

## UPDATED DRAFT GOALS, POLICIES & PROGRAMS for the LAND USE & COMMUNITY DESIGN ELEMENT (Tracked Version)

### Land Use Definitions

#### *Open Space*

**Publicly Owned Conservation Land:** Open lands whose primary purpose is the preservation and enhancement of the natural state of the land and its plants and animals. Only resource management, recreation, and educational activities compatible with resource conservation are allowed.

**Public Park:** Open lands whose primary purpose is active recreation and whose character is essentially urban. These areas, which may have been planted with non-indigenous landscaping, require a concerted effort to maintain recreational facilities and landscaping.

**Streamside Open Space:** This designation is intended to preserve and enhance e-corridors of riparian vegetation along a natural streams. Hiking, biking, and riding trails may be developed in the streamside open space. The corridor will generally vary in width up to 200 feet either side of the center line of the creek. However, along San Francisquito Creek between El Camino Real and the Sand Hill Road bridge over the creek, the open space corridor varies in width between approximately 80 and 310 feet from the center line of the creek. The aerial delineation of the open space in this segment of the corridor, as opposed to other segments of the corridor, is shown to approximate scale on the Proposed Land Use and Circulation Map.

**Open Space/Controlled Development:** Land having all the characteristics of open space but ~~upon which~~ where some development may be allowed on private properties. Open space amenities must be retained in these areas. Residential densities range from 0.1 to 1 dwelling unit per acre but may rise to a maximum of 2 units per acre where second units are allowed, and population densities range from 1 to 4 persons per acre.

#### *Residential*

**Single Family Residential:** This designation applies to residential neighborhoods primarily characterized by detached single-family homes, typically with one dwelling unit on each lot. Schools and churches are as well as conditional uses requiring permits. such as churches and schools ~~Specific areas may be zoned to allow s~~ Second units or duplexes may be allowed in select, limited areas where they would be compatible with neighborhood character and do not create traffic and parking problems. The net density in single family areas will range from 1 to 7 units

per acre, but may rise to a maximum of 14 units in areas where second units or duplexes are allowed. Population densities will range from 1 to 30 persons per acre.

**Multiple Family Residential:** The permitted number of housing units will vary by area, depending on existing land use, proximity to major streets and public transit, distance to shopping, and environmental problems. Net densities will range from 8 to 40 units and 8 to 90 persons per acre. Density should be on the lower end of the scale next to single family residential areas. Densities higher than what is permitted by zoning may be allowed where measurable community benefits will be derived, services and facilities are available, and the net effect will be compatible with the overall Comprehensive Plan.

**Village Residential:** Allows residential dwellings that are designed to contribute to the harmony and pedestrian orientation of a street or neighborhood. Housing types include single family houses on small lots, second units, cottage clusters, courtyard housing, duplexes, fourplexes, and small apartment buildings. Design standards will be prepared for each housing type to ensure that development successfully contributes to the street and neighborhood and minimizes potential negative impacts. Net densities will range up to 20 units per acre.

**Transit-Oriented Residential:** Allows higher density residential dwellings in the University Avenue/Downtown and California Avenue commercial centers within a walkable distance, approximately 2,500 feet, of the City's two multi-modal transit stations. The land use category is intended to generate residential densities that support substantial use of public transportation and especially the use of Caltrain. Design standards will be prepared to ensure that development successfully contributes to the street and minimizes potential negative impacts. Individual project performance standards will be developed, including parking, to ensure that a significant portion of the residents will use alternative modes of transportation. Net density will range up to 50 units per acre, with minimum densities to be considered during development of new City zoning regulations.

### **Commercial**

**Neighborhood Commercial:** Includes shopping centers with off-street parking or a cluster of streetfront stores that serve the immediate neighborhood. Examples include ~~Alma Plaza Village~~, Charleston Center, Edgewood Center, and Midtown. Typical uses include supermarkets, bakeries, drugstores, variety stores, barber shops, restaurants, self-service laundries, dry cleaners, child care and hardware stores. In ~~some~~ locations along El Camino Real and Alma Street, residential and mixed use projects may also locate in this category. Non-residential floor area ratios will range up to 0.4.

**Regional/Community Commercial:** Larger shopping centers and districts that have a wider variety of goods and services than the neighborhood shopping areas. They rely on larger trade areas and include such uses as department stores, bookstores, furniture stores, toy stores, apparel

shops, restaurants, theaters, and non-retail services such as ~~residential and offices and~~ banks. ~~Non-retail Muses such as medical and dental offices are conditional uses requiring permits may also locate in this designation.~~ Examples include Stanford Shopping Center, Town and Country Village, and University Avenue/Downtown. In some locations, residential and mixed use projects may also locate in this category. Non-residential floor area ratios range from 0.35 to 2.

**Service Commercial:** Facilities providing citywide and regional services and relying on customers arriving by car. These uses do not necessarily benefit from being in high volume pedestrian areas such as shopping centers or Downtown. Typical uses include auto services and dealerships, motels, lumberyards, appliance stores, and restaurants, including fast service types. In almost all cases, these uses require good automobile and service access so that customers can safely load and unload without impeding traffic. In some locations, residential and mixed use projects may be appropriate in this land use category. Examples of Service Commercial areas include San Antonio Road, El Camino Real, and Embarcadero Road northeast of the Bayshore Freeway. Non-residential floor area ratios will range up to 0.4.

**Mixed Use:** ~~The Mixed Use designation is intended to promote pedestrian-oriented places that layer compatible land uses, public amenities and utilities together at various scales and intensities. The designation allows for multiple functions within the same building or adjacent to one another in the same general vicinity to foster a mix of uses that encourages people to live, work, play, and shop in close proximity. Most typically, mixed use developments have retail on the ground floor and residences above. This category includes Live/Work, Retail/Office, Residential/Retail and Residential/Office development. Its purpose is to increase the types of spaces available for living and working to encourage a mix of compatible uses in certain areas, including a mix of housing types from small studios to larger attached units. This category and is also intended to encourage the upgrading of certain areas with buildings designed to provide a high quality pedestrian-oriented street environment. Mixed Use may include permitted activities mixed within the same building or within separate buildings on the same site or on nearby sites. Live/Work refers to one or more individuals living in the same building where they earn their livelihood, usually in professional or light industrial activities. Retail/Office, Residential/Retail, and Residential/Office provide other variations to Mixed Use with Retail typically on the ground floor and Residential on upper floors. Design standards will be developed to ensure that development is compatible and contributes to the character of the street and neighborhood. Floor area ratios will range up to 1.15, although Residential/Retail and Residential/Office development located along transit corridors or near multi-modal centers will range up to 2.0 FAR with up to 3.0 FAR possible in areas resistant to revitalization. The FAR above 1.15 will be used for residential purposes.~~

**Commercial Hotel:** This category allows facilities for use by temporary overnight occupants on a transient basis, such as hotels and motels, with associated conference centers and similar uses.

Restaurants and other eating facilities, meeting rooms, small retail shops, personal services, and other services ancillary to the hotel are also allowed. This category can be applied in combination with another land use category. Floor area ratio will range up to 2.0 for the hotel portion of the site.

**Research/Office Park:** Office, research, and manufacturing establishments whose operations are buffered from adjacent residential uses. Stanford Research Park is an example. Other uses that may be included are educational institutions and child care facilities. Compatible commercial service uses such as banks and restaurants, and residential or mixed uses that would benefit from the proximity to employment centers, will also be allowed. Additional uses, including retail services, restaurants, commercial recreation, churches, and private clubs may also be located in Research/Office Park areas, but only if they are found to be compatible with the surrounding area through the conditional use permit process. [In some locations, residential and mixed use projects may also locate in this category.](#) Maximum allowable floor area ratio ranges from 0.3 to 0.5, depending on site conditions.

**Light Industrial:** Wholesale and storage warehouses and the manufacturing, processing, repairing, and packaging of goods. Emission of fumes, noise, smoke, or other pollutants is strictly controlled. Examples include portions of the area south of Oregon Avenue between El Camino Real and Alma Street that historically have included these land uses, and the San Antonio Road industrial area. Compatible residential and mixed use projects may also be located in this category. Floor area ratio will range up to 0.5.

### ***Institutional***

**School District Lands:** Properties owned or leased by public school districts and used for educational, recreational, or other non-commercial, non-industrial purposes. Floor area ratio may not exceed 1.0.

**Major Institution/Special Facilities:** Institutional, academic, governmental, and community service uses and lands that are either publicly owned or operated as non-profit organizations. Examples are hospitals and City facilities.

**Major Institution/University Lands:** Academic and academic reserve areas of Stanford University. Population density and building intensity limits are established by conditional use permit with Santa Clara County. These lands are further designated by the following sub-categories of land use:

**Major Institution/University Lands/Campus Single Family Residential:** Single family areas where the occupancy of the units is significantly or totally limited to individuals or families affiliated with the institution.

**Major Institution/University Lands/Campus Multiple Family Residential:** Multiple family areas where the occupancy of the units is significantly or totally limited to individuals or families affiliated with the institution.

**Major Institution/University Lands/Campus Educational Facilities:** Academic lands with a full complement of activities and densities that give them an urban character. Allowable uses are academic institutions and research facilities, student and faculty housing, and support services. Increases in student enrollment and faculty/ staff size must be accompanied by measures that mitigate traffic and housing impacts.

**Major Institution/University Lands/Academic Reserve and Open Space:** Academic lands having all the characteristics of open space but upon which some academic development may be allowed provided that open space amenities are retained. These lands are important for their aesthetic and ecological value as well as their potential for new academic uses.

**GOAL L-1: A Well-Designed, Compact, and Resilient City, Providing Residents And Visitors With Attractive Neighborhoods, Work Places, Shopping Districts, Public Facilities, And Open Spaces.**

**Concentrating Development within the Urban Service Area Compact Development**

POLICY L-1: Continue current City policy limiting future urban development to currently developed lands within the urban service area. The boundary of the urban service area is otherwise known as the urban growth boundary. Retain undeveloped land west of Foothill Expressway and Junipero Serra as open space, with allowances made for very low-intensity development consistent with the open space character of the area. Retain undeveloped ~~Baylands~~ land northeast of Highway 101 as open space. [L1]

NEW POLICY: Focus on attracting and encouraging land uses that address the needs of the community.[L2]

POLICY L-5: Promote infill development compatible with its surroundings on vacant and underutilized properties in the urban service area to ensure a compact, efficient development pattern. (PTC Policy L1.7) Maintain the scale and character of the City. Avoid land uses that are overwhelming and unacceptable due to their size and scale. [L3]

*NEW PROGRAM: Maintain a list of vacant and underutilized properties. Work with property owners and developers to identify barriers to infill development of affordable, below market and attainable housing on these properties and actions that address these barriers. (PTC Program L1.7.1) [L4]*

*NEW POLICY: Ensure that future development addresses potential risks from climate change and sea level rise. [Note that the revised Safety Element will include a much more extensive discussion of this issue along with policies and programs to respond.] [L5]*

*NEW PROGRAM: Review development standards applicable in areas susceptible to flooding from sea level rise, including east Bayshore and East Meadow Circle, and update requirements as needed to ensure that new development is designed and located to provide protection from potential flooding impacts. Develop new development requirements for shoreline development to ensure that new development is designed and located to provide protection from potential impacts of flooding resulting from sea level rise and significant flood events. Requirements may include: new setbacks to ensure structures are set back far enough inland that they will not be endangered by erosion; limits on subdivisions and lot line adjustments in areas vulnerable to sea level rise to avoid the creation of new shoreline lots; incentive or transfer of development rights (TDR) programs to relocate existing development away from high risk areas; and/or triggers for relocation or removal of existing structures based on changing site conditions and other factors. [EIR Mitigation Measure GHG-3. Note that additional mitigation measures to address sea level rise and climate change adaptation will be added to the revised Safety Element.] [L6]*

## Regional Cooperation

*POLICY L-2: Maintain an active cooperative working relationship engagement with Santa Clara County, San Mateo County, neighboring cities, other public agencies and Stanford University regarding land use and transportation issues. [L7]*

*PROGRAM L-1: Maintain and update as appropriate the 1985 Land Use Policies Agreement that sets forth the land use policies of the City, Santa Clara County and Stanford University with regard to Stanford unincorporated lands. [L8]*

*PROGRAM L-2A: City staff will monitor Stanford development proposals and traffic conditions within the Sand Hill Road Corridor and annually report to the Planning Commission and City Council. [this is out dated—we now have annual Mayfield and SUMC reporting requirements]*

~~PROGRAM L-2B: City staff will review development proposals within the Airport Influence Area to ensure consistency with the guidelines of the Palo Alto Airport Comprehensive Land Use Plan, and when appropriate, will refer development proposals to the Santa Clara County Airport Land Use Commission for review and comment.~~

~~POLICY L-7: Evaluate changes in land use in the context of regional needs, overall City welfare and objectives, as well as the desires of surrounding neighborhoods.~~

~~NEW PROGRAM: Participate in regional strategies to address the interaction of jobs, housing balance and transportation issues. [L9]  
[L10]~~

### **Palo Alto's Character Guiding Building Design**

POLICY L-3: Guide development to respect views of the foothills and East Bay hills from public streets in the developed portions of the City. ~~However, community needs, such as affordable housing, should be prioritized over views.~~ [L10]

POLICY L-4: Maintain Palo Alto's varied residential neighborhoods while sustaining the vitality of its commercial areas and public facilities. ~~Use the Zoning Ordinance as a tool to enhance Palo Alto's desirable qualities, and to address undesirable qualities such as high housing costs.~~ [L11]

~~PROGRAM L-3: Maintain and periodically review height and density limits to discourage single uses that are inappropriate in size and scale to the surrounding uses.~~

~~NEW POLICY: (BUILDING HEIGHTS - OPTION 1) Maintain the current 50-foot height limit on building heights in Palo Alto. [L12]~~

~~NEW POLICY: (BUILDING HEIGHTS - OPTION 2) Maintain a 50-foot height limit on building heights in Palo Alto, but allow heights up to a maximum of 55 feet for residential and retail mixed use projects to allow flexibility in floor to ceiling heights and enhance the livability in multi-family residential units. Maintain a 50-foot limit on building heights in Palo Alto in order to limit the potential for traffic congestion and parking impacts, but allow limited exceptions of up to a maximum of 55 feet for individual mixed use residential projects. [L13]~~

~~NEW POLICY: (BUILDING HEIGHTS - OPTION 3A) Building height limits up to a maximum of 65 feet may be considered for areas well-served by transit, services and retail as a way to facilitate a mix of multi-family housing, including affordable units, units targeted to seniors and other special needs populations, and micro-units designed to accommodate younger members of the workforce. [L14]~~

NEW PROGRAM: (BUILDING HEIGHTS - OPTION 3B) Establish criteria and conditions that must be met in order to allow building heights up to 65 feet. Criteria could include affordability of the residential units; compatibility with surrounding land uses; sensitivity to context; proximity to transit, services and retail; and mitigation or avoidance of adverse impacts on traffic and parking conditions. To allow higher density residential development in commercial areas well served by transit, permit limited exceptions to the 50-foot height limit for housing projects within one-quarter mile of fixed rail stations. [L15]

NEW POLICY: Maintain a 50-foot limit on building heights in Palo Alto, but allow exceptions up to 55 feet for individual projects that offer significant community benefits, such as attainable housing for seniors, the disabled and other disadvantaged populations in areas well served by transit, or dedication of new land for parks within the urban service area.

NEW PROGRAM: Update the municipal code to establish findings that must be made and conditions that must be met in order to allow exceptions to the 50-foot limit on building heights.

NEW POLICY: (BUILDING HEIGHTS - OPTION 4) Building height limits over 50 feet may be considered for areas well-served by transit, services and retail as a way to facilitate a mix of multi-family housing, including affordable units, units targeted to seniors and other special needs populations, and micro-units designed to accommodate younger members of the workforce. [L16]

NEW PROGRAM: (BUILDING HEIGHTS - OPTION 4B) Establish criteria and conditions that must be met in order to allow building heights higher than 50 feet. Criteria could include affordability of the residential units; compatibility with surrounding land uses; sensitivity to context; proximity to transit, services and retail; and mitigation or avoidance of adverse impacts on traffic and parking conditions. [L17]

POLICY L-6: Promote gradual transitions in the scale of development where residential districts abut more intense uses. Where possible, avoid abrupt changes in scale and density between residential and non-residential areas and between residential areas of different densities. To promote compatibility and gradual transitions between land uses, place zoning district boundaries at mid-block locations rather than along streets wherever possible. [L18]

NEW PROGRAM: Review architectural standards to assure they effectively address land use transitions. [L19]



~~POLICY PROGRAM L-4: Review and change Maintain zoning regulations that promote gradual transitions in the scale of development where residential districts abut more intense uses. [former PROGRAM L-4] [L16]~~

~~POLICY: PROGRAM L-5: Establish new Ensure the use of Use performance measures and architectural standards to that minimize negative impacts where land use transitions occur. [formerly PROGRAM L-5 ] [L20]~~

~~PROGRAM L-6: Revise the City's Neighborhood Commercial (CN) and Service Commercial (CS) zoning requirements to better address land use transitions [Complete]~~

~~POLICY L-9: Enhance desirable characteristics in Create mixed use areas. Use the planning and zoning process to create opportunities for new mixed use development that includes housing and retail. [L21]~~

~~NEW PROGRAM: Include a zoning overlay changes that allows a mix of retail and residential but do not allow office uses. The intent of this overlay these changes would be to encourage a mix of land uses that contributes to the vitality and walkability of commercial centers and transit corridors. [L22]~~

~~PROGRAM L-10: Create and apply the following four new Mixed Use zoning standards: A "Live/Work" designation that permits individuals to live on the same site where they work by allowing housing and other uses such as office, retail, and light industrial to co-exist in the same building space; and "Retail/ Office," "Residential/Retail," and "Residential/Office" designations that permit a mix of uses on the same site or nearby sites Develop Modify design standards for all-mixed use projects designations providing for to promote a pedestrian-friendly relationship to the street, including elements such as buildings with one to three four stories, rear parking or underground parking, street-facing windows and entries, and landscaping along the street zero setback along a pedestrian friendly relationship to the street, except that which may include front gardens may be provided for ground floor residential uses. [L23]~~

~~NEW PROGRAM: Update the zoning code to (1) limit the number of similar uses in a neighborhood center, (2) specify that housing, where permitted, should not be at ground level, and (3) specify that residential densities in neighborhood centers should be consistent compatible with residential densities in the surrounding area. [L21]~~

~~NEW PROGRAM: Re-evaluate development standards in the Neighborhood Commercial, Community Commercial, Service Commercial, and Downtown Commercial Districts (CN, CC, CS, and CD) and the Neighborhood Commercial District along El Camino Real and Alma Street~~

to consider incentivizing the conversion of ~~allowing residential FAR instead of non-retail commercial FAR to residential use.~~[L24]

NEW PROGRAM: Update the zoning code to limit the displacement of existing retail from neighborhood centers. [L25]

## **Managing Non-Residential Growth**

NEW POLICY: Provide positive stewardship of development in Palo Alto and manage change to benefit the community.[L26]

NEW PROGRAM: Review regulatory tools available to the City and identify actions to preserve and enhance the quality of life in residential neighborhoods and the vitality of commercial and employment districts, including improved code enforcement practices.[L27]

POLICY L-8 (GROWTH MANAGEMENT - OPTION 1): Maintain a limit of 3,257,900 square feet of new non-residential development for the nine planning areas evaluated in the 1989 Citywide Land Use and Transportation Study, with the understanding that the City Council may make modifications for specific properties that allow modest additional growth. Such additional growth will count towards the 3,257,900 maximum. The City Council will consider preservation and/or modification of this policy. Staff has recommended supplementing this policy or substituting one that relies on Congestion Management Plan data for new office/R&D uses (not all non-residential uses) for the entire city (not just the nine planning areas illustrated on Map L-6 of the current Comp Plan.) [L28]

NEW POLICY (GROWTH MANAGEMENT - OPTION 2): Establish a citywide limit of 3,257,900 square feet of new non-residential development. [L29]

NEW POLICY (GROWTH MANAGEMENT - OPTION 3A): Establish a citywide limit of 3,257,900 square feet of new non-residential development and actively address traffic congestion and parking shortages.[L30]

NEW PROGRAM (GROWTH MANAGEMENT - OPTION 3B): Identify optimal, achievable thresholds, strategies to achieve them and methods for monitoring. [L31]

NEW POLICY (GROWTH MANAGEMENT - OPTION 4A): Maintain limit of 3,257,900 square feet of new non-residential development and monitor new non-residential development to proactively address its adverse effects, including traffic, parking air quality and noise. It is the City's intent to allow new development while taking steps to minimize its adverse impacts. [L32]

NEW PROGRAM (GROWTH MANAGEMENT - OPTION 4B): Establish performance standards, including requirements that move the City toward "net zero," as well as monitoring and enforcement provisions for new development to minimize the adverse effects of growth. Performance standards should address single-occupant vehicle trips, parking and greenhouse gas emissions. [L33]

NEW POLICY (GROWTH MANAGEMENT - OPTION 5A): Monitor new residential and non-residential development and proactively address its adverse effects, including traffic, parking air quality and noise. It is the City's intent to allow new development while taking steps to minimize its adverse impacts. [L34]

NEW PROGRAM (GROWTH MANAGEMENT - OPTION 5B): Establish performance standards, including requirements that move the City toward "net zero," as well as monitoring and enforcement provisions for new development to minimize the adverse effects of growth. Performance standards should address single-occupant vehicle trips, parking and greenhouse gas emissions. [L35]

*PROGRAM L-7: Establish a system to monitor the rate of non-residential development and traffic conditions related to both residential and non-residential development at key intersections ~~including those identified in the 1989 Citywide Study and additional intersections~~ identified in the Comprehensive Plan EIR. If the rate of growth reaches the point where the citywide development maximum might be reached, the City will reevaluate development policies and regulations.* [L36]

NEW POLICY: Limit approvals of new office and research and development uses downtown, in the California Avenue area, and along the El Camino Real corridor, to a combined maximum of 50,000 square feet per fiscal year. [The City Council will consider this policy based on their experience with the interim office/R&D annual limit that is currently in effect.][L37]

NEW POLICY (Formerly PROGRAM L-8): Limit new non-residential development in the Downtown area to 350,000 square feet, or 10 percent above the amount of development existing or approved as of May 1986. Reevaluate this limit when non-residential development approvals reach 235,000 square feet of floor area. [The City Council will consider modification of this policy based on the 2014 Downtown Cap Study and supplemental information/analysis currently underway.] [L38]

~~[L29b]~~

*PROGRAM L-9: Continue to monitor development, including the effectiveness of the ground floor retail requirement, in the University Avenue/Downtown area. Keep the Planning and Transportation Commission and City Council advised of the findings on an annual basis.*[L39]

**GOAL L-2: An Enhanced Sense of “Community ” with Development Designed to Foster Public Life, and Meet Citywide Needs, and Embrace the Principles of Sustainability.**

**City Structure**

POLICY L-10: Maintain a citywide structure of Residential Neighborhoods, Centers, and Employment Districts. Integrate these areas with the City’s and the region’s transit and street system. [L40]

POLICY L-11: ~~Promote increased compatibility, interdependence, and support~~Enhance connections between commercial and mixed use centers and the surrounding residential neighborhoods by promoting walkable and bikable connections and a diverse range of retail and services that caters to the daily needs of residents. [L41]

NEW POLICY: As a key component of a diverse, inclusive community, allow and encourage a mix of housing types, sizes, and affordability, particularly smaller units and senior housing, in order to ensure that those workers whose jobs play a key role in our quality of life — such as teaching, childcare, nursing, and public safety — can choose to live here. [L42]

[NOTE THAT POLICIES/PROGRAMS LINKING THE COMP PLAN AND S/CAP WILL BE LOCATED HERE, PENDING INPUT FROM THE SUSTAINABILITY SUBCOMMITTEE]

~~*New Program: Develop an ordinance to address emerging short term accommodation sharing arrangements in a way that balances private property rights with impacts to neighborhoods and preserves the local housing supply.*~~

~~*NEW PROGRAM: Develop new development requirements for shoreline development to ensure that new development is designed and located to provide protection from potential impacts of flooding resulting from sea level rise and significant flood events. Requirements may include: new setbacks to ensure structures are set back far enough inland that they will not be endangered by erosion; limits on subdivisions and lot line adjustments in areas vulnerable to sea level rise to avoid the creation of new shoreline lots; incentive or transfer of development rights (TDR) programs to relocate existing development away from high risk areas; and/or triggers for*~~

~~relocation or removal of existing structures based on changing site conditions and other factors. [EIR Mitigation Measure GHG-3. Note that additional mitigation measures to address sea level rise and climate change adaptation will be added to the revised Safety Element.]~~

### **GOAL L-3: Safe, Attractive Residential Neighborhoods, Each With Its Own Distinct Character And Within Walking Distance Of Shopping, Services, Schools, And/or Other Public Gathering Places.**

#### **Neighborhood Character**

POLICY L-12: Protect the character of residential neighborhoods by encouraging the preservation of existing historic homes and encouraging requiring new or remodeled structures to be compatible with the neighborhood and adjacent structures. [Comp Plan Draft EIR Mitigation Measure AES-1] [L43]

~~PROGRAM L-11: Establish pedestrian-oriented design guidelines for residences that encourage features that enliven the street. [Complete]~~

~~PROGRAM L-12: Where compatible with neighborhood character, use Zoning and the Home Improvement Exception process to create incentives or eliminate obstacles to remodel houses with features that add street life and vitality.~~

~~New Program: Refine programs that regulate design within existing residential neighborhoods. Develop a new conservation district tool to regulate design and compatibility within established single family residential neighborhoods and ensure that appropriate home improvements and remodels are allowed while preserving existing neighborhood character.~~  
[L44]

~~NEW POLICY: Preserve residential and retail uses from conversion to office or short-term vacation rentals.~~ [L45]

~~NEW PROGRAM: Consider strategies to prevent illegal conversion of residential and neighborhood-serving retail space to retail office or short-term vacation rentals.~~ [L46]

~~NEW POLICY: Support efforts to preserve rental housing units in existing neighborhoods.~~ [L47]

~~NEW POLICY: Support the creation of workforce housing for City and school district employees as feasible.~~ [L48]

NEW PROGRAM: Collaborate with PAUSD in exploring opportunities to build workforce housing on sites such as 25 Churchill. [L49]

POLICY L- 16: ~~Consider siting~~Encourage small-scale neighborhood-serving retail facilities such as coffee shops and corner stores at appropriate locations in existing ~~or new mixed use~~ residential areas. [L50]

## Mix of Housing Types

POLICY L-13: ~~Evaluate~~ In appropriate locations, encourage ~~alternative a mix of housing types of housing, including micro-units, studios, co-housing, clustered housing and secondary dwelling units, that increase density and to~~ provide a more diverse range of housing opportunities. [Note to CAC: Program H3.3.5 of the adopted Housing Element is to explore modifications to development standards to further encourage second unit development.] [L51]

~~PROGRAM L-13: Create and apply~~Review and revise zoning standards for Village Residential housing prototypes. ~~Develop design guidelines for duplexes, townhouses, courtyard housing, second units, and small lot single family homes that ensure that such housing is compatible with single family neighborhoods and other areas where it may be permitted.~~

~~PROGRAM L-14: Create and apply zoning standards for Transit Oriented Residential housing prototypes, including appropriate parking based on demand, consideration of minimum density standards and maximum units sizes that will encourage consideration studios and micro units. Consider exceptions for dedicated senior housing. Develop design guidelines that ensure that such housing is compatible with the University Avenue/Downtown and California Avenue centers where it may be permitted.~~ [Replaced by new program calling for Coordinated Area Plans.]

~~New Program: Amend the Neighborhood Commercial, Community Commercial, Service Commercial, and Downtown Commercial Districts (CN, CC, CS, and CD) zoning districts to allow and encourage mixed use, studios and other stypes of small unit housing~~

[Note to CAC: the adopted 2015-2023 Housing Element includes a goal and several policies and programs to encourage senior housing. We recommend these remain in their current, adopted location, but are including them here for ease of reference.]

H2 GOAL SUPPORT THE CONSTRUCTION OF HOUSING NEAR SCHOOLS, TRANSIT, PARKS, SHOPPING, EMPLOYMENT, AND CULTURAL INSTITUTIONS

H2.1 POLICY Identify and implement strategies to increase housing density and diversity, including mixed-use development and a range of unit styles, near community services. Emphasize and encourage the development of affordable and mixed-income housing to support the City's fair share of the regional housing needs and to ensure that the City's population remains economically diverse.

*H2.1.4 PROGRAM Amend the Zoning Code to create zoning incentives that encourage the development of smaller, more affordable housing units, including units for seniors, such as reduced parking requirements for units less than 900 square feet and other flexible development standards.*

*H3.3.7 PROGRAM Prepare a local parking demand database to determine parking standards for different housing uses (i.e. market rate multifamily, multifamily affordable, senior affordable, emergency shelters etc.) with proximity to services as a consideration. Adopt revisions to standards as appropriate.*

H4.2 POLICY Support housing that incorporates facilities and services to meet the health care, transit, and social service needs of households with special needs, including seniors and persons with disabilities.

*H4.2.1 PROGRAM Ensure that the Zoning Code facilitates the construction of housing that provides services for special needs households and provides flexible development standards for special service housing that will allow such housing to be built with access to transit and community services while preserving the character of the neighborhoods in which they are proposed to be located.*

## Residential Design

POLICY L-14: Ensure that new multifamily buildings, entries and outdoor spaces are designed and arranged so that each ~~unit~~-development has a clear relationship to a public street. [L52]

POLICY L-15: Create, pPreserve and enhance ~~the parks and~~ publicly accessible, shared outdoor gathering spaces within walking and biking distance of residential neighborhoods. Ensure that each residential neighborhood has such spaces to encourage social interaction and the mental and physical health of Palo Alto community members. [L53]

*NEW PROGRAM: Analyze existing neighborhoods and determine where publicly accessible shared, outdoor ~~gathering~~ gathering spaces are lacking. Create new public spaces, including public squares, parks and informal gathering spaces in these neighborhoods.* [L54]-

POLICY L-17: Treat residential streets as both public ways and neighborhood amenities. Provide and maintain continuous sidewalks, healthy ~~street~~-trees, benches, and other amenities that promote walking and “active” transportation ~~favor pedestrians~~ and support public health. [L55]

*NEW PROGRAM: Review standards for streets and signage and update as needed to foster natural, tree-lined streets with a minimum of signage.* [L56]

**GOAL L-4: Inviting Pedestrian Scale Centers That Offer A Variety Of Retail And Commercial Services And Provide Focal Points And Community Gathering Places For The City’s Residential Neighborhoods And Employment Districts.**



Background narrative from the Comp Plan:

Palo Alto has three different types of commercial Centers. Each type differs in form, intensity, and function. They are:

- » **Regional Centers** are commercial activity centers of citywide and regional significance, with a mix of shopping, offices, and some housing. They are characterized by two- and three-story buildings with ground floor shops. Trees, benches, outdoor seating areas, sidewalks, plazas, and other amenities make the streets pedestrian-friendly. Transit is highly accessible and frequent. Regional Centers include **University Avenue/Downtown and Stanford Shopping Center**.
- » **Multi-neighborhood Centers** are retail shopping centers or districts that serve more than one neighborhood with a diverse mix of uses including retail, service, office, and residential. One- and two-story buildings with storefront windows, entries, and outdoor seating areas create a pedestrian-friendly atmosphere. Plazas and parks provide public gathering spaces around which retail uses are clustered. Future plans for these areas include local transit or jitney service that links them to other Centers in the City. Multi-neighborhood Centers include **California Avenue, Town and Country Village, and South El Camino Real**.
- » **Neighborhood Centers** are small retail centers with a primary trade area limited to the immediately surrounding area; often anchored by a grocery or drug store and may include a variety of smaller retail shops and offices oriented toward the everyday needs of surrounding residents. Selected streets provide walking and biking connections from adjacent neighborhoods. As with the Multi-neighborhood Centers, future plans include local transit or jitney service and new public gathering places around which new retail uses may be clustered. Palo Alto's four Neighborhood Centers are **Midtown, Alma Plaza, Charleston Center, and Edgewood Plaza**.

### *Commercial Centers and Mixed Use Areas*

POLICY L-18: Encourage the upgrading and revitalization of selected Centers in a manner that is compatible with the character of surrounding neighborhoods, without loss of retail and existing small, local businesses. [L57]

~~*PROGRAM L-15: Establish a planning process for Centers that identifies the desired character of the area, its role within the City, the locations of public gathering spaces, appropriate land uses and building forms, and important street and pedestrian connections to surrounding Residential Neighborhoods. [This planning process would be the Coordinated Area Plan process proscribed in a new program below.]*~~

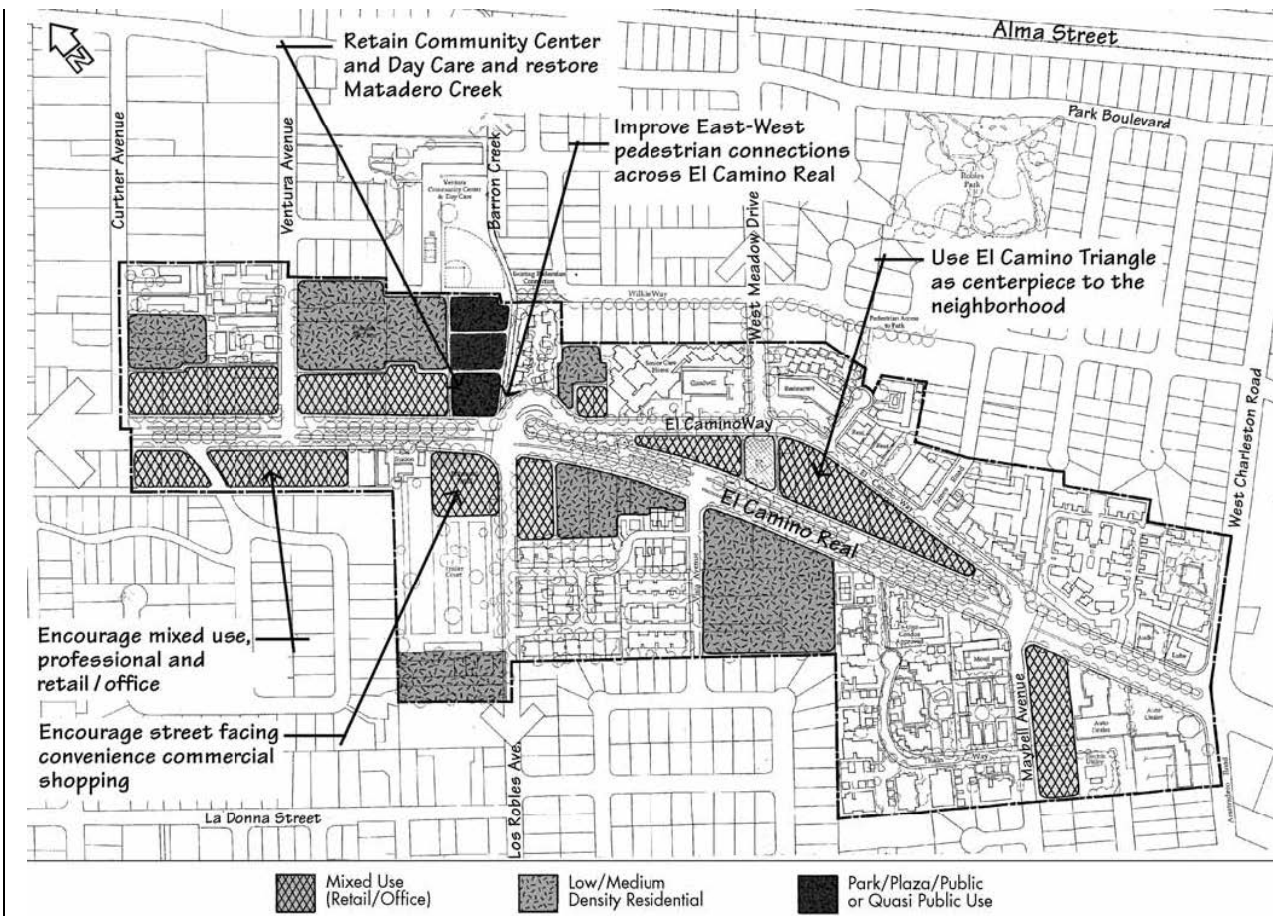
NEW PROGRAM: Evaluate the effectiveness of formula retail limits adopted for California Avenue and consider whether these limits should be applied in other Centers. Develop incentives for local small businesses where warranted.[L58]

~~POLICY L-19: Encourage a mix of land uses in all Centers, including housing and an appropriate mix of small scale local businesses. Note to CAC: This is superseded by NEW PROGRAM under Policy L-9.~~

~~New Program: Update the use definitions for the *Neighborhood Commercial, Community Commercial, Service Commercial, and Downtown Commercial* Districts (CN, CC, CS, and CD).~~

NEW POLICY: Use coordinated area plans to guide development in areas of Palo Alto where significant change is foreseeable. Address both land use and transportation at an equal level of detail, define the desired character and urban design traits of the areas, identify opportunities for public open space, parks and recreational opportunities, and address connectivity to and compatibility with adjacent residential areas. [L59]

NEW PROGRAM: Prepare a coordinated area plan for the South El Camino corridor from Curtner Avenue to West Charleston Road, as shown in the diagram below. The plan should articulate a vision for the corridor as a well-designed complete street with an enhanced pedestrian environment including wider sidewalks, increased building setbacks, public open spaces, safe pedestrian crossings at key intersections, trees and streetscape improvements. Mixed use residential and retail development on shallow parcels should be encouraged to support a more walkable and bikable environment along the corridor, with appropriate transitions to the surrounding single-family neighborhoods. The plan should also foster improved connections to surrounding destinations. [L60]



*NEW PROGRAM: Prepare a coordinated area plan for the Fry's site and surrounding area. The plan should describe a vision for the future of the Fry's site as a walkable neighborhood with multi-family housing, ground floor retail, a public park, and an interconnected street grid. [L61]*

*NEW POLICY: Encourage broad community involvement in the planning process for proposed development, including the participation of homeowners associations, particularly for developments proposed in the South El Camino Real corridor and the Fry's site and surrounding area prior to completion of coordinated area plans. [L62]*

POLICY L-20: Encourage street frontages that contribute to retail vitality in all Centers. Reinforce street corners with by allowing buildings that come up to the sidewalk with build-to lines that enhance the pedestrian realm or that form corner plazas. [L63]

POLICY L-21: Ensure all Centers provide centrally located gathering spaces that create a sense of identity and encourage economic revitalization. Encourage public amenities such as benches, street trees, kiosks, restrooms and public art. [L64]

PROGRAM L-16: Study the feasibility of using public and private funds to provide and maintain landscaping and public spaces such as parks, plazas, ~~and~~ sidewalks and public art within commercial areas.[L65]

PROGRAM L-17: Through public/private cooperation, provide obvious, clean, and accessible restrooms ~~available for use during normal business hours~~. [L66]

~~POLICY L-22:~~ NEW PROGRAM: Collaborate with merchants to enhance the appearance of streets and sidewalks within all Centers. Encourage the formation of business improvement districts and undertake a proactive program of maintenance, repair, landscaping and enhancement and cleaning program; street improvements; and the use of a variety of paving materials and landscaping. (Formerly POLICY L-22)[L67]

PROGRAM L-18: Identify priority street improvements that could make a substantial contribution to the character of Centers, including widening sidewalks, narrowing travel lanes, creating medians, restriping to allow diagonal parking, and planting ~~street~~ trees.[L68]

~~NEW PROGRAM: Identify and prioritize the Centers and/or Employment Districts that would benefit from a Coordinated Area Plan. Coordinated Area Plans shall address both land use and transportation at an equal level of detail. Coordinated Area Plans should also describe the desired character and urban design traits of the areas, identify opportunities for public open space, parks and recreational opportunities, and address connectivity to and compatibility with adjacent residential areas.~~

## **Regional Centers**

### **University Avenue/Downtown**

~~NEW POLICY: Coordinated Area Plans for the following Mixed-Use Centers identified in the 2012 Rail Corridor Study should reflect that study's recommendations regarding circulation, connectivity, land uses, urban design, open space improvements, and historic resources:~~

- ~~— University Avenue/Downtown [Comp Plan Draft EIR Mitigation Measure AES-1]~~
- ~~— California Avenue~~
- ~~— South Palo Alto El Camino Real~~

POLICY L-23: Maintain and enhance the University Avenue/Downtown area as ~~the central~~ major business district commercial center of the City, with a mix of commercial, civic, cultural, recreational and residential uses. Promote quality design that recognizes the regional and historical importance of the area and reinforces its pedestrian character. [Comp Plan Draft EIR Mitigation Measure AES-1] [L69]

~~PROGRAM L-19: Support implementation of the Downtown Urban Design Guide. [This document, intended to guide downtown development, was adopted in 1994. It would be superseded by the Downtown Coordinated Area Plan.]~~

~~NEW PROGRAM: Evaluate to what extent the City can and should specify the types and scale of commercial operations, development, manufacturing, etc., are appropriate for Downtown or California Avenue. [L70]~~

~~POLICY: PROGRAM L-20: Facilitate reuse of existing buildings, particularly Downtown, where financially feasible. [formerly PROGRAM L-20] [L71]~~

POLICY L-24: Ensure that University Avenue/Downtown is pedestrian-friendly and supports bicycle use. Use public art, trees, bicycle racks and other amenities to create an environment that is inviting to pedestrians and cyclists. [L72]

~~PROGRAM L-21: Improve the University Avenue/Downtown area by adding landscaping and bicycle parking, consistent with the Bicycle + Pedestrian Transportation Plan, and encouraging or requiring large development projects to benefit the public by incorporating public art, consistent with Municipal Code requirements.~~

~~POLICY L-25: Enhance the character of the South of Forest Area (SOFA) as a mixed use area.~~

~~PROGRAM L-22: Prepare a Coordinated Area Plan for the SOFA and the Palo Alto Medical Foundation (PAMF) site. [completed]~~

POLICY L-27: Pursue redevelopment of the University Avenue Multi-modal Transit Station area to establish a link between University Avenue/Downtown and the Stanford Shopping Center. [L73]

~~PROGRAM L-25: Prepare a Coordinated Area Plan for the University Avenue Multi-modal Transit Station Area.~~

~~PROGRAM L-26: Establish the following unranked community design priorities for the University Avenue Multi-modal Transit Station Area, consistent with the Rail Corridor Study:~~

~~Improving pedestrian, bicycle, transit, and auto connections to create an urban link between University Avenue/Downtown and Stanford Shopping Center.~~

~~Creating a major civic space at the Caltrain Station that links University Avenue/Downtown and Palm Drive.~~

~~*Infilling underutilized parcels with a mix of uses such as shopping, housing, office, hotel, and medical facilities arts and civic uses.*~~

~~*Improving public park space.*~~

~~*Protecting views of the foothills by guiding building heights and massing.*~~

### Stanford Shopping Center

POLICY L-26: Maintain Stanford Shopping Center as one of the Bay Area's premiere regional shopping centers. Encourage any new development at the Center to occur through infill, including housing and mixed use development on existing surface parking lots, and to enhance access for bicyclists and pedestrians. [L74]

*PROGRAM L-23: Identify strategies to reuse surface parking lots, while preserving adequate parking to meet demand, and improve pedestrian, bicycle, and transit connections at Stanford Shopping Center. [L75]*

POLICY: PROGRAM L-24: Maintain a Stanford Shopping Center development cap of 80,000 square feet of additional development beyond that existing on June 14, 1996. formerly PROGRAM L-24 [L76]

### Multi-Neighborhood Centers

#### California Avenue

POLICY L-28: Maintain the existing scale, character, and function of the California Avenue business district as a shopping, service, and office center intermediate in function and scale between Downtown and the smaller neighborhood business areas. [L77]

*PROGRAM L-27: Create regulations for the California Avenue area that allow for the replacement or rehabilitation of smaller buildings while preventing buildings that are out of scale with existing buildings and retaining existing retail, particularly local, small businesses. [L78]*

~~*PROGRAM L-28: Work with merchants, property owners, and City representatives to create an urban design guide for the California Avenue business district. [Rather than a standalone urban design guide document, design guidance would be found in the California Avenue Concept Plan and, ultimately, a new Coordinated Area Plan.]*~~

~~*PROGRAM L-29: Revise the zoning of the California Avenue business district to reduce the non-residential development potential to levels comparable to other commercial areas in the City while retaining substantial residential development potential.*~~

POLICY L-30: Improve the transition between the California-Cambridge area and the single family residential neighborhood of Evergreen Park. Avoid abrupt changes in scale and density between the two areas. [L79]

POLICY L-31: Develop the ~~Cal-Ventura~~California Avenue area as a well-designed mixed use district with diverse land uses, ~~two to three story buildings~~, and a network of pedestrian-oriented streets providing links to California Avenue. [L80]

~~PROGRAM L-30: Prepare a Coordinated Area Plan for the Cal-Ventura area. Use the land use diagram from the Community Design Workshop as the starting point for preparing this Plan. [Replaced with new program calling for a Coordinated Area Plan for the California Avenue area]~~

~~PROGRAM L-31: Establish the following unranked priorities for redevelopment within the Cal-Ventura California Avenue area, consistent with the Rail Corridor Study:~~

- ~~• Connect the Cal-Ventura California Avenue area with the Multi-modal Transit Station and California Avenue. Provide new streets and pedestrian connections that complete the street grid and create a walkable neighborhood.~~
- ~~• Fry's Electronics site (300 Portage): Continued retail activity is anticipated for this site until 2019. A program should be Develop a Coordinated Area Plan developed for the future use of the site for mixed density multi-family housing, including affordable housing, with groundfloor retail and a public park or other park and gathering open spaces, building from the recommendations in the California Avenue Concept Plan (Appendix X of this Comp Plan).~~
- ~~• 395 Page Mill Road Hewlett-Packard: Uses that is are compatible with the surrounding area and a site plan that facilitates pedestrian use of Park Boulevard.~~
- ~~• North of Sheridan Avenue: Development of one or more of the City-owned parking lots with primarily residential uses, provided that public parking spaces are replaced.~~
- ~~• Park Boulevard: Streetscape and bicycle boulevard improvements.~~

### South El Camino Real

~~POLICY L-35: Establish the South El Camino Real area as a well-designed, compact, vital, Multi-neighborhood Center with diverse uses, a mix of one, two, and three-story buildings, and a network of pedestrian-oriented streets and ways. Consistent with Housing Element Program 2.1.10, consider greater densities at pedestrian nodes.~~

~~PROGRAM L-32: Prepare a Coordinated Area Plan for the South El Camino Real area. Use the land use map from the Community Design Workshop Task Force recommendations from the Rail Corridor Study as a starting point for preparing this Plan, and emphasize adequate buffering from adjacent residential uses.~~

NEW POLICY: PROGRAM L-33: Study ways to make Enhance the pedestrian environment along South El Camino Real more pedestrian friendly, including redesigning the street to provide wider sidewalks, increased building setbacks, safe pedestrian crossings at key intersections, street trees, and streetscape improvements, consistent with the recommendations in the Rail Corridor Study and the Grand Boulevard Design Guidelines. [Former PROGRAM L-33 to be transformed into ongoing policy. Consistent with Comp Plan Draft EIR Mitigation Measure AES-1] [L81]

*PROGRAM L-34: Provide better connections across El Camino Real to bring the Ventura and Barron Park neighborhoods together and to improve linkages to local schools and parks.* [L82]

~~POLICY L-36: Allow a mix of uses, including full range of retail, residential and office uses on shallow parcels along South El Camino Real, subject to adequate buffering from adjacent residential uses.~~

~~PROGRAM L-35: Consider Transfer of Development Rights (TDR) as a tool to encourage re-development and/or community serving amenities along South El Camino Real.~~

### Town and Country Village

POLICY L-32: Maintain Town and Country Village as an attractive retail center serving Palo Alto and residents of the wider region. Future development at this site should preserve its existing amenities, pedestrian scale, and architectural character while also improving safe access for bicyclists and pedestrians and increasing the amount of bicycle and vehicle parking. [L83]

POLICY L-33: In Town and Country Village, encourage ~~housing~~ development consistent with a vibrant business-retail environment and urban greening consistent with the Urban Forest Master Plan. [L84]

POLICY L-34: Encourage improvement of pedestrian and auto circulation and landscaping improvements, including maintenance of existing oak trees and planting additional trees consistent with the adopted Urban Forest Management Plan. [L85]



## Neighborhood Centers

POLICY L-37: Maintain the scale and local-serving focus of Palo Alto's ~~four~~three Neighborhood Centers – Charleston Shopping Center, Edgewood Plaza and Midtown Shopping Center. Support their continued improvement and vitality. [L86]

~~PROGRAM L-36: Evaluate current~~ Review and update the zoning code as needed to ensure ~~determine if~~ it supports the types of uses and scale of buildings considered appropriate in Multi-Neighborhood Centers.[L87]

POLICY: Encourage property owners within Neighborhood Centers to prepare master plans, with the participation of local businesses, property owners, and nearby residents. [formerly PROGRAM L-37] [L88]

POLICY L-38: Encourage maximum use of Neighborhood Centers by ensuring that the publicly maintained areas are clean, well-lit, and attractively landscaped. [L89]

POLICY L-39: Facilitate opportunities to improve pedestrian-oriented commercial activity within Neighborhood Centers. [L90]

*PROGRAM L-38: Revise land use and zoning designations as needed to encourage medium-density housing (20 to 25 units per acre) within or near Neighborhood Centers served by public transportation to support a more vital mix of commercial activities. [L91]*

POLICY L-40: ~~Revitalize~~ Maintain Midtown as an attractive, compact Neighborhood Center with diverse local-serving uses, a mix of one- and two-story buildings, adequate parking, and a network of pedestrian-oriented streets, ways and gathering places. Encourage retention of Midtown's grocery stores and encourage a variety of neighborhood retail shops and services. [L92]

~~PROGRAM L-39: Prepare an area plan for Midtown with the participation of property owners, local businesses, and nearby residents. Address in the plan efficient parking, pedestrian and bicycle connectivity and safety along Middlefield Road. The plan should provide coherent urban design guidelines for the area including provision of adequate open space. Consider the Midtown Economic Study and the land use concepts identified during the 1994 Community Design Workshop in developing the plan. The plan should have a special emphasis on public improvements, including parking, street furniture and signage.~~[L93]

~~PROGRAM L-40: Make improvements to Middlefield Road in Midtown that slow traffic, encourage commercial vitality, make the street more pedestrian friendly, and unify the northeast~~

~~and southwest sides of the commercial area, with consideration given to traffic impacts on the residential neighborhood. Note: Subsumed in revised Program L-39 above.~~

*PROGRAM L-41: Support bicycle and pedestrian trail improvements along a restored Matadero Creek within Hoover Park. [L94]*

POLICY L-41: Maintain existing residential uses within the Midtown area and encourage additional residential mixed use development. [L95]

~~*PROGRAM L-42: Retain the existing housing along Colorado Avenue and consider increasing the density to allow townhouses, co-housing, and/or housing for the disabled. [Complete]*~~

## **Goal L-5: High Quality Employment Districts, Each With Their Own Distinctive Character And Each Contributing To The Character Of The City As A Whole.**

### **Employment Districts**

POLICY L-42: Encourage Employment Districts to develop in a way that encourages transit, pedestrian and bicycle travel and reduces the number of auto trips for daily errands. [L96]

~~*PROGRAM L-43: Modify existing zoning regulations and create incentives for employers to provide employee services in their existing buildings—for example, office support services, restaurants, convenience stores, public gathering places, and child care facilities—to reduce the need for employees to drive to these services.*~~

POLICY L-43: Provide landscaping, trees, sidewalks, pedestrian paths, and connections to the citywide bikeway system within Employment Districts. Pursue opportunities to build-~~incorporate~~ sidewalks, paths, landscaping, and trees in renovation and expansion projects. [L97]

POLICY: Design ~~the~~ paths and sidewalks to be attractive and comfortable and consistent with the character of the area where they are located. [former PROGRAM L-44 to be recast as an ongoing policy rather than a one-time action.] [L98]

POLICY L-44: Develop the Stanford Research Park as a Foster compact employment centers served by a variety of transportation modes. [L99] \_

*PROGRAM L-45: Create and apply zoning standards and design guidelines for commercial hotels, ~~and~~ conference centers, and possible residential or mixed-use projects along the El Camino Real edge of the Stanford Research Park. [L100]*

NEW POLICY: Preserve some open space within Stanford Research Park.[L101]

*New Program: Evaluate the optimum number of future hotel rooms for Palo Alto and consider reductions in the allowable floor area ratio if necessary.* [L102]

~~POLICY L-45: Develop Stanford Medical Center in a manner that recognizes the citywide goal of compact, pedestrian-oriented development as well as the functional needs of the Medical Center.~~

~~PROGRAM L-46: Work with Stanford to prepare an area plan for the Stanford Medical Center.~~  
~~Complete~~

POLICY L-46: Maintain the East Bayshore and San Antonio Road/Bayshore Corridor areas as diverse business and light industrial districts, consistent with the approved East Meadow Circle Concept Plan (Appendix Y of this Comprehensive Plan). [L103]

~~POLICY L-47: Consider the East Meadow Circle Area as a potential site for higher density housing that provides a transition between existing housing—and nearby industrial development.~~

~~PROGRAM L-47: Undertake a Community Design Workshop for the East Meadow Circle Area.~~  
~~[Note to CAC: The Council approved the East Meadow Circle Concept Plan in February 2012. It does not add higher density housing.]~~

New Policy: Implement the 2012 East Meadow Circle Concept Plan (Appendix Y of this Comprehensive Plan) in approving new development or other improvements within the Plan area. [L104]

## **GOAL L-6: Well-Designed Buildings That Create Coherent Development Patterns And Enhance City Streets And Public Spaces.**

### **Design of Buildings and Public Space**

POLICY L-48: Promote high quality, ~~creative~~ design and site planning that is compatible with surrounding development and public spaces. [Comp Plan Draft EIR Mitigation Measure AES-1] [L105]

~~POLICY PROGRAM L-48:~~ Use the Zoning Ordinance, design review process, design guidelines, and Coordinated Area Plans to ensure high quality residential and commercial design. [formerly PROGRAM L-48] [L106]

*NEW PROGRAM: Develop guidelines for bird-friendly building design that minimizes hazards for birds and reduces the potential for collisions.*[L107]

*POLICYPROGRAM L-49:* In areas of the City having a historic or consistent design character, design new development to maintain and support the existing -character. *[This is labeled as a program in the existing Comp Plan but should more accurately be a policy since it is an ongoing statement to guide design. It is included in the Comp Plan Draft EIR as Mitigation Measure AES-1.]* [L108]

*NEW POLICY: Recognize the contribution of cottage cluster housing to the character of Palo Alto and preserve and protect this type of development.*[L109]

POLICY L-49: Design buildings to revitalize streets and public spaces; *and to promote* personal safety, *public health and well-being; and* to enhance a sense of community and personal safety. Provide an ordered variety of entries, porches, windows, bays and balconies along public ways where it is consistent with neighborhood character; avoid blank or solid walls at street level; and include human-scale details and massing.[L110]

~~*PROGRAM L-50: Undertake a comprehensive review of residential and commercial zoning requirements to identify additional architectural standards that should be incorporated to implement Policy L-49. [Complete]*~~

~~*PROGRAM L-51: Use illustrations and form code methods for simplifying the Zoning Ordinance and to promote well-designed buildings. [Complete]*~~

~~*NEW POLICY: PROGRAM L-52:*~~ Discourage the use of fences that obscure the view of houses *(was Program L-52).*[L111]

POLICY L-50: Encourage high quality signage that is attractive, *energy-efficient,* appropriate for the location and balances visibility needs with aesthetic needs.[L112]

*PROGRAM L-53: Promote awards programs and other forms of public recognition for projects of architectural merit that contribute positively to the community.*[L113]

## **GOAL L-7: Conservation And Preservation Of Palo Alto's Historic Buildings, Sites, And Districts.**

### **Historic Character Resources**

POLICY L-51: Encourage public and private upkeep and preservation of resources that have historic merit, including residences listed in the City's Historic Resource Inventory. [L114]

*PROGRAM L-54: ~~Review and update the City's Inventory of historic resources including City-owned structures. Update and maintain the City's Historic Resource Inventory to determine all historic resources that are eligible for the California Register as well as important examples of California history or prehistory. Historic resources may consist of a single building or structure or a district. [Comp Plan Draft EIR Mitigation Measure CULT-1b]~~*[L115]

*PROGRAM L-55: Reassess the Historic Preservation Ordinance to ensure its effectiveness in the maintenance and preservation of historic resources, particularly in the University Avenue/Downtown area.*[L116]

NEW POLICY: If a proposed development would affect a potential historic resource that has not been evaluated for inclusion into the City's Historic Resources Inventory, require an evaluation prior to the issuance of a demolition or alterations permit. [Comp Plan Draft EIR Mitigation Measure CULT-1b] [L117]

*PROGRAM L-56: ~~Maintain and strengthen the design review procedure for exterior remodeling or demolition of historic resources. Prepare and adopt an ordinance that would regulate the demolition or alteration of a historic resource listed on the National and/or California Register, or listed on the City's Historic Inventory, if alterations would significantly alter the historic value and/or character defining features of the historic resource. Discourage demolition of historic resources and severely restrict demolition of Landmark resources. [Comp Plan Draft EIR Mitigation Measure CULT-1a]~~*[L118]

POLICY L-53: Actively seek state and federal funding for the preservation of buildings of historical merit and consider public/private partnerships for capital and program improvements. [L119]

POLICY L-54: Support the goals and objectives of the Statewide Comprehensive Historic Preservation Plan for California. [L120]

POLICY L-55: Relocation may be considered as a preservation strategy when consistent with State and National Standards regarding the relocation of historic resources. [L121]

POLICY L-56: To reinforce the scale and character of University Avenue/Downtown, promote the preservation of significant historic buildings. [L122]

POLICY: Promote awards programs and other forms of public recognition for exemplary Historic Preservation projects. [formerly PROGRAM L-62] [L123]

**POLICY:** Streamline, to the maximum extent feasible, any future processes for design review of historic structures to eliminate unnecessary delay and uncertainty for the applicant and to encourage historic preservation. [\[formerly PROGRAM L-63\]](#) [L124]

**POLICY L-59:** Follow the procedures established in the State Public Resources Code for the protection of designated historic buildings damaged by earthquake or other natural disaster. [L125]

*PROGRAM L-65: Seek additional innovative ways to apply current codes and ordinances to older buildings. Use the State Historical Building Code for designated historic buildings. [L126]*

## **Rehabilitation and Reuse**

**POLICY L-58:** Promote adaptive reuse of old buildings. [L127]

*PROGRAM L-66: Revise existing zoning and permit regulations as needed to minimize constraints to adaptive reuse, particularly in retail areas. [L128]*

**POLICY:** Allow compatible nonconforming uses for the life of historic buildings. [\[formerly PROGRAM L-61\]](#) [L129]

**POLICY L-52:** ~~Ensure encourage~~ the preservation of significant historic resources owned by the City of Palo Alto. Allow such resources to be altered to meet contemporary needs only if, ~~provided that~~ the preservation standards adopted by the City Council are satisfied. [L130]

*PROGRAM L-58: For proposed exterior alterations or additions to designated Historic Landmarks, require design review findings that the proposed changes are in compliance with the Secretary of the Interior Standards for Rehabilitation. [L131]*

**POLICY:** Allow parking exceptions for historic buildings to encourage rehabilitation. Require design review findings that the historic integrity of the building exterior will be maintained. [\[Formerly PROGRAM L-59\]](#) [L132]

*PROGRAM L-60: Continue to use a TDR Ordinance to allow the transfer of development rights from designated buildings of historic significance in the Commercial Downtown (CD) zone to non-historic receiver sites in the CD zone. Planned Community (PC) zone properties in the Downtown also qualify for this program. [L133]*

**PROGRAM:** Develop incentives for the retention and rehabilitation of buildings with historic merit in all zones. [\[formerly POLICY L-57\]](#) [L134]

POLICY: Encourage and assist owners of historically significant buildings in finding ways to adapt and restore these buildings, including participation in state and federal tax relief programs. [formerly PROGRAM L-64] [L135]

*PROGRAM L-57: Consider creating incentives to encourage salvage and reuse of discarded historic building materials.* [L136]

## Archaeological Resources

POLICY L-60: ~~Protect Palo Alto's archaeological resources.~~ Protect Palo Alto's archaeological resources, including natural land formations, sacred sites, the historical landscape, historic habitats, and remains of settlements here before the founding of Palo Alto in the nineteenth century. [Comp Plan Draft EIR Mitigation Measure CULT-1c] [L137]

NEW POLICY: Require that areas found to contain significant prehistoric artifacts be examined by a qualified consulting archaeologist for appropriate protection and preservation. [Comp Plan Draft EIR Mitigation Measure CULT-3] [L138]

NEW POLICY: Require that if cultural resources, including archaeological or paleontological resources, are uncovered during grading or other on-site excavation activities, construction shall stop until appropriate mitigation is determined and implemented. [Comp Plan Draft EIR Mitigation Measure CULT-3] [L139]

NEW POLICY: Require that any archaeological or paleontological resources on a development project site, as a condition of project approval, be either preserved at their location or adequately documented as a condition of removal. When a development project has sufficient flexibility, avoidance and preservation of the resource shall be the primary mitigation measure, unless the City identifies a superior mitigation. If resources are documented, their preservation should be coordinated with descendants and/or stakeholder groups, as warranted. [Comp Plan Draft EIR Mitigation Measure CULT-3] [L140]

NEW POLICY: Continue to consult with tribes as required by California Government Code Section 65352.3. In doing so, use appropriate procedures to accommodate tribal concerns when a tribe has a religious prohibition against revealing precise information about the location or previous practice at a particular sacred site. [Comp Plan Draft EIR Mitigation Measure CULT-3] [L141]

~~POLICY: Using the archaeological sensitivity map in the Comprehensive Plan as a guide, continue to assess the need for archaeological surveys and mitigation plans on-~~ ~~a~~ —project by

*project basis, consistent with the California Environmental Quality Act and the National Historic Preservation Act. [Note: the referenced figure will likely be removed from the Comp Plan to protect the integrity of known and undiscovered archaeological resources.] [formerly PROGRAM L-67] [L142]*

New Policy: Require that a records search of the California Historical Resources Information System be conducted and reviewed by a cultural resources professional for proposed new development to determine whether the site contains known prehistoric or historic cultural resources and the potential for as-yet-undiscovered cultural resources. [Comp Plan Draft EIR Mitigation Measure CULT-1c] [L143]

## **GOAL L-8: Attractive And Safe Civic And Cultural Facilities Provided In All Neighborhoods And Maintained And Used In Ways That Foster And Enrich Public Life.**

### **Civic Uses**

NEW POLICY: Facilitate creation of new parkland to serve Palo Alto's residential neighborhoods, as consistent with the Parks, Trails, Open Space and Recreation Master Plan, while maintaining adequate land for affordable housing.[L144]

NEW PROGRAM: Explore ways to encourage dedication of new land for parks, including regulations and incentives for new development and programs to solicit bequests of land in single-family neighborhoods.[L145]

NEW PROGRAM: Pursue opportunities to create linear parks over the Caltrain tracks in the event the tracks are moved below grade.[L146]

NEW PROGRAM: Explore ways to dedicate a proportion of in-lieu fees towards acquisition of parkland, not just improvements.[L147]

NEW PROGRAM: ~~Pursue~~ Explore opportunities to dedicate City-owned land as parkland to protect and preserve its community serving purpose into the future.[L148]

POLICY L-61: Promote the use of community and cultural centers, libraries, local schools, parks, and other community facilities as gathering places. Ensure that they are inviting and safe places that can deliver a variety of community services during both daytime and evening hours.



~~PROGRAM L-68: To help satisfy present and future community use needs, coordinate with the School District to educate the public about and to plan for the future use of school sites, including providing space for public gathering places for neighborhoods lacking space.~~

~~PROGRAM L-69: Enhance all entrances to Mitchell Park Community Center so that they are more inviting and facilitate public gatherings. [Complete]~~

~~PROGRAM L-70: Study the potential for landscaping or park furniture that would promote neighborhood parks as outdoor gathering places and centers of neighborhood activity.~~

~~POLICY L-74: Encourage use of data driven, design thinking tactics to evaluate how people use public space. Use the work of artists, craftspeople, architects, and landscape architects in the design and improvement of public spaces. [L149]~~

POLICY L-62: Provide comfortable seating areas and plazas with places for public art adjacent to library and community center entrances. [L150]

POLICY L-63: Encourage small-scale local-serving retail services, such as small cafes, delicatessens, and coffee carts, in Civic Centers. [L151]

NEW POLICY: Create facilities for civic and intellectual life, such as better urban public spaces for civic programs and speakers.[L152]

POLICY L-72: ~~Promote and maintain~~ Recognize public art and cultural facilities as a community benefit. Encourage the development of new and the enhancement of existing public art and cultural facilities throughout Palo Alto. Ensure that such projects are compatible with the character and identity of the surrounding neighborhood. [L153]

POLICY L-64: Seek potential new sites for art and cultural facilities, public spaces, open space, and community gardens that encourage and support pedestrian and bicycle travel and person-to-person contact, particularly in neighborhoods that lack these amenities. [L154]

POLICY L-65: Encourage religious and private institutions to provide facilities that promote a sense of community and are compatible with the surrounding neighborhood. [L155]

## **Public Ways and Infrastructure**

**GOAL L-9: Attractive, Inviting Public Spaces And Streets That Enhance The Image And Character Of The City.**

~~POLICY L-66: Maintain an aesthetically pleasing street network that helps frame and define the community while meeting the needs of pedestrians, bicyclists, and motorists. [Note to CAC: this concept is covered in more detail in the Transportation Element. See the Street Design section under Goal T-2. To avoid redundancy, extra length, and potential confusion, we suggest keeping them in Transportation and deleting here.]~~

~~POLICY L-67: Balance traffic circulation needs with the goal of creating walkable neighborhoods that are designed and oriented towards pedestrians. [Covered in Transportation Element]~~

~~POLICY L-68: Integrate creeks and green spaces with the street and pedestrian/bicycle path system. [Covered in Transportation Element — see Policy with identifier T53]~~

## **Streets and Parking**

POLICY L-69: Preserve the scenic qualities of Palo Alto roads and trails for motorists, cyclists, pedestrians, and equestrians. [L156]

**POLICY:** Recognize Sand Hill Road, University Avenue, Embarcadero Road, Page Mill Road, Oregon Expressway, Interstate 280, Arastradero Road (west of Foothill Expressway), Junipero Serra Boulevard/Foothill Expressway, and Skyline Boulevard as scenic routes. [formerly PROGRAM L-71] [L157]

POLICY L-78: Encourage development that creatively integrates parking into the project, including by locating it behind buildings or underground wherever possible, by providing for shared use of parking areas. Encourage, and by encouraging other alternatives to surface parking lots that minimize the amount of land devoted to parking while still maintaining safe streets, and a vibrant local economy, and sufficient parking to meet demand. [L158]

POLICY L-70: Enhance the appearance of streets and other public spaces through regular maintenance as well as tree and landscape planting and care of the existing canopy consistent with the Urban Forest Master Plan. [L159]

*New Program: ~~Review and revise as needed~~ Continue to use the El Camino Real Design Guidelines, the Zoning Ordinance and the Urban Forest Master Plan to enhance the visual character of this corridor by addressing appropriate sidewalk widths and encouraging building forms, massing, and setbacks that relate to the street and the pedestrian, whether through traditional architectural forms or innovative new designs. [Comp Plan Draft EIR Mitigation Measure AES-1] Consider whether sidewalk widths and building setback should also be addressed along other major thoroughfares such as Alma Street and Charleston Road.* [L160]

## Public Spaces

NEW POLICY: Maintain and enhance existing public gathering places and open spaces and integrate new public spaces at a variety of scales. [L161]

NEW PROGRAM: Develop an ordinance that will require development projects of a certain size or location to prepare an analysis of potential shade/shadow impacts to public open spaces (other than public streets and adjacent sidewalks) between 9:00 a.m. and 3:00 p.m. from September 21 to March 21. Projects that are shown to shadow open spaces during these times shall mitigate these impacts through building and site design features. [Comp Plan ER Mitigation Measure AES-4][L162]

## Gateways

POLICY L-71: Strengthen the identity of important community-wide gateways, including the entrances to the City at Highway 101, El Camino Real and Middlefield Road; the Caltrain stations; entries to commercial districts; ~~and~~ Embarcadero Road at El Camino Real, and between Palo Alto and Stanford. In addition, improve the gateways to the Mixed-Use Centers identified in the 2012 Rail Corridor Study. [L163]

PROGRAM L-72: Develop a strategy to enhance gateway sites with special landscaping, art, public spaces, and/or public buildings. Emphasize the creek bridges and riparian settings at the entrances to the City over Adobe Creek and San Francisquito Creek.[L164]

~~POLICY L-73: Consider public art and cultural facilities as a public benefit in connection with new development projects. Consider incentives for including public art in large development projects. Combined with Policy L-72~~

~~POLICY L-75: Minimize the negative physical impacts of parking lots. Locate parking behind buildings or underground wherever possible.~~

~~PROGRAM L-73: Revise the Zoning Ordinance to require the location of parking lots behind buildings rather than in front of them, under appropriate conditions.~~

~~PROGRAM L-74: Modify zoning standards pertaining to parking lot layout and landscaping for land uses within Employment Districts.~~

## Urban Forest

NEW POLICY: Recognize the many benefits of trees in the urban context and foster a healthy and expanded tree canopy throughout the City.[L165]

NEW PROGRAM: Establish incentives to encourage trees, plantings, and "green infrastructure" in new development throughout the city.[L166]

POLICY L-76: Require NEW PROGRAM: Update the municipal code to require trees and other landscaping within parking lots which can serve to capture and filter stormwater. (Formerly POLICY L-76)[L167]

~~PROGRAM L-75: Consider Zoning Ordinance amendments for parking lot landscaping, including requiring a variety of drought tolerant, relatively litter free tree species capable of forming a 50 percent tree canopy within 10 to 15 years. Consider further amendments that would require existing nonconforming lots to come into compliance wherever possible. [Complete]~~

~~POLICY L-77: Encourage alternatives to surface parking lots to minimize the amount of land that must be devoted to parking, provided that economic and traffic safety goals can still be achieved.~~

~~PROGRAM L-76: Evaluate parking requirements and actual parking needs for specific uses. Develop design criteria based on a standard somewhere between average and peak conditions. [Parking requirements will be addressed in the Transportation Element]~~

~~PROGRAM L-77: Revise parking requirements to encourage creative solutions such as valet parking, landscaped parking reserves, satellite parking, and others that minimize the use of open land for parking. [Parking requirements and creative parking solutions will be addressed in the Transportation Element]~~

~~PROGRAM L-78: Encourage the use of Planned Community (PC) zoning for parking structures Downtown and in the California Avenue area. [Not consistent with current City practice]~~

## Utilities and Infrastructure

POLICY L-79: Design public infrastructure, including paving, signs, utility structures, parking garages and parking lots to meet high quality urban design standards and embrace technological advances. Look for opportunities to use art and artists in the design of public infrastructure. Remove or mitigate elements of existing infrastructure that are unsightly or visually disruptive. [L168]

~~PROGRAM L-79: Undertake a coordinated effort by the Public Works, Utilities, and Planning Departments to establish design standards for public infrastructure and examine the effectiveness of City street, sidewalk and street tree maintenance programs. [Complete]~~

PROGRAM L-80: Continue the citywide undergrounding of utility wires. Minimize the impacts of undergrounding on street tree root systems and planting areas. [L169]

PROGRAM L-81: Encourage the use of compact and well-designed utility elements, such as transformers, switching devices, and backflow preventers. Place these elements in locations that will minimize their visual intrusion.[L170]

NEW POLICY: Provide utilities and service systems to serve all urbanized areas of Palo Alto and plan infrastructure maintenance and improvements to adequately serve existing and planned development. (From PTC recommendations POLICY L2.9 edited) [L171]

NEW PROGRAM Develop an Infrastructure Master Plan that projects the future needs of streets, underground utilities, and all City assets and plans for the incorporation of new technology that improves efficiency and effectiveness. (PTC PROGRAM L2.9.1) [L172]

NEW PROGRAM Implement the findings of the City's Infrastructure Blue Ribbon Committee and its emphasis for rebuilding our civic spaces. (PTC PROGRAM L2.9.8) [L173]

NEW PROGRAM Identify City-owned properties where combinations of wireless facilities can be co-located, assuming appropriate lease agreements are in place. (PTC PROGRAM L2.9.5)[L174]

NEW POLICY: Encourage public participation in the City's Capital Improvement Program (CIP) planning process to obtain public input on the City's infrastructure priorities. (PTC PROGRAM L2.9.7) [L175]

## **Baylands**

NEW POLICY: Regulate land uses in the Airport Influence Area to ensure consistency with the Palo Alto Airport Comprehensive Land Use Plan and the Baylands Master Plan. [L176]

NEW POLICY: Palo Alto is committed to preservation of the Baylands as called for in the Baylands Master Plan, which is incorporated here by reference. [L177]