



Treasuring Our Past, Present and Future

Santa Clara, the “Mission City,” has been significantly transformed over the past century from a small agricultural town to the center of technology in Silicon Valley. The past 20 years, in particular, have given rise to a wave of new development in the City. Today, Santa Clara consists of vibrant residential neighborhoods and job centers that provide stability and support for the City’s continued growth. This Chapter provides an overview of the City, including its history and context, as well as a summary of existing conditions that will shape future growth. It also describes the public participation efforts that provide the basis for the vision and strategies incorporated into the General Plan.



3.1 HONORING OUR PAST



Mission Santa Clara was instituted in 1777 and rebuilt four times in its history, with the final 1825 structure residing on the current Santa Clara University (SCU) campus.

Santa Clara has a rich past that is rooted in the early history and development of California. While some aspects of the City past have changed with its transition from a Mission outpost and agricultural town, key reminders of Santa Clara's history remain throughout the City. These features are evident in the City's historical places, like Mission Santa Clara, Santa Clara Railroad Depot, the Old Quad and Agnew Village neighborhoods and the vintage period architecture. As Santa Clara continues to evolve, understanding and honoring the past will ensure that the City's cultural heritage and identity are maintained and enhanced.

The area around Santa Clara was first settled by the Costanoan tribe, also known as the Ohlone tribe, as early as 4000-8000 BC. In 1769, scouts from Juan Gaspar de Portola's expedition into the Monterey Bay discovered the area's rich fertile soils. Mission Santa Clara was established in 1777. Over time, Mission activity gave way to wheat farming as well as cattle ranching. By 1850, when California became a state, Santa Clara was an established frontier settlement. In 1851, Santa Clara College, now Santa Clara University, was founded on the Mission site. The incorporation of Santa Clara followed in 1852. In 1866, the City officially established a grid street system to accommodate anticipated growth. Today, this area is known as the Old Quad neighborhood.

Early industries in the City included manufacturing, as well as seed and fruit packing. Leather tanning and wood products were two key industries of the City well into the 20th century. Similarly, seed growing, fruit farming and packing (especially pears, cherries, apricots and prunes) were mainstays, contributing to the City's exports. The Santa Clara Railroad Depot, built in 1863, became an important hub as exports increased. In addition to its growing industries and rail use, the City made historic headway in transit and transportation. The Alameda became the first interurban horse car line in the West, linking Santa Clara and San José. By 1888, the street had the first electric trolley line in California. The City also established its own municipal electric power utility in 1896; this entity endures today as Silicon Valley Power, a City department, providing Santa Clara residents and businesses with low-cost power and alternative energy resources.

During the early evolution of Santa Clara into a prosperous and innovative city, the City's population remained relatively small and stable, growing from around 3,500 in 1900 to 6,500 in 1940. During and after World War II, industry expanded and the population doubled. It was not until the introduction of the semiconductor, the related electronics industry and the defense industry in the 1950s that the City's population increased dramatically by well over 600 percent in 20 years, to 86,000 by 1970. The growth of the technology sector quickly replaced the City's renowned orchards, changing the character of the City into a modern, growing technological hub.

During this period of extensive growth, the City's urbanized area grew from approximately 3.1 square miles in 1953 to 8.0 in 1961 and to 14.9 in 1980, as shown in Figure 3.1-1. Much of the mid-century expansion in the City was due to the construction of the many single-family subdivisions found in the southern portion of the City today. Industrial growth expanded significantly during the following 20 years through 1980 as more electronics research and manufacturing establishments located in Santa Clara. With this expansion, the City began to regulate new development. The City's Planning Commission was established in 1949, followed by the establishment of City departments for Engineering, Utilities, Planning and Building. During this time, the City also developed ample parks, along with recreation facilities, public utilities and services. All of these have positively contributed to the City's high quality of life.

Santa Clara's dramatic growth and rise to its current role as a job center in Silicon Valley has had a significant effect on the City's outlook today. For almost 100 years, the City of Santa Clara's identity was based on its orchards and agriculturally-based industries. With the rapid growth of the technology industry and residential neighborhoods, this agricultural character was lost. Additionally, in the 1960s, the City demolished most of the Downtown core under the federal Urban Renewal program. The promise of a new Downtown has not been realized. As a result, a cornerstone of the City's history and identity was eliminated.

The loss of agricultural land and the demolition of the historic Downtown have had a lasting effect on subsequent City decisions to preserve the City's identity and historic assets. In 1955, the City Council established the Historical and Landmarks Commission to make recommendations to the City Council on historic issues. In 1976, a decade after the initial Urban Renewal



The Santa Clara Railroad Depot was constructed in 1863, and by 1916 was a bustling center of activity in the City [top and center]. The Depot, which is on the National Register of Historical Places, was the oldest continuously operated railroad depot in California until the ticket office closed in 1997. The intersection of Main Street and Franklin Street was once considered the center of Downtown Santa Clara [bottom].



Many of Santa Clara's historic buildings, such as the Franck Mansion [top], are located in the Old Quad area. Santa Clara University continues to play an important role in the community with several public venues like Mission Santa Clara, as well as the de Saisset Museum and the Louis B. Mayer Theater [not pictured]. Nobili Hall [bottom] is a residential hall on the University campus.

demolition, the City compiled a City-wide historic resources inventory. More recently, the City completed the Downtown Plan for a portion of the original Downtown, as a catalyst for future redevelopment and regeneration of Downtown Santa Clara. Historic preservation and City identity are key components of this General Plan. Despite the growth and transformation of the City, Santa Clara's small-town origins have left an imprint on the community. The community values its historic resources and quality of life. This General Plan builds on these assets to ensure that the City's evolution to 2035 preserves its core identity and character.

Development through the 1970s represents today's predominant pattern for most of the land area of the City, with low-density, low-rise development. The street pattern found in the Old Quad is representative of pre-tract development where small walkable blocks provided easy pedestrian access through the neighborhood. As daily dependence on the automobile grew, particularly in the post-World War II era, road patterns evolved and the proliferation of auto-oriented strip malls became commonplace, particularly on important thoroughfares such as El Camino Real.

Some of these areas, such as the existing single family neighborhoods, are protected by the General Plan, while other areas present opportunities for redevelopment with new uses in conjunction with enhanced services and facilities to meet the needs of the future.

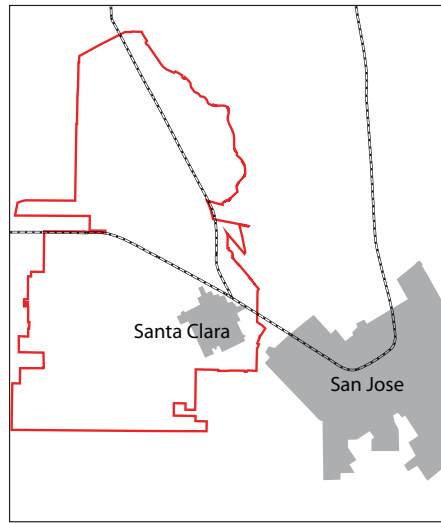
Figure 3.1-1
Evolution of City Form

- Existing City Limits
- Rail
- Highway
- Urbanized Area*
- Norman Y. Mineta San José International Airport

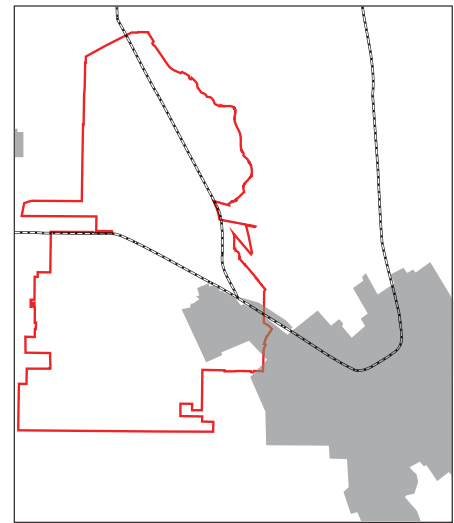
Source: USGS

* Airport not considered to be urbanized land area

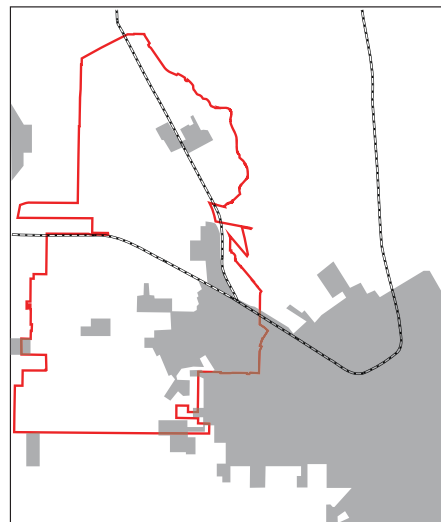
Urbanized area is defined through multiple sources from the United States Geological Survey (USGS) depending upon the year and data source. Generally, an urbanized area comprises a place and the adjacent densely settled surrounding territory (1,000 people per square mile) that together have a minimum population of 50,000 people. (From: Dynamic Mapping of Urban Regions: Growth of the San Francisco/Sacramento region 1995.)



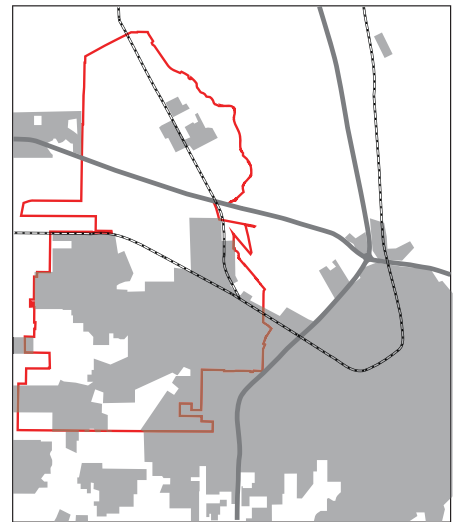
1899



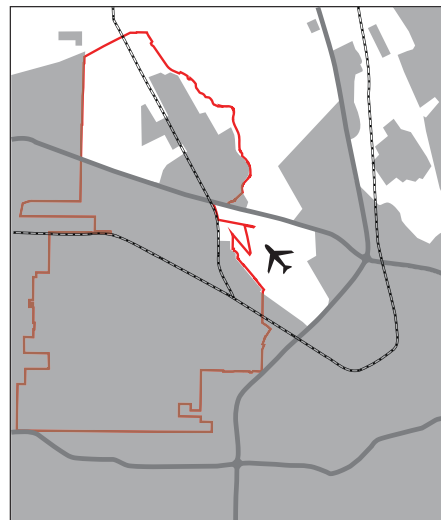
1943



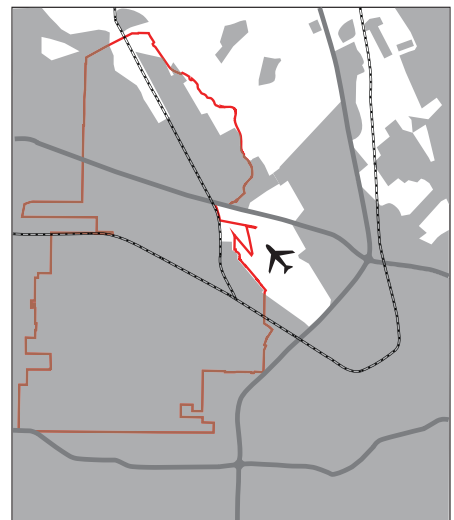
1953



1961



1980



2001



3.2 THE CITY TODAY

3.2.1 Regional Location and Setting



Calabazas Creek runs through the southern portion of the City.

The City of Santa Clara is located at the center of the Santa Clara Valley, between the Santa Cruz Mountains to the southwest and the Diablo Range to the northeast. As shown on Figure 3.2-1, Santa Clara is at the southern end of San Francisco Bay, approximately 40 miles south of San Francisco. Three seasonal creeks run through the City and empty into the southern portion of the Bay: the San Tomas Aquino, Saratoga and Calabazas Creeks. Additionally, the City is bordered by the Guadalupe River to the northeast.

The City is completely surrounded by neighboring jurisdictions: the City of San José to the north, east and south, and the cities of Sunnyvale and Cupertino to the west. Figure 3.2-2 illustrates the City's 18.4 square-mile footprint within the subregional context of Santa Clara County. Due to its location on the valley floor, Santa Clara is well served by existing regional transportation and transit corridors, making it attractive to commercial interests. U.S. Highway 101 traverses east-west through the center of the City, while State Route 237 is located to the north and Interstates 880 and 280 skirt the southeast and southwest corners of the City, respectively. Existing transit lines include Caltrain, Altamont Commuter Express (ACE), Capitol Corridor, Valley Transportation Authority (VTA) bus and light rail. Future transit plans include a new Bay Area Rapid Transit (BART) Station at the eastern border of the City. The Norman Y. Mineta San José International Airport provides air transportation services that link the region to the world.

3.2.2 Existing Characteristics

Santa Clara is centrally located in Santa Clara County, which has been one of the fastest-growing counties in the State. Santa Clara County's population is estimated to have increased by approximately 11 percent between 2000 and 2010, while employment is estimated to have declined by ten percent during that same period. The County is home to numerous global high technology companies. The City of Santa Clara is located in the center of the County's industrial core and is home to Intel, Applied Materials, Sun Microsystems/Oracle, Nvidia, National Semiconductor and other high technology companies. Mission

College, Santa Clara University and the UCSC Extension are also located in the City. Santa Clara is adjacent to San José, the largest city in the Bay Area, the airport and regional transportation corridors. As a result, pressure is likely to continue for Santa Clara to absorb a substantial share of the region's growth.

Existing Development Pattern

As shown in Figure 3.2-3, the City's 2009 land use pattern is predominantly characterized by individual uses segregated into distinct areas, including single-family neighborhoods, retail commercial corridors and industrial/office employment centers. These uses are largely separated by major transportation facilities located in the City. South of the east-west Caltrain corridor are much of the City's residential developments, neighborhood-serving retail uses, schools and parks. The central portion of the City, north of the Caltrain corridor and south of U.S. 101, consists predominately of light and heavy industrial uses, although some of the area has transitioned into office/research and development (R&D) and data centers. The northernmost portion of the City has the most diverse mix of uses, including office/R&D, light industrial and regional entertainment and sports uses, including Great America theme park, the Santa Clara Convention Center, and the San Francisco 49ers Training Facility. Commercial uses and a new, higher-density residential neighborhood (known as Rivermark) are located to the east. Recent development in the City has been primarily focused in this northernmost area. As of 2010, the remaining vacant land within the City has been developed and the City is essentially built out.

The existing mix of land uses in the City is shown in Chart 3.2-1 and Table 3.2-1. Almost half of the developable land in the City (excluding roads, highways and other rights of way) is residential (42%). Employment uses, including light and heavy industrial (18%), office/R&D (11%) and retail commercial (10%), constitute the next most prevalent uses. Less than one percent of the land is comprised of mixed-use development. The remaining is composed of public/quasi-public/institutional (11%), parks and open space (6%), vacant land and other uses.



The City is a major employment center with headquarters of many high tech companies founded in Silicon Valley [top], and is home to California's Great America and supportive visitor services [center and bottom].



TABLE 3.2-1: EXISTING CITY-WIDE ACRES BY LAND USE (2008)

<i>Land Use Type</i>	<i># of Acres</i>	<i>% of Total¹</i>
Residential	3,890.3	42%
Very Low Density (0 to 10 units/acre)	2,425.2	26%
Low Density (8 to 18 units/acre)	702.1	8%
Medium Density (18 to 25 units/acre)	613.2	7%
High Density (25-50 units/acre)	149.9	2%
Commercial	888.9	10%
Neighborhood Commercial	21.9	0%
Community Commercial	543.6	6%
Regional Commercial	323.5	4%
Mixed Use	11.6	0%
Community Mixed Use	11.6	0%
Office/Research and Development	1,044.1	11%
Low Intensity Office/R&D	901.0	10%
High Intensity Office/R&D	143.2	2%
Industrial	1,644.1	18%
Light Industrial	1,140.7	12%
Heavy Industrial	503.4	5%
Public/Quasi Public	981.6	11%
Parks, Open Space and Recreation	565.0	6%
Parkland, Local Serving	272.5	3%
Open Space and Specialized Recreation Facilities	292.5	3%
Vacant/Unassigned	158.3	2%
SUBTOTAL (DEVELOPABLE LAND)	9,184.0	100%
Roads and Other Rights of Way (including creeks)	2,591.0	
TOTAL	11,775.0	

1. Percent of total developable land, defined as land area exclusive of roads, highways, and other rights-of-way.

Source: City of Santa Clara; Dyett & Bhatia, 2008.

Figure 3.2-1
Regional Context (2010)

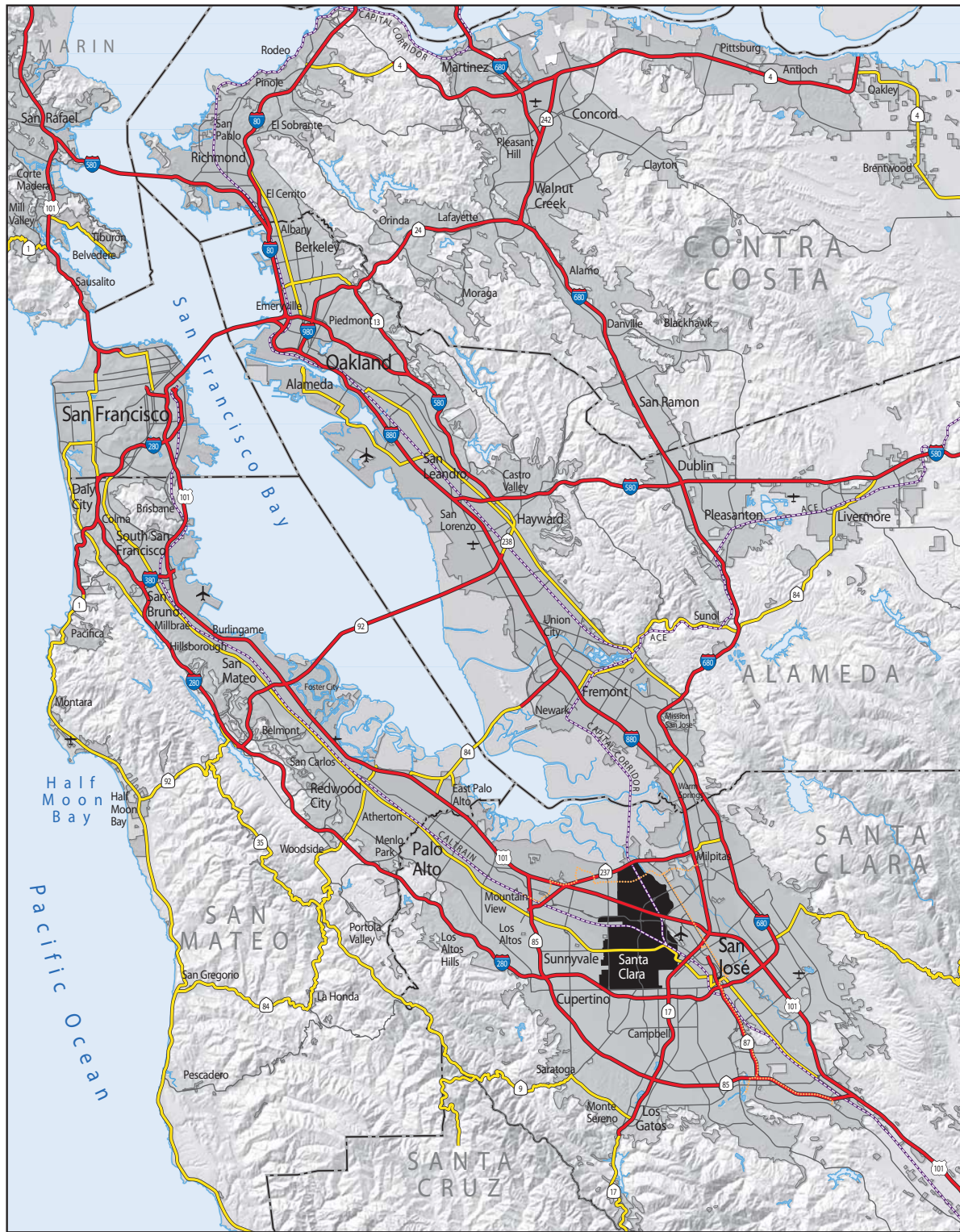




Figure 3.2-2
Subregional Context

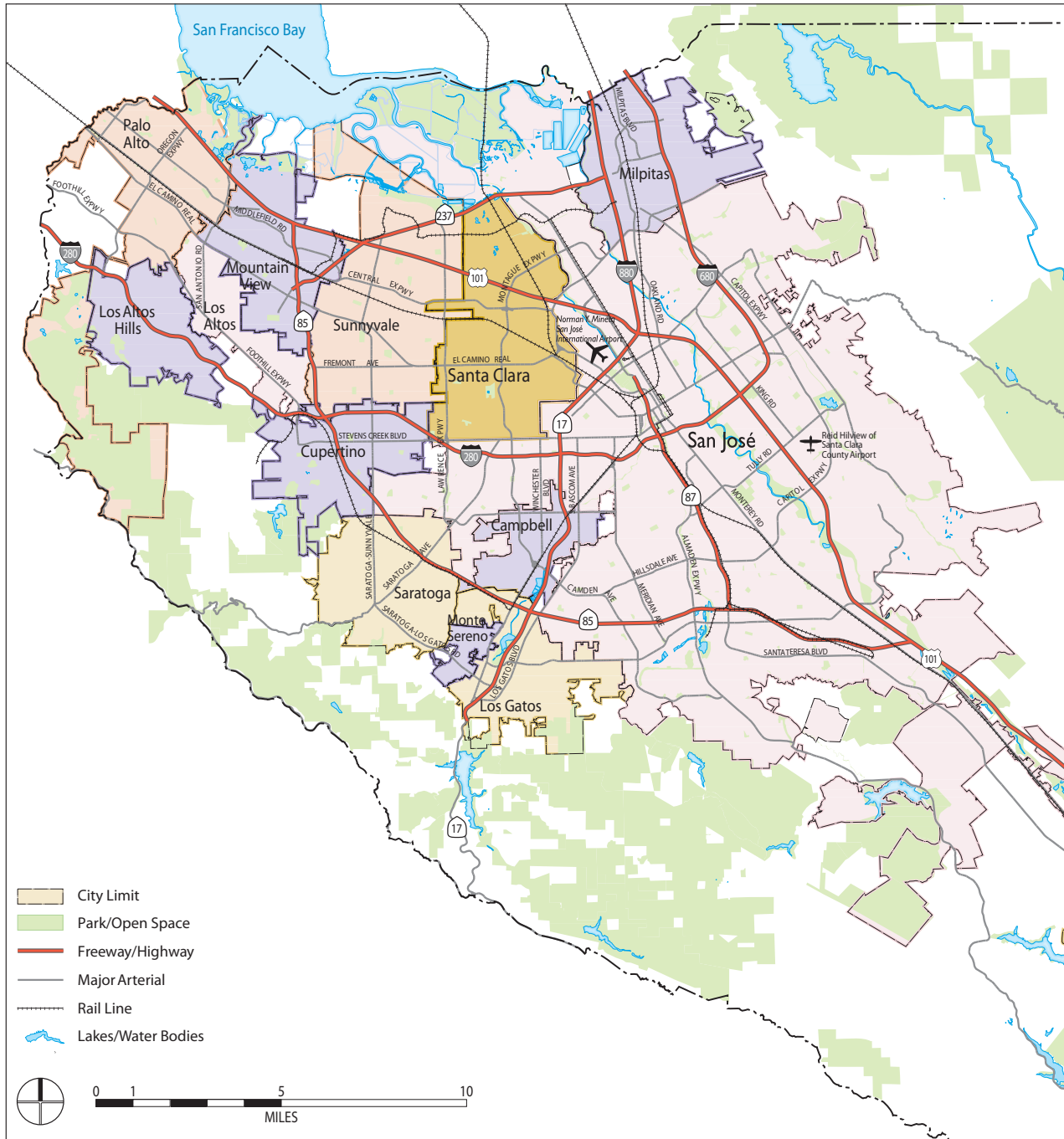


Figure 3.2-3
Existing Land Use (2008)

- Very Low Density Residential
- Low Density Residential
- Medium Density Residential
- High Density Residential
- Neighborhood Commercial
- Community Commercial
- Regional Commercial
- Community Mixed Use
- Low Intensity Office/R&D
- High Intensity Office/R&D
- Light Industrial
- Heavy Industrial
- Public/Quasi Public
- Parks/Open Space
- Vacant

- Rail & Light Rail
- Stations
- City Limits
- Creek
- Trail

Source: Metrosan 2007,
City of Santa Clara, 2009,
Dyett & Bhatia 2009.

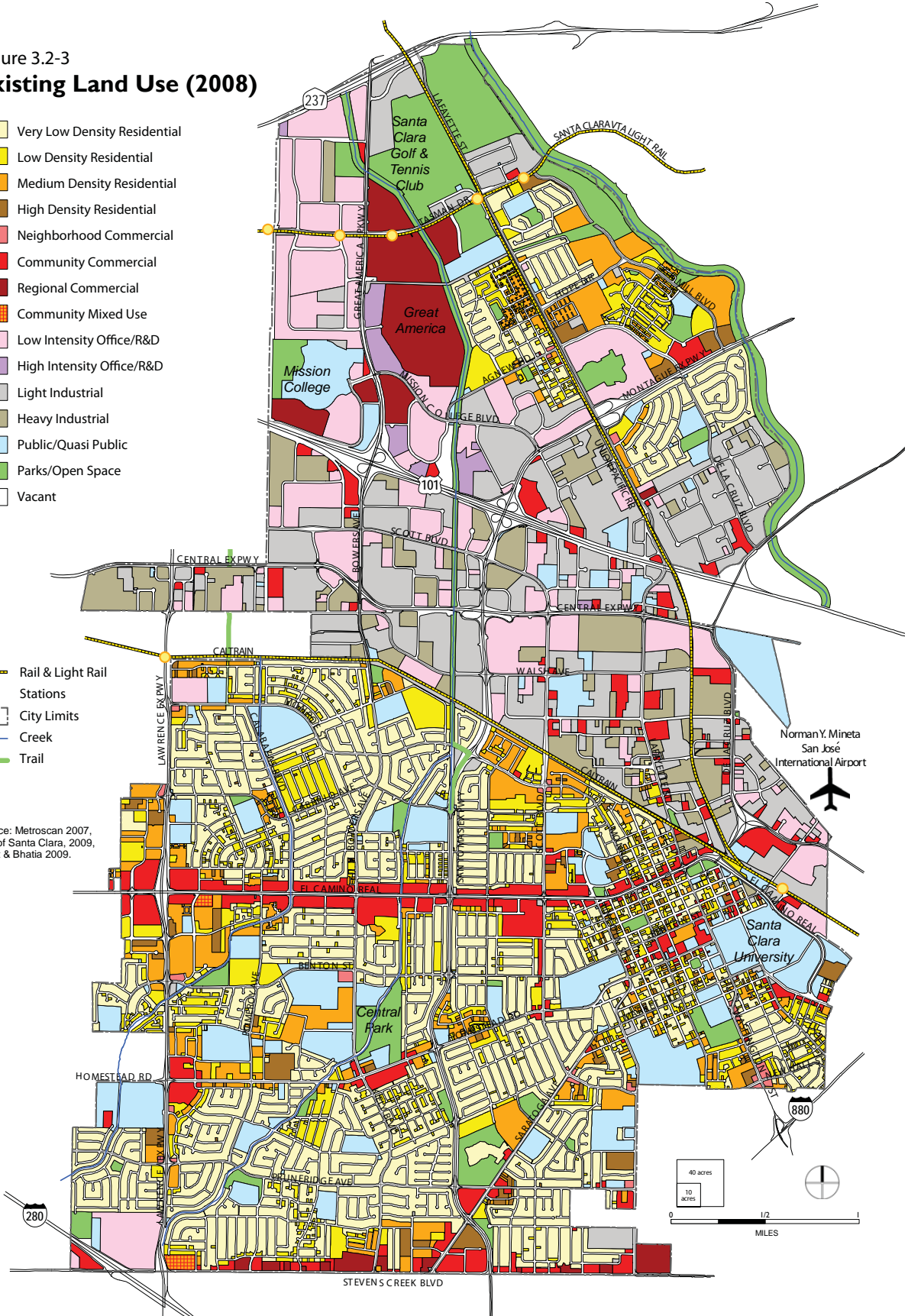
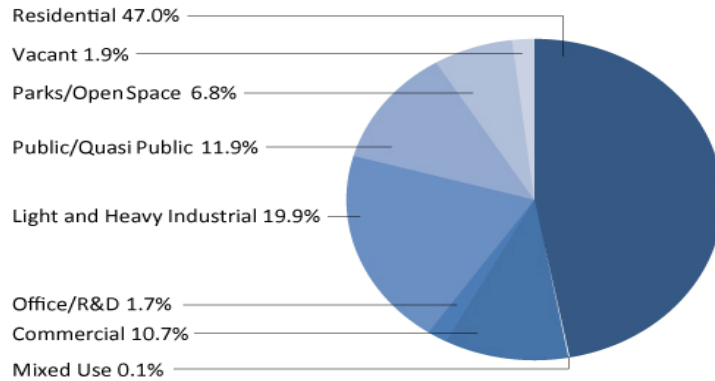




CHART 3.2-1: EXISTING CITY-WIDE PERCENTAGE OF LAND USE



Source: City of Santa Clara; Dyett & Bhatia, 2008.

Existing Land Uses

Residential

Santa Clara includes a range of housing types and densities to serve diverse lifestyles, age groups and cultural backgrounds. Table 3.2-2 shows the most prevalent housing types that make up the City’s 44,166 housing units. The most common is the single-family unit (detached and attached), representing 50 percent of the City’s housing stock. Nine percent of the City’s residential units are in two-to-four unit complexes, and 40 percent are in five-or-more unit complexes. Multifamily units include duplex, apartment and condominium configurations, as well as some student housing near Santa Clara University.

TABLE 3.2-2: HOUSING UNITS, BY TYPE (2008)

	# of Units	% of Total
Single-Family Detached	18,617	42%
Single-Family Attached	3,759	9%
Multifamily 2 to 4 Units	3,929	9%
Multifamily 5 or More Units	17,861	40%
Total	44,166	100%

Source: California Department of Finance, 2008



Santa Clara has a variety of housing types, including well-established single-family homes [top left], townhomes [center left, bottom left], apartments and condominiums [Flora Vista, top right, and Rivermark, center right].



The majority of single-family homes in the City are located south of the Caltrain corridor in residential neighborhoods, with an average density of eight units per acre. These neighborhoods comprise a quarter of the land area of the City and are a significant factor in the City's character and identity. Residential areas include historic neighborhoods, like the Old Quad, and newer master-planned neighborhoods, like Rivermark. Higher-density residential neighborhoods, with multifamily units, are often located along arterial streets, transportation corridors or at the edges of single-family neighborhoods.

Commercial

Commercial uses are located on ten percent of the City's developable land area and make up approximately 18 percent of the total building space in the City. Commercial uses include neighborhood uses, like grocery stores, personal services, small offices and banks, as well as tourist and entertainment uses and professional or medical offices.

Retail commercial uses and professional offices are primarily located along El Camino Real and Stevens Creek Boulevard. Uses along El Camino Real include auto-oriented businesses, such as auto repair, service stations and auto sales. Larger properties along both El Camino Real and Stevens Creek Boulevard include community and regional commercial retail uses. Additional community and regional commercial uses are also located north of U.S. 101, including the Rivermark retail center and the Mercado Center. Neighborhood commercial uses are located in pockets throughout the City.

Mixed Uses

Mixed uses make up less than one percent of the land uses within the City. These developments integrate commercial and residential uses, as well as specialized non-residential uses like retail and office uses.



Commercial development in the City includes retail, service and auto-related uses, such as those along El Camino Real [top] and Stevens Creek Boulevard [center], as well as neighborhood and community-oriented retail services [Rivermark, bottom] and regional retail and visitor services.

Although Santa Clara has a variety of land uses throughout the City, there are only a few mixed use developments, including these two developments along Stevens Creek Boulevard and El Camino Real [top and center]. The Rivermark development is characterized by multiple uses, including residential, retail, and visitor services [bottom].



Office/Research and Development

Comprising over 11 percent of the City's developable land area, campus style office and Research & Development (R&D) uses are located north of U.S. 101 along Great America Parkway and Mission College Boulevard. This area constitutes the core of the large-scale, intense office uses; however, over 30 percent of the City's office and R&D space is located between the Caltrain corridor and U.S. 101.

Industrial

Approximately 18 percent of the City's developable land area is comprised of low intensity heavy and light industrial uses, primarily located between the Caltrain corridor and U.S. 101. Approximately 36 percent of this space is located north of U.S. 101. The City's heavy and light industrial businesses are characterized by manufacturing, warehousing and wholesaling activities as well as by low intensity one and two story development. Over the past ten years, some of the light and heavy industrial sites between the Caltrain/U.S. 101 corridors have transitioned from these traditional uses to more intense office/research and development uses, particularly on larger parcels located along major transportation corridors.

Public/Quasi Public

Public/quasi public and institutional uses occupy approximately 11 percent of the developable land area in the City's jurisdiction. These uses include civic facilities, such as City Hall, police and fire stations, electric substations and libraries, as well as public and private educational institutions, such as Santa Clara Unified School District facilities, Mission College and Santa Clara University properties, places of assembly, religious institutions, and medical facilities, such as Kaiser Permanente facilities. The majority of public/quasi public uses are located south of U.S. 101 near residential neighborhoods.



Many employers, like Yahoo [top] and Intel are located in Santa Clara, with campus-style office developments of larger mid-rise buildings [center], a combination of surface and structured parking and well-landscaped grounds. The City is home to many data centers as well, which are primarily located in the industrial core between U.S. 101 and the Caltrain corridor.

Industrial uses in the City are the predominant use between U.S. 101 and the Caltrain corridor, as well as adjacent to the Norman Y. Mineta San Jose International Airport off of De La Cruz Boulevard. Uses include manufacturing, construction-related industries, warehousing and distribution, and repair services [top and center]. Airport-related support services are focused close to the Airport along De La Cruz Boulevard and Martin Avenue [bottom].



Demographics and Employment

With its employment and housing opportunities, Santa Clara attracts a population that is diverse in ethnicity and age. The City has a population of 115,500 residents¹, representing 6.3 percent of the total population in Santa Clara County. With a growth rate of 12.8 percent since 2000, Santa Clara grew slightly more than the County's rate of 8.7 percent. The City's population is represented by 37 percent Asian or Pacific Islander, 18 percent Hispanic, two percent African American and four percent other ethnicities; the remaining 40 percent of the population is Caucasian. Racial distribution in the City is generally similar to that of the County.

The median age of the population in the City was 34.9 years as of 2008. The median age has increased since 2000, reflecting the aging trend that is evident throughout the Bay Area and country overall.² Despite this aging trend, enrollment in the Santa Clara Unified School District has increased slightly over the past five years, predominantly as a result of the recent residential development in the Rivermark area. New higher-density and infill development anticipated by this General Plan will likely result in smaller household sizes and a reduced rate of growth for student enrollment. For the 2008-2009 school year, the Santa Clara Unified School District had an enrollment of 14,252 students, representing 5.6 percent of the County's total public school enrollment.³

In 2008, 56,100 of the City's 115,500 residents were employed, representing 6.4 percent of the County's overall labor force. The City of Santa Clara has an estimated 106,700 jobs⁴, comprising 11.7 percent of total jobs in the County. The resulting 2008 ratio of jobs to employed residents in the City is 1.90 to one as shown on Table 5.2-2. The City is an employment hub and destination within the region. Since only 30 percent of the City's workers reside within Santa Clara, the vast majority of workers (about 70 percent) commute from other cities.⁵

¹ State of California, Department of Finance, E-5 Population and Housing Estimates for Cities, Counties and the State, 2001-2009, with 2000 Benchmark. Sacramento, California, January 2008.

² U.S. Census, 2007 American Community Survey 1-Year Estimates.

³ California Department of Education Educational Demographics Unit for January 2008.

⁴ Estimated jobs using ABAG 2007 projections.

⁵ U.S. Census, 2000.

3.2.3 Growth Potential

Characteristics that will continue the pressure for growth in Santa Clara are its relatively strong real estate market, advantageous location, potential for redevelopment with higher-intensity housing, retail and employment, and existing and future opportunities for improved transit in addition to an existing and easily accessible roadway network of freeways and expressways. Through the ebb and flow of economic cycles over the past few decades, commercial interest in Santa Clara has remained relatively strong, due to location advantages and positive economic conditions specific to the City. This is expected to continue to the City's advantage.

Real Estate Market

In 2008, the housing market experienced an economic downturn. Over the term of this General Plan, it is anticipated that the City and region's projected employment and population growth from 2008-2035 (an employment increase of 50 percent in the County and 45 percent in the City and a population increase of 34 percent in the County and 26 percent in the City) will be realized. Job growth will serve as a stimulus for future housing, although the rate of development will be influenced by interest rates, home prices, construction costs and the credit market. Future residential development opportunities will also be constrained by site availability and density ranges in the City.

Development Opportunities

While selected retail sectors, such as automobile sales, have traditionally been economically strong in the City of Santa Clara, these markets have slowed since the downturn in the economy began in 2001. Even with retail outlets in the nearby cities of San José, Mountain View, Los Gatos, Campbell, Milpitas and Sunnyvale, there is the potential for expansion of eating and drinking establishments, groceries (including specialized ethnic, natural and other niche outlets), building material sales and major anchors and sub-anchors not yet represented in the City of Santa Clara. Opportunities for new retail to replace aged development are primarily along the City's major corridors like El Camino Real and Stevens Creek Boulevard, as well as Homestead Road. In particular, large sites with existing low-intensity or vacant retail development provide key opportunities for intensification and mixed-use development where a residential component will help to ensure the market viability of new retail enterprises.



Opportunities also exist for intensification of the City's industrial and office/R&D uses. Current trends for development include office/R&D uses in former light industrial areas with larger parcel sizes and convenient transportation access. New employment centers can be positioned to take advantage of existing and future alternative transportation modes, particularly transit along Tasman Drive, Great America Parkway and Bowers Avenue.

Existing and Future Transit

Current options in the City for alternative transportation modes, other than the automobile, are relatively limited. They include light rail along Tasman Drive in the northern part of the City, and Caltrain stations at the east and west borders of the City. An additional ACE/Amtrak station is located at Lafayette Street and Tasman Drive. VTA bus service also operates in the City, with a main hub at the Santa Clara Transit Center/Caltrain Station near Santa Clara University. Future planned and proposed transit opportunities include a BART extension, with the Santa Clara station forming the South Bay terminus, and an Automated People Mover connecting the Norman Y. Mineta San José International Airport to the Santa Clara Transit Center and future BART station. In addition, two bus rapid transit (BRT) corridors are proposed by VTA in the City, one along El Camino Real and the other along Stevens Creek Boulevard. Opportunities to expand bus, BRT and shuttle services to traverse north-south within the City could improve access to employment centers as well as provide better connections to existing transit for Santa Clara residents.

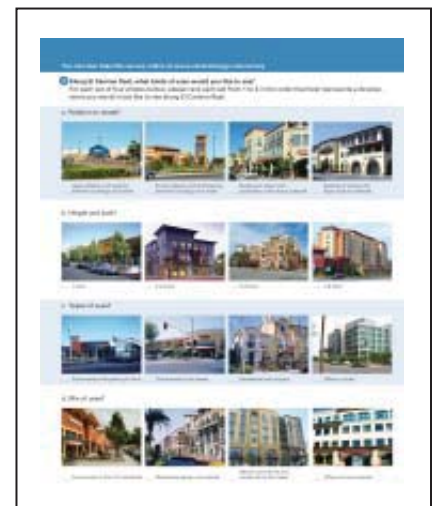
3.3 VISION FOR THE FUTURE AND PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

3.3.1 Public Participation

As the City's primary tool to implement the vision for the physical form of the community, the General Plan relies on the goals and policies to carry out the community's vision. During preparation of this General Plan, opportunities were designed so that public input was received directly from City residents, business and property owners and other community members. The process encouraged public feedback throughout the development of the Plan.

Outreach to the community and decision-makers included a variety of mechanisms:

- *Community Workshops and Open Houses.* The first Community Workshop on Visioning and Issues was attended by over 100 persons. Held in June 2008, it set the stage for more focused workshops on Housing and the Environment in August 2008. Additional workshops were held in October 2008 and open houses on the Preferred Progressive Plan in April 2009 and on the Draft General Plan and EIR in mid-2010.
- *City-wide Survey.* In September 2008, a City-wide survey was sent to all City residents and businesses to gather input on major planning issues. The more than 1,600 completed responses provided feedback on specific land use and urban design preferences that were subsequently incorporated into the Preferred Plan.
- *Newsletters and Postcards.* A series of newsletters and mailings provided updates on the planning process and schedules for workshops and public hearings. The summer 2009 edition of *Inside Santa Clara* included an insert focusing on the City's General Plan. An additional newsletter describing the Preferred Progressive Plan was also posted on the General Plan website and made available at City facilities.
- *General Plan Website.* All documents and maps created during the update, as well as background information on the planning process and meeting notes, were posted on the General Plan website: www.santaclaragp.com.



Community outreach included the General Plan website, which served as a portal for all materials, documents and information distributed during the planning process [top]. A City-wide survey was distributed to solicit feedback on land use and design issues for the City [center and bottom].



Six community workshops, information sessions, and open houses were held during the General Plan process [top and center]. The General Plan Steering Committee (GPSC) helped to guide the process [bottom], and held 12 meetings that were open to the public.

- *General Plan Steering Committee (GPSC).* The 19-member City Council-appointed GPSC included representatives from a variety of community interests. This committee was responsible for providing input and making recommendations to staff for the draft Plan. Members included residents as well as representatives from businesses, schools, public agencies, City commissions and the City Council. These meetings were open to the public.
- *City Council/Planning Commission Study Sessions.* Several joint City Council/Planning Commission workshops and study sessions were televised and held throughout the planning process to assess the City’s vision and solicit comments about General Plan issues, opportunities and concerns. These meetings were open to the public.
- *An Open Process.* The results of public meetings and workshops were posted to the General Plan website, presented to the Steering Committee and made available to the public at all stages of the process. Summary reports of the first three community workshops and the City-wide survey were posted to the website, as well as meeting notes and summaries from all GPSC meetings and City Council/Planning Commission Study Sessions.

3.3.2 The Vision

The vision for the City as it moves forward in the 21st century embraces both the preservation of valued resources and pursuit of new opportunities. Consensus opinions in the planning process clearly supported maintaining and enhancing the quality of life currently enjoyed in the City. Goals and policies improving the livability and vitality of the City, without sacrificing enjoyment of neighborhoods, are promoted. These goals and policies also take into account the City’s diverse cultural and economic interests and mobility, among other things, for current and future residents.

Early outreach efforts in the General Plan process focused on understanding community issues and establishing an overall vision for the City’s future. These efforts were complemented by technical analysis of the regional and local context. This process helped to define land use, character and identity, as well as to shape the City’s response to regional expectations for population and employment growth.

Through an iterative public process, several common themes representing community values emerged to define the City's vision:

- Preserve the small-town feel, particularly by maintaining the character and quality of the City's residential neighborhoods.
- Add opportunities for mixed uses throughout the City in places with access to existing and future transit.
- Revitalize and create a landmark Downtown.
- Improve the visual and physical character of the City's commercial corridors.
- Enhance walkability and bicycle circulation throughout the City.
- Reduce traffic congestion and expand public transportation.
- Diversify industrial and business uses that support a future, intensified employment base.
- Provide new neighborhood commercial centers.
- Continue high quality public services and amenities, including open space and parks.
- Encourage sustainability to protect energy, water supplies and air quality.

These themes serve as the basis for the General Plan Major Strategies, which are described in Chapter 4. They also provide the context for the General Plan policies as well as for the population and job growth projections identified in Appendix 8.6.

Regional Expectations

The City of Santa Clara is not isolated from the region. It is expected to accommodate its fair share of population and job growth through the 2035 Plan horizon. Overall, the Association of Bay Area Governments (ABAG) projects that the County of Santa Clara will grow by 512,900 (27%) in population and 427,480 (46%) in new employment between 2010 and 2035. For



that same period, ABAG projects that the City of Santa Clara will accommodate nearly six percent of this new population, resulting in 28,300 new residents. According to ABAG, job growth in the City is expected to grow just as quickly, matching that of the County, with 48,690 new jobs (45% growth).

In addition to the City's expected share of regional growth, the City participates in several regional efforts that support sustainable growth. The City signed the U.S. Mayors Climate Protection Agreement that calls for a 29 percent reduction in greenhouse gas emissions by 2012. Additionally, the City is a member of Sustainable Silicon Valley, a coalition of businesses, governments and organizations working to reduce regional carbon dioxide emissions to 20 percent below 1990 levels by 2010 and 30 percent by 2020. To support regional goals, the City has also adopted a policy to meet Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) silver standards for new public buildings of over 5,000 square feet. Silicon Valley Power has also established future goals for expanding its share of sustainable resources beyond the current (as of 2008) 57 percent renewable energy. Similarly, the City is a leader for water recycling and co-ownership of the San José/Santa Clara Water Pollution Control Plant and the South Bay Water Recycling Program.

The General Plan provides the framework in which new development within the City will be able to accommodate the City's projected growth while addressing regional commitments and objectives. The phased approach of the Progressive Plan offers a means to periodically plan and re-evaluate the City's direction, allowing opportunities for appropriate response to regional trends as well as local demands at specified intervals to ensure that the Plan continues to meet changing community values.