amendments described in Policy GM2.2 are infeasible under the Authority's prescribed criteria. Prior to initiating the request, the City will evaluate policy options and changes, alternative standards, and proposed mitigation measures to achieve the minimum service levels and describe the findings upon which these alternatives were deemed infeasible.

- Development Regulations (zoning)
- Capital Improvements Program

 Intergovernmental Coordination

### Goal GM3: Timely review of projects that are heavy traffic generators.

## GM3.1 Traffic Impact Study. Conduct a traffic impact study consistent with CCTA Technical Guidelines as part of the application review process for development proposals estimated to generate over 100 peak-hour vehicle trips.

 Development Regulations (zoning)

### GM3.2 Finding of Consistency with

Standards. Demonstrate that development proposals that generate over 100 peak-hour vehicle trips in the peak direction are consistent with the Level of Service Standards stated in Policy GM2.2, and the West Contra Costa Action Plan for Regional Routes prior to approval. Findings of Consistency may be made if a traffic impact analysis demonstrates that the project will not erode the minimum service standards at any Basic Route signalized intersection unless:

- Development Regulations (zoning)
- Intergovernmental Coordination

- (1). Projects included in the City's Capital Improvement Program or Street Improvement Program will result in attainment of the desired standard and fully or partially offset the traffic impacts of the project; or
- (2). Findings of Special Circumstances, including appropriate mitigation measures, have been adopted by the City of El Cerrito and the CCTA.
- GM3.3 Transportation Demand Management Ordinance. Adopt and implement a Transportation Demand Management (TDM) Ordinance.
- TransportationDemandManagement

Goal GM4: Effective community-wide programs to reduce traffic impacts of new projects.

### GM4.1 Local Development Mitigation Program – Transportation. Adopt and implement a development mitigation program requiring developers to pay the

program requiring developers to pay the costs necessary to mitigate impacts of their projects on the local and regional transportation system.

GM4.2 Local Street Maintenance and

Improvement Funds. Support projects intended to meet or maintain Level of Service standards, to implement Action Plans for Regional Routes, and to provide mitigation for intersections Subject to Findings of Special Circumstances through Local Street Improvement and Maintenance Funds allocated by the Contra Costa Transportation Authority. Revenue from this source shall not replace private developer exactions pursuant to Policy GM4.1 for transportation projects necessary to meet or maintain minimum service standards challenged by new growth.

Traffic Impact Fee

- Intergovernmental Coordination
- Capital Improvements Program

### GM4.3 Capital Improvement Program.

Identify in the City's Capital Improvement Program funding sources, as well as intended phasing, for projects necessary to maintain and improve traffic operations.

- Capital Improvements Program
- **GM4.4 Compliance Reporting.** Complete and submit the required compliance checklist materials required periodically by the Contra Costa Transportation Authority.
- Intergovernmental Coordination

### Goal GM5: An effective system of providing urban services.

### Program - Services. Adopt and implement a development mitigation program requiring developers to pay the costs necessary to offset impacts of their projects on the local police, fire and park service system. Ensure that the local development review process includes

**Local Development Mitigation** 

GM5.1

consultation with contact agencies supplying domestic water, sanitary sewage and flood control service so that cost impacts are identified and appropriate mitigations included on a cooperative basis.

Public Facilities Fee

- GM5.2 Performance Standard Review. As part of the City's development review process, or through the local CEQA review procedure for defined projects, evaluate the impact of the project upon public services and make findings appropriate to project approval under the following circumstances
  - (1) Performance standards will be maintained following project occupancy;
  - (2) Mitigation measures have been incorporated in project approval documents sufficient to maintain designated service standards; or
  - (3) Capital improvements sponsored by El Cerrito or the affected special purpose agency will ensure that designated service standards are maintained.

- Development Review
- **CEQA Review**

### GM5.3 Capital Improvement Program.

Identify in the City's Capital Improvement Program funding sources, as well as intended phasing, for projects necessary to maintain police, fire and park service standards. Encourage outside agencies providing vital services to El Cerrito to maintain adequate funding and long-range facility planning activity to adequately anticipate future demands of growth and the life-cycle/replacement of equipment and infrastructure.

- Capital Improvements Program
- Intergovernmental Coordination

### GM5.4 Contributions to Improvement.

Require new development to contribute to or participate in the improvement of public services according to the demand generated by the project occupants and users.

- Public Facilities Fee
- CEQA Review

### **IMPLEMENTATION**

The following is a summary of the major tools available to the City for implementation of the policies in this chapter, Community Development and Design.

### 1. Beautification Program

A city beautification program is excellent way to increase public awareness and participation in creating good design and quality spaces. City beautification programs can take many forms and involve both the public and private sectors. They can include; design awards for building design and landscaping, yard maintenance; landscape planting programs such as flower planting, street tree planting; and, public art projects or other civic improvement programs. They may also include the development of public scenic turnouts, rest stops, and overlooks to take advantage of views and vistas from the hillsides. Many city beautification programs are sponsored jointly by the city government and local civic organizations to promote civic pride while enhancing the physical appearance.

### 2. Building Code

El Cerrito should consider adopting amendments to the Building Code that promote energy and better uses of natural resources. This could be the part of the charge to a citizen task force that looks into possible ways of encouraging El Cerrito to agree upon and adhere to applicable principles of sustainable development.

### 3. Capital Improvement Program

The Capital Improvement Program (CIP) is a compilation of the capital improvements planned for construction over the next five years in El Cerrito. It includes cost estimates, the phasing of specific improvements and associated costs and methods with which specific improvements will be financed. The City should continue to conduct annual reviews of the CIP and add money for transportation, infrastructure, and public facility improvements as funding sources are identified. The CIP also provides the basis for planning for and funding of a civic center and other community facilities.

### 4. CEQA Review

The City should ensure that the CEQA review process identifies impacts of new development upon the transportation system, utilities, and public facilities.

### 5. City Entry Design Program

The City can sponsor the design and construction of entry monuments and other landscape improvement projects to improve the appearance of city streets. These landscape improvement projects can also be developed in cooperation with civic organizations or sponsored by local business to create new entry signs, monuments, and landmarks at major entry points to El Cerrito.

### 6. Creek Restoration

The City may contribute through its storm drainage improvement program, or seek funding from other agencies or private sources, to restore various segments to creeks or other streets (on surface or through removal of pipes) and restoration of riparian habitats.

### 7. Design Guidelines

Design guidelines are a tool for ensuring that development is compatible with the surrounding area and that it functions well for the community. To the extent possible, the guidelines should be specific: guidelines that are quantifiable should be considered for incorporation into the development regulations.

### 8. Development Incentives

Providing development incentives to developers and property owners can influence good community design. Development incentives can be in the form of density and development intensity bonuses, reduced development standards (i.e., reductions in parking requirements, height restrictions, setbacks, etc.). Incentives may be granted where they promote closer adherence to City objectives by providing desirable features, such as exceptional design, creative design of off-street parking, enhancements to public amenities, environmental benefits, such as creek restoration, and similar benefits to the community.

### 9. Development Regulations (zoning)

The development regulations, primarily the zoning regulations and subdivision ordinance, provide the standards for development, prescribe allowable uses, contain specific incentive provisions, and include other standards and procedures related to approval of development projects.

### 10. Development Review

The development review process includes discretionary review by the Planning Commission and the Design Review Board, based on consideration of General Plan objectives and policies, and criteria established by the zoning and subdivision ordinances and other city regulations and adopted guidelines. Most discretionary actions are subject to the requirements of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). The development review process also includes administrative review of projects to verify compliance with Planning Commission and Design Review Board requirements, as well as standards set by the City through adoption of building and fire codes, engineering standards, and other regulations and ordinances. Development review should be used to assess the impact of new development on the demand for transportation and public facility improvements and to implement mitigation measures and other mechanisms to help finance needed improvements.

### 11. Economic Development Strategy

The city should maintain a strategy to retain and attract businesses. This strategy should be reviewed frequently to ensure that it reflects current economic and business trends and makes use of the city's advantages as a business location. The

city staff, elected officials, and business organizations should then actively market the city as a location for desirable types of businesses.

### 12. Fiscal Impact Assessment

The City should consider development of a fiscal impact assessment process that would identify the economic and fiscal impacts of new development projects. The process should establish size thresholds that trigger the assessment, integrate the assessment with CEQA review, and ensure that the fiscal impact assessment is not an undue burden on economic development of the City. Also see Implementation Measures in Chapter 6 on a Public Facilities Fee and Traffic Impact Fee.

### 13. General Plan Consistency Review

Review all public projects for consistency with the General Plan as early as possible in order to minimize wasted effort on projects deemed not to be in conformance.

### 14. Grant Funds

The City should determine whether grant funds are available from federal or state sources for restoring creeks, preparing design guidelines to reduce crime, and developing guidelines for pedestrian friendly areas near either or both BART stations.

### 15. Historical Inventory and Designation

The City should initiate, or work with a local civic group to initiate, an inventory of structures or sites that may have architectural, historical, archeological, or cultural significance to the community. The City should then consider action to list the most significant structures or sites on the California Register of Historical Resources and the National Register of Historic Places.

### 16. Housing Program

The city's housing program consists of those actions necessary to achieve the policies of the General Plan and the goals of the Housing Element. The housing program should monitor progress toward achieving goals to ensure that suitable land and incentives are available. The housing program also includes the responsibilities of the Redevelopment Agency to support affordable housing goals.

### 17. Intergovernmental Coordination

The City should coordinate with adjacent jurisdictions, the Metropolitan Transportation Commission, Contra Costa County, AC Transit, BART, Caltrans, and other applicable agencies. The Contra Costa County Transportation Authority (CCTA) West County Action Plan for Routes of Regional Significance (12/9/94) defines a regional vision for Hercules, Pinole, San Pablo, Richmond, and El Cerrito. This document defines many of the City's positions with respect to regional transportation improvements. Some of the key Action Plan items are:

a. Support inclusion of the West County BART extension in the MTC Track 2 Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) project lists.

- b. Pursue every opportunity to speed the funding and construction of the West County BART extension to Crockett.
- c. Expand efforts urging MTC to determine the best express transit system(s) for the Interstate 80 corridor and, based on the results of the MTC study, encourage timely implementation of planned transit capital and service improvements.
- d. Promote Carquinez Bridge alternatives that will achieve mainline metering of Interstate 80 into West Contra Costa County.
- e. Support efforts by Caltrans, CCTA, and MTC to tailor capacity of the Carquinez Bridge improvements to downstream capacity.
- f. Support efforts by AC Transit to study the feasibility of bus rapid transit treatments along San Pablo Avenue.
- g. Support mixed-use development, high employment commercial, and higherdensity residential development in transit corridors and near BART stations.
- h. Consider additional transit mitigation alternatives, as appropriate, in future Action Plan Deficiency Strategies.

In addition to, and in support of, these regional key items, the following are City of El Cerrito interagency coordination positions:

- a. As opportunities present themselves, improve freeway access to El Cerrito, particularly around the Del Norte area and at the Central Avenue interchange.
- b. Oppose transportation projects that would diminish access to Interstate 80 from El Cerrito.
- c. Oppose capacity enhancements to San Pablo Avenue except when the improvements serve local traffic and do not compromise bus, pedestrian and bicycle travel.
- d. Support physical enhancements to San Pablo Avenue to make it a transit and pedestrian friendly multi-modal street.

In addition to the above, the City should work with Caltrans to install adequate highway landscaping improvements along I-80.

### 18. Joint Watershed Goals

In 1995 the cities of El Cerrito, Albany, Berkeley and Richmond, the East Bay Regional Park district, and the University of California at Berkeley, endorsed a goals statement expressing mutual intentions to restore creeks to natural conditions, to make use of creek corridors for pedestrian and bicycle transportation purposes, to assure adequate flow of freshwater for nourishment of creeks, and to promote public awareness of the value of healthy watersheds. The statement includes a mutual agreement to seek opportunities for grants and other cooperative efforts.

### 19. Parking Districts

Parking districts can be formed by local property owners to help finance needed parking in impacted commercial areas. Parking districts provide for centralized parking lots and parking structures that allow participants to build and rehabilitate existing buildings at a higher intensity of development.

### 20. Public Facilities Fee

The City should consider adopting a citywide public facilities impact fee ordinance, under the requirements of the applicable laws, to fund new community and public facilities, including public safety facilities, required to serve new residents and employees in the City.

### 21. Redevelopment Program

In support of its economic development strategy the City may choose to use the authority of its Redevelopment Agency in attracting and retaining business and other activities, and in providing supportive public improvements.

### 22. Sign Ordinance

The sign ordinance is tool to regulate the appearance, size, and location of signs in the City of El Cerrito. Well-designed signs contribute to the overall visual quality of the built environment by reducing clutter as well as helping in way-finding and locating business and other activities.

### 23. Special Districts

Special districts can be formed by local property owner to help finance desired neighborhood improvements including street lighting, streetscape enhancements, and landscaping improvements.

### 24. Specific Plans

Certain areas of the city need to be planned comprehensively, but in more detail than can be done in a general plan. A specific plan can integrate land use, design, transportation, utilities and other issues into an action strategy. Areas to be considered for a specific plan include the Midtown area along San Pablo Avenue, extending from south of Moeser to north of Manila Avenue, and the Del Norte BART station area. A specific plan for the El Cerrito Plaza area, including the BART station and the area along San Pablo Avenue between Fairmount and Central avenues, should be prepared to provide overall direction during the next 20 years.

### 25. Street Tree Program

A citywide street tree planting program can dramatically enhance neighborhood streets, increase property values, and improve the overall appearance of the city. The city should continue its street tree planting program by offering free street trees to any resident or business in the City.

### 26. Streetscape Improvement Program

Many of the commercial streets in El Cerrito can be improved with a concerted effort to provide new improvements to make the right-of-way more attractive and

pedestrian friendly environments. Selected streets can be improved with pedestrian streetscape amenities, decorative lighting, decorative crosswalks, and additional landscaping. Special street improvement projects can be phased over time and included in revitalization efforts of major areas along San Pablo Avenue.

### 27. Traffic Impact Fee

To help avoid public costs of traffic impacts, the City should consider collecting a traffic impact fee from developers of projects, citywide. Fee payments would fund transportation improvements to mitigate the traffic impacts of new development. The traffic impact fee would be in-lieu of the off-site mitigation requirements, but would not replace the developer's responsibility for frontage improvements. The traffic impact fee may be used to fund roadway extensions, intersection improvements, safety improvements, or improvements and amenities to pedestrian, bicycle or transit facilities.

### 28. Travel Demand Management (TDM)

Support and promote TDM measures to reduce the percentage of person trips made by automobile and to reduce the annual vehicle miles of travel. Reduce the percentage of trips made by automobile and provide the opportunity and facilities to divert trips from automobiles to other modes. Encourage small businesses in areas of employment concentration to form cooperatives that can collectively provide effective TDM options to employees.

### 29. Underground Utility Districts

Creating underground utility districts is a way of financing undergrounding of overhead utility lines. This process can speed up the process of removing overhead utility lines along selected streets.