

# ***CHAPTER 5    TRANSPORTATION AND CIRCULATION***

Transportation and circulation – the movement of people by all modes, and provision of support facilities, most notably parking – are crucial to quality of life and economic vitality. They are also key components of providing emergency services and facilitating the movement of goods. Circulation is also a mandatory general plan element.

The circulation element describes those services, facilities and capital improvements needed to facilitate vehicle, pedestrian, transit, bicycle, and emergency transportation. It also describes means for promoting and encouraging the use of alternative transportation modes, accommodating growth in travel demand, and preserving safety.

## **A. Setting**

### ***Street and Highway System***

#### ***Street Hierarchy***

Although El Cerrito has a hierarchy of highways and streets, it lacks a central business district with a traditional grid pattern of streets. Instead, the City is developed along San Pablo Avenue, which serves as its spine. El Cerrito's existing streets and their functional classifications are shown in Figure 6.

#### ***Freeways and Interchanges***

Interstate 80 is the major freeway serving El Cerrito, although Interstate 580 is also located in the area. Historically, Interstate 80 has been heavily congested in the southbound (westbound) direction in the a.m. peak period and the northbound (eastbound) direction in the p.m. peak period. Recent reports indicate that Interstate 80 ranks among the top five most congested freeways in the San Francisco Bay Area. Caltrans has recently completed construction of high occupancy vehicle lanes and will soon be completing the remainder of the ramp improvements on I-80.

Three interchanges provide access from Interstate 80 to El Cerrito:

1. The Central Avenue Interchange is the first El Cerrito Interchange from the south. Although the interchange is located in the City of Richmond, as is the Interstate 580 Interchange with Central Avenue, Central Avenue is the primary travel route to southern El Cerrito, the El Cerrito Plaza and the El Cerrito Plaza BART Station.
2. The Carlson Boulevard Interchanges with Interstate 80 and 580 are also located in the City of Richmond. Although these interchanges provide access to areas of the Richmond Annex, they provide only limited benefit to the City of El Cerrito

because there is no direct connection between Carlson Boulevard and San Pablo Avenue in the vicinity of the interchanges.

3. The Cutting Boulevard/Potrero Avenue Interchange with Interstate 80 is a split interchange with Cutting Boulevard providing the northbound I-80 on- and off-ramps and Potrero Avenue providing the southbound Interstate 80 on- and off-ramps. This split freeway ramp configuration, in combination with the heavy traffic flows to and from local businesses, adjacent residential areas, and the BART Station creates congestion in the Del Norte area.

Traffic conditions on Interstate 80 and at its interchanges have a major influence on El Cerrito surface streets. When an accident or unusual condition causes a breakdown in freeway traffic flow, regional traffic diverts to local arterials: San Pablo Avenue (State Route 123) and the portions of Cutting Boulevard, Potrero Avenue, and Central Avenue west of San Pablo Avenue. San Pablo Avenue is very heavily affected by regional transportation conditions because it parallels Interstate 80 from the City of Emeryville to the City of San Pablo and beyond as far as the Carquinez Bridge, serving as an alternative travel route for regional and semi-regional traffic.

### *Traffic Operations*

Figure 7 identifies existing and projected (under General Plan build-out conditions) daily traffic volumes on area streets and highways. The operation of transportation facilities (freeways, roadways, intersections) is classified in six “level-of-service” categories. Level of service (LOS) is defined in terms of a letter grade ranging from A to F. LOS A is the best level of operation, representing free flow conditions, and LOS F is the worst level of operation, representing excessive delays, long vehicle queues, and generally intolerable conditions. The City of El Cerrito policy calls for achievement of LOS D or better conditions.

Most intersections in El Cerrito currently operate at LOS C or better. All City operated intersections (not along San Pablo Avenue) operate at LOS A. Traffic operation in the Del Norte area, other portions of San Pablo Avenue, and the Central Avenue Interchange can be as bad as LOS E or F conditions when an incident on Interstate 80 results in a higher-than-normal diversion of regional traffic. As of 1999, traffic on Central Avenue can be quite backed up. It is not known, without further study, whether this is a temporary or ongoing problem.

### ***Truck Routes***

In accordance with the California Vehicle Code, trucks are allowed on all streets to make deliveries. However, through truck traffic (trucks on a street where no delivery is being made) is not permitted on local streets. The state allows local jurisdictions to limit truck traffic on other streets as well by designating truck routes that provide access to all areas of the City. El Cerrito does not post accepted truck route signs, but it posts truck prohibitions and areas with truck weight limits (see Figure 8).

Truck prohibition signs are posted in the southwest corner of the City in the area bounded by Central Avenue, Carlson Boulevard, Cerrito Creek, and the City of Richmond City limits. Truck weight limits are used in El Cerrito to prohibit heavy trucks from attempting to travel on steep streets such as Moeser Lane and the eastern portion of Potrero Avenue. Other streets with truck weight limits are a small segment of Cutting Boulevard between Fairview Avenue and Arlington Boulevard, and Rifle Range Road east of Arlington Boulevard.

### ***Emergency Response Routes***

Emergency response routes are the routes that police, fire and paramedic vehicles use when traveling to the scene of an emergency. These routes are generally located on streets with adequate width to accommodate large vehicles. All arterials are generally considered part of the emergency response routes, although emergency vehicles may avoid these streets during heavy peaks when the arterials are congested. El Cerrito emergency response routes are shown in Figure 8.

## ***Parking***

Most residences in El Cerrito have at least one off-street parking space, and there is generally on-street parking available for additional cars and the vehicles of visitors. Most non-residential uses (retail and office) in El Cerrito also have an adequate supply of on-site parking with the exception of many commercial areas on San Pablo Avenue. Along much of San Pablo Avenue, older businesses do not provide off-street parking facilities, leaving only on-street parking for customers, which is sometimes inadequate. This lack of parking tends to thwart full productive use of properties.

The other exception is in the vicinities of the two BART stations, which experience high parking occupancies and parking spillover onto adjacent properties. Neighborhood parking permits have been used to protect residential areas surrounding BART stations from parking intrusion. In areas with neighborhood parking permits (see Figure 9), residents displaying parking permit stickers are permitted to park for an unlimited time. Vehicles without permits can park for only two or four hours, depending on the posted sign, and run the risk of being ticketed if they park for a longer time.

### ***BART Stations***

The Del Norte BART Station provides over 2,000 off-street parking spaces, including about 1,300 in a parking structure. There are also about 1,000 on-street parking spaces within a half-mile radius of the BART Station.

El Cerrito Plaza BART contains about 800 on-site parking spaces. In addition, by courtesy of the El Cerrito Plaza Shopping Center operators, BART riders are currently permitted to park on a portion of the El Cerrito Plaza Shopping Center parking area. This generally is parking that, in the past, served the Emporium store, which closed in 1996. Based on observations made in March 1997, about 350 BART riders were parking on the Plaza site. As of spring 1999, the owners of the Plaza are proposing substantial reconstruction of the center, and it is not expected that BART patrons will continue to be able to park on the side of the shopping center.

Funds are available to the City from the Contra Costa Transportation Authority to build a parking structure of approximately 400 spaces as an expansion of BART patron parking. Although the City has considered locating the structure on a portion of the shopping center site, it appears most likely that the parking will be developed on BART property, possibly in conjunction with a mixed-use development on the western part of the BART site.

### ***Transit***

El Cerrito is served primarily by AC Transit and BART but, because the Del Norte BART station is a major transit transfer location, it is also served by WestCAT Transit, Vallejo Transit, and Golden Gate Transit. Figure 10 shows the current transit routes within El Cerrito.

#### ***BART***

The El Cerrito Del Norte and El Cerrito Plaza BART stations lie on the Richmond - Fremont and Richmond – San Francisco/Colma lines. The El Cerrito BART station is the closest station to the Bay on the East Bay portion of the system. BART service runs from approximately 4 a.m. to midnight, with headways of approximately 15 minutes throughout the day. Figures provided by BART in 1996 showed that approximately 7,100 people enter and 8,000 people exit the Del Norte BART station, the larger of the two stations, during a typical weekday. The imbalance is due primarily to morning peak period carpoolers (including casual carpoolers) who use BART to return in the afternoon. Roughly 28 percent of the daily BART traffic occurs during the a.m. peak period (6 to 9 a.m.) and 32 percent occurs during the p.m. peak period (4 to 7 p.m.).

On weekends, BART service is offered from 6 a.m. to midnight on Saturdays and 8 a.m. to midnight on Sundays, with headways of approximately 20 minutes throughout the day. Figures provided by BART in 1996 showed that approximately 2,500 people enter and 2,900 people exit the Del Norte BART station during a typical Saturday.

#### ***AC Transit***

AC Transit bus coverage within El Cerrito is fairly comprehensive, with most houses within a quarter mile of a transit stop and all houses within a half-mile. Due to budget constraints, AC Transit has reduced or eliminated weekend and off-peak (particularly evening) service on many routes such that route frequencies are less than desired frequencies on most routes. Transit routes are: San Pablo Avenue; the Colusa Avenue – Ashbury Avenue – Navellier Street – Ganges Street – Glen Mawr Avenue – Cutting Boulevard corridor; Arlington Boulevard in the north-south directions; Barrett Avenue; Cutting Boulevard; Potrero Avenue; Stockton Avenue; and the Central Avenue – Fairmount Avenue corridor in the east-west direction.

San Pablo Avenue is one of AC Transit's key transit corridors. AC Transit has received grant funding and is scheduled to prepare a planning study for the San Pablo Avenue corridor. The study will evaluate bus rapid transit treatments for high-frequency routes: Line 72, which serves North Oakland, and Line 82, which serves South and East Oakland. The study will also evaluate physical and technological enhancements that can be used to improve transit vehicle travel times.

#### ***Transit First***

The City of El Cerrito has taken a step toward making AC Transit more efficient by adopting a Transit First Policy. It is the official policy of the City of El Cerrito to encourage public transit among El Cerrito residents and visitors, and expedite the movement of transit vehicles.

## ***Bicycles and Pedestrians***

### ***Bicycles***

Bicycle travel is possible on several north-south and east-west streets in the City of El Cerrito. Topography poses a serious challenge to bicycling and walking in the eastern portion of the City, but the majority of El Cerrito streets are flat or have only small grades (5 percent or less). Figure 11 shows the existing bicycle and trail facilities in El Cerrito.

The City of El Cerrito has a number of hiking trails and dedicated public paths, but the Ohlone Greenway, which travels under the BART tracks from the City's southern border to San Pablo Avenue just south of MacDonald Avenue, is the only formal multi-use trail. The El Cerrito Plaza Shopping Center renovation may also include a multi-use trail along Cerrito Creek at the City's southern boundary. Albany proposes a continuation of this trail to Pierce Street along the southern side of Cerrito Creek in its Bicycle Master Plan, but the two cities would likely need to work together on this effort since Cerrito Creek forms the border between the cities.

There are a number of informal trails in the City of El Cerrito that provide hiking and mountain-biking opportunities. These trails are unimproved pathways in many locations but provide high quality recreation experiences.

El Cerrito does not currently have any bike lanes or bike routes, but a number of streets are wide enough to permit easy implementation. The City of Albany *Bicycle Master Plan* proposes bike lanes on Santa Fe Avenue, which leads to Colusa Avenue, and bike routes on Cornell Avenue, which leads to El Cerrito Plaza and aligns roughly with Liberty Street, and Adams Street, which aligns with Carlson Boulevard. At Adams Street, a bicycle and pedestrian bridge is proposed over the Cerrito Creek.

Both BART stations, El Cerrito Plaza, and many schools currently provide bicycle parking facilities. BART stations have historically been locations where bicycles are stolen or vandalized. The City of El Cerrito is currently considering bicycle enclosures at both BART stations. The City has recently installed bicycle racks at intervals along San Pablo Avenue, with funding from the Bay Area Air Quality Management District.

### ***Pedestrian***

A continuous and interconnected system of sidewalks is available throughout most of El Cerrito, although many major intersections lack striped crosswalks or curb cuts. One exception is the segment of Contra Costa Boulevard between Moeser Lane and Devonshire Drive, which lacks sidewalks (see Figure 11). One of the key pedestrian corridors in El Cerrito is San Pablo Avenue. San Pablo Avenue provides 10- to 20- foot sidewalks on both sides of the street throughout most of its length.

Based on the California Vehicle Code, even where no striped crosswalks are provided, pedestrians have the right to cross at all corners of intersections unless pedestrian traffic is explicitly prohibited with barriers and signs such as those installed at the intersection of San Pablo Avenue and Cutting Boulevard. When

intersection approaches are uncontrolled or controlled by stop signs, pedestrians have the right-of-way (i.e., vehicles are required to yield to pedestrians in the crosswalk).

Figure 11 identifies pedestrian obstacles in El Cerrito. Most of the pedestrian obstacles relate to inadequate pedestrian crosswalks. These occur near both BART stations; the primary problem is the lack of a signed and striped crosswalk. Areas lacking crosswalks are San Pablo Avenue between Cutting Boulevard and Hill Street, Hill Street east of San Pablo Avenue, and Fairmount Avenue between Liberty and Richmond Streets.

As is the case elsewhere in the East Bay Hills, the El Cerrito hill neighborhoods contain a number of narrow city-owned rights-of-way, which serve as mid-block paths running between private properties. The rights-of-way generally are five to fifteen feet in width. Some have been improved by the placement of asphalt or concrete pathways or steps. The majority, however, are unimproved. The city has not had the financial resources to improve the pathways that remain unimproved and those that are improved are not maintained on a regular basis. In some cases these open areas have been a subject of complaints from adjacent neighbors about trees and vegetation. On the other hand, improvement and maintenance of these public rights-of-way would enhance pedestrian enjoyment of the City.

Freeway interchanges also tend to provide limited pedestrian facilities, and, where free right turns are provided at on- and off-ramps, pedestrians must cross an uncontrolled stream of traffic. This occurs at the Cutting Boulevard, Potrero Avenue, and Carlson Boulevard interchanges. Although uncontrolled right turns do not exist at the Central Avenue Interchange, the number and length of street crossings required to get from the east side of Interstate 80 to the west side makes pedestrian travel uncomfortable.

## B. Trends

### *Assumptions*

Traffic in El Cerrito will continue to be heavily influenced by conditions on Interstate 80 and BART. The influences are particularly marked during periods with incidents on the freeway or delays in BART service. However, on a day-to-day basis, the majority of traffic using El Cerrito's streets is locally generated, either beginning and/or ending within El Cerrito.

Regional traffic access to El Cerrito's BART stations also heavily affects conditions on streets in the Del Norte area and, to a much smaller degree, in the El Cerrito Plaza area.

### *The Interstate 80 Corridor*

The Interstate 80 corridor consists of Interstate 80, San Pablo Avenue, and other north-south streets that provide continuous travel opportunities in El Cerrito. Regional growth forecasts indicate that congestion in the Bay Area is expected to grow significantly. The bulk of this growth will occur in areas with significant new development such as San Mateo and Santa Clara Counties. For Interstate 80 through El Cerrito, regional forecasts indicate an average 2.4 percent traffic growth per year through the year 2020.

With this level of growth on an already congested freeway, drivers may seek parallel alternative travel routes such as San Pablo Avenue. It is important to note, however, that San Pablo Avenue will also become more congested due to development within El Cerrito. In addition, in an effort to reduce the impacts of regional traffic on El Cerrito, no significant capacity enhancements are recommended for San Pablo Avenue. As a result, San Pablo Avenue will become a less attractive route. The result of increased travel demand and congestion on the principal routes within the Interstate 80 corridor is likely to be changes in the times of day that people travel (i.e., peak hour spreading), changes in travel modes (i.e., increased use of transit), and possibly changes in destinations (i.e., elimination of trips within the corridor).

The forecasts made for the General Plan build-out assume that the amount of through traffic currently on San Pablo Avenue will increase by at least 15% to 20%. This is based on an estimate that about one-fourth to one-third of the peak hour traffic presently on San Pablo Avenue consists of through trips, neither beginning nor ending in El Cerrito. As a result of this 15% to 20% growth in the through-trip component, the total amount of traffic on San Pablo Avenue will increase by about 5%. Traffic will also grow as a result of new development within El Cerrito. This traffic growth is estimated using a detailed traffic forecasting model, representing the potential changes in activity levels in over 20 different sub-sectors of the City. The locally-generated growth is added to adjusted background traffic. Combined, the effects of regional and local growth produce increases in San Pablo Avenue traffic of approximately 50%.

***BART***

El Cerrito transportation is also heavily influenced by BART and could change dramatically if BART were to extend service further along the Richmond Line or if a connection were made to BART in Richmond with a commute rail line, making Del Norte BART station less of a regional facility. The General Plan forecasts do not assume a BART extension because no extension has been programmed or funded within the lifetime of the General Plan.

Automobile travel to individual BART stations is also heavily influenced by the amount of parking available at or near the station. Parking supply around both BART stations is decreasing, even when considering the proposed structure at the Plaza station, and no additional parking increases are programmed or funded.

In view of the above factors, the traffic forecasts assume a modest 5% increase in vehicle traffic to the Del Norte BART station. Although modest, this traffic growth assumption is conservatively high, based on the fact that parking supplies at both BART stations is decreasing, and demands from local sources will be increasing as new land uses emerge in El Cerrito in accordance with the General Plan.

***Travel Forecasts***

Figure 7 showed the daily traffic volumes on major streets in El Cerrito under General Plan build-out conditions assuming land uses described in the Community Development and Design Chapter. Traffic on most residential streets in El Cerrito will remain constant. Along minor arterials, traffic will grow by 5 to 10%, with the exceptions of Eastshore Boulevard and the portion of Fairmount Avenue near San Pablo Avenue, which have projected growth of about 65 percent. Along major arterial, traffic will grow by 30 to 50 percent. For San Pablo Avenue, traffic will increase by an average of about 50 percent, or about 2.5 percent per year.

***Modeling Methods***

Traffic modeling is a four-step process consisting of trip generation, trip distribution, mode split, and trip assignment. The modeling effort undertaken as part of the El Cerrito General Plan update includes application of state-of-the-practice modeling techniques using the Contra Costa Transportation Authority (CCTA) West County Model and a local-area sub-model developed for El Cerrito. The CCTA model was used to derive regional growth and trip distribution assumptions. The sub-area model was used to generate, distribute and assign traffic from developments within El Cerrito. The local area model developed for El Cerrito contains about 20 traffic analysis zones, which is more detail than similar models in other jurisdictions and significantly more zones than are contained within the Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC) or CCTA models within El Cerrito. The local area model was also validated against highly sophisticated models like the CCTA and MTC models, through the series of reasonableness checks described below.

***Reasonableness Checks***

With all modeling efforts, it is essential that model results be reviewed for reasonableness. For the El Cerrito model, reasonableness checks included comparisons of projected growth with: (1) historic growth trends, (2) the CCTA model, (3) the MTC model, and (4) the El Cerrito Evaluation of Interstate 80 Expansion of Traffic Impact.

- Historic Growth Trends - Over the last 15 years, traffic forecasts on San Pablo Avenue have increased about 0.8 percent per year. (California Department of Transportation, Volumes on California State Highways, 1980, 1990, and 1995)
- CCTA Model - The CCTA model predicts a 1.5-percent per year increase in daily traffic and negligible PM peak hour traffic growth. (West Contra Costa County Action Plan for Routes of Regional Significance, December 4, 1994)
- MTC Model - The MTC predicts a growth rate of less than one percent per year. (Metropolitan Transportation Commission Regional Model Loaded AM Peak Hour Networks for 1990, 2005, and 2015, February 9, 1994 and September 3, 1996)
- El Cerrito Evaluation of Interstate 80 Expansion of Traffic Impact (October 11, 1995) - The subject study was prepared for the City and MTC in anticipation of the Interstate 80 reconstruction project. It predicts a reduction in San Pablo Avenue traffic levels between 1990 and 2000 due to expansion of Interstate 80 and a modest increase between 2000 and 2010, with the net result that 2010 traffic volumes would be similar to or even slightly lower than 1995 volumes.

It is important to note, that each of the above references reports traffic growth from all sources, including growth and shifts in through traffic and locally generated traffic. Therefore, the range of estimates from these references is a growth rate in total traffic on San Pablo Avenue of 1.5% a year or less. By comparison the El Cerrito General Plan build-out projected a growth rate of 2.5 percent per year. As these reasonableness checks indicate, the General Plan forecast is a worst-case assessment of potential traffic conditions.

Although the General Plan forecasts, under worst-case assumptions, considerable traffic growth on El Cerrito arterials, most arterials will have sufficient capacity to accommodate expected traffic growth, but delays can be expected to increase significantly throughout the City. Specific spot improvements required to facilitate acceptable traffic flow are described in the next section. Improvements are specified in a manner that attempts to promote a balance among the competing access and mobility needs of the community. This balance will allow worse traffic congestion on the cities arterials, as long as they: 1) do not violate the City's Level of Service standards, 2) provide a closer balance between congestion on the freeway and congestion on the parallel arterial to discourage traffic diversions from the

freeway, and 3) maintain street widths and pedestrian crossing distances at levels that promote walking, bicycling and transit use, rather than placing the primary emphasis on facilitating traffic flow.

### *Traffic Operations*

The projections indicate that most intersections in El Cerrito will continue to operate at LOS C or better in the future. Around El Cerrito Plaza, the intersections of San Pablo and Central avenues and San Pablo and Fairmount avenues will deteriorate to LOS D, but will still operate acceptably. Three intersections will deteriorate to LOS E or worse and will require improvements. The intersections and improvements necessary to attain LOS D or better are described below.

- San Pablo Avenue/Knott Avenue, which is controlled by stop signs on the Knott Avenue approaches, will operate at LOS F under General Plan build-out conditions. Signalization of the intersection would improve its operation to LOS C.
- San Pablo Avenue/Hill Street/Eastshore Boulevard, which is a signalized intersection with five intersection approaches, is projected to deteriorate to LOS E conditions under General Plan build-out conditions. The addition of an exclusive southbound right-turn lane on San Pablo Avenue to Eastshore Boulevard, an exclusive westbound left-turn lane on Hill Street to San Pablo Avenue, and a second exclusive eastbound left-turn lane from Eastshore Boulevard to San Pablo Avenue would improve this intersection to LOS D.
- Key Boulevard/Cutting Boulevard, which is controlled by all-way stop signs, will operate at LOS E under General Plan build-out conditions. The addition of a southbound right-turn lane on Key Boulevard will improve the intersection's operations to LOS C.

These improvements are not currently programmed or funded but would likely be made in combination with development of adjacent and surrounding properties.

Although planning-level service level calculations indicate that the Central Avenue interchange with I-80 will operate acceptably under future conditions, due to severe operational constraints including close intersection spacing and multiple approach lanes and changes in area freeway ramp configurations, a more detailed review of traffic operations at this interchange is recommended.

## C. Goals and Policies

The following goals and policies have been formulated in response to issues raised throughout the General Plan public input process. Throughout the goals and policies, the terms *circulation* and *transportation* refer to the movement of people by all modes of travel.

**Goal T1: A transportation system that allows safe and efficient travel by a variety of modes and promotes the use of alternatives to the single-occupant vehicle.**

### Policies

### Implementation Measures

Policies	Implementation Measures
<p><b>T1.1      <b>Balanced Transportation System.</b></b> Create and maintain a balanced transportation system with choice of transit, bicycle, pedestrian, and private automobile modes.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Transportation System Performance Measures</li> <li>• Travel Demand Management</li> <li>• Bicycle Master Plan</li> <li>• Pedestrian Circulation Plan</li> <li>• Development Review</li> <li>• Traffic Monitoring</li> </ul>

<b>T1.2</b>	<b>Transit System.</b> Encourage transit providers to improve and increase existing transit routes, frequency, and level of service. Encourage a public transit system that provides convenient transfers between transit services and other modes of travel.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Intergovernmental Coordination</li> <li>• Transit First Policy</li> </ul>
<b>T1.3</b>	<b>Bicycle Circulation.</b> Create a complete, interconnected bicycle circulation system. Provide a bicycle system that serves commuter as well as recreational travel. Improve bicycle routes and access to and between major destinations.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bicycle Master Plan</li> <li>• Pavement Management Plan</li> </ul>
<b>T1.4</b>	<b>Pedestrian Circulation.</b> Provide a safe, convenient, continuous and interconnected pedestrian circulation system throughout the City. Ensure safe pedestrian access to local schools.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pedestrian Circulation Plan</li> </ul>
<b>T1.5</b>	<b>Goods Movement.</b> Maintain a transportation system that provides truck mobility to serve all land uses in El Cerrito.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Circulation Map</li> <li>• Development Review</li> </ul>
<b>T1.6</b>	<b>Emergency Services.</b> Maintain and improve critical transportation facilities for emergency vehicle access and emergency evacuation needs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Circulation Map</li> <li>• Development Review</li> </ul>
<b>T1.7</b>	<b>Regional Coordination.</b> Recognize El Cerrito's role in the region and lead in regional efforts to increase transit and reduce congestion.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Intergovernmental Coordination</li> </ul>

**Goal T2: A land use pattern that encourages walking, bicycling, and public transit use.**

**Policies**

**Implementation Measures**

**T2.1 Land Use Patterns.** Recognize the link between land use and transportation. Promote land use and development patterns that encourage walking, bicycling, and transit use. Emphasize high-density and mixed land use patterns that promote transit and pedestrian travel. Where feasible, emphasize the following land use measures:

1. Promote conveniently located neighborhood complexes that provide housing and commercial services near employment centers and within transit corridors.
2. Promote land use patterns that maximize trip-linking opportunities by assembling uses that allow people to take care of a variety of daily needs.
3. Encourage pedestrian-oriented land use and urban design that can have a demonstrable effect on transportation choices.
4. Direct growth to occur along transit corridors.
5. Encourage retail, commercial, and office uses in ground floor space in combination with upper-floor housing along San Pablo Avenue.

- Development Review

**T2.2 Project Design.** Projects should be designed to include features that encourage walking, bicycling, and transit use.

- Development Review
- Transit First Policy

**Goal T3: A transportation system that maintains and improves the livability of the City.**

Policies	Implementation Measures
<p><b>T3.1 Improve Circulation.</b> Improve circulation in locations with high levels of congestion, but avoid major increases in street capacities unless necessary to remedy severe traffic congestion, and not at the expense of pedestrian circulation.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Capital Improvement Program</li> <li>• Development Review</li> <li>• Traffic Monitoring</li> </ul>
<p><b>T3.2 Streets as Public Spaces.</b> Recognize the role of streets not only as vehicle routes but also as part of an extensive system of public spaces where people live, city residents meet, and businesses reside.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Streetscape Design Standards</li> </ul>
<p><b>T3.3 Residential Streets.</b> To discourage cut-through traffic on residential streets, maintain the existing system of arterial and collector streets. Where necessary, employ traffic management techniques to control the speed of vehicles traveling on residential streets, including residential portions of arterial and collector streets.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Neighborhood Traffic Management Plan</li> <li>• Preference for Cut-through Streets</li> </ul>
<p><b>T3.4 Street Closures.</b> Keep all neighborhood streets open unless there is an existing or potential safety or cut-through traffic problem and there are no acceptable alternatives, or unless the closure would increase the use of alternative transportation modes.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Circulation Map</li> </ul>
<p><b>T3.5 Street Maintenance.</b> Provide high-quality, regular maintenance for existing and future transportation facilities, including streets and dedicated bicycle paths.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pavement Management Plan</li> </ul>
<p><b>T3.6 Maintenance of San Pablo.</b> Coordinate with Caltrans to ensure the timely maintenance of San Pablo Avenue.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Intergovernmental Coordination</li> </ul>

**Goal T4: A minimum amount of land used for parking and minimal parking intrusion in neighborhoods.**

Policies	Implementation Measures
<p><b>T4.1 Parking Requirements.</b> Develop parking requirements that are consistent with the goals for increased use of alternative transportation modes, and acknowledge shared parking opportunities.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Development Review</li> <li>• Parking Regulations</li> </ul>
<p><b>T4.2 Underparked Areas of San Pablo Avenue.</b> Evaluate long-term parking needs along San Pablo Avenue and promote the development of common parking facilities in areas where existing and long-term parking provisions will not satisfy latent parking demand.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Parking Management Plan</li> <li>• Parking Regulations</li> <li>• Development Review</li> </ul>
<p><b>T4.3 BART Parking.</b> Support decreasing the amount of land dedicated to parking around BART stations by using parking structures. To reduce parking demand at BART stations, encourage an improved transit feeder system to BART stations including consideration of new transit technologies. Encourage BART parking not to obstruct pedestrian access from stations to surrounding land uses.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Intergovernmental Coordination</li> <li>• Parking Regulations</li> </ul>
<p><b>T4.4 Residential Parking Permits.</b> Maintain the restrictive residential permit-parking program for neighborhoods surrounding BART stations. As need arises, expand the permit parking areas or create new permit parking areas to protect neighborhoods from parking intrusion from adjacent land uses.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Residential Permit Parking Program</li> </ul>

## D. Implementation

Implementation measures below are listed in alphabetical order.

1. **Bicycle Master Plan.** Prepare a comprehensive Bicycle Master Plan that complies with the 13 elements outlined in the California Bicycle Lane Account (BLA). The Bicycle Master Plan should include an active public input process to develop a comprehensive bicycle circulation and support facilities system; design standards for bicycle facilities; standards for the provision of bicycle support facilities; evaluation of current bicycle education and promotion programs in El Cerrito; analysis of bicycle accidents in El Cerrito; and a capital improvement program. The Bicycle Master Plan should encourage local access to the BART stations by bicycling as an alternative to short-distance driving. Develop a strategic approach to pursuing state and federal funding for bicycle projects, working closely with surrounding jurisdictions and Contra Costa County. Work with the City of Richmond to provide a clear connection between the Ohlone Greenway and the planned Richmond Greenway.
2. **Capital Improvement Program.** Ensure that adequate funding is available to implement transportation improvements required to mitigate the effects of growth.
3. **Circulation Map.** Use the circulation map in the General Plan to guide activities related to goods movement, emergency routes, and street closures.
4. **Development Review.** Undertake development reviews to ensure compliance with applicable local, regional, state, and federal laws and adopted policies. Ensure that developers contribute funding for on-site and off-site improvements. Adopt an ordinance requiring developers to do the following:
  - a. Construct transportation improvements along their property frontages when appropriate; and
  - b. Fund traffic impact studies that identify on-site and off-site effects and mitigation measures.

5. **Intergovernmental Coordination.** Coordinate with adjacent jurisdictions, the Metropolitan Transportation Commission, Contra Costa County, AC Transit, BART, Caltrans, and other applicable agencies. The Contra Costa County Transportation Authority (CCTA) West County Action Plan for Routes of Regional Significance (12/9/94) defines a regional vision for Hercules, Pinole, San Pablo, Richmond, and El Cerrito. This document defines many of the City's positions with respect to regional transportation improvements. Some of the key Action Plan items are:
- a. Support inclusion of the West County BART extension in the MTC Track 2 Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) project lists.
  - b. Pursue every opportunity to speed the funding and construction of the West
  - c. Expand efforts urging MTC to determine the best express transit system(s) for the Interstate 80 corridor and, based on the results of the MTC study, encourage timely implementation of planned transit capital and service improvements.
  - d. Promote Carquinez Bridge alternatives that will achieve mainline metering of Interstate 80 into West Contra Costa County.
  - e. Support efforts by Caltrans, CCTA, and MTC to tailor capacity of the Carquinez Bridge improvements to downstream capacity.
  - f. Support efforts by AC Transit to study the feasibility of bus rapid transit treatments along San Pablo Avenue.
  - g. Support mixed-use development, high employment commercial, and higher-density residential development in transit corridors and near BART stations.
  - h. Consider additional transit mitigation alternatives, as appropriate, in future Action Plan Deficiency Strategies.

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

- a. As opportunities present themselves, improve freeway access to El Cerrito, particularly around the Del Norte area and at the Central Avenue interchange.
- b. Oppose transportation projects that would diminish access to Interstate 80 from El Cerrito.
- c. Oppose regional capacity enhancements to San Pablo Avenue except when the improvements serve local traffic and do not compromise bus, pedestrian and bicycle travel.
- d. Support physical enhancements to San Pablo Avenue to make it a transit and pedestrian friendly multi-modal street.
- e. Encourage the City of Richmond and Caltrans to conduct a detailed operations analysis of the Central Avenue interchange and be an active participant in this study. This study should address an existing base year condition as well as a 20-year growth forecast including expected growth

from development in El Cerrito, Richmond and Albany. It should also address weekday and Saturday conditions. It should be conducted using a detailed operations analysis such as Synchro and/or CORSIM.

6. **Neighborhood Traffic Management Plan.** Develop a Neighborhood Traffic Management Program (NTMP) to respond to problems in a consistent and methodical way. The NTMP should have a strong citizen participation element so that residents can evaluate the benefits and trade-offs of various measures and be actively involved in the decision-making process. Develop a standard procedure for residents to initiate a local NTMP and provide a handbook describing the process and specific steps. At a minimum, the handbook should define the standard procedure, type of data collection, toolbox of potential traffic calming measures, prioritization methodology, and funding mechanism(s). Ensure that the process is vigorously maintained and administered by City staff at all levels.
7. **Parking Management Plan.** Conduct an evaluation of long-term parking needs in commercial areas with current or anticipated parking shortages. Investigate the feasibility of developing common off-street parking facilities in target areas. Consider various funding sources for new parking facilities including in-lieu fees for development projects, redevelopment money, and formation of parking assessment districts.
8. **Parking Regulations.** Develop parking requirements that permit projects to provide less parking if they can demonstrate high use of alternative transportation modes. Specify maximum and minimum parking ratios. Allow a reduction in the individual use parking requirements where two or more non-residential uses provide joint parking, and encourage developers of compatible land uses to provide joint parking facilities. Encourage developers to locate parking lots to the rear or sides of buildings, except where infeasible, to prevent lots from becoming barriers to walking.
9. **Pavement Management Plan.** Maintain a systematic pavement management program and identify and prioritize maintenance projects in the City's Capital Improvement Program (CIP). Street maintenance should also include maintenance and regular cleaning of bicycle routes to remove debris and poor pavement conditions that discourage bicycle riding. The Pavement Management Plan should also address signage and pavement on the Ohlone Greenway.
10. **Pedestrian Circulation Plan.** Review existing pedestrian circulation within the City to identify constraints to walking, develop improvement plans at constrained locations (including pedestrian street crossings), and incorporate pedestrian enhancement projects into the City Capital Improvement Program (CIP). Encourage local access to BART stations by walking as an alternative to short-distance driving. Develop new sidewalk width standards consistent with the type and intensity of adjacent land use. Attention should be paid to the issue

of tree damage to sidewalks and obstruction of sidewalks by signs. When constructing or modifying sidewalks:

- a. Maintain accessibility for all users.
- b. Within commercial, office, and mixed-use areas, provide or improve sidewalk pedestrian amenities, such as seating, bicycle parking, pedestrian-scale lighting, street trees, flower boxes, trash receptacles, drinking fountains, and awnings. In many cases, this may be in combination with the development of adjacent properties.
- c. Systematically inspect and maintain sidewalk facilities to clean and repair damaged surfaces and remove or relocate impediments, such as poles and newspaper racks that interfere with pedestrian flow.
- d. Build at sufficient width to allow at least two people to walk side-by-side. Make sidewalk widths in commercial areas more generous.
- e. Where possible, channel or guide pedestrian traffic along sidewalks to increase commercial opportunities.

As part of a pedestrian circulation plan the City should examine the value for pedestrians of mid-block paths in the hills, and should identify improvements needed to make them safe and effective routes, as well as identify an ongoing maintenance program. The City should consider for abandonment paths that could not affordably and effectively function as part of the pedestrian circulation system.

11. **Residential Permit Parking Program.** Maintain the City's current residential permit parking program. Develop a standard procedure for evaluating permit parking requests and implementing residential permit parking.
12. **Streetscape Design Standards.** Develop street typologies (residential street, commercial main street, boulevard, etc.) with design standards to protect the role of the street as a public space.
13. **Traffic Monitoring.** Ensure regular monitoring of traffic levels and intersection capacity to update base data and respond to changing conditions.
14. **Transit First Policy.** It is the official policy of the City of El Cerrito to encourage and promote the use of public transit among El Cerrito residents and visitors, and expedite the movement of transit vehicles. The City has directed the Planning Commission, the Design Review Board and the Community Development Department to consider and incorporate various methods of expediting transit service and encouraging greater use of transit. Some of the specific methods for accomplishing these goals are:
  - a. Evaluation of automobile turning movements that conflict with transit vehicles;
  - b. Consideration of transit preemption;

- c. Evaluation and optimization of bus stop locations, designs and maintenance; and
- d. Provision of improvements to facilitate pedestrian and bicycle access to transit stops.

15. **Transportation System Performance Measures.** Develop a level-of-service standard for traffic operations that assesses service levels for all street users, including buses, pedestrians, and bicycles. Consider modifying the City's current LOS D standard to allow for higher levels of automobile congestion during peak hours in order to reduce the need for improvements that decrease opportunities for alternative transportation modes or reduce parking supply.

Using a level of service standard worse than LOS D maybe considered acceptable where:

- a. Upstream or downstream bottlenecks control the flow of traffic through an intersection such that capacity enhancements (i.e., improvements) would have marginal benefit;
- b. Retaining a bottleneck would discourage regional or semi-regional traffic from using a facility; or
- c. Traffic capacity enhancements would degrade pedestrian, transit or bicycle conditions (i.e., additional lanes increases pedestrian crossing distances).

In order to maintain consistency with the Congestion Management Plan, LOS E is the worst level of service standard that could be adopted for San Pablo Avenue.

16. **Preference for Cut-through Streets.** In conjunction with the Neighborhood Traffic Management Plan, neighborhoods along residential streets which bear cut-through traffic (as measured by up-to-date traffic data) should be given priority for neighborhood improvements to compensate for the effects of traffic. In addition to traffic management techniques, such improvements might include amenities such as street tree planting and utility undergrounding.

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