

I INTRODUCTION

This General Plan will steer development in the Eden Area through 2025. It is guided by the vision that Eden Area residents expressed in the General Plan update process for how they would like to see the Eden Area evolve. This General Plan includes a policy framework, which is informed by a discussion of the key development issues facing the area. The policy framework is made up of goals, policies and actions that will guide decisions about the location, type and design of development in the Eden Area over the life of the General Plan.

A. *Vision*

The section below describes the vision for the future of the Eden Area, as envisioned by residents of the area. The vision for the Eden Area's future was developed through public participation at community workshops. A detailed vision statement and list of main priorities for the General Plan are provided in Chapter 2 of this document.

Through the year 2025, the Eden Area of Alameda County should emerge as one of the most livable communities in the greater San Francisco Bay Area and become a great place to live, work and do business. Drawing on its rich history, the Eden Area will provide a bright future of opportunities for growth and advancement. The Eden Area will be an attractive and vibrant place, enhanced by the creation of lively districts where residents can live, shop, walk, eat, gather and play. The Eden Area will provide renewed residential areas, affordable neighborhoods with housing choices that fit the needs of all residents, and investment in the economic development of the community to revitalize underutilized districts and transportation corridors. Eden Area residents will enjoy safe streets with a comprehensive network of bicycle lanes and enhanced bus transportation along corridors that is convenient and frequent. Expanded parks and recreation opportunities will serve the needs of all residents.

Growth should be managed to bring in needed benefits while preserving the important qualities of the Eden Area. New development ought to be pedestrian- and transit-oriented; properties and streets should be repaired and enhanced. All stakeholders will continue to have the opportunity to participate in the land use

decision-making process to balance community needs and values with the rights of individuals.

B. About the Eden Area



View of the Eden Area

The Eden Area has been influenced by many different cultures over the generations and has had many different functions in the region, beginning as an agricultural center then evolving into residential neighborhoods with industrial manufacturing areas and commercial corridors as the economy has demanded. The Eden Area is just under eight square miles. Much of the terrain is flat or gently sloped. However, the eastern portion of the Eden Area stretches into the East Bay Hills. To the west, a small portion of the Eden Area touches the San Francisco Bay.

1. Planning Area

The Eden Area consists of unincorporated land in western Alameda County between the cities of San Leandro and Hayward and west of the County's Castro Valley planning area as shown in Figure 1-1.

Historically, Castro Valley was also part of Eden Township. In the 1966 County General Plan, the Eden Planning Unit was comprised of the Castro Valley Planning Area, the Hayward Planning Area, and the San Leandro Planning Area. Eventually, as the population grew and area began to develop, the County prepared the Castro Valley Plan to serve as a general policy guide for public and private decisions affecting the development of the Castro Valley area. The whole of the Eden Area became the communities of Ashland, Cherryland, Hayward Acres, El Portal Ridge, Fairmont Campus, Hillcrest Knolls, Mt. Eden, San Lorenzo, and Fairview.

The Eden Area is now comprised of four communities as shown in Figure 1-2. While these areas are unique in some ways, they have many commonalities and

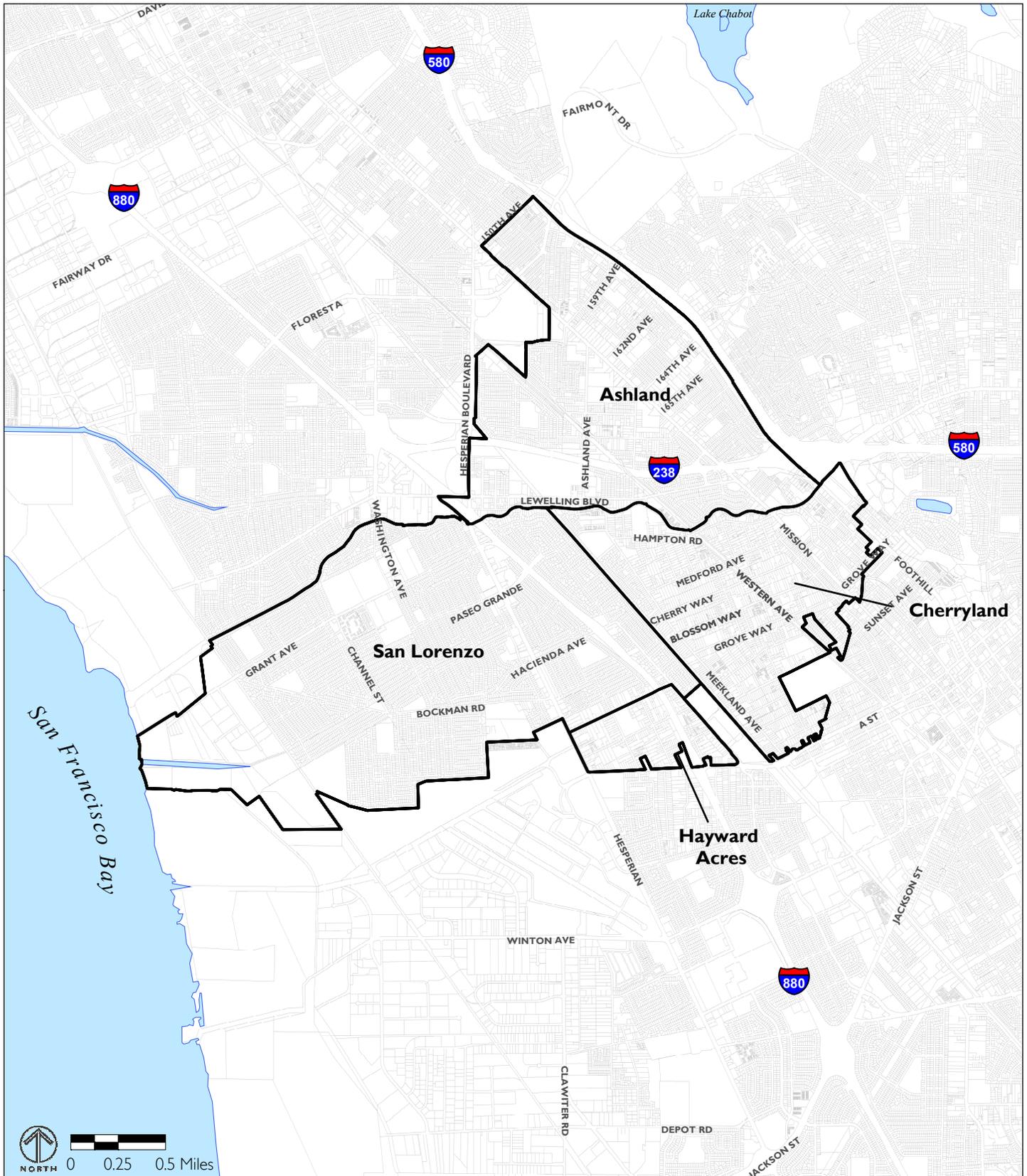


Source: Design, Community & Environment, February 2005.

FIGURE 1-1

REGIONAL LOCATION

COUNTY OF ALAMEDA
EDEN AREA GENERAL PLAN



Source: Alameda County Community Development Agency

FIGURE 1-2

 **Study Area Boundary**

PLANNING AREA

are interdependent economically; thus most policies and actions apply to all areas. Following is a description of each community:

- ◆ **Ashland.** The Ashland community was developed in the 1940s and is named for the Oregon tree. Ashland is bounded on the east by Interstate 580, on the south by San Lorenzo Creek, and on the north and west by the City of San Leandro along Hesperian Boulevard, the Bayfair Shopping Center and the Bayfair BART Station. The prominent parcel pattern consists of relatively large blocks of properties which, prior to their development, were remnants of the small farms, orchards and nurseries. Ashland is centered around Edendale Park, Ashland Avenue, and East 14th Street. East 14th Street is the main commercial corridor, serving as the “spine” of the Ashland community. The major road corridors have some higher-intensity development than the rest of the predominantly single-family area. However, there remain areas with very low-intensity development, such as car-wrecking establishments that present opportunities for redevelopment.
- ◆ **Cherryland.** The Cherryland community is generally characterized by a series of east-west streets forming a grid of large blocks typically made up of narrow, deep parcels, many of which were small orchards, greenhouses, and farms until the 1940s and '50s. Most of the east-west streets intersect with the Union Pacific Railroad tracks at grade. Cherryland also includes the hillside neighborhoods east of Mission Boulevard to Foothill Boulevard. The area’s transition to residential development did not include all of the amenities that residential neighborhoods usually include, such as sidewalks and street trees. These are in the process of being developed through the redevelopment process.
- ◆ **Hayward Acres.** The Hayward Acres community is a relatively small portion of the Eden Area located between the San Lorenzo community and the City of Hayward. It is bounded on the north by Bartlett Avenue, on the south by West ‘A’ Street, on the east by Hathaway Avenue, and on the west by Hesperian Boulevard.
- ◆ **San Lorenzo.** The San Lorenzo community is the largest of the Eden Area communities in size and extends beyond San Lorenzo Creek on the north, to the Union Pacific Railroad tracks on the east, Bartlett Avenue and the Sky-



First Southern Baptist Church of San Lorenzo

west Public Golf Course on the south, and the San Francisco Bay and the tidelands on the west. The area, which includes San Lorenzo Village, a 1940s planned development of small homes to the west of Hesperian Boulevard, consists predominantly of single-family homes with commercial development along the major roadways. Additionally, San Lorenzo has an agglomeration of industrial businesses in the Grant Avenue Industrial Area. These are located between the San Francisco Bay and the residential area of the community.

The Eden Area also includes the Fairview area. The 1997 Fairview Area Specific Plan contains the goals, policies, and zoning regulations that apply to this area.

2. Eden Area History

The original occupants of the Eden Area were the Cho-chenyo-speaking Native American tribes attracted to the creeks, lush vegetation and abundant game in the area. The primary tribes were the Ohlone or Coastanoan. They lived along the San Lorenzo Creek and near the present-day Fairmont Hospital area, where water was available from a spring. San Lorenzo Creek was a focal point for Ohlone society in the area. The creek provided access to the marshes at the edge of the San Francisco Bay, where the Ohlone collected shellfish to eat and tule reeds out of which they constructed their homes. Ohlone hunters also found deer, elk, rabbits, squirrels, and birds around the creek and in the hills.

Spanish settlers moved into the area in 1797, maintaining control until the area was turned over to Mexico at its independence in 1821. The closest mission to the Eden Area was Mission San Jose, which was established with a primary goal of converting the Ohlone people in the area to Catholicism. The establishment of the mission began the first transition of the Eden Area to agricultural use as portions of the area were made part of the mission lands and were used for cattle grazing.

With the gold rush and American annexation in the mid-nineteenth century, the area began to attract a larger population. One of the early U.S. settlers was a miner, Captain William Roberts, who soon discovered that there was much more

money to be made on the abundant game around San Lorenzo Creek for sale on the San Francisco market than from gold. He established a landing at the mouth of the creek and by 1853 was operating a regular freight and passenger schooner service between the landing and San Francisco. Within the year many other settlers moved into the area.

The County of Alameda was established in 1853 and the town of San Lorenzo was founded in 1854. It was located just north of San Lorenzo Creek at the intersection of Telegraph Road (now Hesperian Boulevard) and Main Street (now Lewelling Boulevard). Between 1817-1854 the area at the Four Corners, now the intersection of Hesperian and Lewelling, was known as Squatterville. The first business in San Lorenzo was Boyles Blacksmith Shop, located on the south side of the San Lorenzo Creek on the current Hesperian Boulevard. The building is currently in use as a pottery store. Two miles west from the old town of San Lorenzo was Robert's Landing, which was an important early location for water transportation across the Bay.

During the 1850s and 1860s, a number of farms and ranches were established from former ranchos, including the Meek and Lewelling estates. William Meek established some of the earliest commercial agriculture in Alameda County. He grew grain and raised sheep, rotating the crops to maximize yield. Meek's landholdings, together with his one-time partner Henderson Lewelling, boasted a large cherry orchard, which gave Cherryland its name.

The excellent soil, weather and minimal frost meant that crops could be grown almost year round and the entire Eden Area quickly became a major agricultural area in the East Bay. By the 1880s, the potential of the land for growing fruit trees was recognized and soon the Eden Area became a fruit producing area. Industrial and manufacturing companies also began to locate in the area, to support the agricultural uses.

Beginning in the 1870s, several railroad companies began to build rail lines through the area to begin service from Santa Cruz to the Oakland waterfront. The direct access to rail transport for the area's local produce was a huge boon to

the local economy. The San Lorenzo Railroad Station was built in 1878 and was located near the old cemetery on what is now Hesperian Boulevard. By 1898, more fruit was shipped out of the San Lorenzo Railroad Station than from any other station in the state.

The transit lines stimulated new development in the Ashland community with farmlands and orchards being subdivided into town lots of approximately one acre each. They also made the area more accessible for recreational users that were attracted by the agricultural beauty of the area.

San Lorenzo was a small resort town that boasted two fine hotels in addition to the Grove Pavilion, which was a particularly popular regional destination for day trips. It was an 8-acre natural park owned by the electric car line and was located bordering 3rd Street and Main Street which is now Lewelling Boulevard. It included a dance pavilion, picnic grounds, playing fields, a concession area and an outdoor bandstand.

The park was purchased in 1895 by the Oakland Traction Company and in 1911 was sold to M.S. Rodgers, who operated it as an amusement park until 1920. When the oak trees became infected with a fungus, Mr. Rodgers replaced them with an apricot orchard. The Pavilion was torn down in 1926 to create a site for a house for his daughter that now stands on the corner of Tracy Street and Lewelling Boulevard. The San Lorenzo School district bought the remainder of the land between the orchard and the railroad tracks. The caretaker's house for the Grove was moved next to the school property (near the current Quanset building), where it remains today. Eventually, the orchard was sold and divided to create the right-of-way for Sharon Street. Individual homes were built on the remaining land.

To serve the expanding agricultural economy of the area, several small trading centers in Hayward, San Leandro and San Lorenzo were established, as were a number of landings along the shoreline. In the 1880s and 1890s there was a great diversification of agricultural crops grown in the area, with much of the fruit packed and shipped throughout the country. The Oakland, San Leandro and

Hayward Electric Railway was completed in 1891, permitting new urban development along its length. The California Packing Corporation (CPC) Del Monte Plant No. 9 operated in San Lorenzo for many years. It was located by the cemetery near the current storage area.

During the 1890s, the Eden Area became part of the East Bay's rail transit network with construction of the Oakland, San Leandro and Hayward Electric Railway. By 1892, approximately 14 miles of track were in place along the old County Road (East 14th Street/Mission Boulevard) between Oakland and Hayward. Trolleys ran every half hour from 5 a.m. until midnight. There were side-feeder lines from the Ashland junction (near 150th Avenue and Hesperian Boulevard/East 14th Street) to Lewelling Boulevard along Telegraph Road (now Hesperian Boulevard), and along Ashland Avenue.

At the end of the 19th and beginning of the 20th centuries, numerous immigrant groups from Portugal, Germany, Denmark, Italy and Japan joined early settlers in the area and contributed their heritage and skills to shape the economic growth of the region. In the 1920s, large ranches and farms were subdivided into one- and two-acre farm sets and the landscape began to change again to accommodate new roads for automobiles and trucks. East 14th Street/Mission Boulevard (then called County Road) became the major north-south highway for the East Bay. After World War II, the area's agricultural importance began to decline when extensive farmlands were displaced by multi-unit development, single-family subdivisions, and more recently by areas of commercial and industrial development.

Interstates 880 and 580, which run north-south and were completed in the 1950s and 1960s, and Interstate 238, which runs east-west and became an Interstate in 1983, effectively divided the Ashland, Cherryland and San Lorenzo communities, in an effort to provide improved automobile access to the greater Bay Region. In the 1970s, the Bay Area Rapid Transit System (BART) was built as an elevated line over the then Western Pacific Railroad tracks. The Bayfair station is located at the north edge of Ashland, providing an additional level of transit service to



the overall area, and the Hayward BART station is located just south of the Eden Area in downtown Hayward.

3. Eden Area Today

Today, the Eden Area is an agglomeration of distinct neighborhoods with interconnected histories. The five sub-areas described above vary widely in their populations and physical appearance. The Eden Area is relatively urbanized and substantially built out, though there are opportunities for infill development and redevelopment.

a. Demographics

In 2000, the Eden Area had 60,076 people, 20,515 households and 25,612 employed residents. Like most of Alameda County, the Eden Area is culturally diverse. As shown in Table 1-1, of the 60,076 people who lived in the community in 2000, 38.4 percent were White and 32.0 percent were Hispanic or Latino. There are also smaller, but significant, populations of Black or African Americans (10.7 percent) and Asian Pacific Islanders (14.0 percent).

The Eden Area is largely composed of families, with 70 percent of households classified by the 2000 Census as “family households.” This is slightly higher than Alameda County as a whole, which has 65 percent, and California, which has 69 percent. Of these households, a smaller proportion are homeowners than in Alameda County or California. About 50 percent of Eden Area households own their own home, while 55 percent of Alameda County households and 57 percent of California households are homeowners.

Between 1990 and 2000, the Eden Area population grew at a rate of 1.8 percent per year. This growth rate was slightly larger than the average growth rates for Alameda County and the State of California, which were 1.2 and 1.3 percent per year, respectively. Despite this relatively rapid rate of household growth, housing development has not kept pace with demand, leading to larger household sizes, low vacancy rates for both rental and ownership housing, and rising housing costs. Given regional population growth forecasts and development patterns, these trends are likely to continue into the future.

TABLE I-1 **POPULATION BY RACE AND ETHNICITY IN THE EDEN AREA, 2000**

Race/Ethnicity	Number	Percent
American Indian and Alaska Native	338	0.6%
Asian, Hawaiian and Pacific Islander	8,415	14.0%
Black or African American	6,445	10.7%
Hispanic or Latino	19,264	32.1%
White	23,059	38.4%
Some other race	132	0.2%
Two or more races	2,423	4.0%

The population in the Eden Area is also multi-generational. There are a greater percentage of senior citizens in the Eden Area than in either Alameda County or California. This older population is complemented, however, by a large number of children, 26.7 percent of the total Eden Area population.

This is greater than the percentage of children in Alameda County (24.6 percent) but smaller than the percentage in California as a whole (27.3 percent). This large number of children contributes to an overall lower average median age compared to the County as a whole. However, the median age ranges from a high of 37.7 in San Lorenzo to a low of 29.7 in Hayward Acres, as shown in Table 1-2. The range of ages presents opportunities for families and continuity between age groups but requires that the County provide a range of services to address the disparate needs of this mixed population.

The large number of children contribute to a household size of 2.93, well above the County average of 2.71 persons per household. The large household size contributes to making the Ashland and Cherryland portions of the Eden Area among the densest in northern California.

TABLE 1-2 **MEDIAN AGE AND INCOME BY NEIGHBORHOOD**

Eden Area Neighborhoods	Median Age	Median Income
San Lorenzo	37.7	\$56,170
Hayward Acres	29.7	\$45,398
Cherryland	31.6	\$42,880
Ashland	30.9	\$40,811
Alameda County	34.5	\$55,946

The neighborhoods within the Eden Area vary substantially in terms of median income, as shown in Table 1-2. Only San Lorenzo exceeds the County median income, while Ashland and Cherryland are substantially lower.

Educational attainment information is available for the Ashland, Cherryland and San Lorenzo communities within the Eden Area, as shown in Table 1-3. They vary somewhat in levels of college education, but all three are substantially below the County-wide figure of 38.5 percent with college degrees.

b. Local Economic Base

In the beginning of the 20th century, the greater Eden Area contained many large light industrial and distribution uses, including a prominent local canning industry. The last of these canneries closed in the late 1970s and the Bay Area's regional economy has shifted steadily towards services and high technology. These changes are reflected in the Eden Area's local economic base. The area's strongest employment sector is sales and office occupations, with more than 31 percent of all local jobs as of 2000, followed by management and professional occupations with 24 percent of jobs, as shown in Table 1-4. The predominant types of employment for Eden Area residents are similar to those of Alameda County as a whole because the top two occupations are the same. However, Alameda County's top profession is management and professional, followed by sales and office. Management and professional positions are more likely to require a college degree, which is more common at the Countywide level than in the Eden Area.

TABLE I-3 **EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT**

	Ashland		Cherryland		San Lorenzo	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Less Than 9th Grade	1,557	10.5%	1,591	15.7%	1,082	6.6%
9th to 12th Grade, No Diploma	2,524	17.0%	1,793	17.7%	2,070	12.6%
High School Graduate*	4,242	28.5%	3,141	30.9%	5,428	33.0%
Some College, No Degree	3,793	25.5%	2,127	21.0%	4,468	27.1%
Associate Degree	832	5.6%	659	6.5%	1,110	6.7%
Bachelor's Degree	1,425	9.6%	654	6.4%	1,704	10.3%
Graduate/ Professional Degree	516	3.5%	186	1.8%	606	3.7%
Total	14,889	100%	10,151	100%	16,468	100%
Population with College Degrees	2,773	18.6%	1,499	14.8%	3,420	20.8%

Source: US Census 2000, and analysis provided by Bay Area Economics 2003.

Overall, the greater Eden Area grew more slowly than the County in terms of employment between 1990 and 2000. As displayed in Table 1-5, the Association of Bay Area Governments (ABAG) estimates that the Eden Area's local employment base grew by 3.8 percent between 1990 and 2000, compared to 16.7 percent growth in the County overall.

C. Purpose of the General Plan

The Eden Area General Plan is the County of Alameda's fundamental land use and development policy document for the Eden Area. It is a portion of the Alameda County General Plan, which consists of documents for the various planning areas in unincorporated Alameda County. This plan represents the basic policy direction of the Alameda County Board of Supervisors on community

TABLE I-4 OCCUPATION OF EMPLOYED RESIDENTS IN THE EDEN AREA

Occupation	Number	Percent
Management, professional, and related occupations	6,392	24.0%
Service occupations	3,837	14.4%
Sales and office occupations	8,349	31.3%
Farming, fishing, and forestry occupations	41	0.2%
Construction, extraction, and maintenance occupations	3,168	11.9%
Production, transportation, and material moving occupations	4,859	18.2%
Total	26,646	100%

Note: The figures above include the communities of Ashland, Cherryland and San Lorenzo, rather than the full Eden Area due to data availability.

Source: US Census 2000, and analysis provided by Bay Area Economics 2003.

values, ideals and aspirations to govern the Eden Area through 2025. It addresses all aspects of development including land use, transportation, public facilities and services, and open spaces, among other topics. Though residential development is touched on in this General Plan, detailed housing policies are provided in a separate Housing Element.

The Housing Element of the General Plan has been a separate process from the Eden Area General Plan Update. The County adopted the Alameda County Housing Element in October 2003, and committed to an implementation program that would amend portions of the General Plan and modify aspects of the Zoning Ordinance and Specific Plans to conform to the goals and policies of the Housing Element. To ensure internal consistency between elements of the General Plan and the Zoning Ordinance, these implementation measures are incorporated into the policies found in this Plan. As of 2009, an update to the Alameda County Housing Element was underway, with adoption expected in November 2009.

TABLE I-5 **LOCAL ECONOMIC BASE**

	Eden Area			Alameda County		
	Persons (1990)	Persons (2000)	Percent Change (1990 - 2000)	Persons (1990)	Persons (2000)	Percent Change (1990 2000)
Employed Residents	27,033	31,627	17.0%	645,981	697,882	8.0%
Agricultural and Mining	180	130	-27.8%	3,900	3,460	-11.3%
Manufacturing and Wholesale	1,220	1,430	17.2%	131,820	163,290	23.9%
Retail Jobs	3,440	3,390	-1.5%	111,570	120,590	8.1%
Service Jobs	4,680	4,960	6.0%	215,350	268,770	24.8%
Other Jobs	1,320	1,340	1.5%	181,460	195,570	7.8%
Total Jobs	10,840	11,250	3.8%	644,100	751,680	16.7%
Ratio of Employed Residents to Total Jobs	2.49	2.81	-	1.00	0.93	-

Note: As shown above, the Eden Area includes the communities of Ashland, San Lorenzo, and Cherryland/Fairview; therefore, totals differ from Census data.

Source: ABAG *Projections 2002*, and analysis provided by Bay Area Economics 2003.

In addition to the Alameda County Housing Element, the Eden Area is also subject to a number of additional county-wide General Plan elements, including:

- ◆ Scenic Route Element (adopted 1966)
- ◆ Seismic Safety and Safety Element (adopted 1976, amended 1982)
- ◆ Noise Element (adopted 1976)
- ◆ Open Space Element (adopted 1973, amended 1994)

- ◆ Conservation Element (adopted 1976, amended 1994)
- ◆ Parks and Recreation Element (adopted 1956, amended 1968)

These elements cover issues that go beyond the Eden Area and thus require a coordinated county-wide approach. On some of these topics, namely seismic safety, noise and parks and recreation, there are issues specific to the Eden Area that need to be addressed more fully than is possible in the broader County element. Thus, elements have been included in the Eden Area General Plan to deal with Eden Area-specific issues.

The Eden Area has limited resources for scenic routes, open space and conservation. Therefore, the county-wide elements are sufficient to cover these topics in the Eden Area. Finally, the County is currently revising and consolidating the Open Space, Conservation, and Parks and Recreation elements into one coordinated document that will be called the Regional Open Space and Agriculture Element (ROSA). The goals, policies and actions of the Eden Area General Plan will be consistent with ROSA as it is with all of the other county-wide elements.

California Government Code Section 65300 requires that the General Plan be comprehensive, internally consistent and plan for the long term. Although required to address the issues specified in State law, the General Plan may be organized in a way that best suits the County. The plan should be clearly written, available to all those concerned with the community's development and easy to administer.

This Eden Area General Plan meets these requirements. The Plan articulates a vision for the Eden Area's long-term physical form and development. It also brings a deliberate overall direction to the day-to-day decisions of the Board of Supervisors, its commissions and County staff in regards to the Eden Area. In particular, the General Plan serves six related purposes:

1. **Communication.** The General Plan conveys the vision for the future of the Eden Area to current and future residents and provides policy direction and guidance to the Board of Supervisors for achieving that vision.

2. **Policy Determination.** The document defines a set of policies that enables the Board of Supervisors to govern the future physical development of the community and determine a general physical design showing how the policies will be implemented.
3. **Project Evaluation.** The General Plan provides a mutually agreed upon framework against which the Board of Supervisors and other bodies can review, compare and evaluate specific projects.
4. **Conveyance of Advice.** The General Plan provides the Planning Commission with a coherent, unified structure for advising the Board of Supervisors on development issues.
5. **Education.** The document, and the process of creating and revising it, provides a forum for residents, County staff and the Board of Supervisors to educate themselves and others on the problems and opportunities of the Eden Area.
6. **Action Plan.** The General Plan includes specific actions that the County will take in order to meet its planning goals. These actions constitute a work program for the Planning Commission and County staff over the life of the General Plan. The County acknowledges that many of the proposed actions will require as yet unidentified funding. This General Plan assumes that County staff will identify and pursue all possible funding sources to implement the work program in this General Plan.

In order to be used in the ways described above, the General Plan does the following:

- ◆ Defines a realistic vision of what the Eden Area intends to be in the long term.
- ◆ Expresses the policy direction of the County in regard to the physical, social, economic, cultural and environmental character of the Eden Area.
- ◆ Serves as a comprehensive guide for making decisions about land use, community character, economic development, circulation, open space, the environment, and public health and safety.

- ◆ Contains a general level of information to allow for flexibility of future conditions and ideas.
- ◆ Charts the course of coordinated development and conservation that will preserve the character and heritage of the Eden Area.
- ◆ Serves as the Eden Area’s “constitution” for land use and community development. That is to say, it is the legal foundation for all County zoning, subdivision and public facilities ordinances, decisions and projects—all of which must be consistent with the General Plan under State law.
- ◆ Is in a clear and easy to understand form that encourages public understanding.

D. The General Plan Update Process

The Eden Area General Plan was prepared over a period of several years beginning in October of 2002 by County staff and a consultant team, with extensive public input. The process included four major tasks, each with a series of public workshops. The first task explored the vision, goals and needs of community members as well as the existing opportunities and constraints for development. The comments from the public formed the basis for the vision statement in this General Plan as well as a list of issues to be addressed through policy and action statements. Concurrent with this task, the consultant team prepared an extensive existing conditions analysis that explored a range of physical and social conditions in the Eden Area. The Eden Area General Plan Existing Conditions Report, an extensive report about the area’s built environment, transportation network and economic conditions, resulted from this work. Public workshops on existing conditions were held in March and May of 2003.

As a result of the existing conditions report and the goals and needs of the community, a variety of land use and policy alternatives for the Eden Area were developed. These were presented and discussed at public workshops in July and September 2003. The land use alternatives identified key locations with the greatest potential to attract new business and enhance the overall livability of the

Eden Area. Community members had a number of opportunities to provide feedback on the future for each area and to guide the consultant team in the refinement of alternative development strategies. The final alternative that was developed provides the basis for the Land Use Element in the Eden Area General Plan.

The policy alternatives explored a range of issues of concern to the community including pedestrian safety, traffic congestion, and the need for new public services and facilities, such as parks and schools. Key issues that were identified throughout the process are addressed in the background information, goals, policies and actions of the six elements of the General Plan.

The fourth phase of the update process was the development and review of the General Plan and its adoption by the Alameda County Board of Supervisors. Additional public workshops were held on two key areas, the Grant Avenue Area and the Fairmont Campus. The consultant team prepared a separate existing conditions report and specific key issues for the Grant Avenue Area. Additionally, the consultant team worked with the Alameda County General Services Agency (GSA) to coordinate the General Plan with the *Fairmont Area Master Plan* for the Fairmont Campus. The results of these processes are included in this General Plan.

Changes to the boundaries of the Eden Area necessitated an additional update of the Draft General Plan in 2009. Hillcrest Knolls, Fairmont Campus and El Portal Ridge were removed from the Eden Area and added to the Castro Valley planning area, and the Mt. Eden Area was annexed to the City of Hayward.

E. General Plan Contents

Though all of the elements of the Eden Area General Plan are interconnected and consistent with one another, the contents of the plan are divided into chapters or elements.

1. General Plan Elements

The Eden Area General Plan is guided by the vision statement in Chapter 2 of this document and by the land use and urban design framework presented in the Land Use Element. The bulk of the General Plan is comprised of seven separate elements that set goals, policies and actions for subjects required by State law or determined as important by the County. The elements in the Eden Area General Plan cover four of the seven topics required by State law and three optional elements: on parks and recreation, public facilities and services and greenhouse gas emissions reduction efforts. The Housing Element, also required by State law, is not included in this General Plan because a county-wide Housing Element was adopted by the County Board of Supervisors in October of 2003 and conditionally certified by the State Department of Housing and Community Development in January of 2004. As of 2009, an update to the Alameda County Housing Element was underway, with adoption anticipated in late 2009. The Open Space and Conservation Elements are not included in this General Plan because the County is currently revising and consolidating the ROSA, which will combine the Open Space, Conservation, and Parks and Recreation elements into one coordinated document. The Eden Area General Plan goals, policies and actions will be consistent with ROSA, as they are with all of the other county-wide elements.

The elements that form the Eden Area General Plan are briefly described below:

1. **Introduction.** This introduction provides a vision statement to guide the policies in the General Plan, describes the Eden Area and supplies an overview of the purpose and process for the update of the plan.
2. **Vision for Eden Area 2025.** This section presents the vision statement developed by residents of the Eden Area and identifies the top priorities to be implemented through the General Plan.
3. **Land Use Element.** The required Land Use Element designates all lands within the Eden Area for a specific use such as residential, commercial, open space, recreation or public uses. The Land Use Element also provides an overall urban design framework, land use designations and land use policies for the Eden Area.

4. **Circulation Element.** This required element specifies the general location and extent of existing major streets, transit facilities, and the bicycle and pedestrian network. As required by law, all facilities in the Circulation Element are correlated with the land uses foreseen in the Land Use Element.
5. **Parks and Recreation Element.** The Parks and Recreation Element is an optional element that is included in this General Plan because the lack of park space is a major issue in the community. The Element includes goals, policies and actions to maintain and improve existing parks and presents ideas for the location of new park and recreation facilities.
6. **Public Facilities and Services Element.** The Public Facilities and Services includes goals, policies and actions to maintain adequate levels of public services including fire, police, water, solid waste, schools and libraries.
7. **Noise Element.** This required element addresses noise issues in the community and analyzes and quantifies current and projected noise levels from a variety of sources, such as traffic, industry, rail and the airport.
8. **Public Safety Element.** The Safety Element is required by State law and contains policies to protect the community from risks associated with the effects of flooding, seismic and other geologic hazards, and wildland fires.
9. **Greenhouse Gas Action Element.** This element, which is newly added to the Revised Final Draft of the General Plan, summarizes the County's current efforts to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and identifies policies in the General Plan that address urban form, growth patterns and alternative transportation as they relate to climate change. This element also includes goals and policies designed to offset greenhouse gas emissions as growth occurs in the Eden Area.

2. Organization of the Elements

Each element of this General Plan contains background information and goals, policies and actions. Some elements also have additional sections that are specific to them. For example, the Land Use Element contains sections on urban design and land use designations. The Circulation Element contains information on roadway classifications in the Eden Area.

The background information section of each element describes current conditions in the Eden Area relative to the subject of the element. The goals, policies and actions provide guidance to the County on how to accommodate growth and manage its resources over the next 20 years. The goals, policies and actions in each element are derived from a number of sources including other County planning documents and public input gathered at community workshops. Each goal, policy and action in the Eden Area General Plan was selected or written to address the key issues identified in the General Plan update process outlined above. Each is described as follows:

- ◆ A **goal** is a description of the general desired result that the County seeks to create through the implementation of its General Plan.
- ◆ A **policy** is a specific statement that guides decision-making in working to achieve a goal. Policies represent statements of County regulation and require no further implementation. The General Plan's policies set the standards that will be used by County staff, the Planning Commission, the Board of Zoning Adjustments and the Board of Supervisors in their review of land development projects and in decision-making about County actions in the Eden Area.
- ◆ An **action** is a program, implementation measure, procedure or technique intended to help achieve a specified goal.

Figure 1-3 shows the relationship between each of the components described above. As shown in the figure, policies and actions are at the same level; both policies and actions are intended to implement goals. In most cases, goals have both implementing policies and actions. However, it is also possible for a goal to be implemented exclusively through either policies or actions.

FIGURE I-3 GENERAL PLAN COMPONENTS



3. Policy Language

The policies in this General Plan contain language that reflects the following principles:

- ◆ “**Shall**” means that conformance is mandatory.
- ◆ “**Should**” means that conformance will be strongly encouraged by the County and that the particular policy or action is intended to be a recommendation about how to meet the goals and objectives of the General Plan.
- ◆ “**May**” indicates that a policy is permissive, and that the County has latitude to allow the subject action to occur.

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