



**"The City With a Heart"**

**Auros Ansbergs Harman, Chair  
Thomas Kuhn, Vice Chair  
Mary Lou Johnson  
Rick Biasotti  
Gerard Madden  
Kelly Lethin**

**AGENDA  
PLANNING COMMISSION CITY COUNCIL JOINT SPECIAL MEETING  
Agenda Amended on 5/18/2026 to update Item 3d, Add Staff report  
May 19, 2026  
6:00 PM**

<p><b>IN PERSON* MEETING LOCATION</b> San Bruno Recreation &amp; Aquatic Center, Community Room 251 City Park Way San Bruno, CA 94066</p> <p>*Please turn off all electronic devices before the start of the meeting to prevent disruptions*</p>	<p><b>Zoom Link*</b> <a href="https://sanbruno-ca-gov.zoom.us/j/83641558853">https://sanbruno-ca-gov.zoom.us/j/83641558853</a> Phone Line: 1-346-248-7799 Webinar ID: 836 4155 8853 Webinar Password: 143556</p> <p>*Teleconference broadcasting is offered in the meeting via Zoom as a courtesy to the public. **No public comment accepted via Zoom</p>
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**PUBLIC COMMENT:** In person attendees who want to provide public comment will be asked to fill out a speaker card and turn it into the Planning Commission Clerk. Public comment may also be emailed to [planning@sanbruno.ca.gov](mailto:planning@sanbruno.ca.gov). Comments received via email will not be read aloud during the meeting.

**ACCESSIBILITY:** In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, individuals requiring special accommodations or modifications to participate in this meeting should contact the Planning Commission Clerk at least 48 hours prior to the meeting at (650) 616-7053 or via email at [planning@sanbruno.ca.gov](mailto:planning@sanbruno.ca.gov).

\*Any disclosable public writings related to an open session item on a regular meeting agenda and distributed by the City to at least a majority of the Planning Commission less than 72 hours prior to that meeting are available for public inspection at the Community Development Department Office at City Hall located at 567 El Camino Real, San Bruno, California during normal business hours. In addition, the city may also post such documents on the City's Website at <https://www.sanbruno.ca.gov/AgendaCenter>.

- 1. CALL TO ORDER**
- 2. ROLL CALL**
- 3. CONDUCT OF BUSINESS -**  
*Public comment will be requested after each topic in this section*

- A. Conduct a Joint City Council /Planning Commission Study Session to Receive an Update on SB 79
- B. Conduct a Joint City Council /Planning Commission Study Session to Receive an Update on the Elevate San Bruno Initiative
- C. Conduct a Joint City Council /Planning Commission Study Session to Receive an Update on the Tanforan Redevelopment Project
- D. Conduct a Joint City Council/Planning Commission Study Session to Discuss Downtown Zoning Adjustments to Improve Activity and Aesthetics

**4. PUBLIC HEARING –**

*Public comment will be requested after each topic in this section*

- A. Consider Adoption of a Resolution Recommending the City Council Amend the Health and Safety, Public Facilities and Services, and Environmental Resources and Conservation Elements (General Plan Elements) of the San Bruno General Plan to Comply with Recent Changes to State Law, Incorporate the San Mateo County Multijurisdictional Local Hazard Mitigation Plan by Reference into the General Plan Elements, and Make Required Findings Under the California Environmental Quality Act.

**5. COMMENTS FROM STAFF**

**6. ITEMS FROM MEMBERS**

- 7. ADJOURNMENT –** The next regular meeting will be held June 16, 2026 at 7:00 pm

POSTING: I declare a copy of this agenda was posted at City Hall, 567 El Camino Real, San Bruno, among other locations in the city limits of San Bruno, on May 14, 2026 by 6:00 p.m.

*Brenda Calara*

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Brenda Calara  
Planning Commission Clerk



## City Council & Planning Commission Agenda Item

### Staff Report

CITY OF SAN BRUNO

**DATE:** May 19, 2026

**TO:** Honorable Mayor, Members of the City Council and Planning Commission

**FROM:** Peter Gilli, Community Development Director

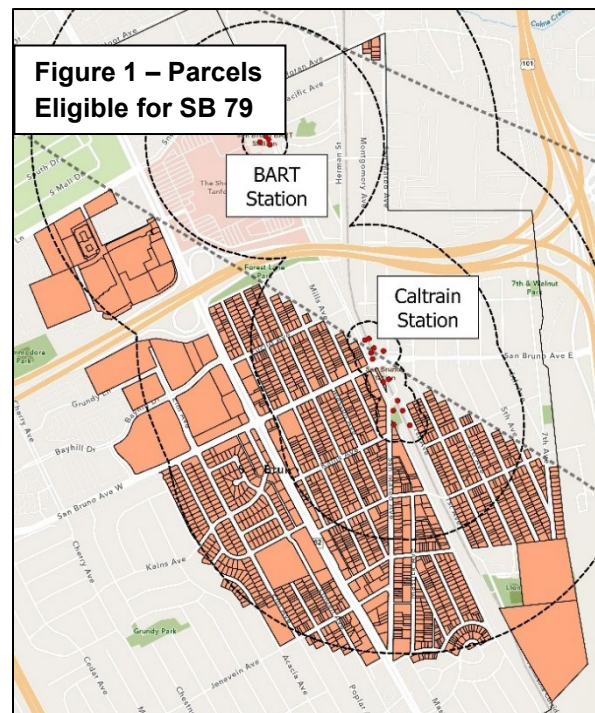
**PREPARED BY:** Evan Schieber, Assistant Planner

**SUBJECT:** Conduct a Joint City Council/Planning Commission Study Session to Receive an Update on SB 79

### BACKGROUND

On October 10, 2025, SB 79 was signed into law, allowing greater heights and intensities for housing projects within a half mile of qualifying transit stops regardless of local regulations. The City has two qualifying transit stops, its Caltrain and BART stations. The bill goes into effect on July 1, 2026.

SB 79 sets the development regulations for a project based on the project's distance from a pedestrian access point to a qualifying transit stop. The bill creates three Transit Oriented Development (TOD) zones, with greater heights and intensities allowed the closer a project is to transit. The general regulations for projects in each TOD zone can be found in Table 1. The MTC TOC program has similar requirements for land within a half mile of major transit stops but allows existing neighborhoods to be exempt. Unlike MTC TOC, SB 79 regulations apply to all properties with a few narrow exemptions.



There are 2,512 parcels within San Bruno's two TOD zones. However, SB 79 exempts certain parcels, including parcels that do not allow residential or commercial land-uses and parcels designated as incompatible for residential uses on an airport land use compatibility plan (ALUCP). Incompatibility of residential uses with the ALUCP disqualifies the majority of parcels around the BART station and northeast of the Caltrain station from using SB 79.

After accounting for these exemptions, San Bruno contains 1,592 parcels comprising 280 acres that are eligible for SB 79 residential projects, including some single-family neighborhoods. See



single-family homes, would allow apartment buildings 65 to 75 feet tall if not exempted from SB 79. Additionally, these parcels are much more prone to flooding, so new apartments would increase the number of residents vulnerable to stormwater events. Staff plans to draft an ordinance to bring the sea level rise exemption, subject to HCD interpretation.

#### High Density Temporary Exemption

SB 79 additionally allows cities to temporarily exempt parcels that are zoned for at least 50% of the residential density and residential floor area allowed under the bill. Recent projects in the areas that qualify for this temporary exemption have exceeded SB 79 heights using density bonus. Additionally, this temporary exemption runs counter to the recent TCP assessment that recommends increasing allowed heights on major corridors through Elevate San Bruno. Staff does not intend to prepare an ordinance for this temporary exemption.

#### **FISCAL IMPACT**

There is no direct fiscal impact with this agenda item.

#### **ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT**

This agenda item is not a project under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). Future City action to temporarily exempt parcels from SB 79 are likely exempt from CEQA.

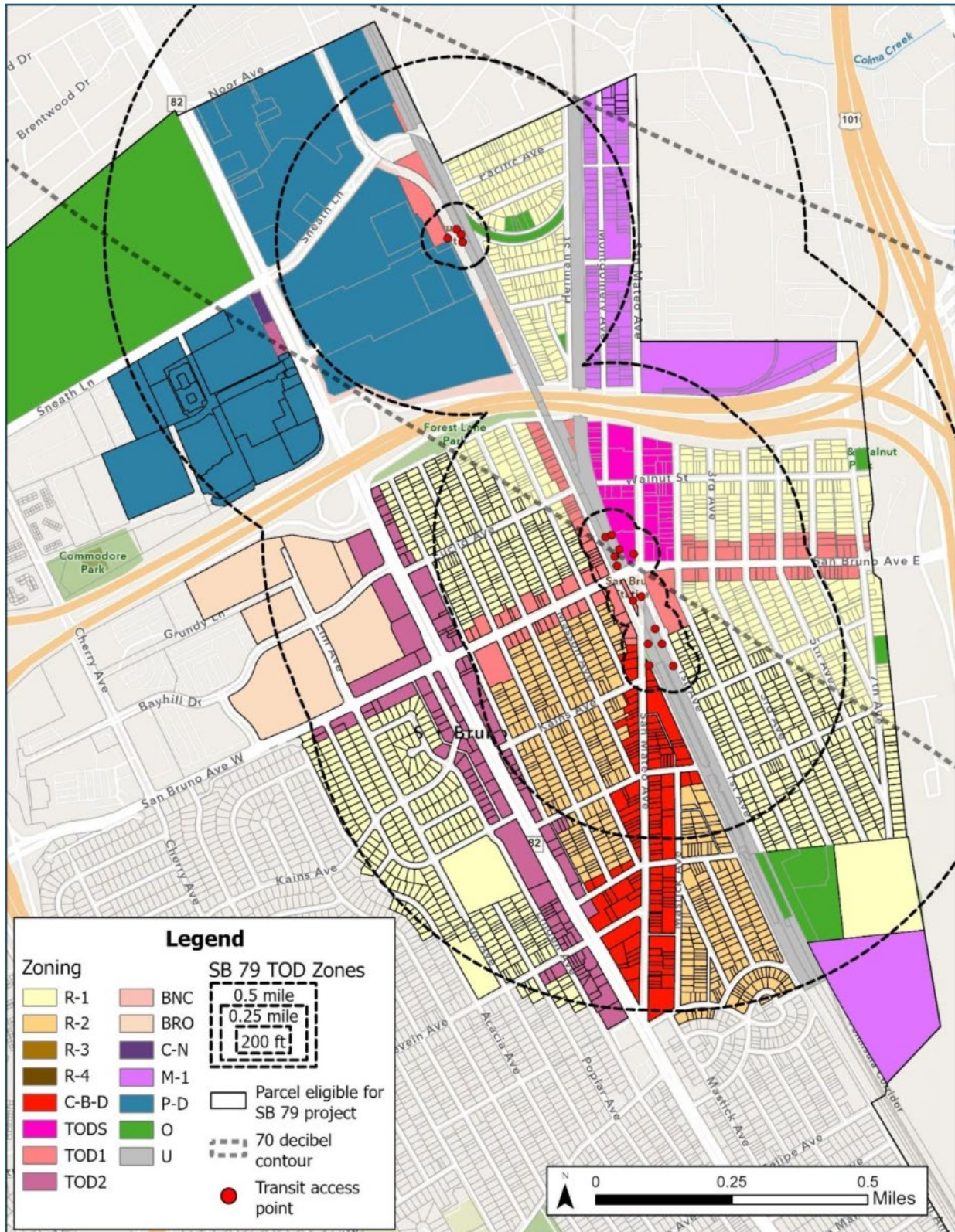
#### **REQUESTED FEEDBACK**

Staff plans to bring forward only the sea level rise temporary exemption for adoption, pending interpretation from HCD. Staff requests that the City Council and Planning Commission provide feedback on the proposed SB 79 action.

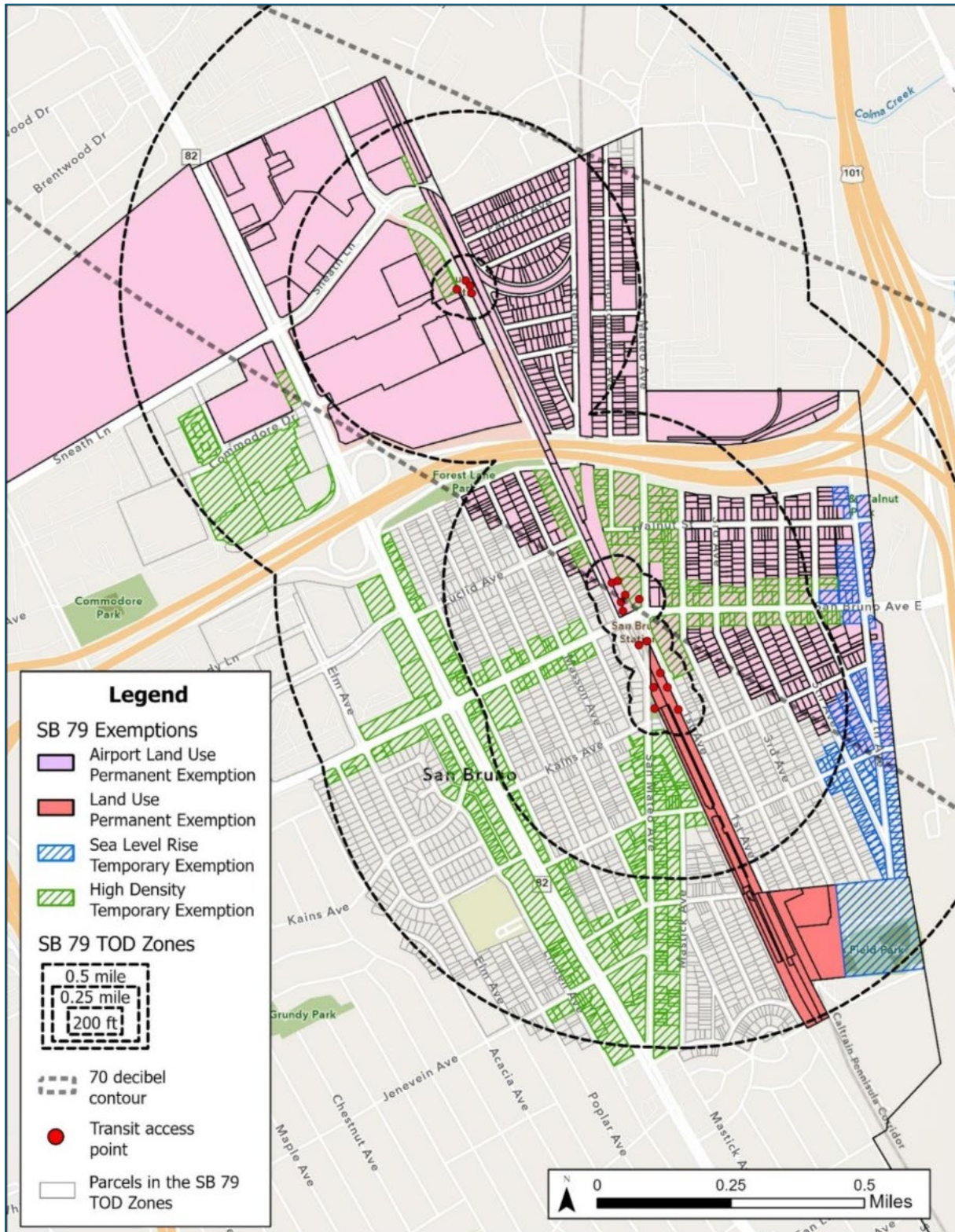
#### **ATTACHMENTS**

1. SB 79 TOD Zone Parcels
2. SB 79 Permanent and Temporary Exemptions

**Attachment 1: SB 79 TOD Zone Parcels**



### Attachment 2: SB 79 Permanent and Temporary Exemptions





# City Council & Planning Commission Agenda Item

## Staff Report

CITY OF SAN BRUNO

DATE: May 19, 2026

TO: Honorable Mayor, Members of the City Council, and Planning Commission

FROM: Peter Gilli, Community Development Director

PREPARED BY: Kelly Beggs, Assistant Community Development Director

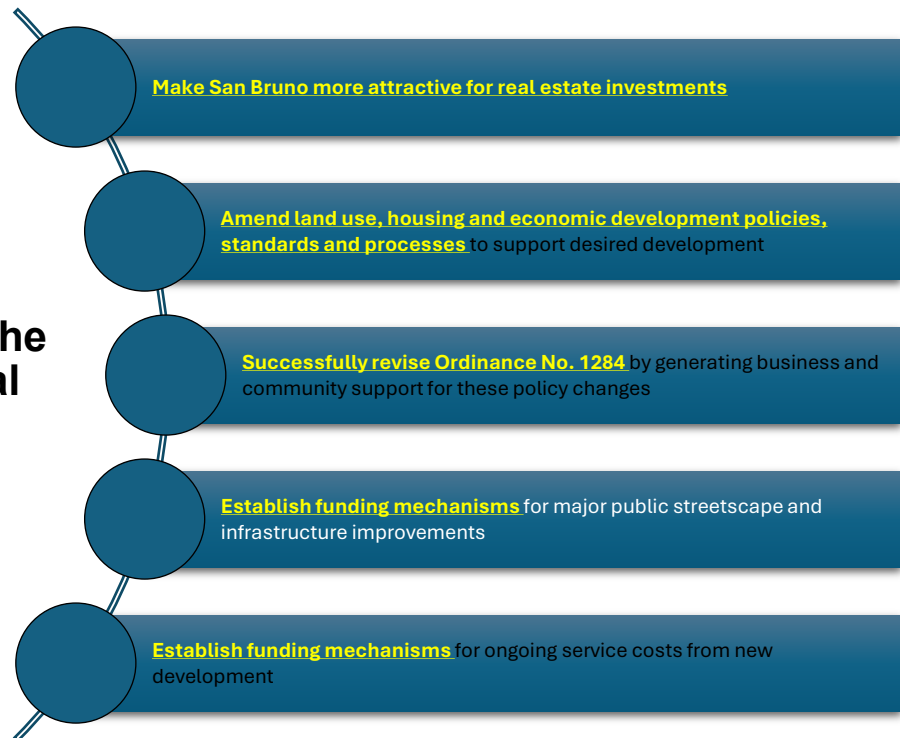
SUBJECT: Conduct a Joint City Council/Planning Commission Session to Receive an Update on the Elevate San Bruno Initiative

### BACKGROUND

On July 22, 2025, the City Council held a study session to receive the findings of the Transit Corridors Plan (TCP) Financial Feasibility Assessment (TCP Assessment) and formally launched a citywide Land Use, Housing, and Economic Development Initiative, now called Elevate San Bruno. Council adopted a resolution setting forth goals, objectives and a strategy, which are as follows:



### Strengthen the City's Fiscal Health



At the January 27, 2026, City Council and Planning Commission study session, PlaceWorks was selected to lead the implementation of the Land Use, Housing, and Economic Development Initiative. The initiative was renamed Elevate San Bruno to help build project awareness and establish an identify, and a website was launched: [www.ElevateSanBruno.org](http://www.ElevateSanBruno.org). In addition, the City Council selected Elevate San Bruno as a FY 27 Council Priority.

Elevate San Bruno is a comprehensive, multi-year effort to strengthen San Bruno's fiscal health by updating land use policy, expanding housing capacity, improving development feasibility, and modernizing the City's development review process. The work includes robust community and stakeholder engagement; a review of existing conditions, Ordinance No. 1284, and adopted plans; fiscal and economic analysis; evaluation of development opportunities and constraints; and the development of land use alternatives and policy recommendations. Elevate San Bruno will result in amendments to the General Plan, Specific Plans, Municipal Code, and objective design standards, supported by a program-level Environmental Impact Report. In parallel, the project includes a detailed assessment and overhaul of the City's development review processes to improve predictability, coordination, and customer experience, including potential technology and AI-enabled solutions. The effort also requires the establishment of infrastructure and service funding mechanisms and culminates in an implementation roadmap to support phased execution of policy, process, and regulatory changes.

The three-year schedule is structured to complete policy amendments requiring a ballot measure, as well as the associated environmental review, by Summer of 2028 to meet the November 2028 election timeline. Components of the scope of work that do not require a ballot measure will continue later into 2028. If the proposed 2026 ballot measure to rescind Ordinance 1284 is successful, these 2028 ballot measures will not be necessary.

## **DISCUSSION**

The purpose of this item is to provide the Planning Commission and the City Council with an update and to receive feedback. No final decisions are being made at this time.

### **Overview of Community Engagement Strategy**

As part of the Elevate San Bruno scope, the team developed a Community Engagement Strategy (Attachment 1), which provides the City with tools and strategies to share information with the San Bruno community and key stakeholder groups about the City's fiscal forecast, how real estate investment can be one tool to strengthen the tax base, and how updating local land use policies, regulations and processes can make the City more attractive for the investment needed to maintain funding for key services the greater community depends on.

To reach community members beyond those able to attend in-person events, the project will prioritize the use of pop-ups events, social media, and video content to expand the project's reach over workshops and open houses, which often yield lower attendance. Outreach strategies in the Engagement Plan include:

- Pop-up Events
- Online Webinars and Video Content
- Online Surveys
- Stakeholder Interviews
- Community Workshops and/or Open Houses

To raise community awareness about the project and foster engagement, the team will use a variety of methods, including flyers, social media, informational videos, and updates to the project website.

### **Overview of Alternatives Process**

In order to strengthen San Bruno's fiscal health by promoting real estate investment, the Elevate San Bruno project will explore height and intensity increases in selected parts of the city.

Because the City completed the TCP Assessment in 2025, the project team has a strong base of analysis to draw from and expand upon. A summary of the steps to create the alternatives and ultimately a preferred scenario is listed below, with this agenda item focusing on Step 2 in this process.

1. Establish a study area. The first step in the alternatives process is to establish the area of study where future height and density changes may occur. The Elevate San Bruno team initially proposes that the study area roughly include the El Camino Real corridor, areas within ½ mile of the BART and Caltrain stations, Bayhill Specific Plan area, and U.S. Navy Site Specific Plan area, as shown on Attachment 2, including effectively all lands east of I-280 that are not single-family or duplex neighborhoods.
2. Identify preferred alternative. The second step in the alternatives process is to create alternatives that consider different locations and intensities of development that could occur within the identified study area. The intent of this agenda item is to collect Planning Commission input and City Council direction on alternatives for evaluation.

While generally a planning process would evaluate a wider range of alternatives to identify a preferred alternative, because the TCP Assessment provided the baseline of what is needed to make real estate investment feasible (8 stories) in the city, the City can expedite the alternatives identification and selection process.

3. Evaluate preferred alternative. City staff and consultants will estimate the amount of future development that the preferred alternative could generate. The evaluation will consider varying outcomes of the preferred alternative on:
  - Police, fire, schools, and libraries;
  - Water and wastewater capacity;
  - Traffic and circulation;
  - Fiscal impacts to the City;
  - Extent of changes that would be needed to the General Plan, Specific Plans, and other regulatory documents.

In summer and fall 2026, the project team will present the results of the alternative evaluation to the community and decisionmakers through a public process to review the benefits, trade-offs, and potential outcomes of the preferred alternative.

4. Refine the preferred scenario to become the updated General Plan Land Use map. The preferred scenario will be refined through a public engagement process. The City Council will provide final direction on the preferred scenario, and it will become the basis for the Draft General Plan Land Use Map, which will undergo additional analysis in the Draft Environmental Impact Report.

**Overview of Working Draft Alternatives**

As part of this agenda item, Commission and Council are asked to provide direction on whether Elevate San Bruno will focus only on increasing heights in the study area to eight-stories (Alternative 1) or if the initiative should explore heights greater than eight stories (Alternative 2). This report uses the term “eight-stories” to refer to a residential building of approximately 90 feet; commercial buildings have taller floor to ceiling heights and would thus fit fewer stories within that height limit. Attachment 2 shows the Study Area that the Alternatives would apply to.

**Alternative 1**

Alternative 1 proposes an alternative for study that would allow eight stories across the study area equally, building on the 2025 TCP Assessment’s recommendations to increase height limits to eight stories to promote real estate investment.

In addition to the eight-story height allowance, the following General Plan land use designation changes are reflected in the Study Area shown in Attachment 2:

<b>Location</b>	<b>Current Land Use Designation</b>	<b>Proposed Land Use Designation</b>
Towne Center and Tanforan Shopping Centers	Regional Commercial	Transit Oriented Development (TOD)
Navy Site Specific Plan	High Density Residential, Multi-Use; Neighborhood Commercial; Regional Office	
Sneath Lane (West of Navy Site, East of Cherry Ave)	High Density Residential	
Southern El Camino Real Corridor	Multi-Use Residential Focus	

Note: No Land Use changes are proposed for the Industrial Designation.

Increasing the areas that are designated as TOD will both simplify and clarify Land Use regulations and allow greater flexibility for development sites, as the TOD classification permits a variety of uses and a mix of those uses, including:

- retail sales,
- eating and drinking establishments,
- personal and business services,
- professional and medical offices;
- financial, insurance, and real estate offices;
- hotels and motels;
- educational and social services;
- government offices; and
- residential.

The expansion of the area designated as TOD would also allow housing in more parts of the City, which will require an override of the Airport Land Use Compatibility Plan to allow housing in areas currently deemed incompatible with housing due to noise.

Given State density bonus law, residential projects can already exceed City height limits depending on the amount of affordable housing included in a project. For example, if a project is 100 percent affordable housing and within ½ mile of a major transit stop, such as BART,

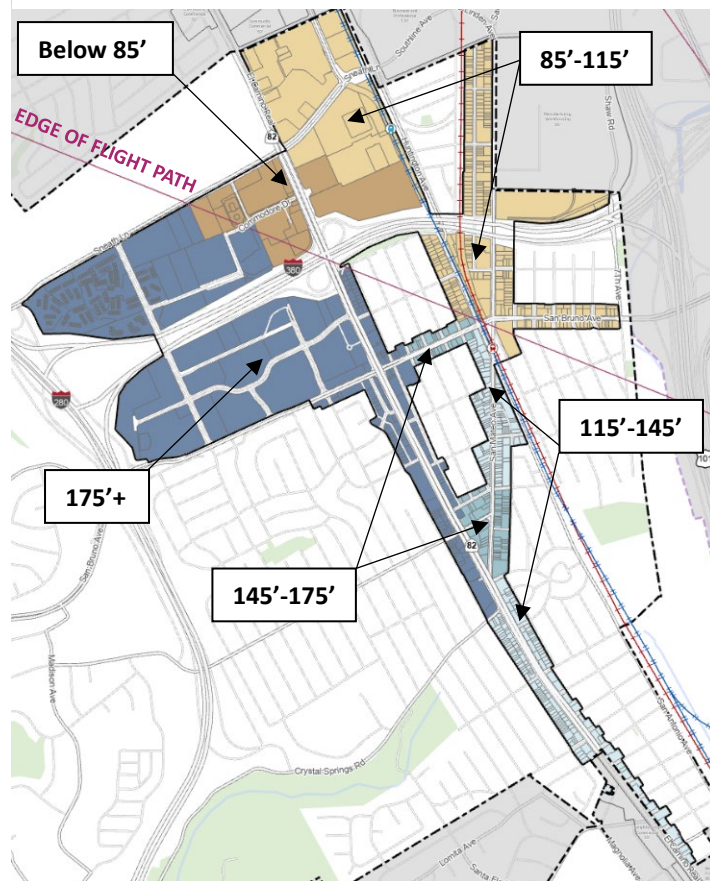
Caltrain, or bus rapid transit, the project can receive a 33-foot height increase. Allowing all buildings to be up to 8 stories within the proposed study area would allow non-residential projects the same opportunities as residential projects. Giving non-residential projects equal footing as residential projects is one strategy to help increase City revenues, which is a central goal for the Initiative.

### Alternative 2

The 2025 TCP Assessment also suggested that the City may want to increase heights to more than 8 stories at key opportunity sites. Staff polled several developers and received feedback that market feasibility does not exist for this type of construction in San Bruno under current economic conditions from a cost and demand perspective. But Elevate San Bruno is amending the General Plan, which should reflect the City's long-range vision. So allowing the opportunity for greater heights may place the City in a competitive position if market conditions or new building methods come forward. There are already examples of new construction methods that allow taller buildings without the same cost of traditional methods, but these new methods do not seem to be mainstream yet.

In prior sessions, a Commissioner suggested removing the City's height limits in the study area to allow buildings to go up to SFO height maximums. Staff recommends this approach, and building upon the City of Burlingame's model, which sets a base intensity limit, which could be the equivalent of 8 residential stories for San Bruno, but a project can go up to the SFO height limits through a special discretionary permit. If this model is pursued, staff would recommend that increased height to be tied to provision of community benefits. Figure 1 includes a high-level evaluation of maximum heights allowed pursuant to SFO airspace protection requirements. As the figure shows, the northeastern portion of the study area, which underlies the flight path, is most limited in heights by airport operations, while area to the southwest of the flight path has more flexibility.

**Figure 1. Heights by Airspace Protection Requirements**



### **Housing Opportunities**

HCD required that the 2023-2031 Housing Element include two programs focused on increasing housing opportunities in lower density, higher resource areas, both of which would require a ballot measure and are included in the Elevate San Bruno scope. If Ordinance No 1284 is rescinded in 2026, no additional ballot measures would be required. Those programs include:

- **Program 4f:** Place ballot measure to allow amendments to the ADU Ordinance to increase the allowable number of ADUs/JADUs beyond State law on eligible R-1 and R-2 parcels.
- **Program 5a:** Provide for "Missing Middle" housing opportunities through amending the Municipal Code to remove the 2,900 sq. ft. per unit requirement in order to allow 2 units for any R-2 legal parcel, and allow legal non-conforming sites, including those with greater units than allowed by zoning, to be rehabilitated, expanded, or rebuilt and maintain the non-conforming number of units.

Implementation of Program 4f could apply to R-1 and R-2 zoned parcels citywide. Program 5a would focus on the R-2 zone, which includes areas between El Camino Real and Huntington Avenue South of San Bruno Avenue West that are not located on the major corridors. The program would also allow legal nonconforming units to be retained permanently. The City can do more to allow housing opportunities in low-density neighborhoods, often referred to as "missing middle" housing, but staff are not proposing additional actions at this time.

### **City Council/Planning Commission Discussion**

Feedback is welcome for all aspects of this report. Staff specifically requests City Council and Planning Commission feedback on the following:

- The Community Engagement Plan strategy of prioritizing going to the public (in person and using technology)
- The Study Area boundaries
- The lack of changes proposed for the industrial area on San Mateo Avenue north of 380
- Whether to study:
  - Up to a maximum of 8 stories in the Study Area
  - Up to the SFO maximum heights in the Study Area
  - Both, or something in between (note, focusing the study on fewer alternatives will reduce the cost of, and expedite the initiative process)
- The scope of increasing housing opportunities in residential neighborhoods only to meet the commitments required from HCD as part of the Housing Element, or should the City do more

### **FISCAL IMPACT**

There is no fiscal impact from this study session. Fiscal impacts of land use alternatives will be studied after direction is received on this item. The intent of the Initiative is to strengthen the fiscal base.

### **ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT**

This presentation is not considered a project under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and no environmental review is necessary. An environmental impact report (EIR) will be prepared as part of this initiative.

### **ATTACHMENTS**

1. Community Engagement Strategy
2. Study Area



# COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY

## INTRODUCTION

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This Community Engagement Strategy describes tools and outreach activities to solicit input from the San Bruno community on strategies to bolster long-term economic resiliency of City finances. The purpose of the Community Engagement Strategy is to inform and build support for potential updates to City policies and regulations from the community, including property and business owners. This plan relies on multiple strategies for participation to allow members of the San Bruno community to learn about why policy changes are necessary to maintain future public services and infrastructure and to get feedback on the proposed changes.

This Engagement Strategy includes:

- An overview of the project
- Engagement objectives of the outreach process
- Description of the target audience for community outreach
- Strategies to spread the word about the project
- A menu of engagement activities to collect input
- Approaches to reduce participation barriers
- A summary of the project schedule

## PROJECT OVERVIEW

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In July of 2025, the San Bruno City Council adopted a resolution to launch a major initiative to assess and enhance the City's long-term fiscal health through strategic land use, housing, and economic development policy changes. Several areas of the city are subject to Ordinance 1284, passed by the voters in 1977. Ordinance 1284 requires voter approval for development applications that propose established height limits, increase residential density beyond 1974 zoning levels, encroach on designated scenic corridors, or are standalone multistory parking structures. Subsequent updates to Ordinance 1284 have modified requirements for specific areas of the city, including the Tanforan Shopping Center, the Navy Site Specific Plan Area, and the Transit Corridors Plan (TCP) Area.

However, specific plans, including the TCP and 2021 Bayhill Specific Plan, have not yielded the anticipated levels of private development. In addition, the City's 2023-2031 Housing Element (Programs 4f and 5a) requires that the City place a measure on the ballot to allow amendments to Ordinance No. 1284 to expand housing opportunities, including allowing more ADUs/JADUs than required by State law on R-1 and R-2 properties, providing for missing middle housing, and expanding taller TCP height regulations to the entire length of El Camino Real within City limits.

The Elevate San Bruno initiative will review and propose updates to City policies, regulations and processes to support transformational economic development and housing opportunities in San Bruno. This is anticipated to include:

- A comprehensive update to the Land Use Element
- Corresponding amendments to other General Plan Elements as needed, such as the Transportation Element
- New or revised Specific Plans and Municipal Code chapters
- A citywide or area-wide Community Facilities District and/or other viable funding mechanism, to fund infrastructure improvements and service costs of new development
- Environmental Impact Report for applicable parts of this initiative

Elevate San Bruno will also include development review process improvements. The City will evaluate the current development review processes and identify opportunities to make them more efficient, transparent, and user-friendly. The City's goal is to reduce the time, complexity, and costs associated with development applications, helping projects move forward while maintaining high standards. Focusing on both internal and external processes, the City will:

- Improve coordination across departments to ensure City teams are aligned and responsive.
- Identify suggested updates to application requirements and approval procedures to improve the customer experience for applicants.

This process will focus on stakeholder engagement with people that have direct experience with the City's development approval process and familiarity with other Bay Area development procedures.

## ENGAGEMENT OBJECTIVES

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The desired outcomes for the Elevate San Bruno public engagement process are to educate the community about why the City is considering proposed policy changes and to have robust and diverse community participation in the process. The Engagement Strategy's primary goals are:

- Build public trust in the Elevate San Bruno process to foster community-wide support for the initiative that will lead to its successful implementation after adoption.
- Educate the community about the:
  - Economic and fiscal objectives of the project, emphasizing the need to increase revenues to maintain City services and the role development plays in supporting future services and provide for long-term financial stability.
  - State housing law, sharing how State law already allows heights above Ordinance No. 1284 limits and how this process would equalize height limits for non-residential development.
- Foster support from property owners and business owners about the available infrastructure and public service financing tools to make property improvements.



- Develop easily understood informational materials.
- Design outreach opportunities to be as inclusive and open as possible, providing a variety of ways in which individuals can participate and contribute ideas.
- Hear from people who represent the full range of demographics, perspectives, and experiences in the community. This includes focusing on traditionally underrepresented and marginalized communities in the process, including racial and ethnic groups and vulnerable communities for whom barriers such as language and cultural differences, lack of access to technology, and lack of trust in government may hinder participation.

## TARGET AUDIENCE

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The target audience for the Engagement Strategy includes the San Bruno community, with a particular goal of engaging business owners, property owners, and those who might not otherwise participate in civic engagement processes. This Engagement Strategy presents a variety of outreach and input strategies, with the understanding that multiple avenues for both outreach and input will provide greater exposure and participation.

## GETTING THE WORD OUT

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The project team will utilize multiple strategies to raise awareness about and foster engagement in the Elevate San Bruno project.

### Project Website

PlaceWorks will create and maintain a project website, [www.ElevateSanBruno.org](http://www.ElevateSanBruno.org). The website will include information about upcoming meetings and other engagement activities, project updates as major milestones are achieved, an email list sign-up, comment form, and PDF versions of important documents and meeting materials. Online surveys will be hosted through the project website.

### Eblasts

PlaceWorks will help develop and maintain a dedicated project mailing list to distribute email campaigns announcing project updates and upcoming meetings. An effective e-blast is short and contains a clear call to action. Links can be used to direct readers to more detailed content where appropriate. E-blasts will be sent out to people who signed up to receive project updates at various venues (project meetings, online, etc.). The PlaceWorks team will prepare e-blast content in English and Spanish with support from City staff. PlaceWorks will be responsible for sending e-blasts and maintaining an email list for the project. When e-blasts are sent out, PlaceWorks will also post similar content on the project website and coordinate with staff to post it to the City's social media accounts.

## Social Media

PlaceWorks will lead the preparation of social media materials and City staff will lead the posting of social media content. The City of San Bruno has social media accounts on [Facebook](#), [X \(Twitter\)](#), [Instagram](#), [YouTube](#), and [Nextdoor](#). The project team will use social media to send updates about upcoming community and City meetings or other engagement opportunities and availability of project documents.

Social media posts must be short and attention-grabbing to help ensure the greatest success. When permissible on the platform, photos or other graphics will be attached to make it more eye-catching. The post will include links to relevant content and be translated into English, Spanish and Simplified Chinese.

## Postcards and Flyers

Postcards and flyers will announce upcoming engagement activities and provide details about how to get involved. PlaceWorks will prepare and City staff will print and distribute the materials to community facilities, local businesses, and through in-person outreach events.

## City Agency Newsletters

Newsletters, such as San Bruno's monthly City Manager's eNewsletter, provide an opportunity to share project information, including updates about the status of the Elevate San Bruno project, future activities, results of key analyses, and other information that may be interesting and useful to readers. Newsletter content will include a short paragraph and an image or graphic that direct readers to the project website for more detailed information. Project-related content will depend on the timing of the newsletter.

PlaceWorks will provide draft content in English and Spanish for PlaceWorks team-led events that City staff can use in their newsletters.

## Informational Videos

PlaceWorks will lead the development of two to three short videos about issues relevant to the initiative, such as public finance, urban design, or real estate economics. PlaceWorks will help serve as and/or recruit speakers and orient any outside speakers to the project and the educational goals of the video to help shape their comments. Video footage may be provided by City staff or stock footage purchased by PlaceWorks. The PlaceWorks team will be responsible for editing the videos. PlaceWorks will upload the final video to the project website; City staff will distribute through standard City media channels.



# ENGAGEMENT ACTIVITIES

This section describes the public input strategies that will be implemented as part of the public engagement process. Offering different methods to provide input will give the community multiple opportunities to participate, thereby increasing the number of people involved in the process. Table 1 provides a summary of the engagement activities and identifies the roles and responsibilities of the City and PlaceWorks by activity.

## Stakeholder Interviews

PlaceWorks will facilitate up to 5 small-group meetings to get feedback on key issues and potential policy solutions from practitioners who have on-the-ground experience doing business and working on development projects in San Bruno. PlaceWorks will work with City staff to identify appropriate stakeholders, such as developers, real estate brokers, architects, business owners, and community groups. PlaceWorks will prepare email invitation language, meeting materials, and discussion questions for City review. Interviews may be conducted in person or virtually based on what is most convenient for participants. The City will be responsible for inviting stakeholders to the interviews, managing RSVPs, and finding a location if the meeting is in person.

## Developer Roundtable

Particularly when crafting site-specific development standards, meaningful input from developers, builders, and architects is valuable in understanding the conditions necessary for feasibility. The PlaceWorks team will facilitate a series of three to four meetings with potential applicants to discuss barriers to development and best practices in other nearby jurisdictions.

## Community Workshops, Webinars, or Open Houses

Community workshops and open houses allow residents and other stakeholders to gather and share input and ideas about a topic or issue. Webinars allow the City to share information and answer questions. These face-to-face or virtual events provide an invaluable opportunity to find common ground when opinions differ and to find compromises that appeal to most community members. To attract the most participants, these events will be held in the evenings or on the weekends. PlaceWorks will develop materials and facilitate up to four community events. Preliminarily, we suggest sharing information with the broader community and seeking input at the following milestones:

1. Existing conditions to educate the community about the conditions that affect the City's fiscal health.
2. Draft Alternatives to get feedback on the preferred scenario.
3. Preparation of draft element amendments and updates to get input on policy topics.
4. Publication of draft plans to get feedback on what elements people support, would like to see changed, and ideas that may be missing.

Two professional translators will be available to attend each event. City staff will be responsible for finding locations for these events.

## Pop-up Events

Although most people in the San Bruno community might have an opinion on the proposed policy changes, it is not always enticing enough to draw busy citizens to share their ideas at an evening or weekend workshop. While community workshops can be effective tools, it is important to go where people are rather than asking them to come to us. The pop-ups are intended to raise the visibility of the initiative and drive visitors to the website and/or online surveys rather than to provide in-depth feedback. The PlaceWorks team will hold up to four pop-up events and could be timed to encourage attendance at the four community workshops. Posters or handouts for pop-up events will be prepared by PlaceWorks and translated into Spanish and simplified Chinese. PlaceWorks will provide one staff person per pop-up event.

## Online Surveys

PlaceWorks will create, maintain, and analyze input received from two online surveys during the project such as on the preferred alternative and to get input on the draft plans. The online surveys will be open to all and will not be considered statistically significant. Online surveys will be translated into Spanish and simplified Chinese.

## Tribal Outreach

As part of this project, the City will prepare an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) which must be conducted pursuant to Assembly Bill (AB) 52, which requires tribal consultation if a Tribe has submitted a written request to the lead agency to be notified of projects and, following notification, requests consultation. To assist the City with tribal notification to any tribes that have previously requested notification, PlaceWorks will draft a notification letter template. City staff will send the letters and conduct tribal consultation if any tribes request consultation as part of this process.

## Planning Commission and/or City Council Study Sessions

In addition to the community-focused engagement activities described above, the project team will discuss the project with the Planning Commission and City Council to gather feedback and direction at key milestones in the process. These study sessions will be open to the public and include opportunities for public comment. PlaceWorks will develop the staff report content and meeting presentation content and attend up to three study sessions with both the Planning Commission and City Council, although City staff may provide updates and conduct study sessions with these and other advisory bodies at other times over the course of the project. (These study sessions are separate from and in addition to public hearings on the Draft EIR and adoption hearings for the amended General Plan, Specific Plan(s) and/or Municipal Code.)



**Table 1. Summary of Outreach Activities**

Type	Amount	PlaceWorks	City
Project Website	n/a	Host and maintain the project website	Review and approve content
E-blast	30	Prepare and send eblasts; maintain project email list	Review and approve content
Social Media Posts	30	Prepare content and graphics	Post and promote
Postcards and Flyers	5	Prepare content and materials	Distribute postcards and flyers
City Agency Newsletters		Prepare content	Integrate content into City newsletter
Informational Videos	3	Produce video (i.e. prepare, script, narrate, and edit footage)	Provide video footage
Stakeholder Interviews	5	Prepare materials and facilitate meeting	Identify stakeholders
Developer Roundtable	4	Prepare materials and facilitate meeting	Identify developers
Community Workshops, Webinars, or Open House	4	Prepare materials and facilitate meeting	Assist with meeting presentation and facilitation
Pop-up Events	4	Prepare materials and staff pop-ups	Assist with identifying pop-up events
Online Surveys	2	Prepare questions and format survey	Review survey
Tribal Outreach	n/a	Draft a tribal notification letter template	Send letters and conduct tribal consultation
Planning Commission and/or City Council Study Sessions	9	Prepare meeting materials. PlaceWorks is available to present and answer questions at these meetings as needed.	Review and refine meeting materials and lead meeting item.

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## ADDRESSING BARRIERS TO ENGAGEMENT

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The project team will continually assess engagement activities to identify and address barriers to participation. A preliminary list of common barriers and approaches to address them are below:

- **Language Access.** Meaningful engagement requires that project materials and activities are accessible to non-English speakers. Postcards, flyers, and online surveys, will be in English, Spanish, and Simplified Chinese. Translators will be available to attend community workshops.
- **Technological and Digital Accessibility.** To reduce potential barriers to technology access, digital materials prepared for the project, such as flyers and documents viewed on screen and posted online, will comply with ADA and Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG), include clear instructions, and be designed for ease of use. When possible, in-person or printed alternatives will be offered, including printed copies of presentations available to participants who benefit from following along with hard-copy materials. Digital materials will be mobile-friendly, and partnerships with schools and libraries may be leveraged to provide access to computers and Wi-Fi.
- **Event Timing.** Event dates and times will be coordinated with the City to maximize attendance. Alternative input channels, such as the option to provide written comments, will be offered to allow participation outside of scheduled meetings.

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## COORDINATION WITH OTHER CITY INITIATIVES

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In addition to the Elevate San Bruno project, the City is leading or participating in several other planning processes. Elevate San Bruno will need to consider these other efforts to align engagement opportunities and messaging. These projects include:

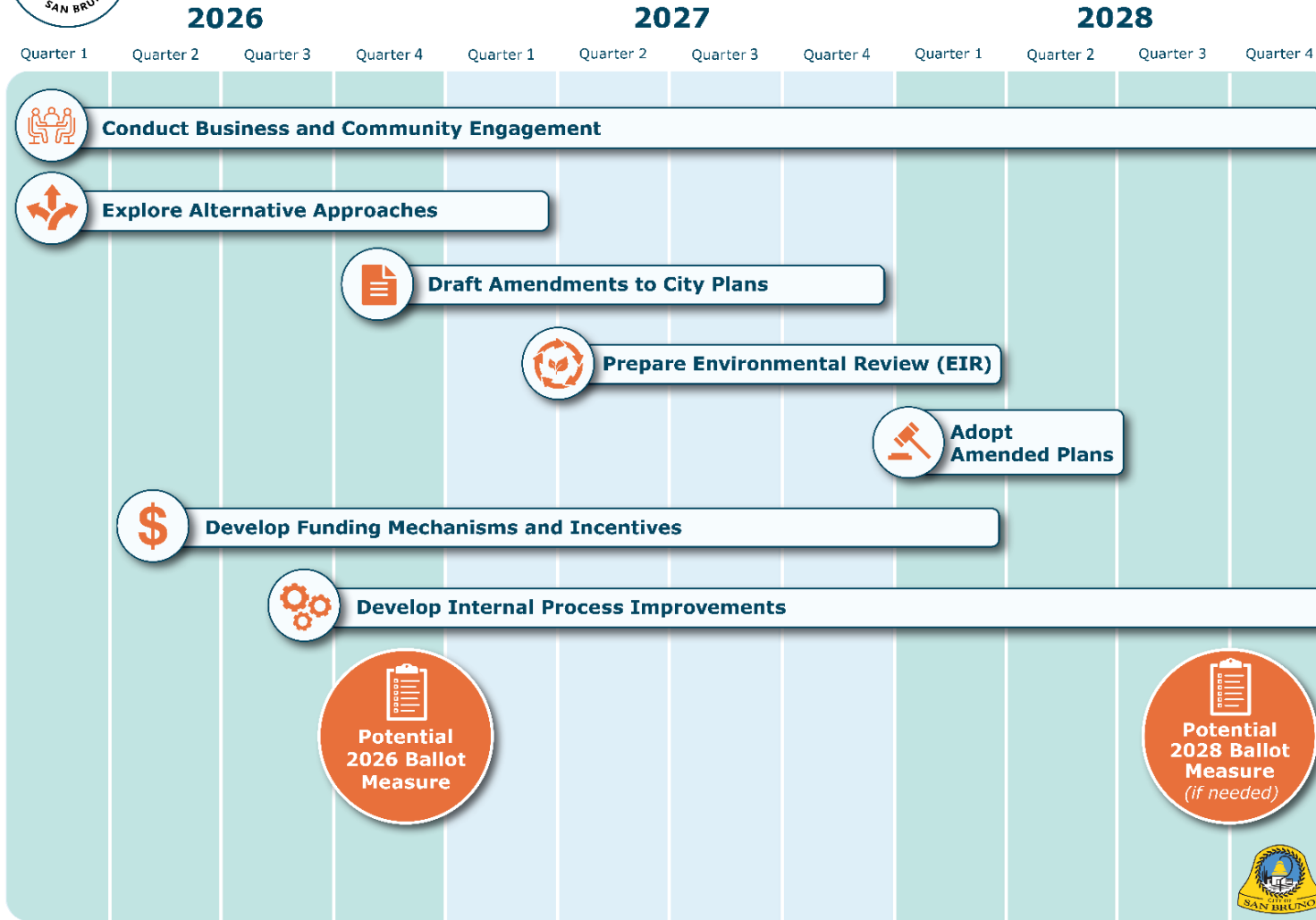
- Safety Element Update
- Climate Action Plan (CAP)
- Environmental Justice (EJ) Element
- Transit Oriented Community policy updates
- Grand Nexus Study
- Community-Based Transportation Plan
- Grand Boulevard Initiative
- San Bruno-Millbrae El Camino Real Multimodal Improvement Corridor Study
- Potential Community Facilities District for Tanforan project

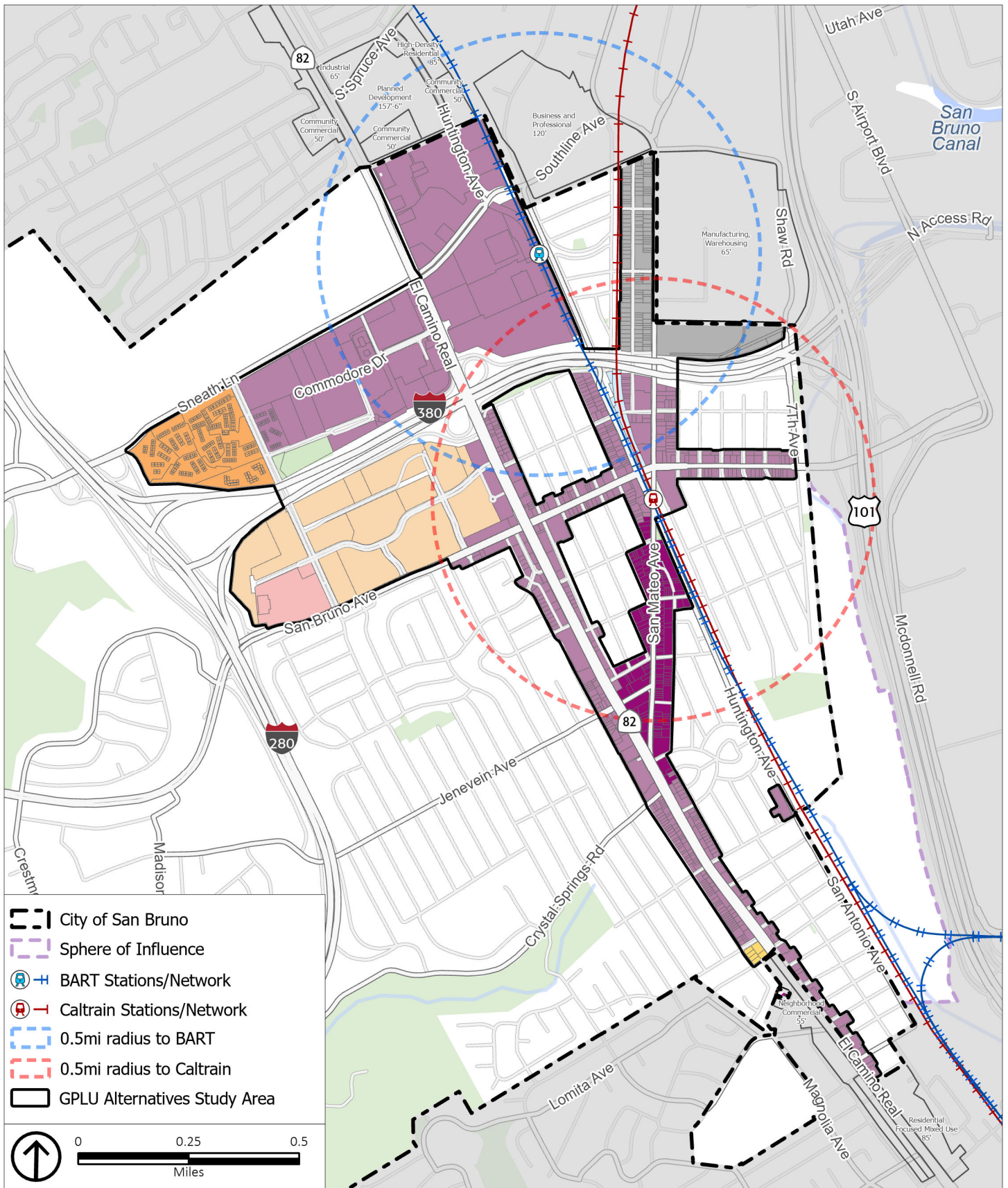


# PROJECT SCHEDULE



## San Bruno Land Use and Economic Development Initiative





Source: ESRI, 2023; County of San Mateo, 2025; PlaceWorks, 2026

**GPU Alternative**

- |                              |                                 |
|------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Medium Density Residential   | Bayhill Neighborhood Commercial |
| High Density Residential     | Bayhill Regional Office         |
| Central Business District    | Industrial                      |
| Transit-Oriented Development | Public/Quasi-Public             |
| Multi-Use                    | Parks/Open Space                |





## City Council & Planning Commission Agenda Item

### Staff Report

CITY OF SAN BRUNO

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**DATE:** May 19, 2026

**TO:** Honorable Mayor, Members of the City Council and Planning Commission

**FROM:** Peter Gilli, Community Development Director

**SUBJECT:** Conduct a Joint City Council/Planning Commission Study Session to Receive an Update on the Tanforan Redevelopment Project

#### BACKGROUND

This is a status update for the Tanforan redevelopment project proposed by Alexandria Real Estate (ARE). This is the third update provided to a joint meeting of the City Council and Planning Commission, with the first being November 19, 2024 and the second on March 18, 2025. Please refer to those past agenda items for more background material.

Staff's outlook on the project itself remains strong. If the project is approved by the City Council and built-out by ARE and their partners, the mixed-use plan will fulfill the City Council's Reimagining Tanforan Fact Sheet, help the City achieve its regional housing need, and be consistent with regional planning policies such as the MTC TOC Policy by intensifying uses near major transit stations. The project design is relatively unchanged since the 2025 update, so this update will not cover the design.

Instead, this update will focus on the fiscal aspects of the project because the fiscal situation for both the City and ARE is worse today than it was when ARE started the project several years ago. The City faces General Fund revenue threats, directly and indirectly, from State actions and inactions. ARE faces a market where weaker economic factors for development, particularly for office, result in the value of the project being lower today than it was when they purchased the property. Neither party's fiscal situations are necessarily due to any fault of the party's themselves, and both party's have a shared interest in the success of the Tanforan redevelopment.

#### Correcting the Record

There are some in the public that believe the City received over \$300 M from ARE. This is incorrect. ARE purchased the Tanforan properties from multiple owners in 2021 and 2022 for a total of \$351 M. The entities that received the \$351 M were the prior property owners of the parcels, not the City.

The City receives a fractional amount of the property and sales tax revenues from the Tanforan site, similar to all other properties in the City. The majority of these revenues go to other government agencies.

Since ARE purchased the property, the property tax revenue has increased to reflect the higher purchase price, but the sales tax revenue has dropped much more due to the winding down of

the mall operations. The City's General Fund revenues have been a net negative since the project started. In orders of magnitude, staff estimates the City has lost an aggregate of at least \$750,000 in General Fund revenues since ARE purchased the property. As a comparison, local school districts have gained an aggregate of over \$1 M in additional ongoing revenue simply because of the higher property taxes from the purchase of the land.

Since the project started, the only funds the City has directly received from ARE have been the payment of fees to cover the staff and consultant time for City review and processing of ARE's development applications and preparation of the environmental review documents.

## DISCUSSION

The Tanforan redevelopment package consists of the following:

Component	Description
General Plan Amendment	Change the southern half of the site to the Transit-Oriented Development (TOD) land use designation (from Regional Commercial). The northern section was already changed to TOD as part of the Housing Element. Compared to other aspects of the project, this change is minor.
New Planned Development (PD) zoning	Replace the existing PD zoning with a new list of allowed uses, development standards, design guidelines, and review processes to allow the proposed mixed-use Development Plan. Staff considers this the most significant part of the project.
ALUC Override	Override of the Airport Land Use Commission to allow an additional 500 housing units in the project site. This is considered minor, as the City Council already approved a prior override to allow the first 1,014 units as part of the Housing Element.
Vesting Tentative Map	Subdivision of the existing properties into a new configuration of parcels and private roadways to replace the Development Plan layout. This is a major part of the project as it defines the specific parcels, roadways and utilities for the site.
Environmental Impact Report (EIR)	Comprehensive and highly technical analysis of the environmental impacts of the proposed project, including identification of significant environmental impacts that cannot be mitigated. This is a major part of the project as it provides the public and decision makers with information about the potential environmental impacts of the project.
Development Agreement (DA)	Voluntary, legally binding contract between the City and the Developer, which can signify shared interest between both parties in the project's success. Most common in large scale projects. Terms of the agreement can reduce developer risks by providing clarity and assurances concerning vesting rights, costs, timeframes, and processes. Terms can provide community benefits to the City for the clarity and assurances the Developer receives. More information on the DA is below.

City Council endorsed a list of Guiding Principles for the Development Agreement on August 26, 2025:

The City would agree to provide the developer with certainty regarding the following, each of which brings value to the developer:

1. Transferable vested rights for zoning codes and approvals in effect at the adoption of the agreement.
2. Special fee and processing considerations for permits and construction that allow the project to move forward with predictable timeframes and costs.

The City seeks fiscal certainty regarding the following, each of which brings value to the City:

1. Seek the best community benefit package possible given the nature of the Tanforan project, informed by recent Development Agreements in the region.
2. Seek terms that ensure increased public safety service costs from the project are fully compensated in the long term.
3. Seek terms that incentivize faster construction phasing.
4. Seek terms that provide funding sooner rather than later.
5. Seek terms that prioritize economic development outcomes.

DA negotiations stalled in the latter half of 2025, delaying the project. The primary issue is that both parties are facing challenging fiscal situations that are worse than when the project review began. Negotiations re-commenced in early 2026 and staff is working toward a tentative agreement that fulfills the intent of the Guiding Principles. The two major fiscal concerns staff is seeking to address through the DA are:

- *Public Safety Service Costs.* Due to the City's General Fund forecast, it is essential to ensure the increased public safety costs from the project are covered by the development. This is because the City gets such a small share of property taxes compared to other entities such as school districts, and because the new project is expected to have less sales tax revenue than the former mall. Therefore, the City needs additional funding sources to be able to provide the public safety services the project will need. The anticipated method for which this funding will be provided to the City is through a Community Facilities District (CFD).
- *Short-term Funding Losses.* Due to the loss in General Fund revenue as the mall operations have been winding down, the City has a critical need for short-term funding to cover the loss of General Fund revenues until the first buildings are completed, in order to maintain existing services provided to the community.

As a corporation, ARE is facing major fiscal challenges as well, particularly the significant upfront capital costs for the demolition, grading and site preparation of the property, while maintaining access to Target and the cinema. These costs must be incurred before any new construction can occur that starts to provide ARE with ongoing revenue. This was always going to be the case, but when ARE purchased the property, the market outlook for the residential and office uses was strong, which would have made the upfront capital cost investment an easier decision. With a weaker market, committing those same upfront costs is more challenging.

*Projected Milestones*

If the City and ARE reach a tentative agreement on the Development Agreement terms in the coming weeks, the desired schedule for public hearings would be as follows:

<b>Timeframe</b>	<b>Milestones</b>
Early Summer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Tentative Agreement with ARE on the Development Agreement (DA)</li></ul>
Summer Months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Finalizing the zoning documents, tentative map, and the final language for the DA</li><li>• ALUC review</li></ul>
September	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Notice for Planning Commission hearing (State law now requires 20-day notices for changes to zoning, more than the usual 10-day notice)</li></ul>
October	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Planning Commission hearing</li></ul>
November	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• City Council first reading</li></ul>
December	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• City Council second reading</li></ul>
The following items are what ARE believes could occur if City Council approves the project on the schedule above and market conditions do not worsen:	
By the end of 2027	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Demolition and site preparation</li></ul>
By the end of 2028	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Residential partner begins vertical construction of the first building(s)</li></ul>
By the end of 2030	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• First building(s) completed</li></ul>
TBD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• All other phases of the project are uncertain, but there staff and ARE expect that latter phases will be more attractive to prospective companies once the first buildings are in operation. Full build-out is anticipated to be at least 10-15 years out.</li></ul>

**FISCAL IMPACT**

There is no fiscal impact from this agenda item. If the Tanforan project is eventually approved with the critical DA terms related to public safety funding and filling the short-term revenue loss, and the project proceeds to full build-out as expeditiously as possible, then the long-term fiscal impact of the project will be strongly positive.

**ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT**

There is no formal action with this agenda item, therefore this item is not considered a project under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). The formal hearings on the project will include an Environmental Impact Report (EIR).



## City Council & Planning Commission Agenda Item

### Staff Report

CITY OF SAN BRUNO

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**DATE:** May 19, 2026

**TO:** Honorable Mayor, Members of the City Council and Planning Commission

**FROM:** Peter Gilli, Community Development Director

**SUBJECT:** Conduct a Joint City Council/Planning Commission Study Session to Discuss Downtown Zoning Adjustments to Improve Activity and Aesthetics

#### **BACKGROUND**

During the FY27 goal setting process, several Councilmembers have identified several areas where the City should influence or require different actions by the private sector that will improve the downtown environment. This included reconsidering what business types were allowed, increasing investment into exterior improvements on private properties, improving the maintenance of properties, and providing enforcement of regulations in downtown. These efforts would improve activity and aesthetics in downtown. This eventually led City Council to include adjustments to zoning regulations as one component of the Downtown Improvement Initiative for FY27.

This study session is intended to provide an opportunity for City Council, Planning Commission, staff, and interested members of the public to discuss potential approaches to zoning amendments, particularly the Central Business District regulations that apply to the lands along San Mateo Avenue in the downtown area. The intent is to bring those formal amendments to the Planning Commission and City Council for adoption in the summer/fall of 2026.

As was noted during goal setting, these amendments will be limited adjustments, not a comprehensive update of the applicable regulations or a process with community engagement beyond the adoption hearings. This is due to limited due to staff resource availability, due to Tanforan, Elevate San Bruno, ongoing Housing Element implementation, proposed reductions in planning staff for budget reasons, and other typical planning assignments. Also, City Council desired these amendments be adopted early in FY27.

Nevertheless, drawing on the collective broad experience of Planning staff working for nearly two dozen California cities, staff believes there are meaningful opportunities to make positive adjustments to zoning regulations to further City Council's goal.

#### **DISCUSSION**

##### **Exterior Improvements**

The City Council's goal setting discussion included the question of how the City can increase private investment in building exteriors, which can include site, architectural (building, façade), or landscaping, as applicable. When a business moves into a tenant space, the business

typically does interior tenant improvements, but many do not invest in improving the exterior. This is understandable because exterior improvements are added cost, but the investment in exterior improvements benefit more than just the single business, so it is also understandable why the City would want to leverage more investment in improving the exteriors of private buildings.

Unless the business otherwise requires a planning permit, the City currently does not have a mechanism to require any exterior improvement when a business moves into a tenant space. Even in cases where a planning permit is required, the City has typically not pushed for exterior improvements unless the applicant was already proposing exterior improvements. Here are two options for increasing exterior improvements, which can serve as talking points for the study session:

- *Modest policy change.* For any business that requires a planning approval, staff can begin to require exterior improvements such as new materials and finishes, windows, doors, awnings, or signage. Currently, only businesses that are a Conditional Use require planning approval. Requiring exterior improvements with businesses that need planning approval would improve exteriors along the Avenue slowly, possibly 1-3 tenant spaces a year. No formal action from City Council is necessary for this. This approach would have limited results unless the City expands the number of business types that require a planning approval.
- *Major legislative change.* Add zoning language that requires any “change of use” (even a new business that is a permitted use) to get an administrative planning approval, where staff can require exterior improvements. Only a like-for-like business change would be exempt from this administrative planning approval, and the associated exterior improvements. This change would likely result in double the improvements per year because it would apply to almost every new business.

A positive outcome of such changes would be that more building exteriors will be improved over time, incrementally improving the overall aesthetics of the Avenue. A negative outcome of such changes is that it would be more costly for a new business to open downtown. That could eliminate small businesses with limited capital for investment, could make it harder for property owners to lease vacant spaces, and will likely result in greater complaints to the City from those business/property owners.

### **Adjusting Allowed Uses**

The downtown area is in the Central Business District (CBD), one of a handful of Mixed-Use Zoning Districts created following the adoption of the Transit Corridor Plan. The CBD, like most other zoning districts in the City, have a list of permitted, conditional, and prohibited uses.

- *Permitted.* Fundamentally, a permitted use is allowed anywhere and everywhere in the district. These should be limited to a type of use that, theoretically, the City has no problem with each and every tenant space being that type of business. Currently, concerns have been raised about uses such as salons/barber shops, but these are permitted uses in CBD. In theory, entire blocks could be filled with salons and barber shops without any City discretion, because it is listed as a permitted use.

- *Prohibited.* A prohibited use is a type of use that is allowed nowhere because the City does not want that use in **any** situation or circumstance, no matter how well the use is operated. For example, no matter how well operated a drive-through use is, most cities striving for a walkable downtown would not want a drive-through in their downtown. San Bruno prohibits drive-through uses in downtown.
- *Conditional.* A conditional use is a type of use that lies in between permitted and prohibited. The community **may** accept this type of use in that district, but it is a case-by-case basis depending on many factors such as the specific operations of that business, the specific location, and what is specifically in the surrounding area. A Use Permit can include conditions of approval that define performance standards for the use. The City's ability to perform regulatory enforcement of conditional uses is much greater than for a permitted use, which allows the City to better protect the surrounding area from the actions of a single business.

#### *Maximum Number/Minimum Distances*

Another approach a City can take is to set minimum distances or a maximum number of a business type in an area. Staff considers such approaches to be somewhat arbitrary and a blunt zoning instrument that is not recommended an area where the City wants to take great care to improve like a downtown.

Returning to the hair salon example, where there is a concern by some that there are too many. The City could (1) set a maximum number of hair salon/barbershops in downtown, (2) could set a minimum distance between them, or (3) the City could make salons into a conditional use.

Imagine a hair salon owner that has successfully opened similar stores in neighboring cities wants to open in our downtown. This salon has a track record in the other cities of attracting clientele that frequent neighboring stores more than the typical salon. That owner wants to open a business downtown at a particular location they believe is optimal. This business owner has the resources to propose a positive exterior improvement to the building, and preliminary plans show the exterior improvements would make this tenant space in the upper echelon of store-fronts.

- *Maximum Number.* For the purpose of this example, let's say the City was at the maximum number of hair salons/barbershops that it set. The City's regulation would have shut the door on the investment opportunity.
- *Minimum Distance.* The tenant space this business wants is within the radius of an existing salon. But this is the location this business owner wants and knows will be successful for them, so they do not come to San Bruno. The City's regulation would have shut the door on the investment opportunity.
- *Conditional Use.* The City considers this hair salon for this specific situation, weighing the positive and negatives of the case – it's another salon when there may be a large number already in downtown; and it's in proximity to another salon so there could be over-concentration in one area. But the experience and track record of this particular

business owner, coupled with the investment in improving the exterior aesthetics gives the City the opportunity to consider approving the new business.

*Use Tables*

The tables below show the Permitted, Conditional and Prohibited uses in the CBD in the categories of Residential, Retail, Service and Industrial:

**CBD – Residential Uses**

Permitted	Conditional	Prohibited
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Multi-family and ADUs</li> <li>• Residential Care Facilities</li> <li>• Transitional and Supportive</li> <li>• Single Room Occupancy</li> <li>• Employee Housing</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Live/Work</li> <li>• Boardinghouse</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Duplex</li> <li>• Single-Family Home</li> <li>• Mobile Home Parks</li> </ul>

**CBD – Retail Uses – ground-floor only**

Permitted	Conditional	Prohibited
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <u>Retail Sales and Services</u> which are stores and shops that sell merchandise. Includes: Food, Beverage, Appliance, Bookstore, Clothing, Convenience, Department, Drug, Animal, Animal Accessories, Grocery, Liquor, Pharmacies, Pawn shops, Smoke shops, Furniture, Art galleries, Home improvement, Vehicle parts, Hardware, Other similar uses</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Adult businesses</li> <li>• Cannabis retailer</li> <li>• Firearms dealers</li> <li>• Vehicle sales and rental</li> </ul>

**CBD – Service Uses**

Permitted	Conditional	Prohibited
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <u>Personal Service “Downtown Focus”</u> – beauty salons, barber shops, shoe repair, dry cleaner, laundry</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <u>Personal Service “Instructional Focus”</u> – dance, martial arts, fitness, photography and music studios, and similar</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <u>Personal Service “General”</u> – massage, tattoo, funeral home</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Restaurants (ground floor)</li> <li>• Banks and other financial services</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bars, nightclubs and lounges</li> <li>• Health and exercise clubs</li> <li>• Schools (2<sup>nd</sup> floor only)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cemeteries</li> <li>• Emergency shelters</li> <li>• Hospitals</li> <li>• Nursing and convalescent homes</li> </ul>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Business services, office, research and development (2<sup>nd</sup> floor only)</li> <li>• Low barrier navigation center</li> <li>• Public parks and recreation facilities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Community facilities</li> <li>• Day care center</li> <li>• Places of worship</li> <li>• Social services and charitable institutions</li> <li>• Commercial recreation/entertainment</li> <li>• Hotels and motels</li> <li>• Pet day care facility</li> <li>• Private parks/recreation facilities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Public maintenance facilities</li> <li>• Check cashing</li> <li>• Drive-through facilities</li> <li>• Gas and service stations</li> <li>• Personal storage</li> <li>• Pet boarding overnight</li> <li>• Vehicle repair and maintenance</li> </ul>
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**CBD – Industrial Uses**

Permitted	Conditional	Prohibited
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Construction</li> <li>• Maintenance</li> <li>• Repair Services</li> <li>• Heavy Equipment Sales/Rentals</li> <li>• Lumberyards</li> <li>• Manufacturing and Processing</li> <li>• Warehousing</li> <li>• Wholesaling and Distribution</li> </ul>

For purposes of this initiative, staff recommends focusing on the Retail and Service tables. Specifically, there are opportunities to shift certain uses from one column to another. Such changes could include:

- **For Retail Uses, separate some of the retail uses to become Conditional or Prohibited.** “Retail Sales and Services” is a broadly defined use that includes a wide range of retail stores, and all are permitted without discretionary review.

The City Council may want some of those specific business types listed in the “Retail Sales and Services” category to no longer be allowed without discretionary review. For those, a separate definition should be made, and the use put into the Conditional Use column. In the past, adult businesses, cannabis retailers, firearms dealers, and vehicle sales were all likely separated from the general “Retail Sales and Services” definition in the same way because the City did not want those uses to be permitted without discretionary review.

There may be some business types in the retail definition that the City Council might consider prohibiting in the CBD.

- **For Service Uses, shift some Permitted uses to Conditional.** Several comments have been received noting the concern with more salons opening in downtown. Personal Service uses are split into three categories: “Downtown Focus” which is

Permitted in downtown, “Instructional Focus” which is Conditional in downtown, and “General” which is prohibited in downtown. Beauty salons, barbers, shoe repair, dry cleaners and laundromats are included in the “Personal Service – Downtown Focus” definition. If it is determined that there is an overconcentration of the “Personal Service – Downtown Focus” uses in downtown, then this set of uses should be shifted to the Conditional category.

- **Remove limitation for retail or restaurants being limited to the ground floor.** It will likely be very uncommon that a business owner will want to have a retail store or restaurant above the first floor, but if a business owner is able to successfully have a retail store or a restaurant above the ground floor, why should the City preclude this? Retail/restaurants on upper floors could be Conditional, to allow the discretion to ensure the access for customers is safe and the method of dealing with waste is adequately handled.
- **Allow business services/office/R&D as a Conditional ground floor use.** These uses are currently only allowed on the upper floor, but if an owner/tenant provides a positive façade improvement, maintains an open storefront, and programs their interior to have as much activity near the frontage, the exterior improvement is considered more valuable to the City Council’s long term goal than the drawbacks of allowing a less active use.

Expanding the number of uses that are in the Conditional column also increases the number of business types that the City can leverage exterior improvements from, which increases the rate of the incremental aesthetic improvements to downtown. There is added cost associated with the process and investment that the business and/or property owner would have to bear.

### **Other Aesthetic Considerations**

The CBD requires the majority of storefront windows and doors to be transparent to allow people along the street to see what is happening (activity) and to have a better aesthetic environment. Ninety percent of the transparent windows and doors on the building’s street frontage must remain clear “to allow views into the building.” (SBMC 12.280.040) Many storefronts violate the Municipal Code and this requirement has not been enforced. There is an administrative exception process for situations that have unique operational characteristics or use architectural detail or landscaping to create visual interest at the pedestrian level.

Some businesses use very bright lights, or bright signs, neon lights, and other elements that negatively affect the aesthetic environment of the Avenue, and the Municipal Code may not have specific standards that prohibit these.

### **Amortization**

When the Mixed-Use Zoning Districts were adopted in 2019, including the TOD-1, TOD-2 and CBD regulations, many existing businesses became legal non-conforming. A legal non-conforming (LNC) use is a use that was permitted or conditional at one time, but the City Council consciously made it a prohibited use at some point. The LNC use becomes “grand-fathered” meaning it can stay. There are numerous examples of non-conforming uses in San

Bruno, and throughout California, that have remained in operation for years, with no sign of change. In San Bruno, if the LNC use ceases for six-months, the use has to be replaced with an allowed use. This timeframe is fairly common. In addition, a LNC use cannot be expanded. As a result, there is little reason for the business owner of a LNC use to reinvest in their building, which can result in cases where these businesses contribute to the appearance of disinvestment in downtown.

The City has the authority to require LNC uses to be terminated within a certain time frame, by applying amortization. This assigns a number of years the LNC use can remain, but after that “amortization period” ends, the use must end. The number of years provided by the City must reasonably allow the business owner to recoup their investments in the business. Except for abandoned signs having 60 days, the City does not have amortization. Options include legislative changes such as:

- Require LNC uses that are now prohibited to cease within a certain number of years. Examples of amortization periods can range from three years for adult businesses (Culver City), to five years for signage, to 10+ years for other uses. Providing a sufficient amortization period allows the business to be closed without compensation.
- If requiring a business to close is not what the City wants to do, even after what the court would consider a reasonable timeframe is provided, then the City can establish a requirement that LNC uses cease within a certain number of years unless they get a Conditional Use Permit, make exterior improvements, in which case the LNC use can remain beyond the amortization period because the City has established conditions of approval that protect the public welfare.
- The City can also explore methods to require LNC uses that used to be permitted, but are now conditional, to secure a use permit within a number of years. This allows the City to apply conditions of approval to protect public welfare, and require exterior improvements if necessary.

If the City Council and Planning Commission are interested in pursuing any of these amortization concepts, those amendments would likely require extensive work with the City Attorney’s Office and may not be part of the zoning adjustments brought back in the summer/fall of 2026.

### **Incentives**

Requiring more planning review and exterior improvements in downtown adds costs to property owners and small business owners. Ideally, a comprehensive downtown business association would exist that can work with the City to establish a Business Improvement District to tax the property owners within downtown to fund downtown improvements and even subsidize part of the application fees associated with the City review. Downtown businesses are not organized in a manner to have BID at this time, and the City’s fiscal forecast does not indicate there will be available public funding in the near future.

Currently, City Council has approved of prior staff recommendations to keep planning application fees most used by small businesses below full 100% cost recovery. This results in a

partial subsidy of the City time spent reviewing the applications for these small businesses. Staff considers improvements to the aesthetics of downtown to be a community benefit and therefore recommends a portion of the application fees for these permits continue to be partially subsidized by the General Fund. The specifics will be presented at a future Fee Schedule update.

Because of the City Council and Planning Commission's support for shifting most Use Permits to administrative hearings, the cost of Conditional Use Permits are significantly lower than in the past, and the amount of time in the review process is lessened. The combination of the shorter review times and partially subsidized fees for the planning applications is likely the most the City can do at this time to incentivize small business investment in exterior improvements at this time.

### **Expected Outcomes**

Any changes that raise the expectations and requirements for local businesses and property owners will result in added costs that will result in increased complaints by those parties for several years until the changes become normal operating procedure. In the short term, modest, incremental improvements to the aesthetics of the Avenue will occur. In the long term, as the improvements become broader and more noticeable, visitors will recognize the improved aesthetics and more businesses may start to support the new expectations.

Some properties in downtown do not appear to be actively managed and have remained vacant for many years. Staff does not believe zoning adjustments will change that behavior. Staff can work to ensure that these vacant spaces are properly maintained through Code Enforcement.

### **Recommendation**

Staff recommends a moderate increase in expectations within the Central Business District (Downtown) to improve aesthetics and visitor experiences, including the following:

1. Shift *certain* Permitted Uses to Conditional Uses, in order to ensure there is not too much over-concentration of that use, to leverage exterior improvements, and/or to ensure the City can place operational conditions for particular uses that will make future enforcement of potential nuisances easier to process.
2. Shift *certain* Permitted or Conditional Uses to Prohibited Uses, if City Council and Planning Commission determine that particular use is not appropriate in downtown at all.
3. Do not use maximum numbers or minimum distances for regulating downtown uses.
4. Do not create a "change of use" permit process at this time, which would require planning approvals and exterior improvements for almost every new business.
5. Amend the Municipal Code to limit/prohibit the use of bright lights, neon, or other features that negatively affect the aesthetic environment of the Avenue. What other examples of features does the City Council and Planning Commission want to address?

6. Support a CD Department policy to require *all* discretionary planning permits in downtown to include site, building (façade) and landscaping improvements, as applicable, designed by a licensed architect/professional.
7. Support a CD Department policy to perform annual visual surveys of the CBD and provide business owners with information about how their existing operations may violate the Municipal Code related to use, storefront window coverings, signage, lighting, and maintenance. Enforcement action would follow for businesses that do not address violations in a timely manner.
8. Support applying only partial cost recovery of the planning application fees for the additional use permits and permits for exterior improvements that are part of this initiative.
9. That City Council and Planning Commission accept the proposed downtown zoning adjustments will result in a greater number of complaints from business owners in the short-term, until such time as the process becomes accepted as standard practice.

Provide general direction to staff regarding amortization:

10. Study requiring *all* non-conforming, non-residential uses (business use, signage, lighting, etc), that are now or become Prohibited, to cease operations within a reasonable amortization period? Or provide these uses with the opportunity to get a Conditional Use Permit to remain in perpetuity?
11. Study methods to require non-conforming, non-residential uses, that are now or become Conditional Uses, to get a Conditional Use Permit within a certain number of years, which may include operational conditions to protect the surrounding area and require improvements that will improve the aesthetics of the surrounding area?

Amendments related to amortization would likely have to come separate from the downtown zoning adjustments.

### **FISCAL IMPACT**

There is no fiscal impact from this agenda item. Depending on the potential zoning ordinance adjustments, staff expects minimal fiscal impact (positive or negative) in the short term, with minor positive fiscal impact in future years as the aesthetics and activity in downtown improves.

### **ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT**

There is no formal action with this agenda item, therefore this item is not considered a project under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). The potential zoning ordinance adjustments from this initiative are expected to be exempt from environmental review.



## Planning Commission Agenda Item

### Staff Report

CITY OF SAN BRUNO

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**DATE:** May 19, 2026

**TO:** Planning Commission

**FROM:** Peter Gilli, Community Development Director

**PREPARED BY:** Kelly Beggs, Assistant Community Development Director

**SUBJECT:** Consider Adoption of a Resolution Recommending the City Council Amend the Health and Safety, Public Facilities and Services, and Environmental Resources and Conservation Elements (General Plan Elements) of the San Bruno General Plan to Comply with Recent Changes to State Law, Incorporate the San Mateo County Multijurisdictional Local Hazard Mitigation Plan by Reference into the General Plan Elements, and Make Required Findings Under the California Environmental Quality Act.

#### **BACKGROUND**

The Safety Element of the General Plan is a State-mandated component of every city's and county's General Plan, required under California Government Code Section 65302(g). It identifies potential natural and human-caused hazards that could affect residents, businesses, and services in the community. The purpose of the Safety Element is to establish a framework that identifies and anticipates these hazards and prepares the community to minimize risks and harm resulting from these hazards.

San Bruno's Safety Element, called the Health and Safety Element, identifies the natural and human-caused hazards that affect San Bruno, describes present and expected future conditions, and sets goals and policies to minimize hazards to safety. This includes efforts to protect the health and safety of community members, minimize physical harm to the buildings and infrastructure, and reduce damage to local economic systems, community services, and ecosystems. San Bruno's Health and Safety Element was adopted with the General Plan in 2009.

#### **State Law Requirements for Safety Elements**

California Government Code Section 65302(g) contains the requirements for Safety Elements, including that it must be updated upon each revision of the housing element or local hazard mitigation plan, but not less than once every eight years. A series of recent legislative changes has significantly expanded the content requirements for Safety Elements. Key legislation includes:

- **SB 1241** (2014) added Section 65302(g)(3) to the California Government Code, requiring jurisdictions in a state responsibility area or very high fire hazard severity zone to provide background, historical context, and goals, policies, and implementation measures to address wildfire risks in a community.
- **SB 379** (2017), codified in Section 65302(g)(4), requires local governments to conduct vulnerability assessments as part of their long-range planning efforts and to prepare

resilience and adaptation policies that will protect against harm caused by climate change.

- **SB 1035** (2018) established Section 65302(g)(6) of the California Government Code, requiring jurisdictions to review and update the Safety Element upon updates to the Housing Element and Hazard Mitigation Plan, or at least every eight years. Any revisions should include updated information related to flood hazards, fire hazards, and climate adaptation and resilience, along with other relevant topics.
- **SB 99** (2019) established Section 65302(g)(5) of the California Government Code and requires jurisdictions to review and update the Safety Element to include information identifying residential developments in hazard areas that do not have at least two emergency evacuation routes.
- **AB 747** (2019) established Section 65302.15 of the California Government Code. It required jurisdictions to identify evacuation routes and their capacity, safety, and viability. **AB 1409** (2021) amended this section to include identifying evacuation locations. This requirement is being addressed by the county-wide All-Hazards Evacuation Plan, which is currently in progress and which San Bruno is participating in.
- **AB 2684** (2024) added Section 65302.01 to the California Government Code, requiring jurisdictions to identify areas most vulnerable to extreme heat, assess health and infrastructure risks, and include goals, policies, and implementation measures to address those risks. This requirement takes effect January 1, 2028.

### **The PREP Project**

The City prepared its Safety Element update as part of the Peninsula Resilience Planning (PREP) project, a collaborative multi-jurisdictional effort of San Mateo County, the Town of Atherton, the City of Belmont, the City of Brisbane, the City of Burlingame, the City of East Palo Alto, the City of Half Moon Bay, the City of Pacifica, and the City of San Bruno. The PREP project is managed by the County's Planning and Building Department and supported by a consulting team led by PlaceWorks. The collaborative approach allowed participating jurisdictions to share technical analyses and resources for greater efficiency and consistency across the region.

### **DISCUSSION**

The update described in this staff report is undertaken to bring the Health and Safety Element into full compliance with the State laws described above, to incorporate the results of a new climate vulnerability assessment, and to reflect updated hazard information and community priorities. The update includes revised and new goals, policies, and implementation actions organized around the hazard topics addressed in the element. Additional associated updates have also been made to the Public Facilities and Services Element and the Environmental Resources and Conservation Element for consistency and State law compliance. This report refers to the amendments to all three elements as the Safety Element Update.

### **Key Updates**

The updated Safety Element has been organized to address all hazard topics required by current State law and to reflect local conditions and community priorities identified through the planning process. Key changes include:

- New coverage of climate change vulnerability, including the results of the PREP vulnerability assessment, which analyzed current and projected future risks to people,

buildings, infrastructure, and key services from a range of climate hazards. All information about existing hazard conditions was reviewed and updated as needed.

- Updated wildfire policies, including information on new Fire Hazard Severity Zones mapping and updated materials consistent with CAL FIRE requirements.
- New content on emergency evacuation, including an analysis of residential areas that may lack two or more emergency evacuation routes, consistent with SB 99 requirements.
- New policies addressing extreme heat, severe weather, and drought.
- Updated flood and sea level rise policies reflecting current hazard information, including updated FEMA flood maps and projections for sea level rise and emergent groundwater.
- Updated hazard maps for all major hazard categories.
- A background report (attached as Appendix A to the Safety Element), documenting the current state of all hazards discussed in the element.

The amendments associated with the Safety Element Update focused on those required by State Law. A more comprehensive update to correct any remaining outdated information is planned as part of other General Plan updates that are underway.

### Review by Other Agencies

As part of the Safety Element Update process, the draft Health and Safety Element was circulated to the following State agencies for review, as required by California Government Code Section 65302.5:

- **California Geological Survey (CGS):** All Safety Elements must be submitted to CGS for review prior to adoption. CGS reviews the Safety Element for adequacy of coverage of seismic, geologic, and related hazards. The City submitted the Draft Health and Safety Element to CGS for review February 11, 2026. No comments were received.
- **Governor's Office of Emergency Services (Cal OES):** Safety Elements must be submitted to Cal OES for review. Cal OES reviews the Safety Element for consistency with the jurisdiction's LHMP. Confirmation from Cal OES that the Safety Element appropriately integrates the LHMP ensures the jurisdiction remains eligible for California Disaster Assistance Act (CDAA) funding. Cal OES reviewed San Bruno's Safety Element and provided guidance on the process compliance with AB2140 but did not have any revisions to the document.
- **California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE):** As the City includes areas designated as Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zones (VHFHSZs), the City is required by California Government Code Section 65302.5(a) to submit the draft Safety Element to CAL FIRE and the Board of Forestry and Fire Protection (BOF) for review and comment at least 90 days prior to adoption. The City submitted the Health and Safety Element to CAL FIRE on February 11, 2026. CAL FIRE staff requested minor changes during this review focused on additional references to other County planning efforts (CWPP, MJHMP) and Cal FIRE resources (Past Fires), as well as minor clarifications on a few policies, which the City incorporated into the documents submitted to the BOF for official review and approval on May 8, 2026. CAL FIRE's suggested edits have been incorporated into the Elements included as attachments to the Resolution, and further edits are not anticipated. The Board of Forestry and Fire Protection is anticipated to formally review the document in June.

### **Public Outreach**

Engagement activities were organized into two primary phases. Phase 1 (March–June 2024) focused on the vulnerability assessment, gathering community input on hazard experiences, identifying vulnerable populations and assets, and understanding challenges related to disaster preparation and recovery. Phase 2 (November 2024–May 2025) focused on presenting vulnerability assessment results and draft policy concepts to gather community feedback on proposed resilience strategies. The City held an interactive community workshop on April 24, 2025 on the Safety Element Update in tandem with the Climate Action Plan. A workshop summary is available [here](#). The PREP initiative also conducted broader countywide outreach, including Virtual Community Workshops in March 2024 and May 2025, and Communities of Concern Meetings. A summary of all community engagement activities and how input was incorporated into the Safety Element is documented in the [PREP Community Input Report](#) (March 2026).

Key themes that emerged across engagement activities included: flooding and sea level rise as top community concerns; wildfire risks including challenges with rising insurance costs and evacuation constraints; infrastructure vulnerabilities and emergency communication gaps; and particular concern for the vulnerability of non-English speaking residents, older adults, low-income households, and people with access and functional needs.

The public draft of the Health and Safety Element, Public Facilities and Services Element, and Environmental Resources and Conservation Element was released February 5 - March 9, 2026, with a Planning Commission Study Session on February 17, 2026. No public comments were received throughout the comment period or at the Planning Commission meeting.

### **FISCAL IMPACT**

There is no fiscal impact from adoption of the Safety Element update.

### **ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT**

The Safety Element update qualifies for a CEQA exemption under the common-sense exemption set forth in CEQA Guidelines Section 15061(b)(3). This exemption applies where it can be seen with certainty that there is no possibility the activity may have a significant effect on the environment. Following adoption of the Safety Element by the City Council, staff will file the Notice of Determination and Notice of Exemption with the San Mateo County Clerk and post them with the State Clearinghouse, as required.

### **RECOMMENDATION**

Adopt a Resolution Recommending the City Council Amend the Health and Safety, Public Facilities and Services, and Environmental Resources and Conservation Elements (General Plan Elements) of the San Bruno General Plan to Comply with Recent Changes to State Law, Incorporate the San Mateo County Multijurisdictional Local Hazard Mitigation Plan by Reference into the General Plan Elements, and Make Required Findings Under the California Environmental Quality Act.

### **ATTACHMENTS**

1. Resolution
  - a. Health and Safety Element
  - b. Public Facilities and Services Element
  - c. Environmental Resources and Conservation Element

RESOLUTION NO. 2026 - \_\_

**A RESOLUTION OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF SAN BRUNO RECOMMENDING THE CITY COUNCIL AMEND THE HEALTH AND SAFETY ELEMENT, PUBLIC FACILITIES AND SERVICES, AND ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCES AND CONSERVATION ELEMENTS (GENERAL PLAN ELEMENTS) OF THE SAN BRUNO GENERAL PLAN TO COMPLY WITH RECENT CHANGES TO STATE LAW, INCORPORATE THE SAN MATEO COUNTY MULTIJURISDICTIONAL LOCAL HAZARD MITIGATION PLAN BY REFERENCE INTO THE GENERAL PLAN ELEMENTS, AND MAKE REQUIRED FINDINGS UNDER THE CALIFORNIA ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY ACT.**

**WHEREAS**, pursuant to California Government Code Section 65300, each city and county in California must adopt a comprehensive, long-term general plan addressing the physical development of the county or city, and any land outside its boundaries which in the agency's judgment bears relation to its planning; and

**WHEREAS**, California Government Code Section 65302 identifies seven mandatory elements which all city and county general plans must include (land use, circulation, conservation, open space, noise, safety and housing); and

**WHEREAS**, The San Bruno General Plan was adopted by the City Council in 2009 and has been amended as needed; and

**WHEREAS**, California Government Code Section 65302(g)(4) requires that local agencies update their general plan safety element to address climate adaptation and resiliency, and California Government Code Section 65302(g)(5) requires that local agencies update their general plan safety element to identify residential developments in any hazard area identified in the safety element that do not have at least two emergency evacuation routes; and

**WHEREAS**, recent legislation requires that the City review the Health and Safety Element and update it as needed upon updates to the Housing Element or Local Hazard Mitigation Plan, or at least once every eight years; and

**WHEREAS**, the Health and Safety Element of the General Plan integrates and incorporates by reference the current San Mateo County Multijurisdictional Local Hazard Mitigation Plan, including the City of San Bruno, approved by the Federal Emergency Management Agency, in accordance with California Government Code Sections 8685.9, 65302, and 65302.6; and

**WHEREAS**, the Public Facilities and Services and Environmental Resources and Conservation Elements contain information and policies relevant to natural hazards and topics pertinent to the Health and Safety Element; and

**WHEREAS**, the City determined the proposed amendments to the Health and Safety Element are subject to the requirements of the California Environmental Quality Act ("CEQA") and its implementing regulations (CEQA Guidelines); and

**WHEREAS**, provided in Government Code Sections 65352 -- 65352.5 the City mailed a public notice to all California Native American tribes provided by the Native American Heritage Commission and other entities; and

**WHEREAS**, the Safety Element was developed in consultation with emergency service providers and members of the public, was reviewed by the California Governor's Office of

Emergency Services and California Geological Survey and incorporates recommendations from these agencies, and reflects best practices outlined in the State’s General Plan Guidelines and Technical Advisories; and

**WHEREAS**, the Health and Safety Element was reviewed by CAL FIRE and is anticipated be formally considered at the Board of Forestry hearing on June 16, 2026, and incorporates all recommendations from CAL FIRE to ensure the Safety Element is consistent with State fire protection standards and best practices; and.

**WHEREAS**, there have been numerous opportunities for members of the public to participate in the development of the Health and Safety Element update, including in-person and virtual workshops, online surveys, focus group and service provider discussions; and

**WHEREAS**, on April 19, 2026, the San Bruno Planning Commission conducted a duly noticed public hearing with careful consideration of all maps, facts, exhibits, correspondents, testimony, and other evidence submitted in this matter.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** that the San Bruno Planning Commission hereby finds:

1. The Health and Safety Element is in the public interest and furthers the City’s responsibility to protect public health, safety, and welfare.
2. The Health and Safety Element is internally consistent with other elements of the San Bruno General Plan.
3. The Health and Safety Element update qualifies for a CEQA exemption under the common-sense exemption set forth in CEQA Guidelines Section 15061(b)(3), as it can be seen with certainty that there is no possibility the activity may have a significant effect on the environment.

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the Planning Commission hereby adopts the resolution recommending that the City Council adopts Amendments to the Health and Safety, Public Facilities and Services and Environmental Resources and Conservation Elements of the General Plan.

Exhibit A: Health and Safety Element

Exhibit B: Public Facilities and Services Element

Exhibit C: Environmental Resources and Conservation Element

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I hereby certify that foregoing **Resolution No. 2026 - \_\_** was introduced and adopted by the San Bruno Planning Commission at a special meeting on May 19, 2026, by the following vote:

AYES: Planning Commission Members:

NOES: Planning Commission Members:

ABSENT: Planning Commission Members:

Roscoe Mata, Planning Commission  
Secretary

[Updates were made to portions of the Health and Safety Element in 2026 to comply with state laws to address climate change adaptation and resilience to risks such as wildfire, flood, and extreme heat.](#)



7

## HEALTH AND SAFETY ELEMENT

**S**imilar to many California cities, San Bruno faces a variety of health and safety hazards from both natural and human-caused sources. This chapter provides the policy framework for

addressing emergency preparedness and evacuation, geologic hazards, potential seismic hazards, flooding, wildfire, hazardous materials, noise, other hazardous conditions (especially those linked to climate change), and

airport safety. Additional discussion of fire hazards can be found in the Public Facilities and Services Element of the General Plan within the fire department, public safety, and emergency response services sections.



*Residential neighborhoods in the city's western hills (top) feature steep topography, some of which is susceptible to landsliding (bottom).*

## 7-1 VISION

The Health and Safety Element addresses preservation of human life and property through the following key principles:

- prevention of potential geologic or seismic hazards through appropriate geotechnical analysis and mitigation during project planning and development;
- reduction of flooding hazards through stormwater system improvements and appropriate project design in high-risk areas;
- enhancing resilience to climate change and associated natural hazards through building and infrastructure improvements, educational efforts, and adaptation programs; and
- prevention of potential human contact with hazardous materials through safety in the use, transport, and disposal of hazardous materials.

The element also seeks to reduce potential noise and safety impacts along transportation corridors, including highways, railroads, and San Francisco International Airport (SFO). Additional details about these hazards and related issues are included in a background report prepared as part of this element and attached as Appendix A.

### Plan Integration

The Health and Safety Element does not act independently but instead relies on other

elements of the General Plan as well as other documents that support the discussions; findings; and goals, policies, and implementation actions included.

A key document that supports the element is the 2021 Multi-Jurisdictional Local Hazard Mitigation Plan (Multi-Jurisdictional LHMP), prepared by San Mateo County in partnership with San Bruno, other incorporated communities, and special districts and agencies in San Mateo County. In compliance with California Government Code Section 8685.9 (also known as Assembly Bill 2140), the LHMP has been incorporated into the Safety Element, ensuring the City has access to additional funding opportunities under the California Disaster Assistance Act. The integration of the LHMP into the Safety Element allows San Bruno to use the LHMP to satisfy State requirements and creates a stronger mechanism for implementing the LHMP. The LHMP is available online at <https://www.smcgov.org/dem/multijurisdictional-local-hazard-mitigation-plan>.

To support the findings of the 2021 LHMP and address climate change requirements in accordance with Government Code Section 65302 (g) 3, the City prepared a Climate Adaptation Vulnerability Assessment that identified the relevant hazards that could be exacerbated by climate change. The Vulnerability Assessment is attached to this element as Appendix B. Much of the information within this assessment is based on

data from Cal-Adapt, which is California’s climate change data and visualization platform that provides localized data from global climate models.

In addition to the LHMP, the Health and Safety Element also works in concert with other elements of the General Plan. Key elements that support the City’s ability to address hazards and disasters include:

- Land Use - which promotes the proper use of land within the city, ensuring development does not occur in locations that may be hazard prone.
- Transportation - identifies the circulation network within the city and the improvements that can help facilitate evacuations and the movement of people to safe locations.
- Open Space and Recreation - recognizes that effectively managed and maintained open space areas can play a hazard risk reduction role regarding wildfires and flooding.
- Public Facilities and Services - identifies the vital roles and responsibilities that first responder personnel play in keeping residents safe as well as the critical

infrastructure systems that support city functions and risk management.

## 7-2 EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS AND EVACUATION

The City of San Bruno employs a multipronged approach for mitigating, responding to, and recovering from emergencies. Like most cities, San Bruno relies on their Emergency Operations Plan to support most emergency situations. As part of this plan, the City lays out procedures and protocols for emergency response, including evacuations.

### Evacuation Resources

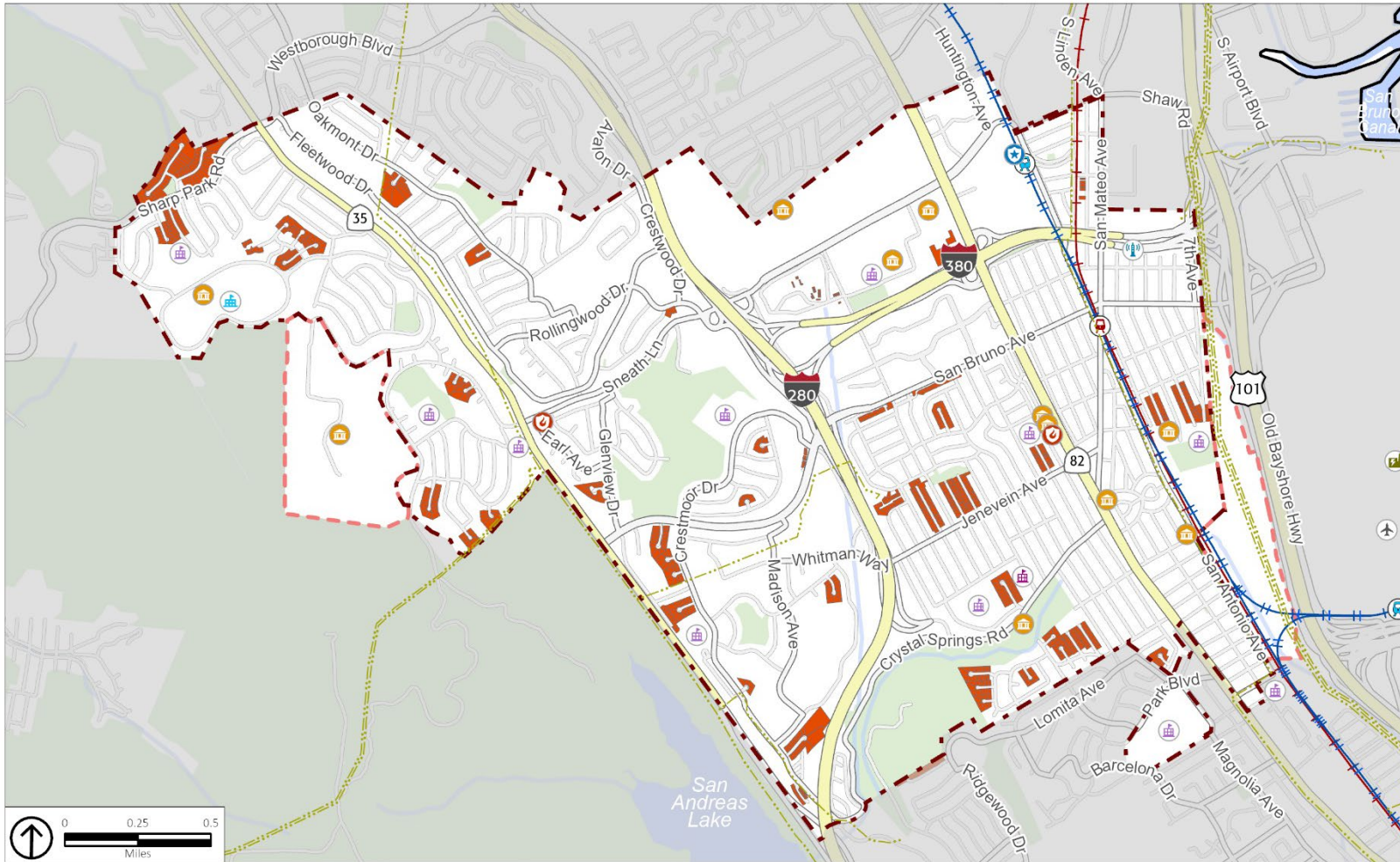
During an evacuation, the City will determine the appropriate locations deemed safe and the appropriate routes for evacuees to take based on incident characteristics. Community members lacking easy access to these routes may face difficulties getting out of their homes. This is particularly true for homes that are evacuation constrained, meaning that they lack at least two points of ingress or egress. Figure 7-1 identifies these residential parcels, as required by Section 65302(g)(5) of the California Government Code. In these conditions, residents in these homes may be challenged to evacuate quickly and have increased vulnerability to fast-

spreading incidents (i.e., flash floods and wildfire).

To help facilitate effective evacuations, cities and the County of San Mateo rely on evacuation zones within a communication platform that organizes the city into evacuation zones. To support evacuation notifications, the city through San Mateo County uses SMC Alert to notify the community about incidents (flood, fire, severe weather, or tsunami warnings), emergency shelter locations, evacuation route information, and activate disaster volunteers (Community Emergency Response Teams). Smaller incident alerts may also be shared (traffic accidents, fires, street closures, flooding, and related incidents) through SMC Alerts, when needed. As a voluntary alert system, residents and business owners in the city can opt in to receiving these messages by signing up on the San Mateo County SMC Alert website: <https://www.smcgov.org/dem/smc-alert>.

The City is participating in the county-wide All-Hazards Evacuation Plan to analyze potential evacuation scenarios across San Mateo County and identify needed improvements to local and regional road networks. This plan is still currently under development (as of April 2026) and once completed will be incorporated into the element.

**FIGURE 7-1 Evacuation Constrained Residential Parcels (2026)**



Source: ESRI, 2023; County of San Mateo, 2025; PlaceWorks, 2025

- |                           |                   |                         |                                |
|---------------------------|-------------------|-------------------------|--------------------------------|
| City of San Bruno         | BART Stations     | Fire Stations           | College or University          |
| Sphere of Influence       | BART Network      | Government Facilities   | Communication Facilities       |
| San Mateo County Boundary | Caltrain Stations | California Power Plants | Transmission Lines             |
| Airport                   | Caltrain Network  | Public Schools (K-12)   | Evacuation-Constrained Parcels |
|                           | Law Enforcement   | Private Schools (K-12)  |                                |



### 7-3 GEOLOGY AND SOILS

San Bruno is situated between the upland foothills of the Santa Cruz Mountains and the low-lying flatlands of the San Francisco Bay margin. Elevations range from 700 feet above mean sea level west of Skyline Boulevard to near sea level along Highway 101.

San Bruno lies within the physiographic region of California referred to as the Coast Ranges geomorphic province. Much of the Coast Range province is composed of marine sedimentary and volcanic rocks that form the Franciscan Assemblage. The Merced Formation is composed of sandstone, claystone, and siltstone. The younger Colma Formation is weakly consolidated, and consists of gravel, sand, silt, and clay. The eastern portion of the city is underlain by artificial fill material used to reclaim the Bay marginal tideland. Figure 7-2 illustrates the geologic and soils foundation of San Bruno.

#### Geologic Hazards

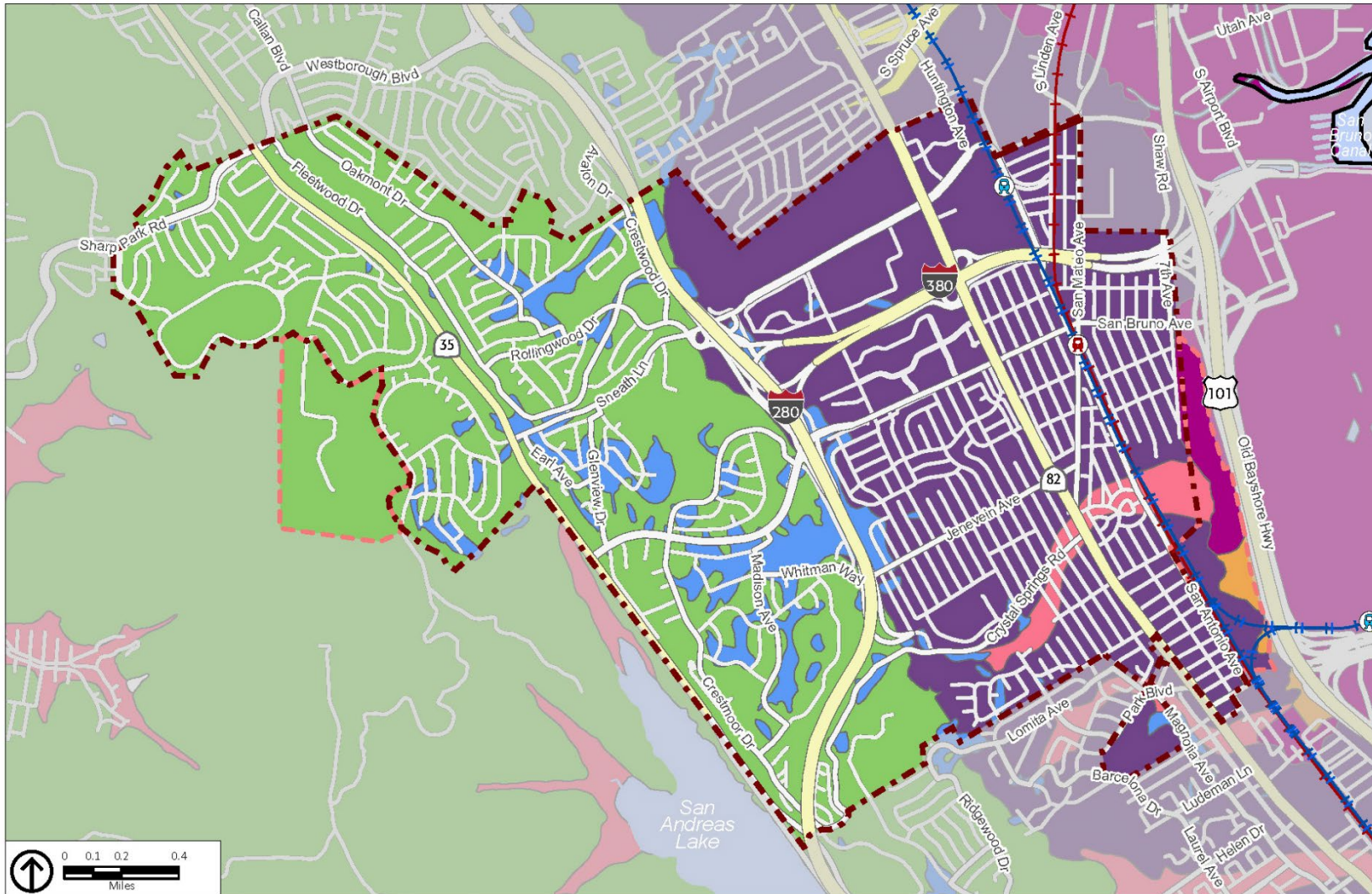
Geologic hazards that can affect San Bruno include expansive soils, ground failure (landslides), settlement, and erosion. Expansive soils possess a “shrink-swell” characteristic, which is expansion and contraction of fine-grained clay sediments from the process of wetting and drying. The Colma Formation, underlying eastern San Bruno, is described as moderately expansive. Sites identified in these areas proposing development activities will be required to assess the expansion potential of underlying soils and adherence to the provisions of the building code that address expansive soil

conditions. Settlement is the depression of soils when a load, such as a new building or fill material, has been placed on it. Settlement can be accelerated by earthquakes during groundshaking. Erosion generally occurs on steeper slopes, particularly where unnatural slope cuts and grading have occurred. Both settlement and soil erosion have occurred and caused damage in the hillside neighborhoods in western San Bruno.

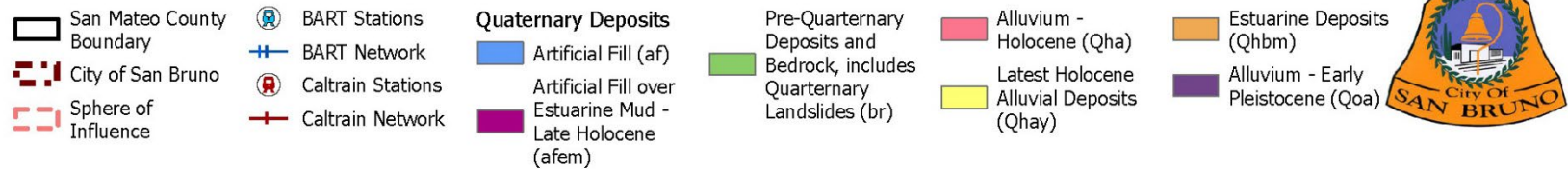
Ground stability is dependent on the slope and geology of a particular location. Other factors that can contribute to unstable conditions include the amount of rainfall, excavation of earth materials, and/or seismic activities. The main form of ground instability is a landslide, which is a mass of rock, soil, and debris displaced down-slope by sliding, flowing, or falling. Steep slopes and downslope creep of surface materials characterize areas most susceptible to landsliding. The highest susceptibility to landsliding in San Bruno exists in the upland areas east of Skyline Boulevard and west of I-280, including Junipero Serra County Park. The potential for landslides in this area is considered low to moderate with areas of higher potential, especially in the hillside neighborhoods in western San Bruno. Susceptibility to landsliding could be greater in the Junipero Serra Park area due to the presence of undeveloped, natural slopes. Figure 7-3 illustrates areas of historic landslide activity and landslide potential. Landsliding activity occurs most frequently during El Niño seasons, when heavy rains saturate soils and cause sliding

on steep slopes. During El Niño seasons, the City monitors areas of concern.

Figure 7-2: Geology and Soils (2026)



Source: ESRI, 2023; County of San Mateo, 2023; PlaceWorks, 2023; USGS, 2023



## Seismic Hazards

The San Francisco Bay Area contains both active and potentially active faults. Earthquakes pose especially high risks to San Bruno because of the city's close proximity to active faults with relatively frequent past movements. San Bruno straddles the San Andreas Fault and is approximately 18 miles southwest of the Hayward Fault. The San Andreas and Hayward faults are the two principally active, strike-slip faults in the Bay Area.<sup>1</sup> The San Andreas Fault is a major structural feature in the region and forms a boundary between the North American and Pacific tectonic plates.

Other principal faults capable of producing significant ground shaking in San Bruno include the San Gregorio-Hosgri, Rodger's Creek-Healdsburg, Calaveras, Concord-Green Valley, and Pilarcitos faults. The Serra Fault is a zone of reverse faulting that trends to the northwest, approximately 3,500 feet east of the San Andreas Fault in San Bruno. The Serra Fault represents the contact between the Merced and Colma Formations and marks the topographic boundary between the upland area west of I-280, and the flatland area to the east. Fault traces within the city are illustrated in Figure 7-3.

The four major hazards associated with earthquakes include fault surface rupture, groundshaking, ground failure (landslides), and settlement. These hazards are defined in the

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<sup>1</sup> Strike-slip faults exhibit displacement in a horizontal direction but may also have a vertical component.

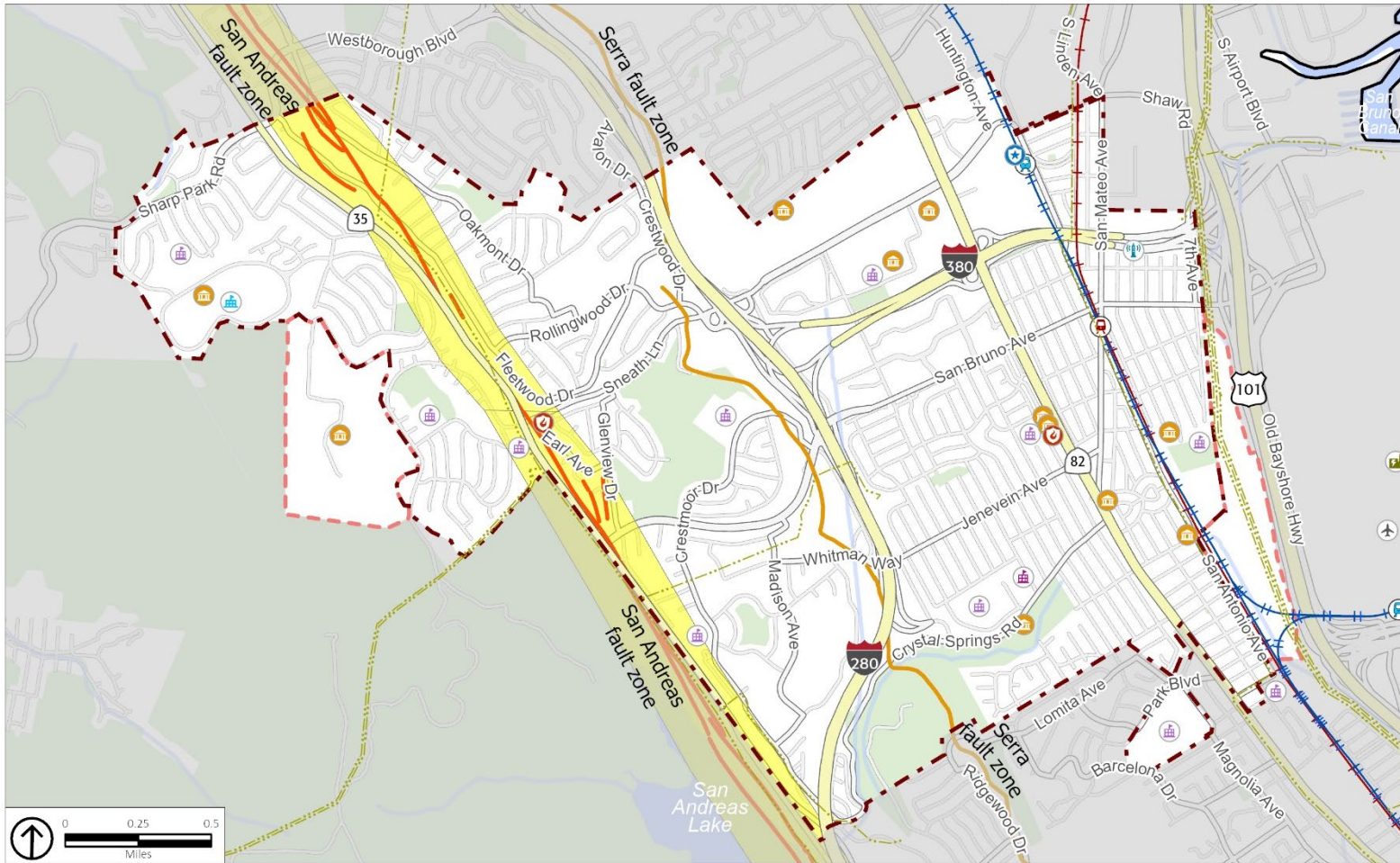
“Geology and Soils” section. Groundshaking, which may affect areas hundreds of miles distant from an earthquake's epicenter, is magnified by loose unconsolidated soils. Liquefaction, the process by which water-saturated soils transform to liquid, is caused by groundshaking. Liquefaction potential is highest in the eastern areas of the city underlain by Bay margin artificial fills.

## Climate Change Concerns

While most geologic and seismic hazards occur independently of climate change, landslides can be exacerbated by changing climatic conditions due to the increasing frequency of wildfires and severe storms. Wildfires remove stabilizing vegetation and alter soil properties, making slopes more vulnerable to erosion during and after subsequent storms. In addition, a drier climate that experiences more extreme precipitation events can also trigger landslides and mudslides. These incidents can displace residents, block emergency routes, and damage critical infrastructure, disrupting daily life and requiring costly repairs.

The San Mateo [Peninsula Resilience Planning Project](#) (PREP) includes a detailed GIS map viewer that provides more detailed and customizable mapping tools to allow users to see detailed conditions within San Bruno. Use of this viewer is for planning purposes only and not intended to provide regulatory information.

Figure 7-3: Local Fault Lines (2026)



Source: ESRI, 2023; County of San Mateo, 2025; PlaceWorks, 2025; USGS, 2020

- |                           |                   |                         |                          |                            |
|---------------------------|-------------------|-------------------------|--------------------------|----------------------------|
| City of San Bruno         | BART Stations     | Fire Stations           | College or University    | Alquist Priolo Fault Zones |
| Sphere of Influence       | BART Network      | Government Facilities   | Communication Facilities |                            |
| San Mateo County Boundary | Caltrain Stations | California Power Plants | Transmission Lines       | Surface Faults             |
| Airport                   | Caltrain Network  | Public Schools (K-12)   | Quaternary               |                            |
|                           | Law Enforcement   | Private Schools (K-12)  |                          |                            |



## 7-4 FLOODING

The San Mateo County Flood and Sea Level Rise Resiliency District (OneShoreline) is a Countywide Special District that was formed in 2020 to oversee countywide efforts to address flood protection, sea level rise, coastal erosion, and climate change adaptation. Replacing the San Mateo County's Flood Control District, the new special district works collaboratively across all jurisdictions focusing on multi-benefit solutions that help communities throughout the county.

The risk of flooding in urban areas is dependent on the following variables: preceding soil conditions, amount and intensity of rainfall, and capabilities of the storm drain system. It is the function of the storm drain system to move surface runoff into gutters, storm drain inlets, channels, creeks, collection basins, and eventually to the receiving body (San Francisco Bay).

Based on recent mapping prepared by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), areas of San Bruno along its eastern border (closest to the Bay) are within the 100-year and 500-year floodplains, meaning that they have either a 1 in 100 (1 percent) chance or a 1 in 500 (0.2 percent) chance of flooding in any given year. In addition, the City has identified several areas which occasionally flood due to combined high tides and heavy rain:

- Downtown's San Mateo and Mastick Avenues, north of Sylvan Avenue.

- Kains Avenue, east of Green Avenue.
- First Avenue through parts of Seventh Avenue (as far north as I-380, and south of Pine Street).
- City Park Way, along with portions of Crystal Springs Road.
- Magnolia Avenue, adjacent to Capuchino High School.
- Santa Helena and San Juan Avenues at San Antonio Avenue.

Flooding occurs in these areas because of inadequate storm drains and/or low elevation, which subjects the areas to tidal influences. The City's storm drain system does not operate effectively at times of high tide combined with heavy rain. Figure 7-4 shows the flood zones in the city.

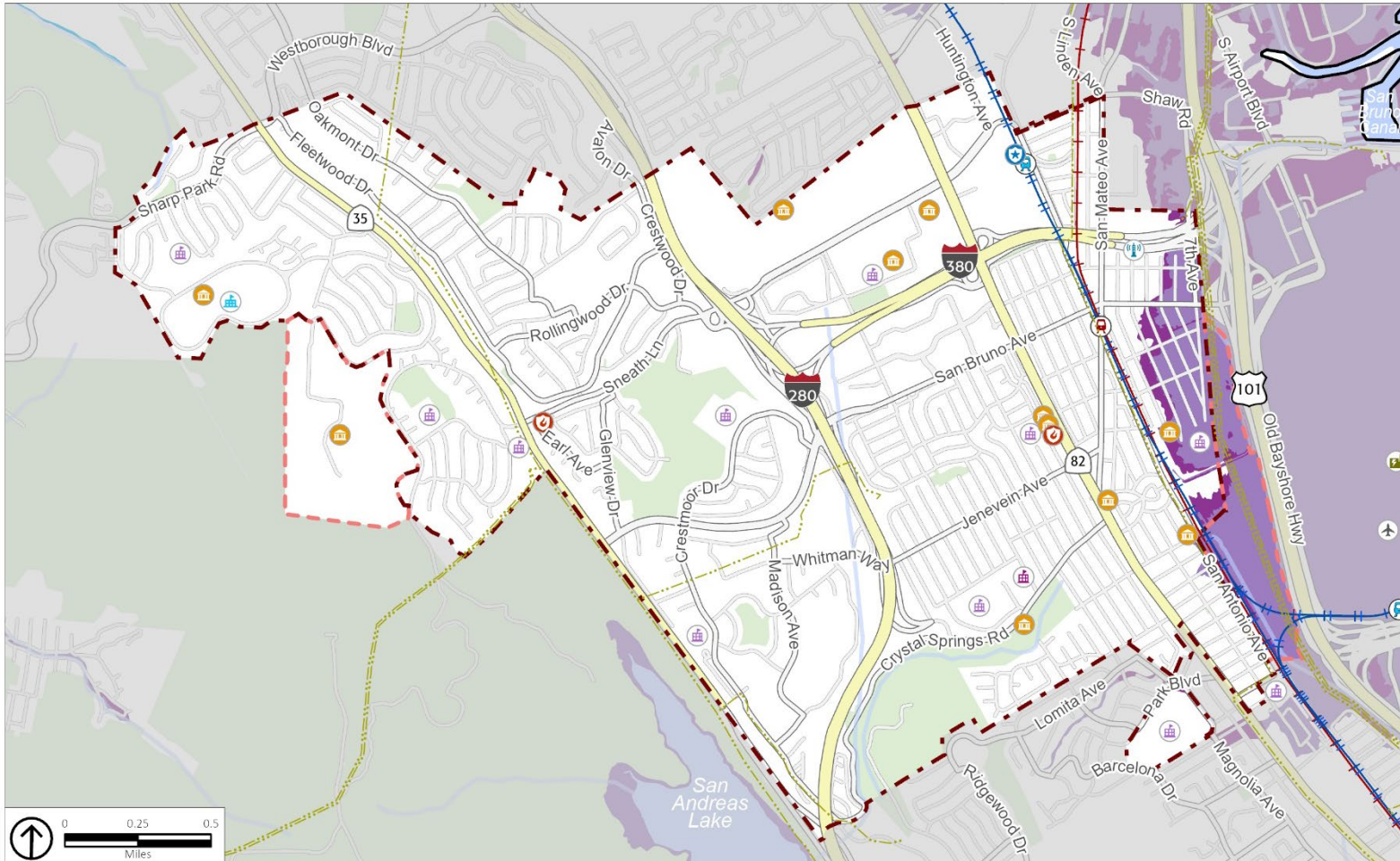
### Storm Drain System

San Bruno's system of storm drains collects and channels surface water (mostly from rainfall) into a series of pipes, trenches, culverts, detention basins, and open channels, managed by OneShoreline, which transport and empty it into San Francisco Bay. The system is based upon the natural drainage pattern determined by topography. Because of the high relief (steep slopes) in the western third of San Bruno and the more gradual eastward slope east of I-280, a gravity-flow system is used. Its main artery carries water along a course that was formerly San Bruno Creek.

Figure 7-5 illustrates the six watersheds that drain the city. The northern portion of San Bruno

drains toward South San Francisco and into Colma Creek watershed. Despite ultimate drainage into the South San Francisco system, the City of San Bruno maintains all storm drainage facilities within the city limits. The city's primary drainage basins—Crystal Springs Creek, Huntington Creek, and San Bruno Creek—encompass 80 percent of San Bruno's land area. These highly modified, intermittent channels are part of the storm drain system maintained by the San Bruno Public Works Department. Several smaller watersheds that are delineated in the eastern portion of the city reflect the pattern of existing storm drain trunks.

Figure 7-4: Flood Hazard Zones (2026)

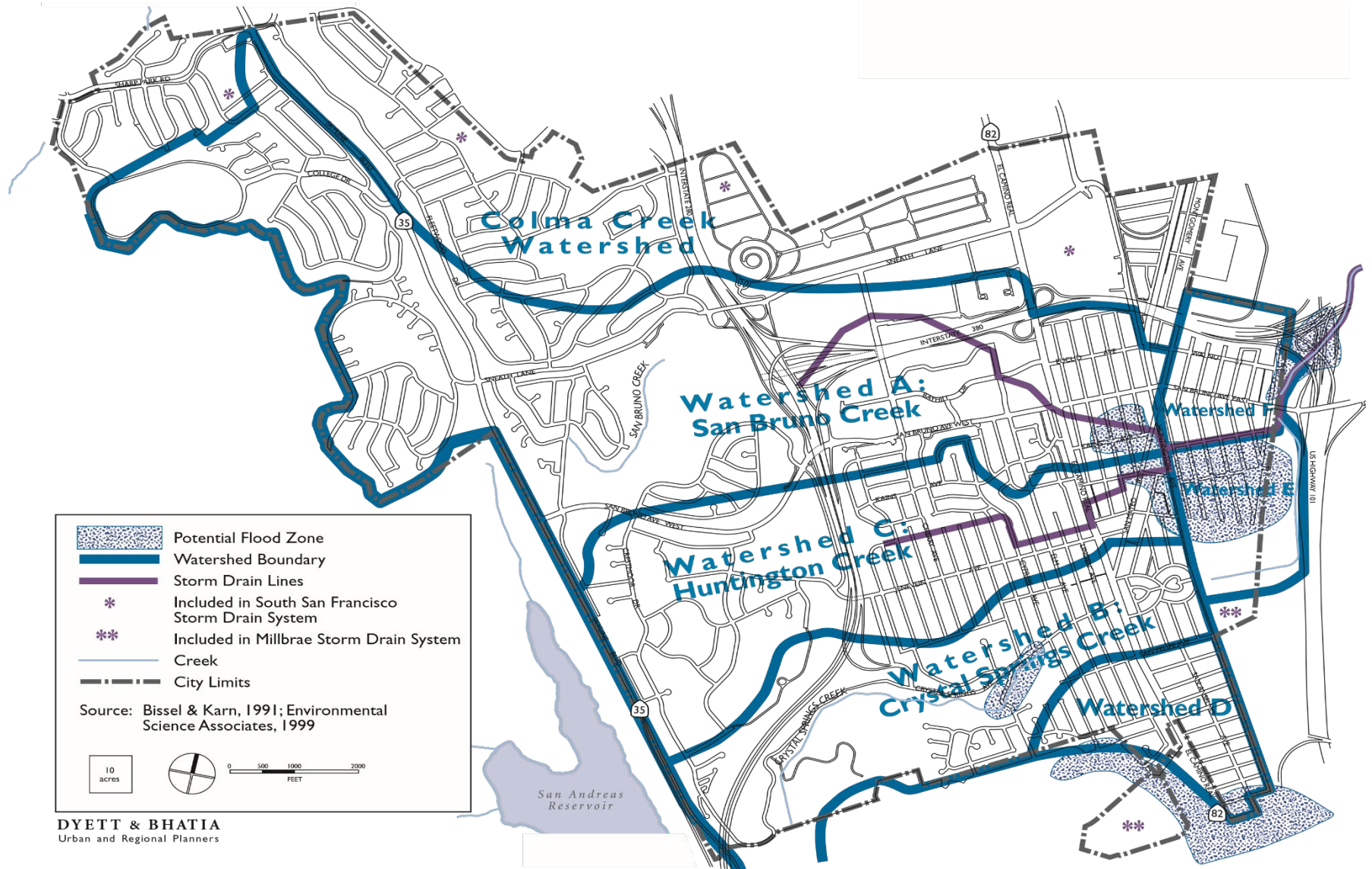


Source: ESRI, 2023; County of San Mateo, 2025; PlaceWorks, 2025; FEMA; DWR, 2021

- |                           |                   |                         |                          |                               |
|---------------------------|-------------------|-------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------|
| City of San Bruno         | BART Stations     | Fire Stations           | College or University    | Designated Flood Hazard Zones |
| Sphere of Influence       | BART Network      | Government Facilities   | Communication Facilities |                               |
| San Mateo County Boundary | Caltrain Stations | California Power Plants | Transmission Lines       |                               |
| Airport                   | Caltrain Network  | Public Schools (K-12)   |                          |                               |
|                           | Law Enforcement   | Private Schools (K-12)  |                          |                               |



Figure 7-5: Flooding and Storm Drainage (2009)



DYETT & BHATIA  
Urban and Regional Planners

*San Bruno Creek watershed* (A) encompasses an area of two square miles of mostly urbanized land, sloping steeply toward the east. Headwaters of San Bruno Creek are located in the coastal range at the boundary with the City of Pacifica. San Bruno Creek is not a natural creek, but is composed of a series of channels, pipes, and detention basins.

*Huntington Creek watershed* (C) encompasses approximately one square mile. Huntington Creek begins east of Skyline Boulevard and flows through storm drain pipes and culverts to its juncture with San Bruno Creek.

*Crystal Springs watershed* (B) drains approximately one square mile of the southern part of the city. Crystal Springs Creek originates in Junipero Serra County Park, and maintains a natural stream channel through Junipero Serra County Park and San Bruno City Park.

The discharge point for these watersheds is the San Bruno Channel, maintained by OneShoreline, located next to the South San Francisco-San Bruno Water Quality Control Plant just north of SFO. Two pump stations are critical to the movement of stormwater in this District; one at Angus Avenue and one at Walnut Street.

Silt and debris in the storm drain system can sometimes cause water to back up and flood surrounding areas. Leaves, branches, household trash, and other debris must be removed regularly in order for the storm drain system to function effectively. The City of San Bruno

Public Works Department maintains and repairs the municipal stormwater drainage system. Much of the City's storm drain infrastructure is aging and needs to be replaced. Although adequate under average conditions, there are problem spots where flooding occurs during heavy storms and high tides. Development in San Bruno's low-lying areas could be subject to flooding unless adequate measures are taken to improve the drainage system.

The City adopted a Storm Drainage Master Plan in 2014. The master plan allows the City to study and review the existing storm drain collection system performance and develop strategies to improve its level of service. As of 2026, the City has begun an update to this plan. Although proposed improvements would increase the flow through capacity of the City's storm drain system, inundation of some problem areas could still be expected during higher tides events until downstream outfall improvements are made to infrastructure owned by OneShoreline.

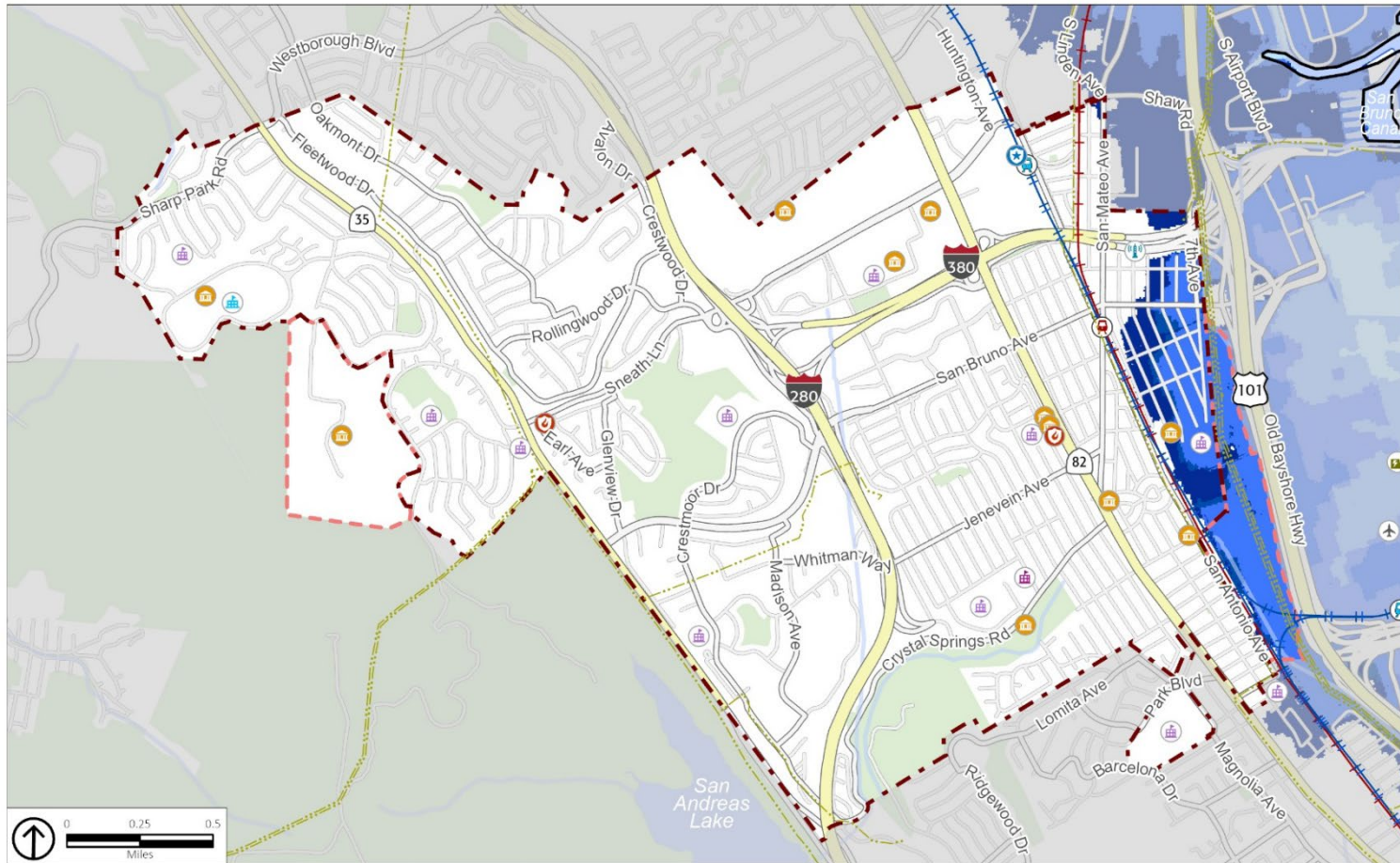
### **Climate Change Concerns**

Climate change is expected to make flood events worse by causing a number of more intense precipitation events, in the form of atmospheric rivers. As a result of these projected changes, the frequency of flooding in areas may increase and the locations of projected flooding may expand. Climate change is also likely to increase the frequency and severity of droughts, changing soil characteristics. When precipitation returns, drier and harder soils can experience more runoff

because the soils cannot absorb the water, increasing downstream flooding. In addition, floodplain areas near the bay shoreline are likely to expand as sea level rises and the tide regularly moves farther inland.

Sea level rise is a result of melting ice caps/glaciers and expansion of sea water from warmer temperatures associated with climate change. Sea levels along the Bayside are projected to increase by as much as 0.4 feet (5 inches) by 2030, 1.3 feet (16 inches) by 2050, and 5 feet (78 inches) by 2100. Regardless of the rate, increased sea levels, coupled with storm surge, wave runup, and King Tide events could result in an additional 24 to 36 inches of temporary flooding affecting San Bruno and its buildings and infrastructure adjacent to Highway 101. Figure 7-6 identifies the areas of San Bruno most vulnerable to sea level rise inundation, which could total 128 acres of land by the end of the century.

Figure 7-6: Sea Level Rise Projections (2026)



Source: ESRI, 2023; County of San Mateo, 2025; PlaceWorks, 2025; USGS CoSMoS

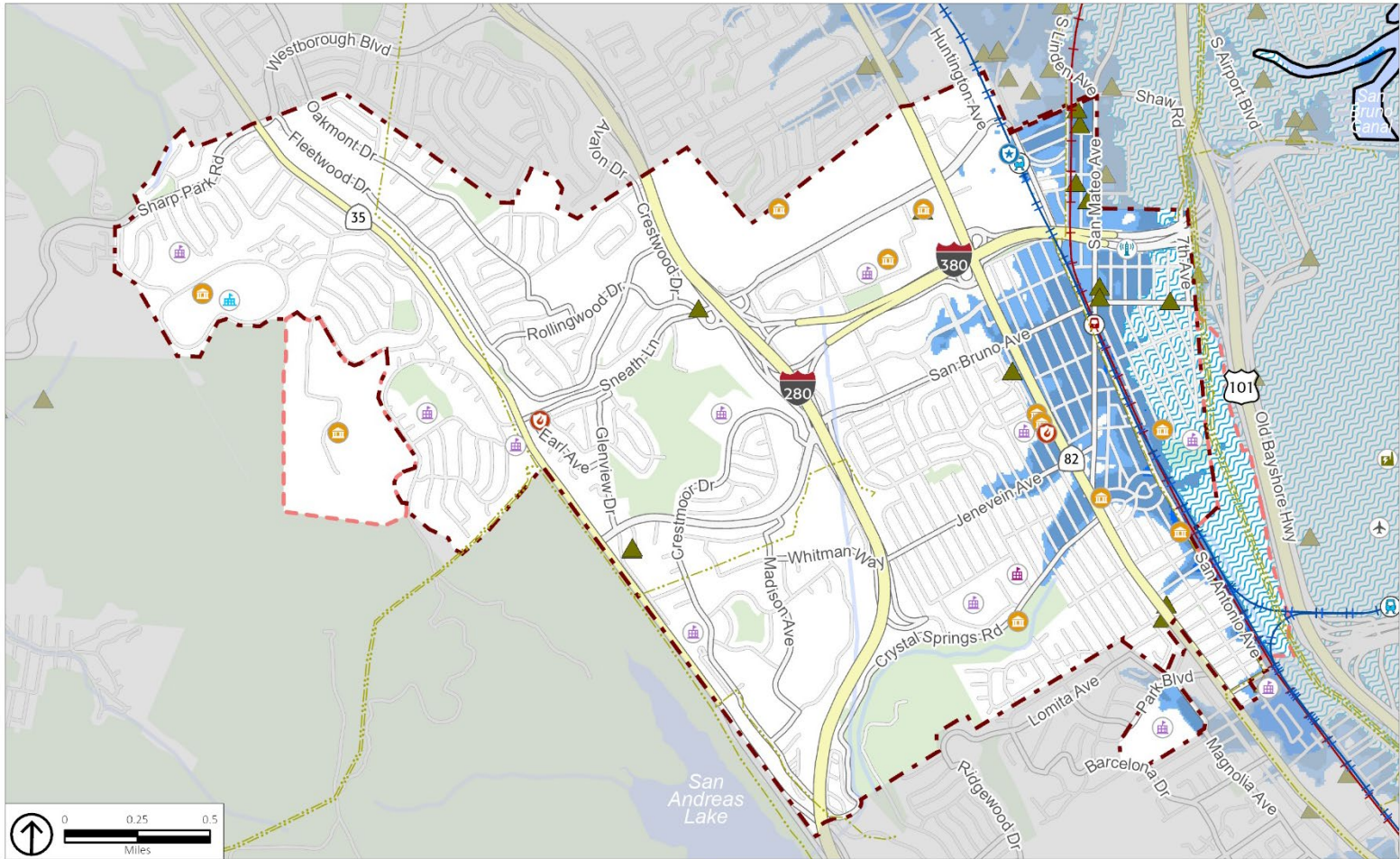
City of San Bruno	BART Stations	Fire Stations	College or University	Sea Level Rise
Sphere of Influence	BART Network	Government Facilities	Communication Facilities	
San Mateo County Boundary	Caltrain Stations	California Power Plants	Transmission Lines	
Airport	Caltrain Network	Public Schools (K-12)		
	Law Enforcement	Private Schools (K-12)		

	3.3 ft
	6.6 ft
	6.6 ft + 100-year storm
	0 ft + 100-year storm
	0.8 ft + 100-year storm
	3.3 ft + 100-year storm



Figure 7-7: Emergent Groundwater Hazards at 6.6 Feet of Sea Level Rise (2026)



Source: ESRI, 2023; County of San Mateo, 2025; PlaceWorks, 2025; California Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment, 2021; USGS, 2020

- |                           |                   |                         |                                  |  |
|---------------------------|-------------------|-------------------------|----------------------------------|--|
| City of San Bruno         | BART Stations     | Fire Stations           | College or University            | Groundwater Flooding by Sea Level Rise Scenario (6.6 feet)<br>Emergent Groundwater<br>6.6ft Sea Level Rise<br>Groundwater depth below surface<br>0 - 3.3 feet (Very Shallow)<br>3.3 - 6.6 feet (Shallow) |
| Sphere of Influence       | BART Network      | Government Facilities   | Communication Facilities         |  |
| San Mateo County Boundary | Caltrain Stations | California Power Plants | Transmission Lines               |  |
| Airport                   | Caltrain Network  | Public Schools (K-12)   | Hazardous Material Cleanup Sites |  |
|                           | Law Enforcement   | Private Schools (K-12)  |                                  |  |



An added consequence to sea level rise is emergent groundwater, which occurs when freshwater is pushed upward by denser sea water that travels further inland, causing temporary or permanent inundation. Sea level rise is expected to increase the frequency, duration, and magnitude of flood events. As sea levels rise and emergent groundwater increases, the number of individuals and properties at risk will increase, which will in turn lead to a higher likelihood of flood damage and other adverse consequences for both coastal and inland areas. Sea level rise and emergent groundwater will interact directly with stormwater from inland sources, causing more severe flooding near creeks and at the outlets of drainage systems. To further complicate this issue, the presence of contaminated soils in areas of emergent groundwater could introduce these contaminants into stormwaters, potentially spreading contaminants into uncontaminated areas or waters of the Bay. Figure 7-7 shows areas at risk of emergent groundwater in San Bruno.

## 7-5 WILDFIRE

A wildfire is an unplanned, uncontrolled fire burning in undeveloped areas, such as forests, grasslands, brush, or scrub. Wildfires pose a significant and growing threat to San Bruno and the greater region. The city's Mediterranean

climate, topography, and diverse plant communities create ideal conditions for wildfire.

The San Bruno Fire Department operates two stations, providing city-wide 24/7 coverage, with Station 51 on El Camino Real serving the east side of I-280 and Station 52 on Earl Avenue serving the west side. There are no areas within the city that are lacking in emergency fire protection services.

The wildland-urban interface (WUI) is an area where buildings and infrastructure mix with areas of flammable wildland vegetation, allowing wildland fires to easily spread to buildings and structures. Wildfires can occur naturally and are important to many ecosystem processes. However, human-caused fires are the leading cause of wildland fires, and with thousands of people living near and visiting wildland areas, the probability of human-caused fires is growing. While no major wildfire incidents have been reported in San Bruno in the past 75 years, the potential for an incident still exists. To see a map of areas burned by past wildfires, visit the Historical Fire Perimeters dataset maintained by CAL FIRE's [Fire and Resource Assessment Program](#).

Based on the 2025 fire hazard severity zone mapping prepared by the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE), the western portions of the city (adjacent to the City of Pacifica and unincorporated San Mateo County) are within very high, high, and moderate

fire hazard severity zones. Figure 7-8 identifies the mapping for these areas, which are generally near extensive natural vegetation, including Junipero Serra County Park, Crestmoor Canyon, and the San Francisco Water Department's Peninsula Watershed.<sup>2</sup> Many homes in these areas are near open spaces, increasing vulnerability to wildfires.

Dense stands of large non-native eucalyptus trees within the Crestmoor and Rollingwood neighborhoods also pose a fire threat due to the highly flammable nature of these trees, mixed with steep topography and dry conditions associated with California summers.

San Bruno is also vulnerable to smoke from wildfires occurring throughout the region. These incidents can increase the potential for poor air quality, impacting residents, workers, and visitors in the city.

## Climate Change Concerns

Wildfire season is becoming a year-round hazard, leaving communities vulnerable for much longer periods. Rising temperatures and prolonged droughts dry out vegetation, creating abundant fuel for fires. Pest outbreaks, such as bark beetle infestations, and prolonged droughts leave behind weakened and dead trees as additional fuel, and extreme heat and erratic

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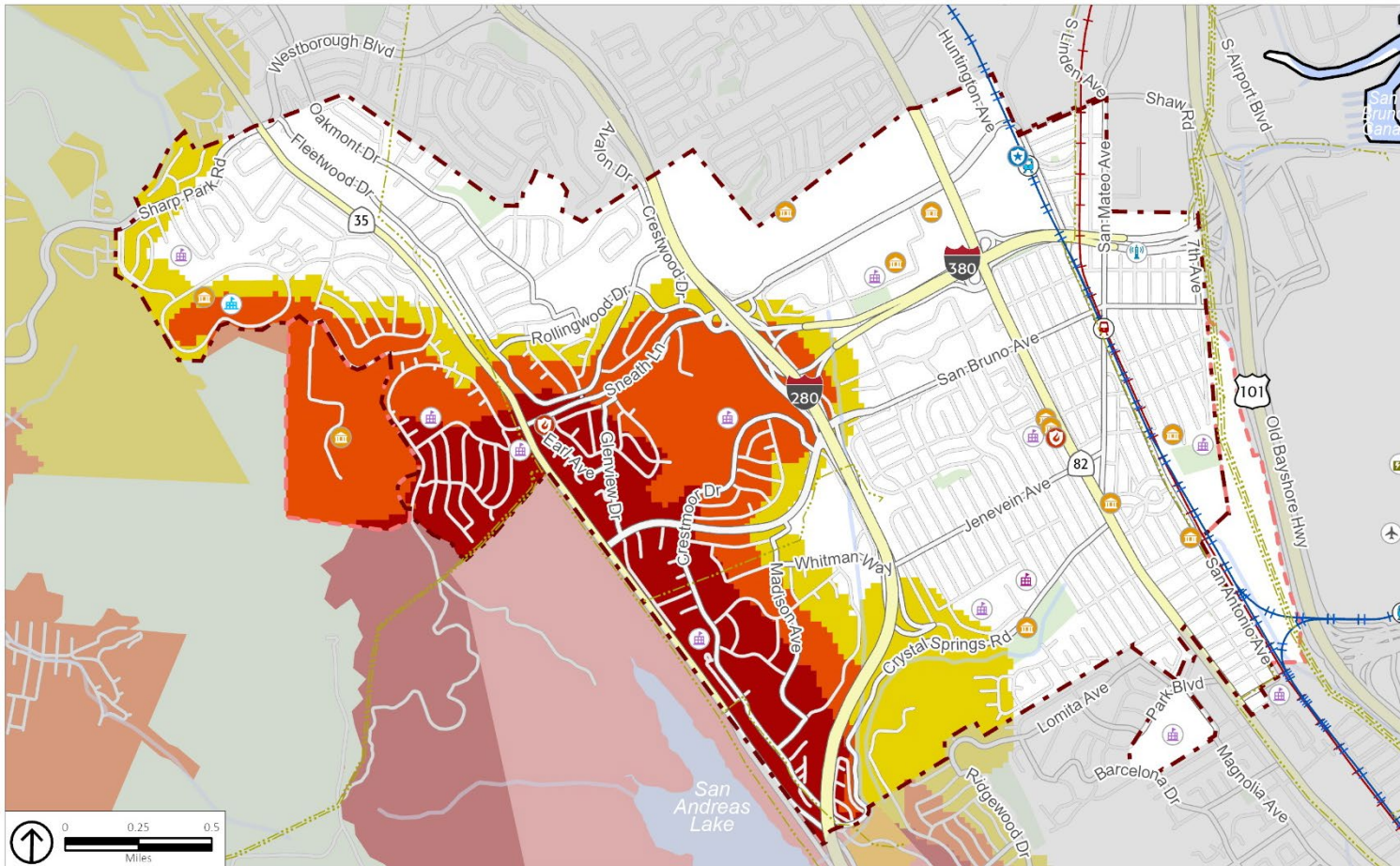
<sup>2</sup> Land use information within the VHFHSZs can be viewed on Figure 2-1 *General Land Use Diagram* of the [Land Use & Urban Design Element](#).

wind conditions make wildfires more unpredictable and harder to control.

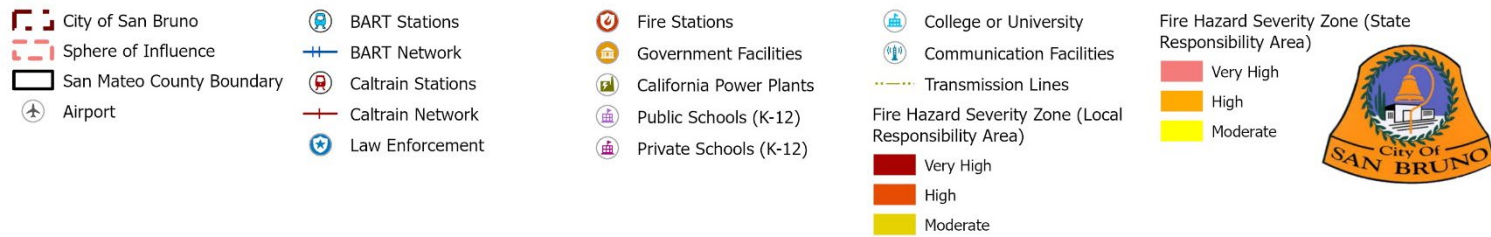
Cal-Adapt projections suggest that the average annual burned areas in San Mateo County could more than double by the end of the century. While San Mateo County has experienced many fires in the past, only a few have caused enough damage to trigger a state or federal disaster declaration. Most notable are the November 1929 fire near Montara and the August 2020 CZU Lightning Complex, which was caused by lightning strikes.

In addition to the increase in wildfires, San Bruno is also vulnerable to air quality and smoke impacts. Air quality directly affects the health, well-being, and everyday quality of life for all residents of San Bruno. Exposure to air pollutants such as ozone and particulate matter can lead to respiratory conditions, exacerbate asthma, and increase the risks of heart attacks, strokes, and certain types of cancer.

Figure 7-8: Fire Hazard Severity Zones (2026)



Source: ESRI, 2023; County of San Mateo, 2025; PlaceWorks, 2025; CALFIRE, 2025



Wildfire smoke, which contains a mixture of gases and fine particulates, has become an increasingly significant concern for air quality in San Bruno and the broader region. The health risks associated with wildfire smoke are particularly severe for vulnerable populations, including children, older adults, individuals with pre-existing respiratory or cardiovascular conditions, and low-resourced residents, who may experience more severe acute and chronic health effects. Hotter and drier conditions have increased the frequency of wildfires resulting in more frequent exposure to hazardous air quality conditions for many residents and visitors.

## 7-6 HAZARDOUS MATERIALS

Releases, leaks, or disposal of chemical compounds, such as petroleum hydrocarbons,<sup>3</sup> on or below the ground surface can lead to contamination of underlying soil and groundwater. Disturbance of a previously contaminated area through grading or excavation operations could expose the public to health hazards from physical contact with contaminated materials or hazardous vapors. Improper handling or storage of contaminated soil and groundwater can further expose the public to these hazards or potentially spread contamination through surface water runoff or air-borne dust. In addition, contaminated groundwater can spread downgradient, potentially contaminating subsurface areas of surrounding properties.



*Crystal Springs Creek flows in a meandering stream channel through City Park.*

The use of hazardous materials in San Bruno occurs most often in its commercial and industrial areas. Various state and Federal agencies monitor hazardous materials locations throughout the state, include San Bruno. The City regularly reviews these resources to determine the presence/status of leaking underground storage tanks or other potential sources of hazardous materials. Uses that generate hazardous waste can include auto body shops due to the use of solvents and petroleum products, machine shops that utilize cutting oils and heavy metals, and auto dismantlers due to the

solvents and petroleum fluids within automobiles. In cooperation with the San Francisco Bay Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB) and the California Department of Toxic Substance Control, the San Mateo County Health Services Agency's Environmental Health Division coordinates investigation and remediation of sites that have been affected by leaking underground storage tanks or hazardous waste. Depending upon the potential extent of contamination in these areas, reuse may be complicated by petroleum hydrocarbon or hazardous materials impacts to soil or groundwater.

Based on the age and nature of existing buildings in San Bruno, lead-based paint or asbestos may be present. In general, structures constructed before December 31, 1978 are at risk for lead-based paint. In addition, asbestos-containing materials (ACMs) can be present in thermal systems insulation, as well as wall and floor materials. Asbestos is a naturally occurring fibrous material used as a fireproofing and insulating agent in building construction before such uses were banned by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) in the 1970s.

Asbestos and lead-based paint can seep into the soil and/or be released into the air, providing a potential threat to the health of workers, as well as persons in the vicinity. Asbestos clean-up is regulated by federal and State laws that include the Clean Air Act and California Occupational Safety and Health Administration (Cal-OSHA). Both the

<sup>3</sup> Petroleum products range from gasoline (the lightest) to motor oil (the heaviest). A common term for the carbon-based compounds that petroleum products are composed of is petroleum hydrocarbons.

federal OSHA and Cal-OSHA regulate worker exposure during construction activities that affect lead-based paint, including demolition, removal, surface preparation for repainting, renovation, cleanup, and routine maintenance. All sites with existing structures built prior to the 1980s could be at risk for asbestos and lead-based paint contamination and therefore require individual surveys.

## 7-7 NOISE

Noise is measured in decibels (dB), which are units of sound energy intensity. Sound waves, traveling outward from a source, exert a sound pressure level measured in dB. The typical human ear is not equally sensitive to all frequencies of the audible sound spectrum. To account for this variation, the A-weighted scale is used. A-weighting is a method of frequency weighting to account for the variation in sensitivity of the human ear to the range of frequencies of the audible spectrum. A 3-dBA increase is the smallest change in noise level perceptible to the average person. Average noise exposure in the community is measured by a Community Noise Equivalent Level (CNEL). This is the computed average of noise over a 24-hour period, weighted for time of day.

Factors that can influence human response to noise include intensity, frequency, and time pattern of noise sources; the amount of background noise present prior to the intruding noise; and the nature of work or human activity that is exposed to the noise. The noise level experienced depends on the distance between the source and the receptor; presence or absence of

noise barriers and other shielding features; and the amount of noise attenuation (lessening) provided by the intervening terrain.

## Noise Sources

### Aircraft Noise

Aircraft overflight noise is an important issue in San Bruno due to the city's proximity to SFO. SFO is located to the east of San Bruno, across U.S. 101. The airport has four runways, of which two are east-west (10R-28L and 10L-28R) and two are north-south (1L-19R and 1R-19L). Northeastern portions of San Bruno are situated beneath flight tracks for arrivals and departures on runways 10R-28L and 10L-28R.

Aircraft noise contour maps are the principal tool used in analyzing airport/land use compatibility in the vicinity of airports. Each contour reflects linear bands subject to similar average noise levels. Two types of noise contour maps have been generated for SFO, one of which is based on computer modeling, while the other is based on actual measured noise levels. The Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), the agency charged with ensuring air safety, generates noise contour maps based on its Integrated Noise Model (INM). SFO received FAA approval for its original Federal Aviation Regulation (FAR) Part 150 Noise Exposure Maps (NEM) and Noise Compatibility Program in 1983. Because of the federally mandated replacement of Stage 2 aircraft with Stage 3 aircraft by 2000, noise contours at SFO have continued to shrink in recent years.

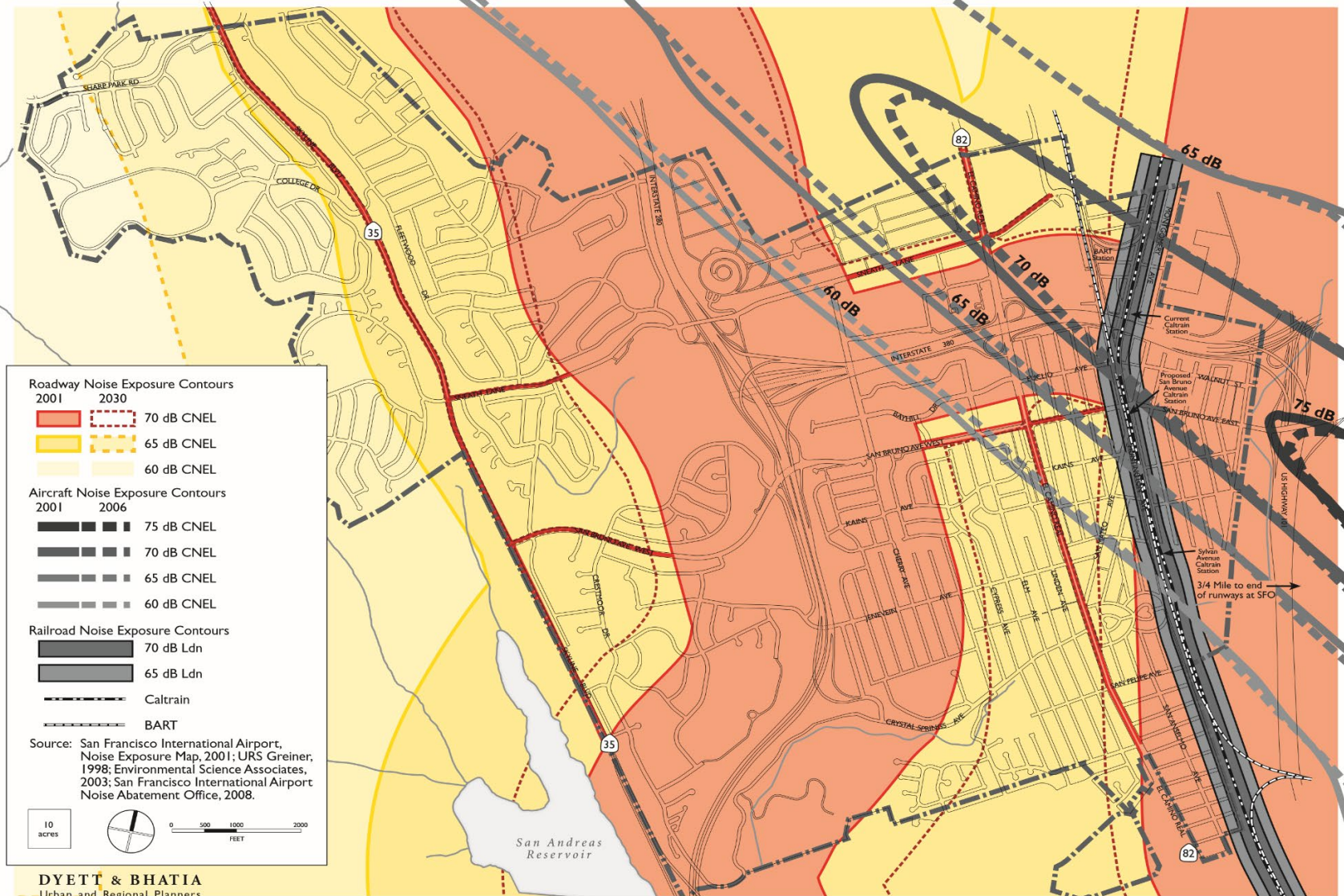
As required by State law, airports that have been designated as noise problem airports (such as

SFO) must install and maintain a noise monitoring system that identifies and defines the airport's noise impact boundary (generally the 65 CNEL noise contour), based upon the aircraft noise levels recorded by noise monitoring equipment. Four of the 27 off-airport noise meters are located within San Bruno. In accordance with Title 21 requirements, SFO staff compiles noise-monitoring data and generates 65 CNEL noise contour maps on a quarterly basis.

### SAN BRUNO AIRCRAFT NOISE INSULATION PROGRAM

Since 1983, the FAA and the City and County of San Francisco Airports Commission, the owner and operator of SFO, have jointly funded local aircraft noise insulation projects in communities near the airport. The goal of these programs is to achieve an interior noise level of 45 dB during an aircraft noise event, consistent with Title 24 noise standards. The Aircraft Noise Insulation Program includes all noise-impacted dwelling units within the 65 CNEL noise contour, as shown on the FAR Part 150 Noise Exposure Maps (NEMs). To date, about 3,000 homes in San Bruno have benefited from this program.

Figure 7-9: Existing and Projected Noise Contours (2009)





*New development under the General Plan must seek to reduce indoor ambient noise levels from the following sources—the Caltrain railroad tracks (top, center), highways, and arterial roadways (El Camino Real, bottom).*

### Roadway Noise

Areas of San Bruno are exposed to noise generated by traffic on I-280, I-380, and U.S. 101. El Camino Real is another heavily traveled roadway in the city. Traffic noise depends primarily on traffic speed (high-frequency tire noise increases with speed) and the proportion of truck traffic, which generates engine, exhaust and wind noise. The proximity of freeways and major streets, and the large amount of truck traffic serving industrial, warehousing, and freight forwarding uses in the area make San Bruno susceptible to traffic noise.

### Railway Noise

Trains operating on the Southern Pacific Railroad Line through San Bruno affect the noise environment of nearby residential areas. These tracks run adjacent to Huntington Avenue. Currently, 112 Caltrain trains and two freight trains pass through San Bruno each weekday. The freight trains operate six times a week between 7 to 10 p.m. from Sunday to Friday. The trains originate from South San Francisco and travel to San Jose and back each evening. Currently, there is also limited Caltrain activity on the weekends.

In June 2003, BART completed the SFO Airport Extension Project that included extension of the Bay Area Rapid Transit (BART) tracks by 8.7 miles and four new stations, including a new station in San Bruno and a station inside the new International Terminal at SFO. The new BART station in San Bruno, the associated parking structure,

and the BART/City of San Bruno Joint Police Station is located on Huntington Avenue adjacent to the existing shops at Tanforan. The BART tracks run along Huntington Avenue through San Bruno.

### Industrial Noise

Industrial land uses in San Bruno are limited primarily to light industrial operations (manufacturing, distribution, storage) and semi-industrial uses (car repair). These types of uses are concentrated in the North Belle Air neighborhood in the northeastern part of the city. This area is largely located within the 65 dB CNEL contour for aircraft noise.

Figure 7-9 illustrates noise contours from the various noise sources in the city.

### Noise Exposure Standards

#### State Regulations

Title 24 of the California Code of Regulations, the Building Standards Administrative Code, contains the State Noise Insulation Standards, which specify interior noise standards for new hotels, motels, apartment houses, and dwellings other than single-family homes. Such new structures must be designed to reduce outdoor noise to an interior level of (no more than) 45 dB in any habitable room. They require an acoustical analysis demonstrating how dwelling units have been designed to meet this interior standard where such units are proposed in areas subject to noise levels greater than 60 dB. Title 24 standards are typically enforced by local jurisdictions through the building permit application process.

### **San Mateo County Comprehensive Airport Land Use Plan Standards**

The San Mateo County Airport Land Use Commission (ALUC) develops and implements the San Mateo County Comprehensive Airport Land Use Plan (San Mateo County CLUP). The current San Mateo CLUP was adopted in December 1996. The CLUP establishes the procedures that C/CAG uses in reviewing proposed local agency actions that affect land use decisions in the vicinity of San Mateo County's airports. Airport planning boundaries define where height, noise and safety standards, policies, and criteria are applied to certain proposed land use policy actions. San Bruno is located within the jurisdiction of the SFO Land Use Plan, a subchapter of the San Mateo County CLUP. For the purposes of review under the SFO Land Use Plan, the '01 NEM, the most recent federally accepted NEM is the noise contour map that C/CAG uses in making its determination of the consistency of a proposed local agency land use policy action with the SFO

Land Use Plan. The northeastern corner of San Bruno is within the 2001 65 and 70 CNEL noise contours; the noise/land use compatibility standards shown in Table 7-1 apply to the areas within these noise contours.

### **City of San Bruno Noise Standards**

General Plan noise standards are shown in Table 7-2. These apply to areas outside of the airport noise impacted areas; for land within 60 db or greater airport noise contours (Figure 7-10), County airport land use compatibility noise standards as per Table 7-1 shall apply. For sites impacted by both airport and nonairport-related sources, the more stringent of the two restrictions shall apply.

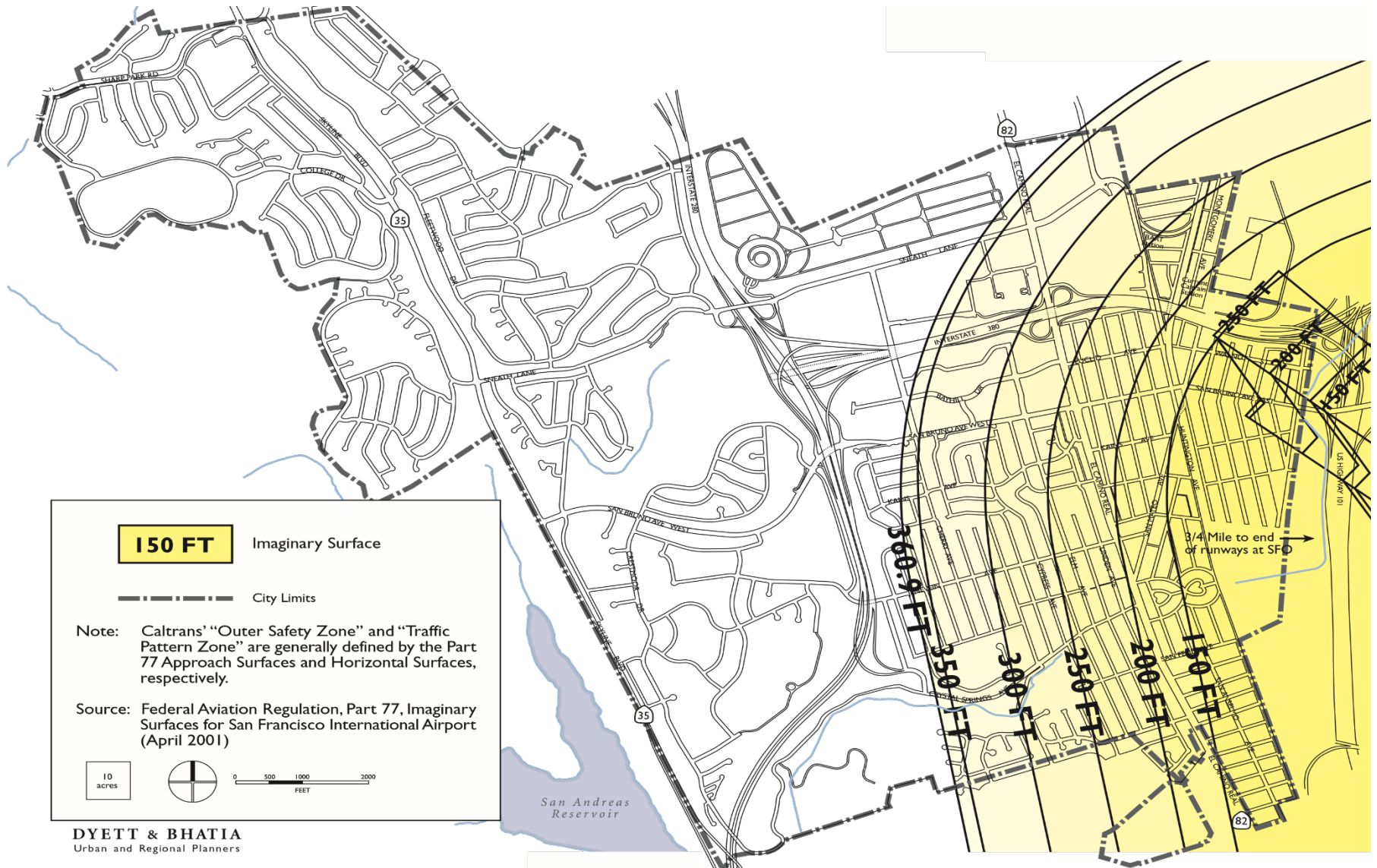
San Bruno's Noise Ordinance is contained in Title 6 of the San Bruno Municipal Code. The ordinance places limits on noise levels in residential zones, limits construction activity noise levels and hours near residential zones, establishes machinery noise level limits, and addresses amplified sounds.

## **7-8 AIRPORT SAFETY**

Approximately 90 percent of arrivals at SFO occur on the east-west runways, with approaches over San Francisco Bay and portions of San Bruno. Approximately 70 percent of departures occur on the north-south runways.

The Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) is the federal agency charged with regulating air commerce and achieving efficient use of navigable airspace. The FAA has established FAR Part 77 criteria which are imaginary surfaces that extend outward from the end of each runway and define the maximum heights of structures within the airport vicinity. Permissible building heights are equal to the difference between the height of the horizontal plane (or imaginary surface of flight pattern) and the ground elevation above mean sea level. Figure 7-6 illustrates the FAR Part 77 criteria applicable to San Bruno.

Figure 7-10: SFO Imaginary Surfaces (2009)



**Table 7-1: San Mateo County Comprehensive Airport Land Use Plan Noise/Land Use Compatibility Standards**

LAND USE	GENERAL LAND USE CRITERIA, CNELA		
	COMPATIBLE <i>No special noise insulation requirements for new construction</i>	CONDITIONALLY COMPATIBLE <i>New development should be undertaken only after analysis and including needed noise insulation features in design</i>	INCOMPATIBLE <i>New construction should not be undertaken unless related to airport activities or services. Special noise insulation features should be included in construction</i>
RESIDENTIAL: single- and multi-family, mobile homes, schools, libraries, churches, hospitals, nursing homes, and auditoriums	Less than 65	65 to 70	More than 70
COMMERCIAL: retail, restaurants, office buildings, hotels, motels, movie theaters, sports arenas, playgrounds, cemeteries, and golf courses	Less than 70	70 to 80	More than 80
INDUSTRIAL: manufacturing, transportation, communications, and utilities	Less than 75	75 to 85	More than 85
OPEN SPACE: agriculture, mining, fishing	Less than 75	NA	More than 75

Source: San Mateo County Airport Land Use Commission, San Mateo County Comprehensive Airport Land Use Plan, December 1996.

**TABLE 7-2: Land Use Compatibility For Community Noise Environments**

LAND USE CATEGORY	EXTERIOR DAY/NIGHT NOISE LEVELS DNL or Ldn, dB					
	55	60	65	70	75	80
Residential—Single Family	Normally Acceptable	Normally Acceptable	Normally Acceptable	Normally Acceptable	Normally Unacceptable	Clearly Unacceptable
Residential—Multiple Family	Normally Acceptable	Normally Acceptable	Normally Acceptable	Normally Unacceptable	Clearly Unacceptable	Clearly Unacceptable
Transient Lodging—Motels, Hotels	Normally Acceptable	Normally Acceptable	Normally Acceptable	Normally Unacceptable	Clearly Unacceptable	Clearly Unacceptable
Schools, Libraries, Churches, Hospitals, Nursing Homes	Normally Acceptable	Normally Acceptable	Normally Acceptable	Normally Unacceptable	Clearly Unacceptable	Clearly Unacceptable
Auditoriums, Concert Halls, Amphitheaters	Conditionally Acceptable	Conditionally Acceptable	Conditionally Acceptable	Normally Unacceptable	Clearly Unacceptable	Clearly Unacceptable
Sports Arena, Outdoor Spectator Sports	Conditionally Acceptable	Conditionally Acceptable	Conditionally Acceptable	Normally Unacceptable	Clearly Unacceptable	Clearly Unacceptable
Playgrounds, Parks	Normally Acceptable	Normally Acceptable	Normally Acceptable	Normally Unacceptable	Clearly Unacceptable	Clearly Unacceptable
Golf Courses, Riding Stables, Water Recreation, Cemeteries	Normally Acceptable	Normally Acceptable	Normally Acceptable	Normally Unacceptable	Clearly Unacceptable	Clearly Unacceptable
Office Buildings, Business, Commercial and Professional	Normally Acceptable	Normally Acceptable	Normally Acceptable	Normally Unacceptable	Clearly Unacceptable	Clearly Unacceptable
Industrial, Manufacturing, Utilities, Agriculture	Normally Acceptable	Normally Acceptable	Normally Acceptable	Normally Unacceptable	Clearly Unacceptable	Clearly Unacceptable

**INTERPRETATION**

	Normally Acceptable	Specified land use is satisfactory, based upon the assumption that any buildings involved are of normal conventional construction, without any special noise insulation requirements.
	Conditionally Acceptable	New construction or development should be undertaken only after a detailed analysis of the noise reduction requirements is made and needed noise insulation features included in the design.
	Normally Unacceptable	New construction or development should generally be discouraged. If new construction or development does proceed, a detailed analysis of the noise reduction requirements must be made and needed noise insulation features included in the design.
	Clearly Unacceptable	New construction or development should not be undertaken.

## 7-9 EXTREME HEAT

Extreme heat is defined as a prolonged period of excessively hot weather, which may be accompanied by high humidity, and significantly exceeds the average temperatures for a given location and time of year. As climate change starts to affect weather patterns through increased temperatures and changes in precipitation levels, communities need to anticipate changes at the local level. Higher temperatures will require mitigation of the health, economic, ecological, and social impacts or increased temperatures and heat waves.

At the state level, California has begun implementation of an Extreme Heat Action plan that provides strategies to address many of the concerns associated with extreme heat. In addition, the State developed the California Communities Extreme Heat Scoring System (CalHeatScore) to raise awareness of extreme heat impacts and share resources to increase resilience to these events. The CalHeatScore ranking system categorizes forecasted daily extreme heat events, relying on historic temperature and health data. As designed, this

CalHeatScore (CHS) Value and Impact Level
CHS 0 (Low)
CHS 1 (Mild)
CHS 2 (Moderate)
CHS 3 (High)
CHS 4 (Severe)

scoring system is intended to raise public awareness of extreme heat events where temperatures pose risks to health and safety. During an extreme heat event day one of these scores will be provided to help people in the affected areas how significant the event may be.

For San Bruno, an extreme heat day is any day where the temperature exceeds 85.9 degrees Fahrenheit (°F). On average, San Bruno has experienced three extreme heat days between 1961 and 1990. However, in the last 20 years, the city has experienced more than 10 events in a year 5 times, with the largest number of events (21 extreme heat days) occurring in 2020. Based on Cal-Adapt projections, San Bruno may experience up to eight extreme heat days annually by mid-century and up to 15 extreme heat days annually by the end of the century. This is a five-fold increase from historic events.

In addition to extreme heat days, concern regarding warm nights is also an issue. Warm night temperatures affect the ability of a community and its residents to effectively cool down from extreme heat days. If temperatures remain higher than normal at night, the compounding impacts from high daytime temperatures can be highly detrimental to public health. According to Cal-Adapt, a warm night event in San Bruno is a night when the evening temperature exceeds 57.6°F. Historically, San Bruno experienced four warm nights annually. Cal-Adapt projections suggest by mid-century the city could

experience up to 46 nights and by the end of the century up to 101 nights.

Warmer temperatures and the urban heat island effect can exacerbate extreme heat impacts in densely populated areas, especially those that have limited tree canopy. **Figure 7-11** shows the areas of San Bruno that may experience higher temperatures on extreme heat days due to limited shade cover and presence of heat-absorbing materials. Areas most at risk include the east San Bruno residential neighborhoods.

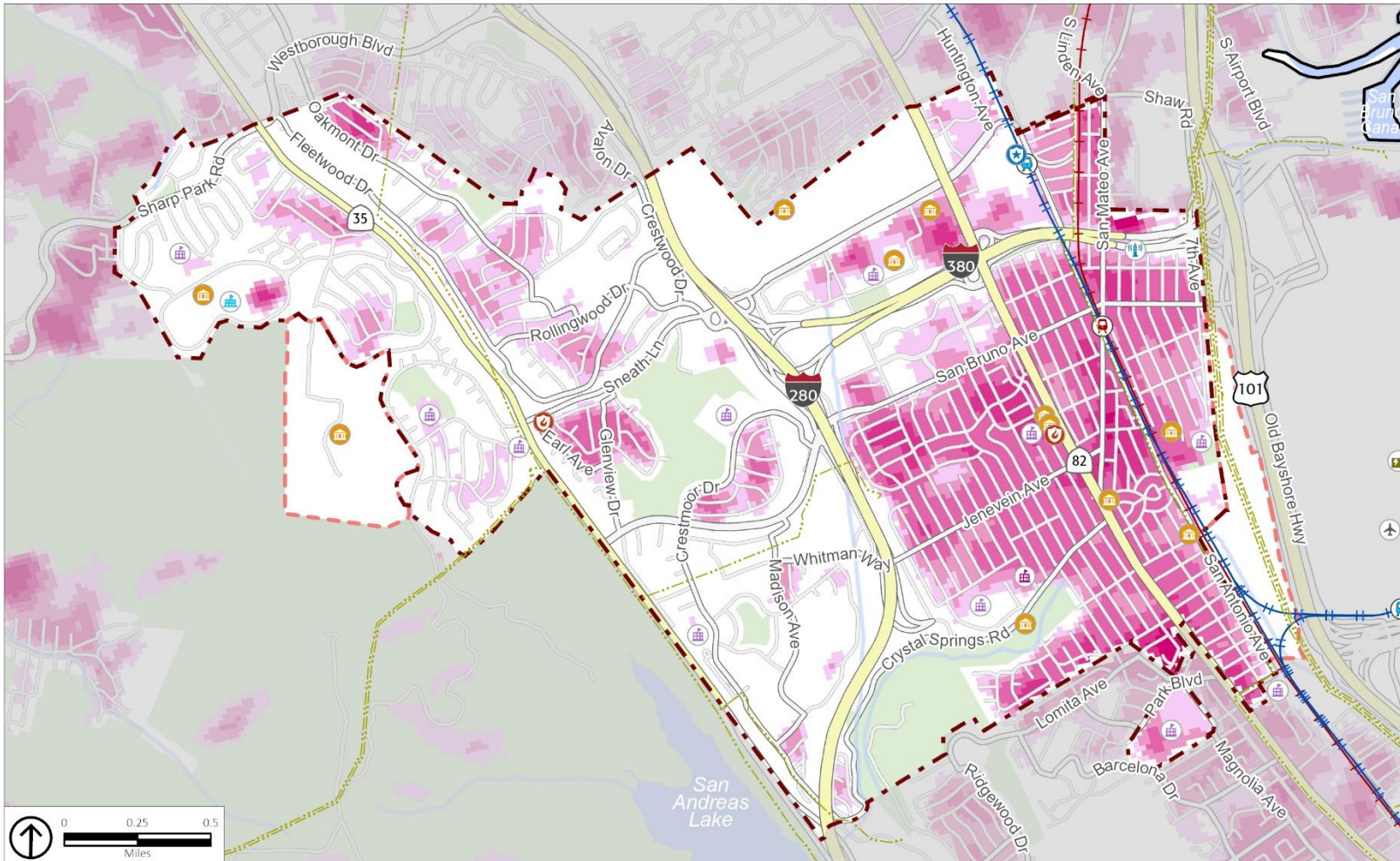
Extreme heat is an increasingly serious issue for San Bruno. More frequent and intense heat events are expected to threaten public health, infrastructure, and the environment. Single-day events are easier to manage in comparison to multiday heat waves, which can threaten community safety, drive up energy costs, and exacerbate the risks of wildfires and water shortages. Extreme heat is one of the deadliest climate-related hazards nationwide, seeing a nearly eight-fold increase in deaths in the past 20 years.

The rising frequency and intensity of extreme heat events pose significant public health concerns, especially in areas like San Bruno that have historically experienced milder temperatures and are home to residents without access to climate-controlled environments. Warmer temperatures and the urban heat island effect can exacerbate extreme heat impacts in densely populated areas, especially those that have limited tree

canopy like the residential neighborhoods of  
east San Bruno. Higher demand for services

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**FIGURE 7-11: Extreme Heat Index (2026)**



Source: ESRI, 2023; County of San Mateo, 2025; PlaceWorks, 2025; The Trust for Public Land, 2019

- |                           |                   |                         |                          |   |
|---------------------------|-------------------|-------------------------|--------------------------|---|
| City of San Bruno         | BART Stations     | Fire Stations           | College or University    | Contiguous United States Cities<br>Heat Severity 2020 |
| Sphere of Influence       | BART Network      | Government Facilities   | Communication Facilities |   |
| San Mateo County Boundary | Caltrain Stations | California Power Plants | Transmission Lines       |   |
| Airport                   | Caltrain Network  | Public Schools (K-12)   | Mild                     |   |
|                           | Law Enforcement   | Private Schools (K-12)  | Mild to Moderate         |   |
|                           |                   |                         | Moderate                 |   |
|                           |                   |                         | Moderate to High         |   |
|                           |                   |                         | Severe                   |   |



and electricity (for air conditioning) can overload these systems, causing delays and outages and can degrade utilities and infrastructure. Rising temperatures can lead to increased stress and failure in these systems as well as harm local ecosystems (lakes, streams, and habitats).

## 7-10 OTHER HAZARDS

In addition to the hazards identified in the previous discussions, there are other issues that may impact public safety and related issues in San Bruno. These hazards may affect the city in a variety of ways depending on the conditions experienced in the future.

### Drought

San Bruno's water supply primarily comes from surface water sources (about 95 percent) from the San Francisco Public Utilities Commission, as well as local groundwater resources (about 5 percent). While local groundwater can be more resilient to drought conditions, much of the water supplied to San Bruno from the San Francisco Public Utilities Commission comes from surface waters from the Hetch Hetchy watershed (85 percent) that feed into the Hetch Hetchy reservoir. The remaining 15 percent of the city's surface water supply comes from the San Andreas and Crystal Springs reservoirs in the Alameda and Peninsula watersheds. Since most of the city's water supplies come from surface waters, drought is a concern as this type of supply can be more vulnerable to drought conditions than groundwater resources. San Bruno is an active participant in regional groundwater storage

and recovery agreement to enhance groundwater resources. Under these agreements, the City currently limits its use of groundwater to support this effort.

A drought is where conditions are drier than normal for an extended period, making less water available for people and ecosystems. While droughts are part of a normal climate cycle, climate change is expected to cause more frequent and severe drought incidents across the state. While droughts do not typically cause direct loss of life or extensive structural damage, they can result in environmental and economic harm. Increases in water demands from population growth, coupled with increased reliance on groundwater reserves from increased pumping, can lead to restrictions and quality issues. Prolonged drought conditions also increase wildfire susceptibility due to dried vegetation and vulnerability to pests. Residents and businesses can also be impacted by prolonged droughts as they may be required to conserve water, which could impact their households and businesses. Depending on the duration, water customers may also see changes in the cost of their water as well.

While current projections show that future annual precipitation levels will not fluctuate significantly, an increase in the frequency of extreme precipitation events (high and low) are anticipated. This potentially reduces water absorption, which, coupled with a reduction in Sierra Nevada snowpack, stresses infrastructure systems that capture freshwater. In addition, as drought events intensify, soils in

the affected area harden, reducing infiltration, which can result in reduced groundwater recharge and a reduction in groundwater aquifer levels. This is further exacerbated by the inability of these soils to absorb water when rain events occur, resulting in more runoff, which can cause flooding as it heads towards the bay.

### Ecosystem Pests

Ecosystem pests are plant and animal species that can harm San Bruno's open spaces, aquatic habitats, and urban forest. As a result of climate change, an increase in the abundance and range of both native and non-native pests and invasive plants is projected. Invasive plant species threaten local ecosystems by outcompeting native flora, disrupting habitats, and reducing biodiversity. Warmer temperatures and shifting precipitation patterns can weaken plants and trees, making them more susceptible to infestations and infections. While San Bruno consists of an urban and built-up environment, ecosystem pests could still cause lasting damage to habitats and vegetation within open space and parks in the city.

In addition, resources like the urban tree canopy that helps reduce the urban heat island effect, and the wetlands adjacent to San Bruno that help mitigate impacts from sea level rise and flooding may be susceptible to pests. Wetlands may become impacted due to vegetation/habitat loss, which can impact hydrological processes, causing increased runoff and erosion. This can result in reduced water quality, increased water temperatures,

and disruptions to water dynamics, reducing the function and efficacy of these systems.

## **Human Health Hazards**

Human health hazards, including bacteria, viruses, parasites, and other pathogens, pose significant concerns in San Bruno. These conditions can result in physical injuries, fatalities, mental health issues, and exacerbate pre-existing conditions like asthma and allergies. Vectors for these hazards may include rats, mice, ticks, and mosquitoes, which can spread illness. Changing temperatures and precipitation in the future may result in increased populations of these vectors and expand the locations where these vectors travel.

Increases in heatwaves can directly impact human health by causing heat-related illnesses and deaths, while also worsening respiratory conditions due to increased air pollution. The implications of these health hazards extend beyond individual well-being, placing strain on healthcare systems, increasing economic burdens, and affecting mental health.

## **Severe Weather**

Severe weather (usually caused by intense storm systems or wind events) poses a significant threat to San Bruno and the greater region. The types of dangers posed by severe weather include injuries or deaths, damage to buildings and structures, fallen trees, roads blocked by debris, and fires sparked by lightning. In addition, these events can exacerbate other hazards and increase the risk of wildfire and flooding in some areas. To

manage these risks, utility providers may shut off power or limit operations, which can produce service outages for an extended period of time. These reduced services could affect emergency notifications, impact resource management and coordination, and, depending on the duration, impact access to goods and services in the community.

During severe weather events, transportation services may be impacted by blocked roadways or reduced operations, which can impact the populations that rely on these resources. If this is the primary form of mobility for some populations, the need to evacuate may be limited or impacted, increasing their vulnerability to the effects of severe weather incidents.

## 7-11 HEALTH AND SAFETY POLICIES

### Goals, Policies, and Implementation Actions

#### Emergency Preparedness and Evacuation

**Goal HS-1:** A community prepared for emergency situations and incidents.

**HS-1.1** Promote activities (such as safety fairs, educational campaigns, and development review procedures) that reduce the risk of loss of life, injuries, loss of property, or resources due to natural hazards.

**HS-1.2** Incorporate the current San Mateo Multi-Jurisdictional Local Hazard Mitigation Plan (LHMP) and San Bruno Annex, as approved by the Federal Emergency Management Agency, into this Safety Element by reference, as permitted by California Government Code Section 65302.6.

**HS-1.3** Ensure that land use plans/development projects recognize the interrelationship between land capacity constraints and natural hazard constraints.

**HS-1.4** Ensure development in areas vulnerable to natural disasters, particularly in areas with recurring damage and/or the presence of multiple natural hazards adhere to the latest standards and best practices to mitigate those hazards.

**HS-1.5** Regulate development, including remodeling or structural rehabilitation, to assure adequate mitigation of safety hazards on sites having a history or threat of slope instability, erosion, subsidence, seismic dangers (including those resulting from liquefactions, ground failure, ground rupture), flooding, and/or fire hazards.

**HS-1.6** Continue to update the City's Building Code and modify the state minimum requirement due to local climatic, geological and topographical conditions. Review and revise Zoning Ordinance, and Subdivision requirements to safeguard against seismic, geologic, wildfire, and other safety hazards. Mitigation should include:

- Minimal grading and removal of natural vegetation to prevent erosion and slope instability. Cleared slopes should be replanted with vegetation.
- Proper drainage control to prevent erosion of the site and affected properties.
- Careful siting and structural engineering in unstable areas.
- Consideration of flooding and fire hazards in siting and designing new development.

**HS-1.7** Require new development to assist emergency responders by providing high-visibility street signage for streets, adequate access for fire and emergency vehicles and equipment, and fuel clearance around roadways.

**HS-1.8** Require new development in hazard-prone areas (wildfire, flood, landslide instability, etc.) to have access to at least two emergency evacuation routes, unless alternative means and methods are approved by the City.

**HS-1.9** Locate critical facilities outside of mapped hazard areas whenever possible, accounting for how climate change may increase the frequency and intensity of hazards. If critical facilities must be in hazard areas, ensure these facilities and their access routes are protected from the hazard risks characteristic to each location.

**HS-1.10** Coordinate with surrounding jurisdictions, school districts, recreation and park districts, and community-based organizations to ensure adequate and equitably located emergency shelters, community resilience centers, and alternate care sites are available when natural disasters and other highly hazardous conditions occur.

**HS-1.11** Ensure the designs for new and significantly renovated community-oriented facilities allow flexible uses and support multiple community purposes, including use as community resilience centers.

A **resilience center**, sometimes called a resilience hub, is a community-serving facility that can remain operational during and immediately after an emergency to provide shelter, distribution of resources, key services, and other community needs. These facilities can also serve day-to-day community needs, such as a library, school, or community center, during normal conditions.

**HS-1.12** Renovate existing City-owned facilities and design new City facilities to incorporate renewable energy generation systems, battery energy storage systems, and energy-efficient design and features, as feasible.

**HS-1.13** Encourage the installation of emergency power supplies, including solar panels and battery energy storage systems, for existing residential and nonresidential properties.

**HS-1.14** Maintain a current Emergency Operations Plan that meets current and anticipated community needs in the event of a major disaster or hazardous event.

**HS-1.15** Support and encourage the continued use and expansion of the Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) training to eligible residents and members of the business community, to increase disaster awareness and emergency response capability.

**HS-1.16** In coordination with regional, State, and federal agencies, develop a post-disaster recovery strategy that prioritizes community resilience and sustainability, and includes an evaluation for appropriate redevelopment potential following a major disaster. Publicize recovery measures along with emergency preparedness information.

**HS-1.17** Ensure that communication, education, and information materials on short-term recovery activities are available to all residents with a focus on accessibility for vulnerable populations.

**HS-1.18** Coordinate with transit agencies, school districts, community service organizations, and faith-based organizations to assist with evacuation efforts, ensuring evacuation services are available to vulnerable populations, including those with limited English proficiency, limited mobility, or limited access to transportation, communication, and other lifeline resources and services.

**HS-1.19** Collaborate with surrounding jurisdictions to ensure the ongoing maintenance and readiness of potential evacuation routes serving the city, including making improvements to existing roads to support safe evacuations, as needed.

**HS-1.20** Coordinate with emergency responders, Caltrans, San Mateo County Department of Emergency Management, and regional transit agencies to maintain potential evacuation routes to ensure adequate capacity, safety, and viability of those routes in the event of an emergency.

**HS-1.21** Ensure emergency alert systems provide community members with alerts about upcoming or current emergency events in languages and formats accessible to the entire community.

**HS-1.22** Coordinate with emergency service and medical service providers to ensure preparedness and provide emergency response.

**HS-1.23** Ensure engagement campaigns increase awareness of and preparation for hazards in the community.

**HS-1.24** Collaborate with surrounding jurisdictions and local community-based organizations to evaluate opportunities to preserve and

improve the cost and quality of property insurance for community members.

**HS-1.25** Ensure City-owned roadways are maintained and retrofitted to meet local and State requirements regarding access and evacuation.

**HS-1.26** Require private property owners to maintain roadways and access points to meet local and state requirements regarding emergency access and evacuation.

**HS-1.27** Maintain functionality and make improvements, where feasible, of existing emergency evacuation routes within the city, taking into account current and future natural and human-caused hazards.

**HS-1.28** Ensure new development, redevelopment, and increases in occupancy, do not impede effective evacuations during emergencies by requiring project level evacuation studies and project design features as appropriate that support the City's evacuation network and facilities.

**HS-1.29** Support access to and provide information about affordable homeowners and renters insurance for all community members.

**HS-1.30** Encourage regional partnerships and mutual aid agreements between the City, neighboring

communities, the County, and regional agencies, further strengthening emergency response capabilities.

### **Implementation Actions**

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**Action 1.1:** Update all emergency management plans to conform with the California Standardized Emergency Management System (SEMS)

**Action 1.2:** Clearly post information and directions for residents, workers, and visitors on evacuation routes and procedures during an evacuation incident.

**Action 1.3:** Work with neighboring jurisdictions, districts, and agencies to establish and maintain equitably located community resilience centers throughout the community and in the wider region, ensuring that resilience centers are situated outside of areas at risk from hazard impacts to the extent possible, offer refuge from extreme heat and poor air quality due to regional wildfire smoke, and are equipped with renewable energy generation and backup power supplies. Such facilities should be in easily accessible locations and available to all community members. Conduct outreach to educate and inform the

community about the resilience hubs.

**Action 1.4:** Develop an Alternative Transit Support Plan in collaboration with transit, dial-a-ride, and paratransit services to provide transit services to and from resilience centers for older adults and people with disabilities in the community.

**Action 1.5:** Install emergency power supplies at City-owned and operated critical facilities.

**Action 1.6:** Provide back-up power systems for all City-owned traffic signals on potential evacuation routes.

**Action 1.7:** Develop or update emergency evacuation traffic signal timing plans for all signals on potential evacuation routes, prioritizing outbound traffic flow while maintaining access for emergency vehicles through traffic signal pre-emption.

**Action 1.8:** Designate corridors where temporary evacuation capacity can be created through manual traffic direction to optimize traffic flow, including use of available parking lanes, shoulders, and bikeways for traffic while ensuring emergency responder access is maintained.

**Action 1.9:** Develop criteria for roadway maintenance projects that identifies enhancements/modifications that support improved evacuation capacity and functionality.

**Action 1.10:** Maintain inter-jurisdictional cooperation and coordination, including mutual and automatic aid agreements with fire protection and suppression agencies in San Mateo County.

**Action 1.11:** Conduct engagement campaigns in multiple languages and offer residents information on ways to protect their property and preserve personal health and safety from various hazards, and on available incentives and other financial resources.

**Action 1.12:** Conduct regular emergency training exercises and participate in regional training exercises to ensure that City employees are adequately trained in emergency response and recovery operations.

**Action 1.13:** Publicize areas at risk of local hazards, emergency preparedness programs, evacuation planning resources, and other efforts to promote resident awareness and caution regarding hazards, including soil

instability, earthquakes, flooding, and fire.

**Action 1.14:** Work with utility providers to identify residents whose health and safety may be most severely impacted by power outages and provide support and assistance in obtaining backup power supplies and other safety resources.

### Geologic and Seismic Hazards

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**Goal HS-2: A community more resilient to the effects of geologic and seismic hazards.**

**HS-2.1** Reduce the potential for damage from geologic hazards through appropriate site design and erosion control.

**HS-2.2** Reduce the potential for damage from seismic hazards through geotechnical analysis, hazard abatement, seismic retrofitting, emergency preparedness, and recovery planning.

**HS-2.3** Require geotechnical investigations for development proposed in areas where geologic conditions or soil types are subject to landslide risk, slippage, erosion, liquefaction, or expansive soils. (Require submission of geotechnical investigation and demonstration that the project conforms to all recommended mitigation measures prior to City approval).

**HS-2.4** As part of the development review process, prevent soil erosion by retaining and replanting vegetation, and by siting development to minimize grading and landform alteration.

**HS-2.5** Require preparation of a drainage and erosion control plan for land alteration and vegetation removal on sites greater than 10,000 sq. ft. in size.

**HS-2.6** Development in areas subject to seismic hazards, including ground shaking, liquefaction, and seismically-induced landslides (Figure 7-3) will comply with the latest guidance from the California Department of Conservation.

**HS-2.7** Promote retrofitting of existing structural hazards related to unreinforced masonry, poor or outdated construction techniques, and lack of seismic retrofit.

**HS-2.8** In accordance with the Alquist-Priolo Special Studies Zones Act, do not permit structures across an active fault (Figure 7-3) or within 50 feet of an active fault, except single-family wood frame dwellings where no other location on a lot is feasible. Require any new development to contract with geotechnical engineers to reduce potential damage from seismic activity.

**HS-2.9** Recommend a geologic report by a qualified geologist for construction or remodeling of all structures, including single-family dwellings, proposed within a defined setback established by the City of a historically active or known active fault (Figure 7-3). Geologic reports should recommend minimum setbacks, siting and structural safety standards, to reduce potential seismic hazards. Geologic reports must be filed with the State Geologist by the City within 30 days of receipt.

**HS-2.10** Encourage property owners to conduct preventative maintenance of structures and to perform foundation and other seismic retrofit improvements.

**HS-2.11** Projects involving building permits, land use permits, and environmental review subject to the California Environmental Quality Act will be reviewed for hazardous geologic and seismic conditions using the most current data.

### Implementation Actions

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**Action 2.1:** Establish and maintain informational material that outlines requirements for development.

**Action 2.2:** Develop a Utilities Resilience Program that examines all existing utility lines that cross active fault traces to determine their ability to survive fault

movement and the necessary modifications to withstand anticipated movement.

**Action 2.3:** Update the existing inventory of seismically vulnerable structures and identify potential funding sources for owner retrofit.

### Flooding

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Please note that policies within Chapter 6: Environmental Resources and Conservation and Chapter 8: Public Facilities and Services address water supply and conservation. Additionally, policies in the Geology and Hazardous Materials sections of this element address water quality.

**Goal HS-3: A community where impacts associated with flooding are managed effectively.**

**HS-3.1** Increase public awareness about flooding and flood risks, and approaches to avoid and minimize flood risks on private property.

**HS-3.2** With cooperation from the San Mateo County Flood and Resiliency District (OneShoreline), continue maintenance, early warning, and clean-up activities for storm drains throughout San Bruno.

**HS-3.3** Coordinate with the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) to ensure appropriate designation and mapping of floodplains.

**HS-3.4** Actively engage the San Mateo County Flood and Resiliency District (OneShoreline) to address long-term solutions to potential flood hazards, which may include, but not be limited to, greater pumping capacity, deeper flow channels, or detention ponds.

**HS-3.5** Discourage new development in areas designated within the 100-year floodplain and require flood-proofing in areas designated within the 500-year floodplain.

**HS-3.6** Ensure building designs and site engineering requirements meet or exceed flood risk requirements and address community-level flood issues.

**HS-3.7** Design and engineer new or redevelopment projects in potential flood hazard areas (e.g., Belle Air Park) to withstand known flood risk.

**HS-3.8** Require upgrade of the City's storm drain infrastructure proportionate with new development's fair share of demand. Require that stormwater management capacity and infrastructure are in place prior to occupancy of new development.

**HS-3.9** Require developers to implement erosion and sedimentation control measures to maintain an operational drainage system, preserve drainage capacity, and protect water quality.

**HS-3.10** Maintain ongoing communication and coordination with surrounding cities, San Mateo County, and other agencies( (OneShoreline), San Francisco International Airport and California Department of Fish and Wildlife)—to ensure proper maintenance of storm drain infrastructure that carries surface water runoff.

**HS-3.11** Coordinate with OneShoreline to identify sites subject to flooding hazards and opportunities to protect these sites through storm drainage improvements or other options.

**HS-3.12** Retain existing open space areas that support stormwater detention/retention, recharge aquifers, and prevent flooding.

**HS-3.13** Require that construction activities comply with regulations and requirements, follow best practices, meet future community needs, and accommodate changes associated with climate change.

### **Implementation Actions**

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**Action 3.1:** Upgrade or replace storm drains where needed to reduce potential flooding, particularly in the neighborhoods east of El Camino Real.

**Action 3.2:** Analyze projects along creeks to help establish appropriate buffer zones from top of creek bank to provide space to

accommodate and maintain built and natural infrastructure for flood protection, habitat restoration, and public access. A wider buffer zone to accommodate habitat migration shall be included where feasible.

**Action 3.3:** Revise San Bruno landscaping requirements to prevent unnecessary pooling of water, reducing residents' susceptibility to mosquito infestation and viruses.

**Action 1.15:** Coordinate with OneShoreline to explore the feasibility of creating a parametric insurance model for flood-prone areas, including both inland and shoreline flooding.

### **Emergent Groundwater**

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**Goal HS-4:** A community proactively addressing emergent groundwater conditions.

**HS-4.1** Ensure stormwater systems anticipate projected sea level rise to ensure safe conveyance, treatment, and management of stormwater as groundwaters rise and change over time.

**HS-4.2** Coordinate with OneShoreline and adjacent jurisdictions as appropriate to establish a detailed

understanding of the effects of rising shallow groundwater on people, ecological assets, and the built environment in San Bruno. This includes buoyancy, seepage, infiltration, liquefaction, corrosion, and contaminant mobilization hazards. This assessment should have an interactive map component or rely on OneShoreline's map of future conditions) that will be updated based on site-specific geotechnical and topographic data submitted by new developments.

### **Implementation Actions**

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**Action 4.1:** Require new development in areas where emergent groundwater is a concern, to flood-proof underground and first floors to accommodate emergent groundwater.

**Action 4.2** Evaluate risks to infrastructure associated with emergent groundwater conditions.

**Action 4.3** Evaluate the areas of potential emergent groundwater with known hazardous materials locations to determine potential interaction risks.

**Action 4.4** Work with OneShoreline and adjacent jurisdictions as appropriate to incorporate regionally coordinated adaptation strategies for shallow groundwater rise into San Bruno's Local Hazard Mitigation Plan,

General Plan, Capital Improvement Plan, and Municipal Code. Adaptation strategies can include updated land use policies, building code revisions, infrastructure investments, better monitoring systems, and nature-based solutions.

## Wildfire

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### **Goal HS-5: A community proactively managing risks associated with wildfire hazards.**

- HS-5.1** Maintain and enhance water supply infrastructure to ensure adequate supplies for existing and future daily demands and firefighting suppression requirements.
- HS-5.2** Ensure new development provides the necessary improvements to ensure water supply infrastructure and evacuation roadway capacity is not degraded for existing development.
- HS-5.3** Coordinate with local and regional agencies to require vegetation management and long-term maintenance of fire hazard reduction projects (including community fuel breaks) on all private and public roads and properties, especially in fire-prone areas.

**HS-5.4** Educate residents (with special attention to at risk populations) and businesses on vegetation management practices, including fire safety, landscape installation and maintenance, defensible space, and other fire hazard reduction strategies.

**HS-5.5** Regularly re-evaluate fire hazard areas and adopt reasonable safety standards covering such elements as vegetation management around homes, adequacy of existing and future water supplies, fire flow tests, fire hydrants, routes or thoroughways for fire equipment access, clarity of addresses and street signs, and long-term maintenance in compliance with Fire Safe Regulations, adopted California Fire Code, and local ordinances.

**HS-5.6** Encourage development intensification outside of the high and very high fire hazard severity zones. If development is proposed within these zones, require fire-safe design (including, but not limited to, defensible space and home hardening) and compliance with fire safe regulations, adopted codes, and local ordinances.

**HS-5.7** Require all developments in the Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone to meet or exceed statewide Fire Safe Regulations (Title 14, CCR, division 1.5, chapter 7, subchapter 2, articles 1-5 (commencing with section 1270) (SRA Fire Safe Regulations); title 14,

CCR, division 1.5, chapter 7, subchapter 3, article 3 (commencing with section 1299.01) (Fire Hazard Reduction Around Buildings and Structures Regulations)), and Title 24, part 7, the California Wildland Urban Interface Code.

**HS-5.8** Require all new developments and redevelopments within fire hazard severity zones, provide a minimum of two points of access by means of public roads that can be used for emergency vehicle response and evacuation purposes, where practicable.

**HS-5.9** Require new developments and major remodels or renovations in fire prone areas to comply with the California Building Code, California Fire Code, and local adopted ordinances for construction and adequacy of water flow and pressure, ingress/egress, and other measures to ensure adequate fire protection.

**HS-5.10** If proposed, ensure any fuel breaks and other fire defense improvements on public and private property are adequately funded and maintained in perpetuity in compliance with California Fire Code and local adopted ordinances.

**HS-5.11** Design and ensure all private roads are maintained to permit

unrestricted emergency equipment and personnel access in compliance with Title 19, the California Fire Code, and local ordinances.

**HS-5.12** Require fire protection plans consistent with requirements of the California Wildland-Urban Interface Code (Title 24, Part 7), California Fire Code, including a risk analysis, fire response capabilities, fire safety requirements (defensible space, infrastructure, and building ignition resistance), mitigation measures and design considerations for non-conforming fuel modifications, wildfire education maintenance and limitations, addressing and signage, and evacuation plans for new development and **major remodels (substantial reconstruction)** in High and Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zones, and the WUI designated by the City and CAL FIRE.

### Implementation Actions

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**Action 5.1:** Continue existing interdepartmental development review meetings and annually agendaize an item focused on the need for additional fire safe design regulations for the built out, populated areas of the city.

**Action 5.2:** Develop retrofit guidelines for existing non-conforming properties to understand what

improvements may be necessary to comply with the California Fire Code, local ordinances, and best management practices.

**Action 5.3:** Identify the locations throughout the City where existing developments do not meet minimum road standards for emergency equipment access and identify the feasibility of alternative improvements to support emergency response and evacuation, such as:

- Additional vehicle pullouts at key hillside locations.
- Limiting or restricting on-street parking at key hillside locations.
- Potential for construction of new or improved emergency access routes.
- Roadside clearance improvements.
- Leveraging existing alternative or secondary routes, including fire roads, trails, and easements.
- Implement feasible improvements identified as part of this analysis.

**Action 5.4:** Explore grant opportunities to create a retrofit incentive program to assist property

owners in meeting updated fire code requirements.

**Action 5.5:** Create an inventory of structures in the city that meet current fire safety standards.

**Action 5.6:** Develop criteria for standard conditions of approval for projects proposing fuel breaks and fire mitigation improvements, including operations and maintenance funding in perpetuity.

**Action 5.7:** Define major remodels and renovation thresholds that trigger policy applicability.

### Hazardous Materials

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**Goal HS-6: A community focused on preventing harm from the use, storage, and disposal of hazardous materials.**

**HS-6.1** Continue to require appropriate use, disposal, and transport of hazardous materials that meet or exceed safety measures for residents and businesses.

**HS-6.2** In coordination with the State and CUPA partners, require appropriate clean-up of all former commercial and industrial sites according to relevant regulatory standards prior to reuse.

**HS-6.3** Restrict siting of businesses that use, store, process, or dispose of large

quantities of hazardous materials in areas subject to seismic fault rupture or strong ground shaking (Figure 7-3).

**HS-6.4** Ensure development on sites with known or suspected contamination of soil and/or groundwater protects construction workers, the public, future occupants, and the environment through compliance with federal, State, and local rules, regulations, policies, and guidelines.

**HS-6.5** Require that developers compact infill soil following the removal of underground storage tanks.

### Implementation Actions

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**Action 6.1** Identify appropriate regional and local routes for transportation of hazardous materials, and require that fire and emergency personnel can easily access these routes for response to spill incidents.

**Action 6.2** Require that lead-based paint and asbestos surveys and abatement be conducted by qualified personnel prior to structural demolition or renovation, in buildings constructed prior to 1980. Survey and abatement activities shall comply with all State, federal, OSHA, Bay Area Air District, and San Mateo County Health, Environmental Health Division rules and regulations (formerly HS 28 and 29).

**Action 6.3** Regularly review and revise City regulations regarding manufacturing, storage, and usage of hazardous materials as necessary to minimize potential hazards.

**Action 6.4** Initiate a public awareness campaign about household hazardous waste management, control, and recycling through San Mateo County programs and Recology San Bruno.

### Noise

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**Goal HS-7: Protect the health and comfort of residents by reducing the impact of noise from vehicles, San Francisco International Airport, railroad lines, and stationary sources.**

**HS-7.1** Encourage developers to mitigate ambient noise levels adjacent to major noise sources by incorporating acoustical site planning into their projects, including, but not limited to, using reduced-noise pavement (rubberized asphalt); and incorporating state-of-the-art structural sound attenuation measures.

**HS-7.2** Prevent the placement of new noise sensitive uses unless adequate mitigation is provided. Establish insulation requirements as mitigation measures for all development, per the standards in Table 7-1.

**HS-7.3** Discourage noise sensitive uses such as hospitals, schools, and rest homes from locating in areas with high noise levels. Conversely, discourage new uses likely to produce high levels of noise from locating in areas where noise sensitive uses would be impacted.

**HS-7.4** Require developers to comply with relevant noise insulation standards contained in Title 24 of the California Code of Regulations (Part 2, Appendix Chapter 12A).

**HS-7.5** Encourage developers of new residential projects to provide noise buffers other than sound walls, such as vegetation, storage areas, or parking, as well as site planning and locating bedrooms away from noise sources.

**HS-7.6** Require that all sponsors of new housing (residential and senior housing units) record a notice of Fair Disclosure, regarding the proximity of the proposed development to San Francisco International Airport and of the potential impacts of aircraft operation, including noise impacts, per Ordinance 1646 and AB 2776.

**HS-7.7** Require developers to mitigate noise exposure to sensitive receptors from construction activities. Mitigation may include a combination of techniques that reduce noise generated at the source, increase the noise insulation at the receptor,

or increase the noise attenuation rate as noise travels from the source to the receptor.

- HS-7.8** Pursue mitigation of noise impacts from San Francisco International Airport to the fullest extent possible via the SFO/Community Roundtable and other venues. Support and advocate for operational practices such as flight curfews, changes to aircraft, new technologies and physical improvements such as tree screens that would reduce the area in San Bruno impacted by aircraft noise.
- HS-7.9** Via the SFO/Community Roundtable and other avenues, encourage SFO authorities to under-take noise abatement and mitigation programs that are based not only on the airport's noise contour maps, but that consider other factors such as the frequency of over-flights, altitude of aircraft, and hours of operation.
- HS-7.10** Require new residential development within the 65 dBA CNEL SFO noise contour to submit an avigation easement to the airport. Specific avigation easement requirements shall be consistent with the County of San Mateo Comprehensive Airport-Land Use Compatibility Plan for SFO.
- HS-7.11** Allow reasonable latitude for noise generated by uses that are essential to community health, safety, and

welfare, such as emergency vehicle operations and sirens.

- HS-7.12** Where feasible and appropriate, develop and implement noise reduction measures when undertaking improvements, extensions, or design changes to San Bruno streets.
- HS-7.13** Encourage transit agencies to develop and apply noise reduction technologies for their vehicles to reduce the noise and vibration impacts of Caltrain, BART and bus traffic.
- HS-7.14** Enforce Vehicle Code noise emission standards, as well as provisions which prohibit alteration of vehicular exhaust systems in ways that increases noise levels.
- HS-7.15** When environmental reviews of SFO activity are conducted the City should participate in environmental analyses conducted of SFO in order to better understand and address environmental issues affecting San Bruno, including but not limited to: frequency of over flight during nighttime hours, soil and groundwater contamination in and surrounding airport property from gasoline and jet fuel or similar sources, air pollution resulting from overflight jet exhaust and idling aircrafts, airport related traffic impacts on local roads, light and glare impacts from airport

generated lighting and overall noise generation, and impact of airport alterations and/ or expansion.

- HS-7.16** The City should work with the County of San Mateo and local planning directors in future Comprehensive Airport-Land Use Compatibility Plan planning efforts to raise shared concerns regarding airport impacts on the region. The SFO/Community Roundtable should help facilitate this process as well.

## Airport Operations

**Goal HS-8: A community where airport operations and daily life experience little conflict.**

- HS-8.1** Work together with other affected cities, the Airport Land Use Commission, and San Mateo County to achieve further reduction of San Francisco International Airport (SFO) airport-generated noise and safety concerns.
- HS-8.2** Require all new development to comply with FAR Part 77 height restriction standards, in accordance with Airport Land Use Commission guidelines.

**HS-8.3** Actively and aggressively participate in forums and discussions regarding operations and expansion plans for San Francisco International Airport. Seek local representation on task forces, commissions, and advisory boards established to guide airport policies and programs.

## Extreme Heat

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**Goal HS-9:** A community that prepares for and adapts to rising temperatures.

**HS-9.1** Encourage new developments and existing property owners to incorporate sustainable, energy-efficient, and environmentally regenerative features into their facilities, landscapes, and structures to reduce energy demand and improve on-site resilience.

**HS-9.2** Encourage new and existing development to incorporate building and site design features that reduce the effects of extreme heat, improve indoor air quality, increase resilience to severe weather, and reduce energy demand. These features could include building orientation, air conditioning, air filtration, energy-efficient duct work, energy-efficient windows and doors, improved awnings and shading, and shade trees and other green infrastructure.

**HS-9.3** Use heat vulnerability mapping to identify and prioritize areas and

populations most at risk. Collaborate with public health agencies, local governments, and community organizations to update these assessments periodically.

**HS-9.4** Coordinate with SamTrans, and Caltrans (where necessary) to increase shading and use of heat mitigation strategies along transit routes and transit stops.

**HS-9.5** Encourage local businesses to develop workplace heat safety protocols and provide training for employers and employees in heat-exposed occupations.

**HS-9.6** Promote the use of drought-tolerant green infrastructure, including landscaped areas, as part of cooling strategies in public and private spaces.

## Implementation Actions

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**Action 9.1** Develop a street tree program to increase shade and address urban heat island effects.

**Action 9.2** Prioritize increasing shade, including, but not limited to, planting street trees and installing shade structures in areas with high urban heat island index rankings.

## Other Hazards

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**Goal HS-10:** A community ready to face the challenges associated with climate change.

**HS-10.1** Ensure drought resistant landscaping is prioritized in the following ways:

- City-owned properties optimize drought-resistant and/or native plant landscaping.
- Require drought-tolerant landscaping in new private and municipal development, in accordance with applicable State and local laws (MWEL0).
- Promote the use of native and drought-tolerant plants in landscaping for both public spaces and private properties through educational materials, community outreach, and workshops.

**HS-10.2** Promote water conservation measures in all public and private development.

**HS-10.3** Encourage water-efficient practices in site and building design for private and public projects.

**HS-10.4** Work with regional water providers to prepare for a reduced long-term water supply resulting from more frequent and severe drought events to implement extensive water conservation measures and ensure sustainable water supplies, including fire suppression needs.

**HS-10.5** Work with Cal Water and Bay Area Water Supply and Conservation Agency to promote rebate offerings for high-efficiency toilets, washing machines, rain barrels, and other water-conserving appliances.

**HS-10.6** Ensure that new landscaping does not exacerbate wildfire or flood risks and aligns with vegetation and stormwater management standards.

Updates were made to portions of the Public Facilities and Services Element in 2026 to comply with State laws to address climate change adaptation and resilience to risks such as wildfire, flood, and drought.



# 8

## PUBLIC FACILITIES AND SERVICES ELEMENT

**T**his element addresses issues related to public facilities and services provided to San Bruno residents, including water supply, wastewater collection, solid waste disposal, fire protection and emergency medical response, police services, school facilities, library services, and cable television.

Parks and recreation facilities are discussed in the Recreation and Open Space Element (Chapter 5). The storm drain system is addressed in the Health and Safety Element (Chapter 7). Locations of public facilities are illustrated in Figure 8-1.

## 8-1 VISION

The Public Facilities and Services Element is written to ensure provision of adequate water supply, wastewater collection, and solid waste disposal for all residents and businesses. The element reiterates the City's commitment to convenient and effective access to City administration, decision-makers, and committees. Coordinated response to natural and human-caused disasters, through efficient fire protection and police services, is a key feature of the City's public services. Additionally, San Bruno provides a diverse range of educational programs and materials through both the local public school districts and the public library system.

## 8-2 WATER SUPPLY

San Bruno is unique among cities on the San Francisco Peninsula because it uses a local water source to meet some of its water supply needs. Four wells produce approximately 5 percent of the city's water supply. These producing wells draw water from a deep aquifer—Westside Groundwater Basin—located between 250 feet and 500 feet below ground surface. The aquifer is capped by an impervious layer of clay, which acts as a barrier to any contaminants that might be at or near the surface. The wells are in the eastern portion of the city. Before 2016, San Bruno used a larger amount of groundwater from this aquifer; however, since that time, the city has reduced its use to align with the Regional Groundwater Storage and Recovery Project.

Water purchased from the San Francisco Public Utilities Commission (SFPUC) is the primary supply source (approximately 95 percent) for San Bruno. The SFPUC's primary water source is the Hetch Hetchy system, which originates in the Sierra Nevada. Water is transported 150 miles via a series of pipelines, and supplies San Francisco and the cities along the Peninsula. Known for consistently high quality and purity, the Hetch Hetchy water source was granted a filtration treatment exemption by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. In addition to this water source, the city also receives supplies from North Coast County Water District (approximately 1 percent of the City's purchased water).

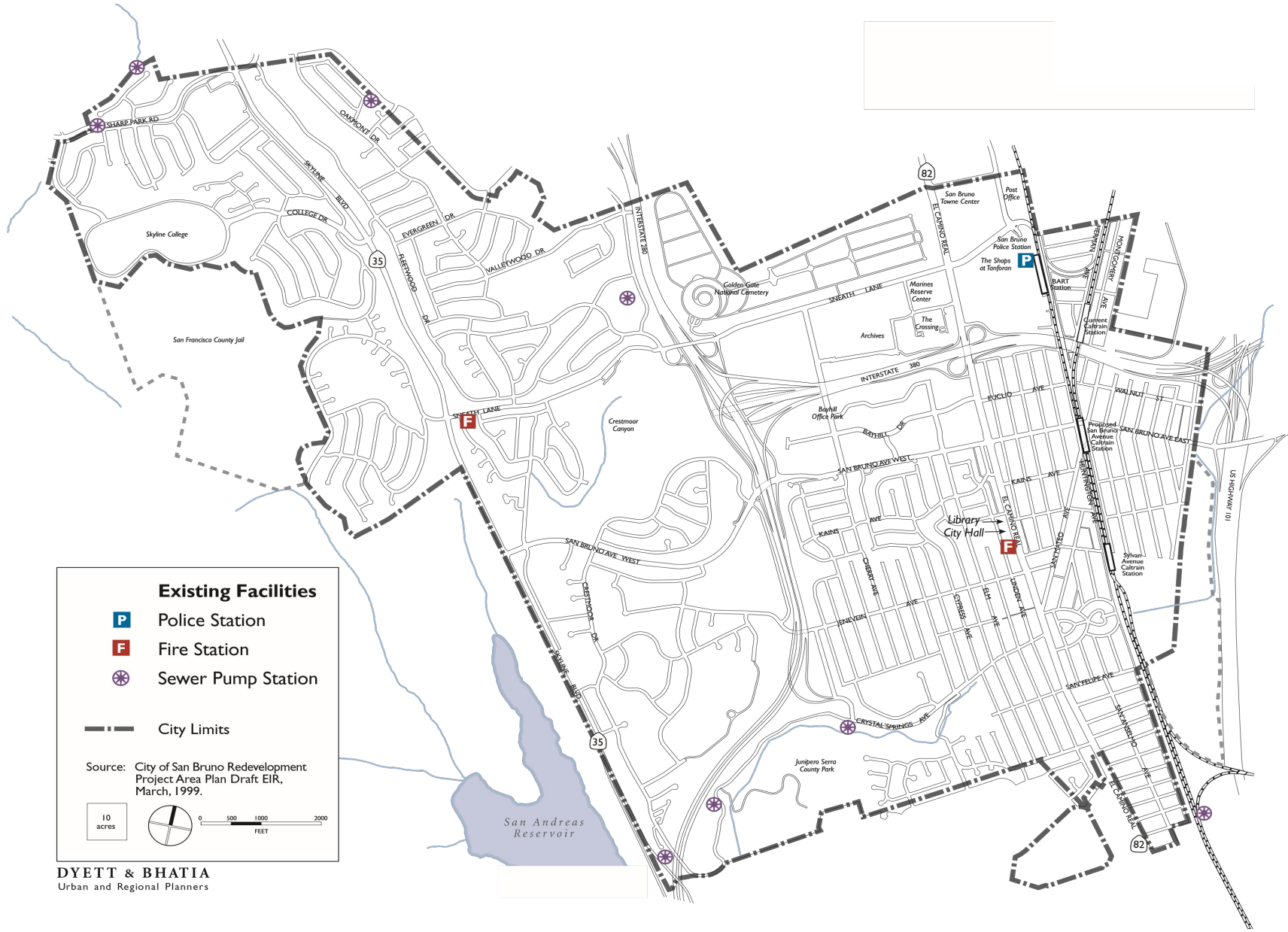
The City of San Bruno uses approximately 2.8 million gallons of water per day (mgd). Per-capita consumption averages approximately 57 gallons per day (gpd).



*San Bruno's water supply comprises a blending of water from local wells and purchases from the San Francisco Public Utilities Commission. Municipal water is stored in eight storage tanks (shown) throughout the city.*

In addition to the four wells, San Bruno's water system infrastructure consists of 18 booster pumps, one filtering plant, eight storage tanks (with a combined capacity of eight million gallons), 900 fire hydrants, 9,000 valves, over 100 miles of water mains ranging from 12 inches to 16 inches in diameter, and 11,300 metered services. Much of the distribution system was constructed over 40 years ago before current stringent performance standards were in effect. Inspection and maintenance of equipment, inspection and treatment of the water supply, and administration of several programs including water conservation and public awareness are all tasks of the San Bruno Public Works Department's Water Division. According to the Public Work's Department, San Bruno has adequate water storage capacity to meet current demands.

**Figure 8-1: Public Facilities**



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### 8-3 WASTEWATER SYSTEM

The Public Works Department's Wastewater Division is responsible for the wastewater collection system and assures compliance with all permit requirements for the Environmental Protection Agency, the State Water Quality Control Board, the Regional Water Quality Control Board, County Health Mandates, and the National Pollution Discharge Elimination System.

The sanitary sewer system consists of approximately 150 miles of pipeline and seven lift stations. Currently, 2.8 mgd of effluent goes to the South San Francisco-San Bruno Water Quality Control Plant (SSF/SB WQCP) treatment plant that the City of San Bruno owns jointly with the City of South San Francisco. This facility is located one mile north of San Francisco International Airport (SFO) within the boundaries of South San Francisco. Treated wastewater is discharged into San Francisco Bay from a 60-inch outfall pipeline two miles offshore and 20 feet beneath the surface, in conjunction with the North Bayside Unit, a joint powers authority consisting of the cities of South San Francisco, San Bruno, Millbrae, and Burlingame, and the San Francisco International Airport. The treatment plant is nearly 50 years old but has been updated several times to provide primary and secondary treatment. Its most recent upgrade project was completed in 2001. The facility expansion allows a dry-weather capacity of 13 mgd and a wet-weather capacity of approximately 62 mgd.

Before the plant's upgrade, San Bruno utilized approximately 50 percent, or about 4.29 mgd, during dry weather, of the plant's capacity. Since the wastewater treatment facility upgrade expanded dry weather capacity from 9 to 13 mgd, San Bruno is entitled to 0.5 mgd of the additional 4.0 mgd capacity, and currently utilizes about 30 percent of the plant's total capacity. There is no formal agreement about the proportion of wastewater treatment capacity entitled to each city, however, the agreement is specific that the share of operating costs is proportional to use.

Most of San Bruno's sewer collection system was installed 30 to 80 years ago, its age reflecting the decades of the city's most rapid development. It contains large sections of aging pipe that will require upgrading and/or replacement. The gravity-flow lines were constructed primarily with vitrified clay pipe, a material that tends to crack with age. Small sections of orangeburg (an inferior substitute cardboard-based material used during wartime) pipe installed during the 1940s still exist.

For additional information on the wastewater system, please see the Health and Safety Element sections on flooding and stormwater management.

### 8-4 SOLID WASTE

San Bruno Garbage Company (SBGC)<sup>1</sup>, provides solid waste disposal services to the City. The City's contract with SBGC, which is owned by Norcal Waste Systems, extends through June 30, 2009. SBGC collects

approximately 37,142 tons yearly, from San Bruno. Garbage is taken to SBGC's transfer station, where recyclable materials and refuse are processed, sorted, and loaded into longhaul trucks for transfer to recycling facilities or the landfill. Waste is transported by truck for final landfill disposal.

The 173-acre Ox Mountain facility is a Class III landfill (non-hazardous waste) owned by Browning-Ferris Industries and overseen by San Mateo County. Since 1995, San Bruno has deposited between 42,000 and 49,000 tons of waste at the Ox Mountain Landfill each year, including both independent and industrial haulers. San Mateo County estimates that the landfill, which also serves other municipalities, will reach capacity in year 2017. An expansion is currently underway that may extend landfill capacity for an additional eight years.

SBGC's curbside recycling program, which began in 1987, includes collection of glass, plastics, aluminum, newspaper, cardboard, and yard waste from residential and commercial development within the city. In 1989, the California legislature enacted the California Integrated Waste Management Act, requiring all cities and counties to divert 50 percent of their solid waste stream from landfills by the end of 2000. By 2000, San Bruno had achieved the 50 percent State requirement.

Buildout of land uses according to the General Plan would result in an additional 23,901 pounds per day, or 4,362 tons per year, of solid waste. The city's total 2025 waste stream is

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<sup>1</sup> Recology has replaced SBGC as the solid waste disposal provider.

projected at 44,654 tons per year—an increase of nearly 14 percent over the next two decades.



Public safety services are provided through the San Bruno Police Department (Police Plaza at the San Bruno BART Station, top) and the San Bruno Fire Department (Station No. 52 on Earl Avenue at Sneath Lane, bottom).



## 8-5 PUBLIC SAFETY

Public safety services in San Bruno are provided by the City’s Police and Fire departments. Following is a brief description of each.

### Police Services

The San Bruno Police Department provides police protection services to the City of San Bruno. In September 2002, construction was completed on a 23,000-square-foot police facility at 1177 Huntington Avenue, next to the San Bruno BART station. This facility is shared

with BART Police, which occupies approximately 20 percent of the floor space. The expanded police facility was built to accommodate future expansion of police services, including evidence and general storage. An older police facility on El Camino Real was incorporated into the expanded City Hall facility that was completed in 2003. The Department currently employs 45 Sworn Officers, and 18 civilian employees. The Police Department anticipates the need to slightly increase its staff as a result of development proposed at the former U.S. Navy Site, largely as a result of the proposed hotel and commercial development. Development in other areas may require individual assessment by the Police Department to ensure adequate police protection services will be provided.

### Fire Protection and Emergency Medical Response

Fire protection in the City of San Bruno is provided by the San Bruno Fire Department. All firefighters are certified as Firefighter I and Firefighter II according to state fire training standards, and most are trained Paramedics operating at the advanced life support level (ALS). The San Bruno Fire Department operates from two fire stations. Station No. 51 is located on the south side of the City Hall complex at 555 El Camino Real; Station No. 51 has primary responsibility for the area east of Interstate 280 (I-280). Station No. 52 is located near the intersection of Sneath Lane and Earl Avenue at 1999 Earl Avenue, and responds to emergency calls west of I-280. Both fire stations are in need of replacement.

Department responsibilities include plan-checks and field inspections on commercial cooking equipment, fire alarm systems, sprinkler systems, and specialized extinguishing systems in all new and existing construction within the City of San Bruno. They also provide all new businesses, daycare centers and care facilities with their initial fire safety clearance.

Annually, the Fire Department responds to approximately 6,000 calls for service. The Fire Department is also part of a Joint Powers Authority (JPA) between the 20 incorporated cities in San Mateo County and the County itself for fire protection and emergency medical services. The JPA requires the closest available paramedic engine company to respond to a call for emergency medical service, and the closest available engine and truck company and Battalion Chief to respond to fire calls.

Development in the western and central portions of the city may require the Fire Department to review project designs to assess potential wildfire hazards, ensure adequate emergency access, ensure that fire prevention measures are incorporated in the project design, and ensure adequate water supply for fire hydrants. Among other design considerations, proposed projects would have to provide minimum road widths for emergency access, as codified in the San Bruno Municipal Code, California Fire Code, and California Fire Safe Regulations. This part of the city is mapped within fire hazard severity zones by CAL FIRE, requiring a higher compliance standard for these areas. Figure 7-8 in the Health and Safety Element identifies

these locations and discusses wildfire threats within the city.



*Fire protection and emergency response comprise two of the most important roles of the City. High risk fire hazard areas include lands where natural hillsides and woodlands are located adjacent to urban uses (Junipero Serra Park, top, and nearby multifamily development, bottom).*

### Emergency Operations Plan

During emergency situations, the City relies on its Emergency Operations Plan (EOP) for response and recovery procedures and protocols. As a critical component of the City's emergency management activities, the EOP identifies the organizational structure used during an emergency, provides guidance on

specific position duties within the Emergency Operations Center, and helps the City manage a variety of situation types.

## 8-6 SCHOOLS

Four different school districts serve San Bruno residents from kindergarten through the community college level. The San Bruno Park Elementary School District is located entirely within the city and operates seven elementary schools and one middle school. Most San Bruno children in kindergarten through eighth grade are served by this district. South San Francisco Unified School District has one elementary school located in San Bruno—Monte Verde Elementary. The San Mateo Union High School District serves San Bruno's high school students, and the San Mateo Community College District provides post-secondary educational programs. San Bruno's existing and former school facilities are shown in Figure 8-3.

### School Facilities and Enrollment

Table 8-1 illustrates current school enrollment. Schools in the San Bruno Park Elementary School District are at capacity; however, there are no projected increases in enrollment over the next five years. Most school facilities were built in the 1940s and 1950s, and the district is undertaking a facilities modernization program over the next two years.

The district also has two excess school sites which are being used, respectively, for district offices and a driving range.

The San Mateo Union High School District operates eight schools, two of which—Capuchino High School and Peninsula High School—are in San Bruno. Students can choose to attend any of the district’s schools, and San Bruno residents also attend Burlingame, Hillsdale, Mills, and San Mateo high schools. Capuchino High School is currently operating below capacity, but expects enrollment to increase once major facility upgrades are completed and curriculum changes occur. Peninsula High School is a continuation high school located at the former Crestmoor High School site. Peninsula High School is under capacity, and no facilities improvements are planned.

Skyline College is one of three community colleges operated by the San Mateo County Community College District. The 111-acre Skyline College campus, located in northwestern San Bruno, offers a wide array of cultural, educational, and vocational opportunities for students of all ages and is a valuable resource to the San Bruno community. A number of facilities improvements and expansions are planned for the campus, including redevelopment of the former Pacific Heights Middle School site with new college facilities.

### School Enrollment Projections

According to the California Department of Finance, school enrollment County-wide is projected to decrease at least through 2018 (the extent of their current projections). Table 8-2 and Chart 8-1 depict enrollment trends and projections for San Bruno, which support the countywide estimates. In San Bruno, school enrollment has been decreasing steadily since 2000. The General Plan, however, makes the

conservative projection that additional development may steadily increase school age population and thus enrollment, resulting in about 5,100 projected enrolled students in 2025 as compared to about 4,100 today. Since area schools are already functioning well below capacity, and Capuchino High School has undergone major facility upgrades to accommodate the modest increase in high-school age students, buildout of the General Plan is not expected to result in new facility needs.

**Table 8-1: School Enrollment, 2008-2009 School Year**

School	Students
<b>SAN BRUNO PARK SCHOOL DISTRICT</b>	
Allen Elementary (K-6)	359
Belle Air Elementary (K-6)	453
Crestmoor Elementary (K-6)	231
El Crystal Elementary (K-6)	227
John Muir Elementary (K-6)	333
Portola Elementary (K-6)	222
Rollingwood Elementary (K-6)	242
Parkside Intermediate School (7-8)	554
<b>SOUTH SAN FRANCISCO UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT</b>	
Monte Verde Elementary	521
<b>SAN MATEO UNION HIGH SCHOOL DISTRICT</b>	
Capuchino High School (9-12)	1,190
Peninsula High School (10-12)	292
<b>Total K-6</b>	<b>2,067</b>
<b>Total 7-8</b>	<b>554</b>
<b>Total 9-12</b>	<b>1,482</b>
<b>Total K-12</b>	<b>4,103<sup>1</sup></b>
<b>Skyline Community College</b>	<b>8,439<sup>2</sup></b>

<sup>1</sup> Includes some students who are not San Bruno residents, but who attend school in the city.  
<sup>2</sup> Figure represents enrollment for Fall 2005 semester.  
 Source: Enrollment information was provided by each school district.

### Library Facilities

The city’s 15,600-square-foot library is located on El Camino Real adjacent to City Hall. The library has over 120,000 circulating items, including books, magazines, videos, DVDs, CDs, books on tape and books on CD. Children’s services include reading and audio-visual materials, as well as regular preschool story times, a summer reading club, after-school specials and school visits. Adult programming encompasses computer classes, a book club, and several yearly special programs. Children’s services include reading and audio-visual materials, as well as regular preschool storytimes, a summer reading club, after-school specials, and a computer education program for fifth-graders. There is also a growing collection of Spanish reading materials, and a collection of Japanese materials from San Bruno’s sister city Narita, Japan. Delivery and pick-up services are available for any homebound person in San Bruno. The San Bruno Public Library is a member of the Peninsula Library System, a consortium of 32 libraries located in San Mateo County.

Figure 8-3: School Facilities & Library



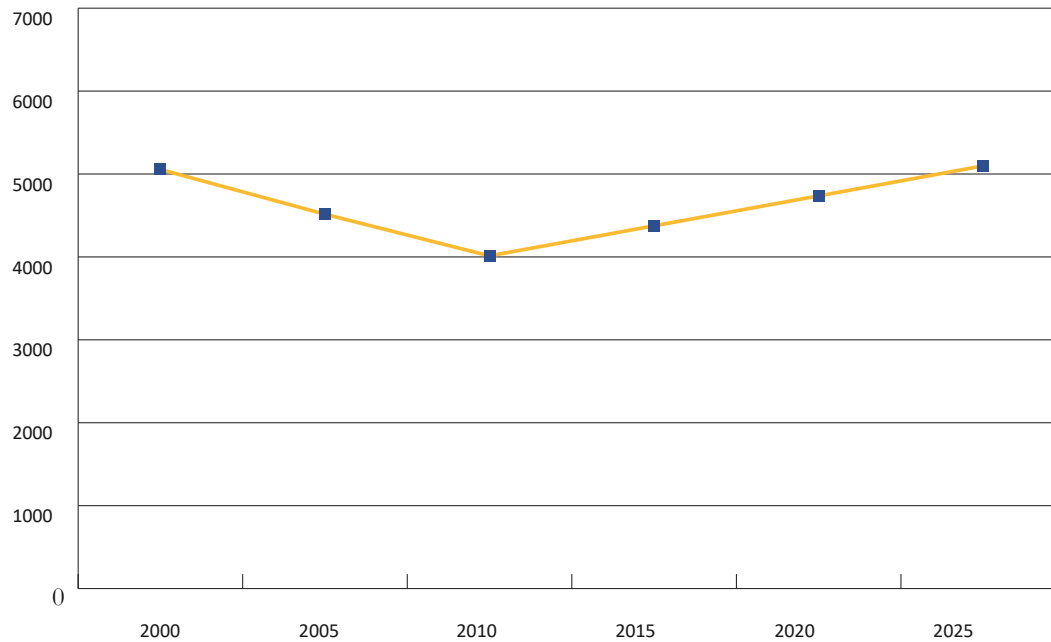
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**Table 8-2: K-12 San Bruno Public School Enrollment Capacity, Trends, and Projections by Grade Range**

schools	capacity	2004-2005		2008-2009		% change 2005-2009	Projected enrollment (2025)
		enrollment	% of capacity	enrollment	% of capacity		
Elementary Schools (K-6)	3,970	2,536	64	2,067	52	-18%	2,772
Middle Schools (7-8)	650	605	93	554	85	-8%	766
High Schools (9-12)	1,550	1,374	89	1,482	96	8%	1,560
<b>Total (K-12) enrollment</b>	<b>6,170</b>	<b>4,515</b>	<b>73</b>	<b>4,103</b>	<b>66</b>	<b>-9%</b>	<b>5,098</b>

Source: California Department of Educations CBEDS Enrollment by Grade and School; Dyett & Bhatia, 2006, 2008.

**Chart 8-1: San Bruno Public School Enrollment Trends & Projections 2000-2025**



Source: California Department of Educations CBEDS Enrollment by Grade and School, DOF Age Cohort Projections

**Table 8-3: Library Services Evaluation**

Service	Current Holdings/ Facilities	Needed Holdings/ Facilities
Book collection	97,500 volumes	133,000 volumes
Seating	68 chairs	178 chairs
Public Computers	12 computers	50 computers
Storytime space	35 shared seats	40 seats
Group study areas	0 seats	28 seats
Parking	9 spaces	170 spaces
Meeting room	0 seats <sup>1</sup>	160 seats

<sup>1</sup> Meeting room has been used for needed storage space.  
Source: City of San Bruno Public Library, Facility Master Plan, August 2000.

The library facility was built in 1955 and expanded in 1960. A number of mechanical, systems, and structural deficiencies have been identified, and the library is no longer able to adequately meet the needs of its increasingly diverse and numerous patrons. The Facility Master Plan prepared for the library in August 2000 identified a shortage of materials and resources available to San Bruno residents, as listed in Table 8-3.

The Master Plan also found that the current library site is too small to support an efficient building and parking configuration. The Ad Hoc Library Citizens Committee recommended two sites for a new two-story, 38,500 square-foot library facility—both within the existing Civic Center complex. The existing library structure could then be used for City Council Chambers, meeting space,

and/or offices. However, the Committee also recommended preparation of a parking plan in recognition of the limited parking available within the complex.

## 8-7 UTILITIES

The Pacific Gas & Electric Company (PG&E) is regulated by the California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) and is the primary provider of gas and electrical power to the City of San Bruno. Deregulation of gas and electricity utilities allows PG&E to purchase both gas and electrical power from a variety of sources, including other utility companies. PG&E obtains its energy supplies from power plants and natural gas fields in northern California and from energy purchased outside its service area and delivered through high voltage transmission lines. Electrical power is provided to the City of San Bruno from eight different distribution feeders: four feeders are from the Sneath Lane substation in San Bruno. Natural gas is provided to the City of San Bruno by PG&E from three gas lines stretching from Milpitas to San Francisco. Gas is delivered from basins in Canada and/or Texas by transmission mains and deposited at PG&E's Milpitas Gas Terminal. The City of San Bruno currently uses a peak load of electricity of approximately 29 to 30 megawatts (MW), which is about 383,794 kilowatt hours (KWH) per day (Poon, 2003). According to PG&E, residential uses comprise the majority of energy loads in San Bruno because the city has very few large commercial or industrial customers.

A key concern regarding utilities is safety. In 2010, an explosion of a PG&E high-pressure gas line in the Crestmoor neighborhood destroyed or damaged over 100 homes and took the lives of eight people. In response, PG&E began safety upgrades and adherence to stronger regulations enacted by the State to reduce the risk of future events like this one.

## 8-8 CABLE TELEVISION

San Bruno Municipal Cable Television, a municipal enterprise of the City of San Bruno, provides cable television, high speed internet and digital telephone services to the San Bruno community. The enterprise, which began in 1971 as a 12-channel coaxial cable system, is a state-of-the-art hybrid fiber/coaxial cable system today offering over 200 channels of cable television programming, a 10 Mbps High Speed Internet, and digital telephone services. These services are available to every household in San Bruno.

San Bruno Cable completed its transition to an all-digital system in 2008, when 100 percent of the cable television programming will be distributed in digital format only, requiring cable television subscribers to have installed a digital set-top box to their television sets to continue receiving cable services. The use of digital set-top boxes prepares the cable system for the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) mandated transition to digital broadcasting effective February 2009, and prevents the obsolescence of the widely used analog television sets. In preparation for this transition, starting in April 2007, San Bruno Cable began the process of placing two

standard digital set-top boxes in every cable household. This set-top box deployment initiative was completed in June 2008, when every cable household was equipped with digital set-top boxes to receive digital cable television programming. In addition to complying with the FCC mandate, this transition to an all-digital system has enabled San Bruno Cable to cost-effectively extend the useful life of its multi-million dollar cable infrastructure and to recapture a large portion of plant capacity for expanding products and services.

San Bruno Cable has completed plant extensions to serve the new subdivision of Marisol, Skycrest and Merimont, The Shops at Tanforan, and the apartment complexes Meridian, Village and Paragon at The Crossing. Future plant extension projects include the Pacific Bay Vistas Apartments, Glenview Terrace, and the SNK Parcel 3 & 4 at The Crossing.

## 8-9 PUBLIC FACILITIES AND SERVICES POLICIES

### Guiding Policies

- PFS-A** Coordinate provision of public services to all city residents, in association with surrounding cities, agencies, and San Mateo County as appropriate.
- PFS-B** Provide convenient and effective access to City administration, including visitor parking, open meetings, technical assistance, etc.
- PFS-C** Ensure that the City’s water supply systems are adequate to serve the city’s present and anticipated needs, and that water conservation is implemented in all residences and businesses, helping to ensure ongoing water supply maintenance and system integrity.
- PFS-D** Ensure that the City’s wastewater collection and treatment systems are adequate to serve the city’s present and anticipated needs, are safe, and are environmentally sound.
- PFS-E** Ensure that the City’s solid waste collection agency provides clean and convenient garbage and recycling service.
- PFS-F** Provide adequate public safety services for all San Bruno properties—including police protection, fire

suppression, emergency medical care, and emergency management.

- PFS-G** Coordinate with regional, State, and federal agencies to prepare for and publicize appropriate response and recovery for natural or manmade disasters.
- PFS-H** Coordinate with local school districts to provide high quality public schooling for San Bruno’s youth.
- PFS-I** Provide a diverse range of research, educational, and reading materials through the San Bruno Public Library.
- PFS-J** Develop comprehensive programs to decrease energy consumption at the household, business, and City government level.

Many of the engagement and outreach activities to residents and businesses, as discussed in select policies and implementation actions below, should be conducted in community appropriate languages and in methods that maximize access to this information.

### Implementing Policies

#### Coordination and Infrastructure

- PFS-1** Prepare and adopt an Infrastructure In-Lieu Fee Schedule to ensure that

adequate improvements are made to the City’s public facilities to accommodate new development.

- PFS-2** Implement a Street Lighting and Sidewalk Maintenance Program for residential neighborhoods throughout the city. Underground utility wires wherever feasible.
- PFS-3** Require, as part of plan review, identification of needed public service improvement and maintenance costs for those projects that may have a significant impact on existing services.
- PFS-4** Improve publication of City-sponsored programs and services available to all San Bruno residents, including public shuttle services, recreation programs, etc.
- PFS-5** Develop a Civic Center Complex Master Plan, in order to coordinate rehabilitation and expansion of the various City departments and service providers.
- PFS-6** As part of the Civic Center Complex Master Plan explore measures to improve access to City facilities, including such measures as integration of Council chambers into the Civic Center complex, provision of visitor parking at City Hall,

important information and forms available on the City's website, etc.

**PFS-7** Evaluate the feasibility, budget, and timing for rebuilding or renovating the City's corporation yard in order to meet the needs of expanding City services and population growth.

### **Water Supply**

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**PFS-8** Require expansion of the City's water distribution system proportionate with new development's fair share of demand.

**PFS-9** Upgrade the water distribution system as necessary to provide adequate water pressure to meet fire safety standards and to respond to emergency peak water supply needs.

**PFS-10** Continue the practice of using Enterprise Funds to finance replacement of the City's aging water distribution system.

**PFS-11** Monitor and regulate well water quality and production levels to prevent contamination and overdraft. Coordinate with SFPUC to develop a conjunctive use program for the Westside Groundwater Basin.

**PFS-12** Work actively with the San Francisco Bay Area Water Supply and Conservation Agency, adjacent cities,

and the water agencies of San Mateo County to increase water conservation measures and minimize the effects of aquifer depletion.

**PFS-13** Establish water conservation Best Management Practices (BMPs) and require them for new development and for municipal buildings and facilities.

**PFS-14** Actively market the importance of water conservation, water recycling and groundwater recharge through the following means:

- Develop a flyer to promote the necessity of and benefits from water conservation, and distribute the flyer to local residents, businesses, and schools;
- Make water production and treatment facilities available for tours by schools or organized groups;
- Encourage educators to include water conservation in their curricula;
- Provide tips to business groups on water conservation and recycling.

The City may solicit assistance from environmental groups, the school district, and/or concerned citizens to provide educational materials or staff

time for these public outreach programs.

**PFS-15** Develop a schedule for the retrofitting of existing public buildings with water conservation features, and budget accordingly.

**PFS-16** Periodically test the City's water supply system for leaks and initiate repairs to conserve water.

**PFS-17** Ensure that new or expanded water supply and transmission facilities are constructed in a manner in which construction and operation impacts are minimized or avoided.

**PFS-18** Consider establishing rebate and/or incentive programs for the replacement of leaking, aging and/or inefficient plumbing with more efficient, water saving plumbing and for the use of water efficient landscaping.

**PFS-19** Investigate the feasibility of developing additional or enhanced sources of water supply, such as recycled water, reclaimed surface water, or enhanced groundwater recharge. Explore working cooperatively with the City of South San Francisco to initiate recycling of treated wastewater from the South San Francisco-San Bruno Water Quality Control Plant.

## Wastewater

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- PFS-20** Require expansion of the City’s sewer collection system proportionate with new development’s fair share of demand.
- PFS-21** Upgrade or replace sewer lines to accommodate anticipated flows and to prevent overflows. Upgrade sewer lift stations as needed.

## Solid Waste

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- PFS-22** Continue contracting for garbage and recycling collection services. Negotiate with the service provider to secure the most convenient recycling methods available within current technology.
- PFS-23** Expand recycling services to include all commercial and industrial businesses in San Bruno.
- PFS-24** Require provision of attractive, convenient recycling bins and trash enclosures in grouped development projects (i.e., multi-family residential projects, office complexes, and commercial shopping centers).
- PFS-25** Continue public education programs about waste reduction, including recycling, yard waste, wood waste, and household hazardous waste.

## Fire And Police Services

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- PFS-26** Ensure adequate staffing and facilities for the City’s Police and Fire departments to achieve desired levels of service, particularly surrounding transit areas and along urban-interface hazard areas.
- PFS-27** Rebuild or retrofit Fire Station No. 51 and Fire Station 52 to accommodate current and future Fire Department needs, Americans with Disabilities Act standards, and seismic requirements. The new Fire Station could include a community meeting room.
- PFS-28** Relocate critical facilities and/or infrastructure outside of mapped hazard areas (fault zone, fire zone, etc.), whenever feasible..
- PFS-29** Maintain existing or better levels of service to neighborhoods in the northern and western part of the city.
- PFS-30** Enhance communication capabilities for use by City crews and firefighters during emergencies. Obtain funding for information technology systems, such as wireless communication systems, to further decrease fire and police response times.

- PFS-31** Ensure adequate fire water pressure as a condition of approval for all new development projects.
- PFS-32** Require installation of fire sprinklers as required by state law and San Bruno the municipal code. Continue to expand the requirements for installation of fire sprinklers in areas with deficient fire flow, buildings undergoing remodels and additions, ensuring our community meet or exceed the minimum standards for life safety.
- PFS-33** Regularly review updates to Cal Fire’s fire hazard severity zone mapping and incorporate the latest maps into the Health and Safety Element (Health and Safety Element, Figure 7-7). Implement required and best practices for building standards, vegetation management and defensible space for fire hazard areas. Establish and maintain inspection programs in accordance with State laws, regulations and the San Bruno Municipal Code.
- PFS-34** Identify and remove mature and/or diseased Eucalyptus trees and other hazardous/fire prone species in rights-of-way and other open areas, if they pose a fire hazard or other threat to health and safety.

- PFS-35** Expand Certificate of Compliance parameters to require issuance before an existing structure is permitted to change uses to public assembly or commercial activities.
- PFS-36** Continue to clear hazardous vegetation from Crestmoor Canyon that pose a threat to nearby residents. Care should be taken to prevent unnecessary harm to healthy vegetation and ensure measures to maintain a healthy forest. Ensure continued use by the Fire Department should the existing fire road be transitioned to a multi-use trail.
- PFS-37** Ensure proper maintenance of the open space areas in western residential neighborhoods. Vegetation maintenance is necessary to prevent potential fire hazards.
- PFS-38** Minimize risks to single-access residential neighborhoods by providing alternative access for fire and other emergency personnel, where feasible.
- PFS-39** Expand or enhance automatic and mutual-aid agreements to further enhance City capabilities during an emergency incident.

- PFS-40** Ensure annual budgeting cycles account for current and future emergency service needs.
- PFS-41** Ensure emergency personnel are included in the development review process to ensure that new development adequately addresses service levels, security concerns, and safety.
- PFS-42** Periodically assess and update the City's priorities for future emergency service needs.

### **Emergency Management**

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- PFS-43** Acknowledge the regional implications of natural hazards and the need for jurisdictional cooperation in the face of potential disasters. Coordinate emergency response planning with surrounding cities, agencies, and San Mateo County Office of Emergency Services.
- PFS-44** Create and maintain an up-to-date Emergency Operations Plan with information including but not limited to evacuation routes and procedures, chain of command communication structure, alerts and warning systems, emergency shelter provisions, and responsibilities and instructions for all relevant departments (police, fire,

hazardous materials, emergency medical services, public works).

- PFS-45** Conduct emergency drills in public buildings, large office developments, and in coordination with local schools. Hold post-drill training seminars to identify needed improvements to emergency preparedness.
- PFS-46** Work with critical use facilities (i.e., hospitals, schools, public assembly facilities, transportation services) to assure that they can provide alternate sources of electricity, water, and sewage disposal in the event that regular utilities are interrupted in a disaster.
- PFS-47** Establish a community risk reduction program and associated materials that is inclusive of local schools, the county fair, civic organizations, and other service groups to promote emergency preparedness.
- PFS-48** Cooperate with San Mateo County to pool natural hazard data developed through special studies or via the plan review process.
- PFS-49** Coordinate with regional, State, and federal agencies to determine appropriate disaster recovery strategies for after a major natural or man-made event. Publicize recovery

measures along with emergency preparedness information.

**PFS-50** Identify a secondary Emergency Operations Center for the management and coordination of disasters in the community.

### Schools

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**PFS-51** Work cooperatively with local school districts to monitor the growth of the school-age population within San Bruno, and the subsequent need for school sites and facilities.

**PFS-52** Provide technical assistance to local school districts in design and planning for reuse of former school sites throughout the city. Consider acquisition or leasing of former school sites for recreation, education, or other community needs.

**PFS-53** Maintain good communication with the local school districts, and integrate school facilities planning with the City's objectives, including:

- Designing school facilities to allow safe pedestrian and bicycle access;
- Ensuring construction of traffic-calming measures on surrounding streets;
- Designing attractive facilities that contribute to neighborhood identity and pride; and

- Allowing public use of recreational facilities on school sites on evenings and weekends.

**PFS-54** Work with local school districts to ensure provision of elementary and intermediate school facilities within ½-mile radius of all residential development.

### Library

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**PFS-55** Provide a wide range of library services to San Bruno residents through a strong main Public Library facility.

**PFS-56** Study potential locations and funding mechanisms for development of a larger Public Library facility. Focus on sites within the Civic Center complex, as recommended by the Ad Hoc Library Citizens Committee

**PFS-57** Continue San Bruno's relationship with Skyline College by coordinating collections and sharing resources through their common partnership with the Peninsula Library System.

**PFS-58** Continue to provide public access to the Internet and other computer-based resources through the San Bruno Public Library facility.

**PFS-59** In order to prevent anticipated future population growth in San Bruno from burdening existing over-extended

library services, City staff will ensure upon individual project review that the developer sets aside contributions or in-lieu fees in general proportion to the burden proposed new residential development would have on the library system, and that those fees are used to improve public library facilities. The per capita share will be negotiated between the Ad Hoc Library Citizen's Committee, City Staff, and City Council, within 1 year of Plan adoption, and will be applied uniformly (and if necessary, retroactively) across all residential development occupancy permit applications submitted after Plan adoption, until such time as an alternative form of support is provided, or the library facilities are fully upgraded to the requirements as described on p 8-12 Table 8-3 of the General Plan.



Existing schools such as Decima Allen Elementary School (above) and Capuchino High School (below) will continue to experience pressure related to population growth and new development.

## Utilities

**PFS-62** Develop and implement a Green Building Design Ordinance and design guidelines for climate-oriented site planning, building design, and landscape design to promote energy efficiency. These standards may include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Require the use of Energy Star® appliances and equipment in new residential and commercial development, and new City facilities;
- Require all new City facilities and new residential development to incorporate green building methods meeting the equivalent of LEED Certified “Silver” rating or better; and
- Require all new residential development to be pre-wired for optional photovoltaic roof energy systems and/or solar water heating.

The Ordinance will allow variances to site or building requirements—building setbacks, lot coverage, and building height—that will enable use of alternative energy sources, such as passive heating and/or cooling.

**PFS-63** Require that all new development complies with California’s Energy Efficiency Standards for Residential and Nonresidential Buildings (Title 24, Part 6).

**PFS-64** Provide incentives for retrofitting existing homes and businesses for improved energy efficiency, such as passive solar and/or cooling devices.

**PFS-65** Require new development to incorporate passive heating and natural lighting strategies if feasible and practical. These strategies should include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Using building orientation, mass and form, including façade, roof, and choice of building materials, color, type of glazing, and insulation to minimize heat loss during winter months and heat gain during the summer months;
- Designing building openings to regulate internal climate and maximize natural lighting, while keeping glare to a minimum; and
- Reducing heat-island effect of large concrete roofs and parking surfaces.

**PFS-66** Enforce landscape requirements that facilitate efficient energy use or conservation, such as drought-

## Cable Television

**PFS-60** Enhance Local Origination programming to promote City services and local business.

**PFS-61** Continue to grow core video business while deploying and promoting new services.

resistant landscaping and/or deciduous trees along southern exposures.

**PFS-67** Require developers and builders to distribute information regarding energy efficiency (such as the Home Energy Guide available from the California Energy Commission) to all new homeowners.

**PFS-68** Initiate a marketing campaign where energy efficiency information is distributed to all City employees and residents. Provide information on how, what type, and where to plant trees to reduce energy demand. Make such information available at all public locations such as City Hall and the Public Library.

**PFS-69** Offer incentives (such as expedited permit processing, density bonuses, site variances) to support implementation of photovoltaic and other renewable energy technologies that provide a portion of the city's energy needs, or for projects that result in energy savings of at least 20 percent when compared to the energy consumption that would occur under similar projects built to meet the minimum standards of the energy code.

**PFS-70** Facilitate environmentally sensitive construction practices by:

- Restricting use of chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs), hydrochlorofluorocarbons (HCFCs) and halons in mechanical equipment and building materials;
- Promoting use of products that are durable and allow efficient end-of-life disposal (e.g. reusable, recyclable, biodegradable);
- Promoting the purchase of locally or regionally available materials; and
- Promoting the use of cost-effective design and construction strategies that reduce resource and environmental impacts.

**PFS-71** Convert street lights and traffic signals to LED and other more efficient technologies as they become available.

**PFS-72** Work with utility providers to ensure that adequate electrical and natural gas facilities and services are available to meet the demands of existing and future development.

**PFS-73** Provide for utility access and prevent easement encroachments that might impair the safe and reliable

maintenance and operation of utility facilities.

**PFS-74** Work with telecommunication providers to ensure that telecommunications service is available for existing and future development.



# 6

## ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCES AND CONSERVATION ELEMENT

**T**he City of San Bruno extends from the lowland areas near the San Francisco Bay, westward to and across the ridgeline of the Santa Cruz Mountains. This variation in elevation, and concomitant variation in temperature and precipitation patterns, endows San Bruno with a diversity of natural resources.

The Environmental Resources and Conservation Element provides policies for biological resources and habitat, water resources and quality, and air quality and greenhouse gas reduction. Historical resources, generally clustered along the historic El Camino Real corridor, are also addressed for conservation.

## 6-1 VISION

The Environmental Resources and Conservation Element seeks to ensure preservation of Crestmoor Canyon, natural canyons within the western neighborhoods, and surrounding Golden Gate National Recreation Area lands as habitat for grasslands species. No public open space lands are proposed to be converted to other uses, and the General Plan policies regarding biological and water resources will enhance natural resources on public lands and waters within the city and surroundings. The element also seeks to preserve the wetlands areas along the San Francisco Bay margins as habitat for aquatic species. The element reiterates San Bruno's commitment to the reduction of water pollutants collected in surface runoff, and reduction in transportation-related air pollutants and emissions related to global climate change.

Finally, the element provides a framework for preservation of historical resources, and placement of signage to identify California historical landmarks.

## 6-2 BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES AND HABITAT

Although urbanization has removed much of the city's original vegetation, it is still found in scattered, discrete areas. Several distinctive vegetative communities found in San Bruno include:

- *Freshwater wetlands.* Freshwater wetlands are ecologically productive habitats that support a rich variety of both plant and animal life. This transitional habitat occurs

between terrestrial and aquatic systems where water tables are near the surface or land is covered by shallow water. Grass-like plants, which emerge from the water, form a dense canopy. Seasonal and permanent wetlands in eastern San Bruno include coastal freshwater marsh. This habitat is one of the most productive habitats for wildlife because it offers water, food, and shelter. Reptiles, amphibians, birds, small mammals, and bats are found in wetlands areas.

- *Willow riparian.* Willow riparian habitat is low shrubby tree structure that can cover an entire watercourse with an impenetrable understory, and can include fallen limbs and other debris. Willow scrub community is a broad-leaved, winter-deciduous streamside thicket, dominated by any of several willow species, usually as small trees or shrubs. Birds, reptiles, amphibians, and small mammals are found in riparian areas.
- *Mixed oak woodland.* Mixed oak woodlands are dominated by any of several oak species, with an understory consisting of shrubs, non-native grasses, and wildflowers. Woodlands provide foraging, nesting, shelter, and migrating corridors for a variety of wildlife species. Birds, small and large mammals, and amphibians utilize this habitat.
- *Non-native annual grassland.* Non-native grassland consists of annual grasses associated with a variety of broadleafed herbs and perennial grasses. Reptiles, small and large mammals, and foraging birds are often found in grassland areas.

Areas within San Bruno that feature potential biological resources are illustrated in Figure 6-1. Despite their separation and relatively small size, these areas potentially contain a number of legally sensitive plant and animal species. Although the California Natural Diversity Database (California Department of Fish and Game, 2001) shows no sensitive plant species within the city limits, there are a number of relatively inaccessible areas in the higher elevations of the city, and it is possible that these have never been comprehensively surveyed for sensitive plants.

### Sensitive Species and Habitats

Located in central San Mateo County, the Peninsula Watershed encompasses 23,000 acres of the San Francisco peninsula, hosts a variety of habitats and supports the highest concentration of rare, threatened and endangered species in the entire Bay Area. The Watershed includes three reservoirs—San Andreas, Crystal Springs, and Pilarcitos. Though no part of San Bruno physically drains into this watershed, Skyline Boulevard marks an eastern edge, and a sensitive boundary for these species.

Within the central portion of the city (generally along the El Camino Real corridor), urban development is too intense for vegetation other than ornamental. However, as the terrain rises to the west, larger areas of natural vegetation and topography are found within the matrix of development, some of it within inaccessible sites that have not been surveyed thoroughly. Additionally, the Bay margins along the city's eastern edge provide habitat areas for a variety

of wetlands species. In particular, current maps from the US Fish and Wildlife Wetlands Online Mapper indicate that there are small areas of freshwater emergent wetland near the southwest corner of the intersection of I-380 and US 101 near 7th and Walnut Park, and small areas of freshwater emergent wetland and freshwater forested/shrub wetland a little further south along the western side of US 101, adjacent to Lion's Field. While their general location indicates they are quite close to the city limits, without a field survey it is difficult to know the precise boundaries of these wetlands resources. While the City is not responsible for the condition of wetlands outside city boundaries, the proximity of these wetlands to San Bruno development suggests that City land management and development decisions could impact the wetlands through changing nearby levels of human activity, rates of stormwater runoff, and populations of domestic animals adjacent to this habitat. Conversely, maintenance of these areas directly impacts the flooding potential in the eastern areas of San Bruno.

The State of California recognizes some plant communities as sensitive or significant communities if they are uncommon, regionally declining, or vulnerable. Among these communities are coast live oak forest, freshwater seeps, and freshwater marshes. All three may be present within the city boundaries.

Two endangered or threatened animal species have been reported within city limits: the California red-legged frog (*Rana aurora draytonii*, federally listed as threatened and a State species of special concern) and the San

Francisco garter snake (*Thamnophis sirtalis tetrataenia*, listed as endangered by both the State and federal governments). Both have occurrences reported in Lion's Field, east of El Camino Real and south of Crystal Springs Road (Environmental Science Associates, 1999). In addition, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service indicated that some areas east of Skyline College may provide suitable habitat for both species (U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, 2000).



San Bruno contains a variety of natural habitats and special status species. Among these are mixed woodlands and grasslands in the western hills (Crestmoor neighborhood, top), and mature Eucalyptus trees along Sneath Lane (bottom).

However, for species such as these that may be collected or captured relatively easily, precise locations are usually not reported or mapped for the safety of the species.

A third legally sensitive species, the western pond turtle (*Clemmys marmorata*, a State species of special concern) might be found at Lion's Field and at other wetland areas, such as the stream area in Crestmoor Canyon, even though no occurrences have been reported. Two sensitive plants have been reported at Lion's Field: Dudley's lousewort (*Pedicularia dudleyi*, a federally-listed species of concern and State rare species) and stink bell (*Fritillaria agrestis*, California Native Plant Society Category 4 species).

A number of raptor species could nest within the city. Some of these, like the Cooper's hawk (*Accipiter cooperii*, a State species of special concern), are specifically listed as sensitive, and all are protected while nesting by Fish and Game Code Section 3503.5. The large trees present in some areas also provide potential habitat for legally sensitive bat species, including the pallid bat (*Antrozous pallidus*, a State species of special concern).

The California Natural Diversity Database shows two locations for the Mission blue butterfly (*Icaricia icarioides missionensis*) near Skyline College: one just southwest of the College at the boundary between Sharp Park and the Coast Guard reservation, and one north in the Milagra Range area near Highway 35.

Figure 6-1: Vegetative Communities and Special Species Habitat



DYETT & BHATIA  
Urban and Regional Planners

## 6-3 WATER RESOURCES

The City of San Bruno contains three parallel watersheds—Crystal Springs, Huntington Creek, and San Bruno Creek—which flow west to east, with riparian woodlands in the upper reaches and willow riparian habitat in the lower, slower-moving reaches. The Health and Safety Element (Chapter 7) provides further discussion of the local watersheds, San Bruno’s stormwater drainage system, and flooding hazards.

### Water Quality

The San Francisco Bay Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB) has no industrial dischargers registered in San Bruno, but city residents generate approximately 3.4 million gallons per day of sewage. This effluent is pumped to the jointly owned South San Francisco-San Bruno Water Quality Control Facility, located on Belle Air Road in the City of South San Francisco, just north of the San Francisco International Airport. The effluent is dechlorinated, and then discharged into lower San Francisco Bay. The combination of point source (wastewater treatment plant) and non-point source (surface runoff) pollutants result in deteriorated water quality levels within San Bruno.

San Bruno’s storm drain system prevents flooding by channeling stormwater runoff into San Mateo County Flood Control District channels, which then funnel the water to the San Francisco Bay. However, this runoff is not treated, and can deliver pollutants to the Bay

from any impermeable surface within the city. Stormwater runoff accounts for up to 80 percent of the pollution entering San Francisco Bay, and can contain the following pollutants: oil, grease, or antifreeze from leaking cars or trucks; paint or paint products; leaves or yard waste; pesticides; herbicides, or fertilizers from yards and gardens; solvents and household chemicals; animal wastes, litter, or sewer leakage; and construction debris such as fresh concrete, mortar, or cement.



*Stormwater runoff accounts for up to 80 percent of the pollution entering San Francisco Bay.*

Federal regulations authorize the issuance of systemwide municipal permits by the RWQCB. The RWQCB regulates municipalities for control of stormwater runoff pollution under the National Pollution Discharge Elimination System (NPDES). Participants in the program are responsible for development and implementation of stormwater management plans to prevent the pollution of surface runoff. Discharge of stormwater from the City of San Bruno is

permitted through a Municipal Storm Water NPDES Permit issued to the City/County Association of Governments of San Mateo County. The permit incorporates specific requirements to limit stormwater pollutant discharges associated with certain new development and significant redevelopment projects. The requirements apply to the City of San Bruno as the Discharger of stormwater, the City/ County Association of Governments as the permit holder, and specific new development and redevelopment projects.

San Bruno is part of the San Mateo Countywide Water Pollution Prevention Program (SMCWPPP) implemented by the San Mateo County Health Services Agency, Environmental Health Division. In compliance with NPDES permit requirements, SMCWPPP has a Stormwater Management Plan (SWMP) that describes the framework for management of stormwater discharges throughout San Mateo County, the program’s goals and objectives, and contains performance standards for five different stormwater management components including (1) municipal maintenance activities, (2) industrial and illicit discharge controls, (3) public information/participation, (4) new development and construction controls, and (5) watershed and monitoring. The State of California periodically amends the NPDES permit orders that apply to municipalities and counties. Projects seeking approval will be required to meet all requirements in place at the time of application.



*The city's varied topography illustrates San Bruno's placement at the north-western edge of the San Francisco Peninsula Air Basin. Several Interstate highways (I-280 shown) contribute to high air pollutant levels within the Air Basin.*

## 6-4 AIR QUALITY

Atmospheric conditions such as wind speed, wind direction, and air temperature interact with the physical features of the landscape to determine the movement and dispersal of air pollutants. San Bruno lies in the northern portion of the Bay Area's peninsula climatological subregion. The Santa Cruz Mountains extend up the center of the San Francisco Peninsula, with elevations ranging from 500 feet to 2,000 feet.

The largest gap in the Santa Cruz Mountains is the San Bruno Gap, which extends from Fort Funston on the Pacific Ocean to SFO on San Francisco Bay. Because the gap is oriented in the same northwest-to-southwest direction as the prevailing winds, and because elevations in the gap are below 200 feet, marine air is easily able to flow through the gap in the direction of the Bay. Within the peninsula subregion, air pollution potential is highest along the southeastern portions (i.e. Redwood City vicinity), which is the area that is most protected from the high winds and that receives the most

pollution transported from upwind urban areas. Pollution emissions are generally high in the San Bruno area, especially from traffic congestion, but winds are generally strong enough to carry the pollutants away.

### Air Pollutants

The federal Clean Air Act requires the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to establish national standards for the "criteria air pollutants," which include: ozone, carbon monoxide, nitrogen dioxide, sulfur dioxide, particulate matter (PM-10 and PM-2.5), and lead.

California has adopted more stringent air quality standards, as well as standards for additional pollutants. The Bay Area Air Quality Management District (BAAQMD) operates a regional monitoring network that measures the ambient concentrations of these six criteria air pollutants. The San Francisco Bay Area is considered "attainment" for the carbon monoxide, nitrogen dioxide, and sulfur dioxide standards. However, the Bay Area is

"nonattainment" or "unclassified" for ozone and PM-10 standards.

Regulation of toxic air contaminants (TACs) is achieved through federal and State controls on individual sources. TACs are air pollutants with short-term (acute) and/or long-term (chronic or carcinogenic) adverse human health effects. The current list of toxic air contaminants includes approximately 200 compounds. According to the BAAQMD, diesel combustion emissions are the TAC responsible for most excess cancer deaths in the Bay Area. TAC sources include industrial processes, commercial operations (e.g., gasoline stations and dry cleaners), and some agricultural activities.

Unlike regulations concerning criteria air pollutants, there are no ambient air quality standards for evaluation of TACs based on the amount of emissions. Instead, TAC emissions are evaluated based on the degree of health risk that could result from exposure to these pollutants.

**Table 6-1: Policies Related to Climate Change and Sustainability**

Element	Section (Topics Addressed)	Policies related to Climate Change & Sustainability
Land Use and Urban Design	Residential Development (infill, pedestrian movement) BART and Caltrain Station Areas (pedestrian movement) San Bruno Avenue (TOD infill)	LUD-6, LUD-9 LUD-26 through LUD-28 LUD-47
Transportation	Alternative Modes Transportation System Management (HOV) BART and Caltrain Station Areas (access, safety, increase use) Bus Transit (access to alternative transportation options) Bicycle (alternative transport)	T-1, T-3, T-4, T-5 T-20 T-43, T-46, T-47, T-52 T-57 through T-68 T-69 through T-74
Open Space and Recreation	Open Space (preserving natural habitats, hydrology)	OSR-24 through OSR-39
Environmental Resources and Conservation	Conservation (preserving natural areas) Biological Resources (preserving habitats and species) Water Resources (water quality, stormwater runoff) Air Quality (reducing VMT, greenhouse gas reduction, regional coordination)	ERC-1, ERC-3, ERC-4 ERC-5 through ERC-18 ERC-19 through ERC-24 ERC-25 through ERC-34
Health and Safety	Emergency Preparedness and Evacuation Geologic and Seismic Hazards Flooding Emergent Groundwater Wildfire Hazardous Materials Noise Airport Operations Extreme Heat Other Hazards	HS-1.1 to HS 1.30 HS-2.1 through HS-2.11 HS-3.1 through HS-3.13 HS-4.1 to HS-4.2 HS-5.1 to HS-5.12 HS-6.1 to HS-6.5 HS-7.1 to HS-7.16 HS-8.1 to HS-8.3 HS-9.1 to HS-9.6 HS-10.1 to HS-10.6
Public Facilities and Services	Water Supply (education, conservation and new sources) Solid Waste (recycling implementation and education) Fire Protection and Services Utilities (energy conservation, green design, retrofitting, incentives)	PFS-8 through PFS-19 PFS-22 through PFS-25 PFS-26 through PFS-42 PFS-63 through PFS-75
Housing	Environmental Justice Element (reducing pollution exposure and health risks) Capital Improvement Program Equity Prioritization (access to alternative transportation options, open space access)	Program 17 Program 16a

The Bay Area's air quality is influenced largely by automobile use. Automobile ownership and use is increasing at a faster rate than population growth; however, the trend toward newer, cleaner vehicles will serve to counteract some of the negative air quality impacts associated with increased vehicle use. Overall, projections indicate a net reduction in the emissions of ozone precursors and carbon monoxide, while total PM-10 emissions are expected to increase in the future with total miles traveled within the region.

## 6-5 GLOBAL CLIMATE CHANGE

Global climate change (GCC) is currently one of the most important and widely debated scientific, economic, and political issues in the United States. GCC is a change in the average weather of the earth that may be measured by wind patterns, storms, precipitation, and temperature. The baseline by which these changes are measured originates in historical records identifying temperature changes that have occurred in the distant past, such as during previous ice ages.

### Greenhouse Gases

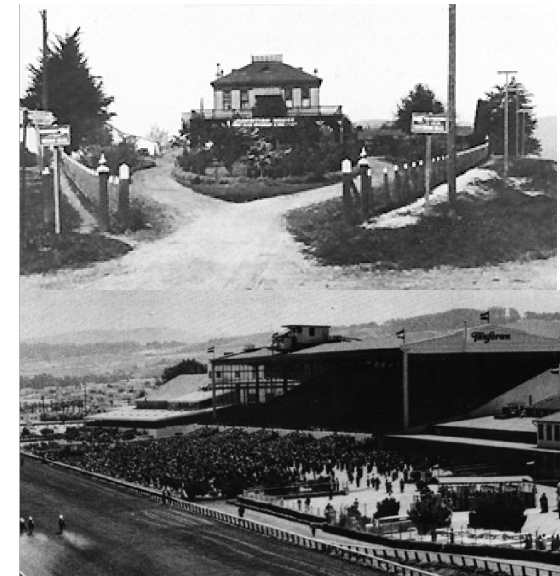
Gases that trap heat in the Earth's atmosphere are called greenhouse gases (GHGs). These gases play a critical role in determining the Earth's surface temperature. Part of the solar radiation that enters Earth's atmosphere from space is absorbed by the Earth's surface. The Earth reflects this radiation back toward space, but GHGs absorb some of

the radiation. As a result, radiation that otherwise would have escaped back into space is retained, resulting in a warming of the atmosphere. Without natural GHGs, the Earth's surface would be about 61°F cooler (CCAT, 2006). This phenomenon is known as the greenhouse effect. However, many scientists believe that emissions from human activities, such as electricity generation and vehicles, have elevated the concentration of these GHGs in the atmosphere beyond naturally occurring concentrations.

To date, the State has not imposed any requirements on local agencies to help achieve GHG emissions reductions. Because the generation of GHGs is, for the most part, related to growth, policies that contribute to a reduction in energy consumption and fuel usage rates can have positive results. In addition to promoting development patterns that will reduce vehicle miles traveled per capita, there are a number of other actions that San Bruno can take to reduce energy consumption and related GHG emissions.

Policies which address GHG emissions are dispersed throughout this General Plan, along with policies that address sustainable development overall. Table 6-1 provides a list of the majority of those policies, their general subject matter, and where in the Plan they may be found.

Discussions regarding climate change effects on city hazards and policies to address these impacts associated with climate change are included in Chapter 7, *Health and Safety*.



*The intersection at El Camino Real and San Mateo Avenue shortly after its groundbreaking (left) and the Tanforan racetrack (right), now the location of the regional retail center The Shops at Tanforan.*

## 6-6 HISTORICAL AND CULTURAL RESOURCES

Cultural resources include prehistoric or historic archeological sites, properties of historic or cultural significance, or paleontological sites. At the time of Euro-American contact, the Native Americans in the region tended to live along the alluvial terraces and along historic Bay margins. Because of San Bruno's location along the San Francisco Bay, potential exists for existence of Native American cultural resources within the city.

Development of San Bruno's Downtown had begun by the late 1880s. The USGS map of San Mateo County indicated that six buildings, the Southern Pacific Railroad grade, and two roadways (El Camino Real and San Mateo Avenue) were established by 1896.

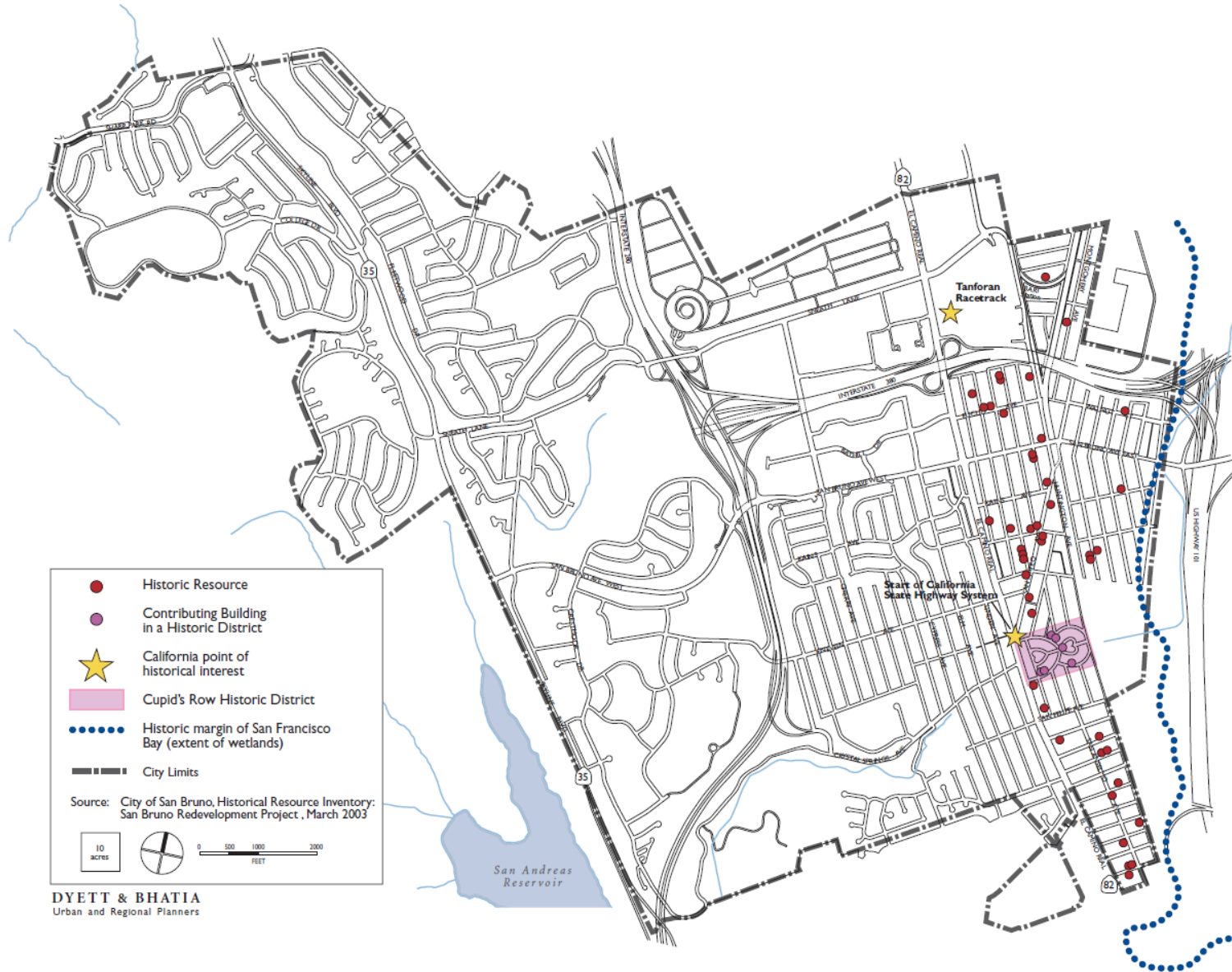
The City of San Bruno contains few historical resources identified by the State of California. The Intersection of El Camino Real and San Mateo Avenue has been identified as a California Point of Historical Interest because it was the historic beginning of the California State Highway System, where ground was broken in August 1913. The site of the former Tanforan Racetrack, located on the northeast corner of the Interstate 380/El Camino Real intersection, has been identified as a California Historical Landmark. The racetrack, which opened in November 1899, was the site of several aviation milestones in the early 1900s, and was also used for military purposes in World Wars I and II. The racetrack burned down in 1964, and the

site is now the location of the regional retail center The Shops at Tanforan.

In March 2003, the City conducted a Historic Resources Inventory of the Redevelopment Project Area, as identified in Figure 6-2. A combination of historical research and property evaluation resulted in 52 properties designated as historical resources, six of which contribute to the Cupid's Row Historic District. A historic resource is a structure, site, or feature which is representative of a historic period or building type but is not of landmark quality (having significance to the region and intangible elements of association). Modifications of a historic resource, including change of use, additions, and so on, are acceptable as long as the resource retains the essential elements which make it historically valuable.

A historic district is a geographically definable area with a significant concentration of buildings, structures, sites, spaces, or objects unified by past events, physical development, design, setting, materials, workmanship, sense of cohesiveness, or related historical and aesthetic associations. Bounded by Mastick, Taylor, Florida, Huntington, Georgia, and Chapman avenues, Cupid's Row Historic District contains housing units built between 1909 and 1951. Designed on a curvilinear heart-shaped novelty street pattern, Cupid's Row is set in the San Bruno Park 3rd Addition area; it is an excellent example of an early San Francisco peninsula railroad/streetcar and automobile suburb.

Figure 6-2: Location of Identified Cultural Resources



## 6-7 ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCES AND CONSERVATION POLICIES

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### Guiding Policies

- ERC-A** Preserve open space essential for the conservation of San Bruno’s natural resources—including vegetation, wildlife, soils, water, and air.
- ERC-B** Protect the natural environment, including wildlife, from destruction during new construction or redevelopment within San Bruno.
- ERC-C** Recognize areas of overlapping jurisdiction with respect to open space and environmental resources, and coordinate the City’s actions with efforts of surrounding cities, agencies, and San Mateo County.
- ERC-D** Reduce pollution levels within the surface water that San Bruno discharges into the San Mateo County Flood Control District, then into San Francisco Bay.
- ERC-E** Contribute to regional attainment by improving ambient air quality levels within San Bruno.
- ERC-F** Preserve and enhance historic and cultural resources within the city, particularly within the historic Downtown area.

### Implementing Policies

#### Conservation

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- ERC-1** Preserve as open space those lands which are identified, through environmental review, as sensitive habitat areas. Require setbacks to development as buffer areas, as appropriate.
- ERC-2** Preserve as open space those portions of property which have significant value to the public as scenic resources, aesthetic, or recreation purposes.
- ERC-3** Protect natural vegetation in park, open space, and scenic areas as wildlife habitat, to prevent erosion, and to serve as noise and scenic buffers.
- ERC-4** Encourage the use of Best Management Practices in conserving the city’s valuable water supply sources.

#### Biological Resources

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- ERC-5** Preserve critical habitat areas and sensitive species within riparian corridors, hillsides, canyon areas, tree canopies, and wetlands that are within the City’s control (Figure 6-1). Protect declining or vulnerable habitat areas from disturbance

during design and construction of new development.

- ERC-6** Preserve wetland habitat in the San Francisco Bay Margins along the eastern edge of city land as permanent open space (Figure 6-1). Where jurisdiction allows, establish buffer zones at the edge of wetland habitats and identify buffer zones as areas to restrict development. Environmental concerns should be addressed during stormwater maintenance activities.
- ERC-7** Ensure that construction adjacent to open canyon areas is sensitive to the natural environment. Preserve the natural topography and vegetation.
- ERC-8** If development occurs adjacent to a wetlands area, ensure that a qualified biologist has conducted a wetlands delineation in accordance with federal and State guidelines.
- ERC-9** Preserve mature trees and vegetation, including wildflowers, within open canyon areas and along the city’s scenic roadways.

**ERC-10** Require incorporation of native plants into landscape plans for new development as feasible—especially in areas adjacent to natural areas, such as canyons or scenic roadways (Figure 6-1). Require preservation of mature trees, as feasible, during design and construction.

**ERC-11** Prohibit the use of any new non-native invasive plant species in any landscaped or natural area. Develop a program for abatement of non-native invasive species in open space or habitat areas.

**ERC-12** Balance the need for fire safety and invasive plant species management with new considerations along the city’s scenic corridors. Encourage buildings to be locked outside of the tree’s drip-line or 12 feet from the tree trunk, whichever is greater, and/or incorporating special techniques to minimize root damage, etc.

**ERC-13** Through environmental review, assure that all projects affecting resources of regional concern (e.g., the San Francisco garter snake habitat, water and air quality, the San Francisco Fish and Game Reserve) satisfy regional, State and federal laws.

**ERC-14** Preserve wetlands habitat and associated species in compliance with the federal “no net loss” policy using mitigation measures such as:

- Avoidance of sensitive habitat areas;
- Clustering of development away from wetlands;
- Transfer of development rights for preservation of existing sensitive lands; and/or
- Compensatory in-kind mitigation, such as restoration or creation.

**ERC-15** Consult with the California Department of Fish and Game to determine significant habitat areas. Identify priorities for acquisition or maintenance of open space areas based on biological or environmental concerns.

**ERC-16** Conduct presence/absence biological surveys for sensitive plant and animal species in natural areas prior to any construction activities proposed adjacent to or within identified natural areas (Figure 6-1). If no special status species are detected during these surveys, then construction-related activities may proceed. If listed special status species are found within the construction zone, then avoid these species and their habitat or consult

with U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and/or California Department of Fish and Game.

**ERC-17** If construction activities, including tree removal activities, are required adjacent to or within natural areas (Figure 6-1), then avoid activities during March through June unless a bird survey is conducted to determine that the tree is unused during the breeding season by avian species that are protected under California Fish and Game Codes 3503, 3503.5, and 3511.



General Plan policies seek to preserve the city's natural resources, including mature tree stands, grasslands (Junipero Serra Park, top), canyons, and creek corridors (Crestmoor Canyon, bottom).

**ERC-18** Coordinate efforts with the San Mateo County Flood Control District, Caltrans, Golden Gate National Recreation Area, San Francisco Airport, Peninsula Watershed lands, and Junipero Serra County Park to develop or preserve and manage interconnecting wildlife movement corridors.

### Water Resources

Please note that policies within Chapter 8: Public Facilities and Services address water supply, distribution, conservation, and recycling.

**ERC-19** Regulate new development—specifically industrial uses—as well as construction and demolition practices to minimize pollutant and sediment concentrations in receiving waters and ensure waterbodies within San Bruno and surface water discharged into San Francisco Bay meets or exceeds relevant regulatory water quality standards.

**ERC-20** Require implementation of Best Management Practices to reduce accumulation of non-point source pollutants in the drainage system originating from streets, parking lots, residential areas, businesses, and industrial operations.

**ERC-21** Continue programs to inform residents of the environmental effects of dumping household waste, such as motor oil, into storm drains that eventually discharge into San Francisco Bay.

**ERC-22** Regularly measure and monitor water quality in San Bruno's surface water to ensure maintenance of high quality water for consumption by humans and other species throughout the region.

**ERC-23** Regulate new development to minimize stormwater runoff rates and volumes generated by impervious surfaces, and maximize recharge of local groundwater aquifers when feasible. Utilize the recommendations provided in the Bay Area Stormwater Management Agency's *Start at the Source Design Guidance Manual for Stormwater Quality Protection*.

**ERC-24** Require that new development incorporate features into site drainage plans that reduce impermeable surface area and surface runoff volumes. Such features may include:

- Additional landscaped areas including canopy trees and shrubs;
- Reducing building footprint;

- Removing curbs and gutters from streets and parking areas where appropriate to allow stormwater sheet flow into vegetated areas;
- Permeable paving and parking area design;
- Stormwater detention basins to facilitate infiltration; and
- Building integrated or subsurface water retention facilities to capture rainwater for use in landscape irrigation and other non-potable uses.

### **Air Quality**

Please note that policies within Chapter 4: Transportation encourage transportation alternatives, such as walking, bicycling, carpooling, transit-ridership, and flex-scheduling, which reduce transportation-related air pollutants.

- ERC-25** Maintain and improve air quality by requiring project mitigation, such as Transportation Demand Management (TDM) techniques, where air quality impacts are unavoidable.
- ERC-26** Require dust abatement actions for all new construction and redevelopment projects.

**ERC-27** Budget for alternative-fuel vehicles in the City’s long-range capital expenditure plans, to replace and improve the existing fleet of gasoline- and diesel-powered vehicles.

**ERC-28** Incorporate air quality beneficial programs and policies into local planning and development activities, with a particular focus on subdivision, zoning, and site design measures that reduce the number and length of single-occupant automobile trips.

**ERC-29** Promote demonstration projects to develop new strategies to reduce motor vehicle emissions. Projects may include low emission vehicle fleets and LEV refueling infrastructure.

**ERC-30** Encourage new residential developments to incorporate measures such as shuttle services to major employment centers, commercial areas and transit areas, and provision of adequate transit facilities.

**ERC-31** Prepare a Greenhouse Gas Emissions Reduction Plan, focusing on feasible actions the City can take to minimize the adverse impacts of Plan implementation on climate change and air quality. The Plan will include but will not be limited to:

- An inventory of all known, or reasonably discoverable, sources of greenhouse gases (GHGs) that currently exist in the City and sources that existed in 1990. In determining what is a source of GHG emissions, the City may rely on the definition of “greenhouse gas emissions source” or “source” as defined in section 38505 of the California Global Warming Solutions Act (“AB 32”) or its governing regulations. The inventory may include estimates of emissions drawing on available information from State and regional air quality boards, supplemented by information obtained by the City.
- A projected inventory of the new GHGs that can reasonably be expected to be emitted in the year 2025 due to the City’s discretionary land use decisions pursuant to the 2025 General Plan Update, as well as new GHGs emitted by the City’s internal government operations. The projected inventories will include estimates, supported by substantial evidence, of future emissions from planned land use and information from state and regional air quality boards and agencies.

- A target for the reduction of those sources of future emissions reasonably attributable to the City's discretionary land use decisions under the 2025 General Plan and the City's internal government operations, and feasible GHG emission reduction measures whose purpose shall be to meet this reduction target by regulating those sources of GHG emissions reasonably attributable to the City's discretionary land use decisions and the City's internal government operations.

**ERC-32** Coordinate air quality planning efforts with local, regional, and State agencies. Support the Bay Area Air Quality Management District's efforts to monitor and control air pollutants from stationary sources.

**ERC-33** Require all large construction projects to mitigate diesel exhaust emissions through use of alternate fuels and control devices.

**ERC-34** Require that adequate buffer distances be provided between odor sources and sensitive receptors, such as schools, hospitals, and community centers.

### **Historical and Cultural Resources**

Please note that policies within Chapter 8: Public Facilities and Services address preservation of existing buildings following a natural disaster.

**ERC-35** Develop criteria for designation of local historic or cultural resources. Designation may not be based solely on the age of a resource, but rather special qualities, detailing, people, or events associated with it. Resources may also include special signage and/or landmarks known to city residents.

**ERC-36** Preserve historic structures and resources during reuse and intensification within the city's older neighborhoods.

**ERC-37** Designate the vicinity of Taylor Avenue, San Mateo Avenue, and El Camino Real as the beginning of the State Highway System as a historic landmark with a marker (Figure 6-2).

**ERC-38** Work cooperatively with the owners of The Shops at Tanforan to preserve the historic marker on site (Figure 6-2).

**ERC-39** Continue to protect archaeological sites and resources from damage. Require that areas found to contain significant indigenous artifacts be examined by a qualified

archaeologist for recommendations concerning protection and preservation.

**ERC-40** Ensure that new development adjacent to historic structures is compatible with the character of the structure and the surrounding neighborhood.

**ERC-41** Educate citizens about San Bruno's past by creating a brochure describing the city's history and resources for distribution to community groups and public schools.

**ERC-42** If demolition of a historical building is necessary for safety reasons, attempt to preserve the building façade for adaptive reuse during reconstruction. Offer funding through the Redevelopment Agency for façade preservation projects.

**ERC-43** Conduct a thorough study of the historic and cultural resources within San Bruno, in coordination with the city's centennial anniversary in 2014.

**ERC-44** Rehabilitation, renovation, or reuse of historic resources will be implemented in coordination with the standards of the Secretary of the Interior and the Office of Historic Preservation.

**ERC-45** If, prior to grading or construction activity, an area is determined to be sensitive for paleontological resources, retain a qualified paleontologist to recommend appropriate actions. Appropriate action may include avoidance, preservation in place, excavation, documentation, and/ or data recovery, and shall always include preparation of a written report documenting the find and describing steps taken to evaluate and protect significant resources.