



WEST OAKLAND SPECIFIC PLAN

Final Plan

2. Vision & Goals

2.1 Community-Based Goals and Objectives

June 2014



2: Vision & Goals

The vision of the West Oakland Specific Plan is to see this remarkable community further thrive as a culturally and economically diverse urban neighborhood and leverage its unique strengths which include:

- Geographical location at the center of the technologically innovative Bay Area, one of the most economically vital areas in the country;
 - Ethnic, economic, and educational diversity;
 - Proximity to some of the nation’s largest educational institutions, including the University of California’s Berkeley and San Francisco campuses;
 - Access via the BART transit system to significant commercial, cultural and government employment centers in downtown Oakland and San Francisco;
 - Spectacularly landscaped Mandela Parkway, which replaced the elevated Cypress Freeway and now links West Oakland neighborhoods back together;
 - Well-preserved Victorian neighborhoods and newer communities that enjoy a sunny climate and a generous proportion of park space; and
 - Emerging center of the industrial arts movement and nationally and internationally recognized artists of all genres.
- West Oakland of the future is an area wherein:
- Industrial areas have been preserved and contribute to economic vitality, supporting clean, low-impact industries that provide living wage jobs for local residents;
 - The character of historic neighborhoods has been maintained. Successful new mixed-income neighborhoods provide a range of housing options, and new housing development is transit-oriented and transit-served;
 - Transit connections between the West Oakland BART station, residential neighborhoods and existing and new employment, cultural and commercial centers is improved, and street and transit better connect West Oakland to the surrounding area;
 - Neighborhood commercial areas (particularly 7th Street and San Pablo Avenue) have been revitalized with vibrant small businesses that provide the daily goods and services needed by local residents;
 - Environmental quality and community health have been improved, and contaminated sites have been remediated. New development and new land uses are designed to encourage physical activity and healthy lifestyles for residents;
 - West Oakland continues to be a socially and culturally diverse area with a strong sense of

community, and West Oakland's artists' community continues to thrive;

- Safety has been improved through a reduction in crime and the provision of safe and attractive new private and public spaces; and
- New developments employs sustainable "green" building practices to decrease the health effects of air pollution.

The West Oakland Specific Plan is based upon an economic and physical design strategy designed to take maximum advantage of expected economic and demographic changes over the next 20 to 25 years, including the increased globalization of the economy, the rise in energy prices, changes in the ethnic composition of America, increasing preference for living in diverse urban areas, and federal and state policies that favor economic development in urban centers. The Plan's economic and land use strategy is based on successful land use models, while resolving land-use incompatibilities and ensuring that the current residents benefit from the new jobs and better livability of their neighborhoods.

West Oakland is also seeking to preserve, showcase, and enhance the community's unique physical beauty, historical buildings, urban texture and cultural traditions. To accomplish this, the Plan proposes strategies focused on Opportunity Areas and Enhancement Areas, using tools of urban design, land use planning, transportation planning, historic preservation, environmental remediation, and infrastructure investment. The Plan highlights the area's existing assets, and identifies strategies for removing challenges to development, capitalizing on economic and market trends. It supports West Oakland as a healthy, safe, culturally and economically diverse community with thriving employment, business and residential areas.

VISION FOR INDIVIDUAL AREAS

Mandela Parkway/ West Grand Avenue Opportunity Area

The area surrounding the intersection of Mandela Parkway and West Grand Avenue will be a major employment area. This area will further promote unique urban character with preservation of existing historic buildings and the addition of compatibly scaled larger development. Mandela Parkway will be celebrated as a major north-south spine connecting between the West Oakland BART Station and Emeryville. An enhanced transit link will bring workers into an attractive urban environment. Elements of this vision are depicted in **Figure 2.1**.



Fig. 2.1: Proposed infill commercial development in Opportunity Area 1 (26th Street & Mandela Parkway)

7th Street Opportunity Area

7th Street will be the commercial center linking West Oakland's new Transit Oriented Development (TOD) project at the West Oakland BART Station and the historic South Prescott neighborhood. Enhancements could include mitigating the sound and visual effects of the elevated BART tracks. Historic 7th Street will be reinvigorated with mixed-use infill development and the West Oakland BART station will be transformed with multi-story mixed-use development on what are now parking lots. Development heights will step down as buildings get closer to adjacent neighborhoods. The creation of an urban place will be complete with plazas, artisans, restaurants, stores, entertainment, and transformation of a currently environmentally challenged parcel (the former AMCOI Chemical/DC Metals site on 3rd Street) into a major open space amenity. Elements of this vision are depicted in **Figure 2.2 and 2.3**.



Fig. 2.2: Proposed mixed-use infill development in Opportunity Area 2 (along historic 7th Street commercial corridor)



Fig. 2.3: Proposed mixed-use development at BART Station in Opportunity Area 2 (5th & Center Streets in foreground)

3rd Street Opportunity Area

3rd Street, from Union to Castro Streets, will be intensified as a distinctive commercial area with enhanced transit connections to BART, Jack London Square and Downtown. The district will celebrate its unique historic commercial and industrial structures. New development

will enhance the urban character through streetscapes and building scale. Light industrial uses will be welcomed but must be designed to contribute to a high-quality environment. Elements of this vision are depicted in **Figure 2.4**.



Fig. 2.4: Proposed infill development in Opportunity Area 3 (3rd & Linden Streets in foreground)

San Pablo Avenue Opportunity Area

San Pablo Avenue will unite the Clawson and Hoover neighborhoods as well as link downtown Oakland and Emeryville. San Pablo Avenue will be re-established as a local “main street” serving the adjacent neighborhoods and wider region. Historic residential and commercial buildings will be preserved and enhanced. New residential development will

include ground floor commercial and other neighborhood-serving uses. San Pablo Avenue will function as a high-quality pedestrian environment as well as a major transit artery. West Grand Avenue and Market Street will become a new neighborhood node with residential and commercial development in compatibly-scaled buildings, serving the adjacent McClymonds and Ralph Bunche neighborhoods. Elements of this vision are depicted in **Figures 2.5 and 2.6**.



Fig. 2.5: Proposed mixed-use infill development incorporating historic residential structures in Opportunity Area 4
 (West Grand Avenue at left, San Pablo Avenue in foreground) (Potential 23rd Street Closure)



Fig. 2.6: Proposed mixed-use infill development in new and historic structures along San Pablo Avenue in Opportunity Area 4

Community Assets

A key element of this Specific Plan is the identification of existing community assets, an acknowledgement of their importance, and inclusion of strategies to ensure their retention. Accordingly, the Specific Plan's vision and resulting strategies reflect intent to maintain and enhance existing residential neighborhood areas.

The Specific Plan vision acknowledges West Oakland's local assets with a specific intent to:

- preserve Oakland's oldest and most historic neighborhoods and industrial areas, ensuring their legacy of cultural, aesthetic and job generation benefits for future generations; and
- foster West Oakland's vigorous arts and culture movement.

Urban Design Principles

The Specific Plan vision includes new urban design principles to guide new development:

- **to sites** that are vacant or barely used, or presently used for recycling or heavy trucking activities;
- **with new uses** desired by community and with strong economic demand in the inner Bay Area region, including employment, housing, retail and other commercial activities and light industrial and custom manufacturing uses;
- **ranging in density** from a minimum density already found in the area to a maximum density at strategic locations that are supported by the existing street system, larger parcel configurations, adequate building stock (some of which can be expanded and adaptively reused), and appropriate context; and
- **that enhance** existing on-going businesses; enhances adjacent neighborhoods; complements other uses in Oakland and the surrounding region; welcomes pedestrians and encourages use of mass transit and bicycles; and respects the unique

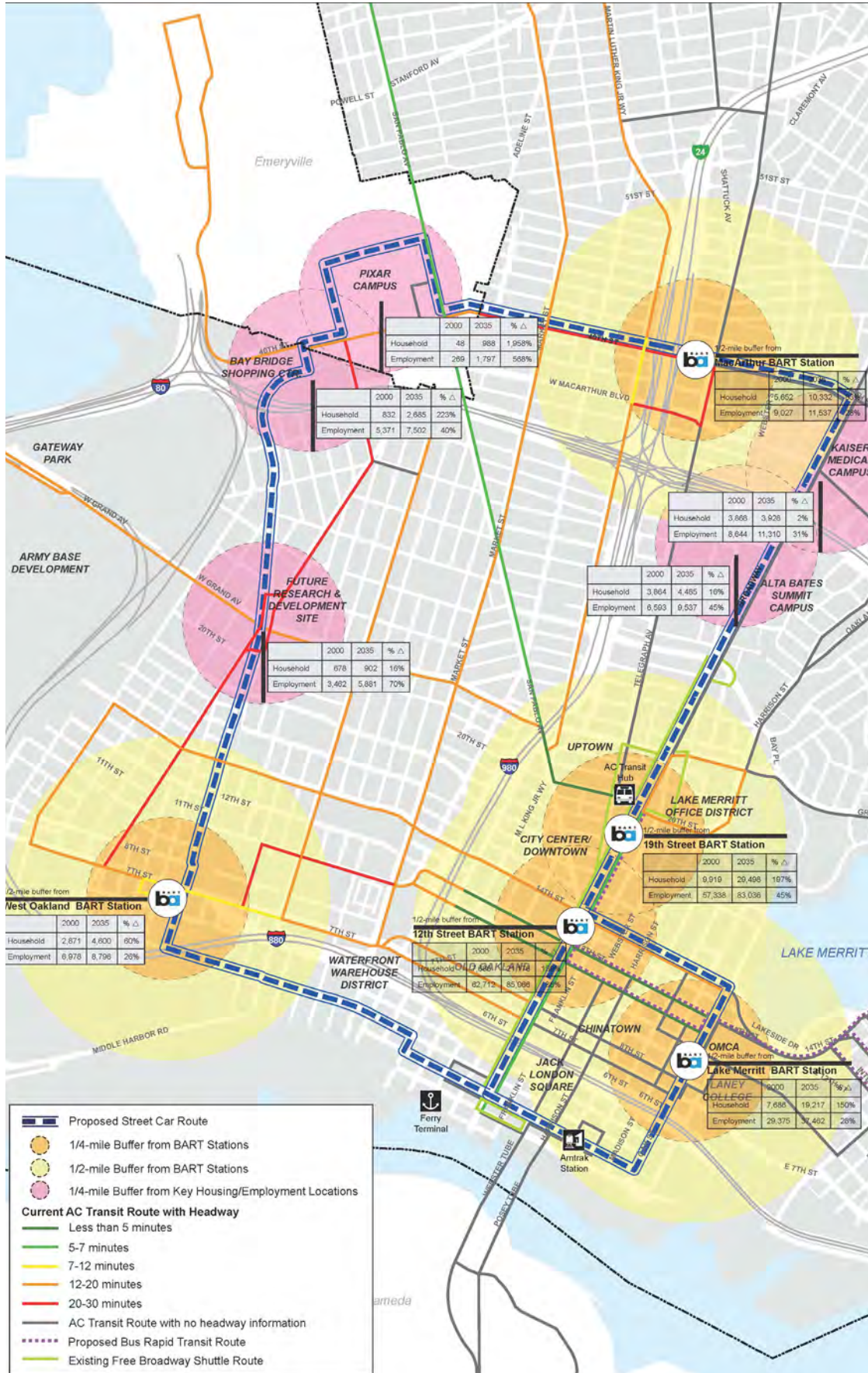
development history and legacy of West Oakland.

New employment centers will be targeted near the intersection of Mandela Parkway and West Grand Avenue and on 3rd Street, while the focus for new housing will be on 7th Street at the West Oakland BART and along San Pablo Avenue. Neighborhood-serving retail will be re-established on 7th Street, San Pablo Avenue, and along West Grand Avenue, while destination-serving retail is planned as an extension of existing destination retail at the Oakland-Emeryville city limit line.

Transportation Linkages & Infrastructure Improvements

The vision also incorporates new transportation concepts. One vision for an enhanced transit loop would better connect four central BART stations (West Oakland, MacArthur, 19th Street and 12th Street stations) to downtown Oakland, Emeryville, "Pill Hill" (East Bay Regional Medical Center), and Jack London Square, and to the ferry and Amtrak system (see **Figure 2.7**).

Fig. 2.7: Proposed Transit Enhancement - Initial Transit Loop

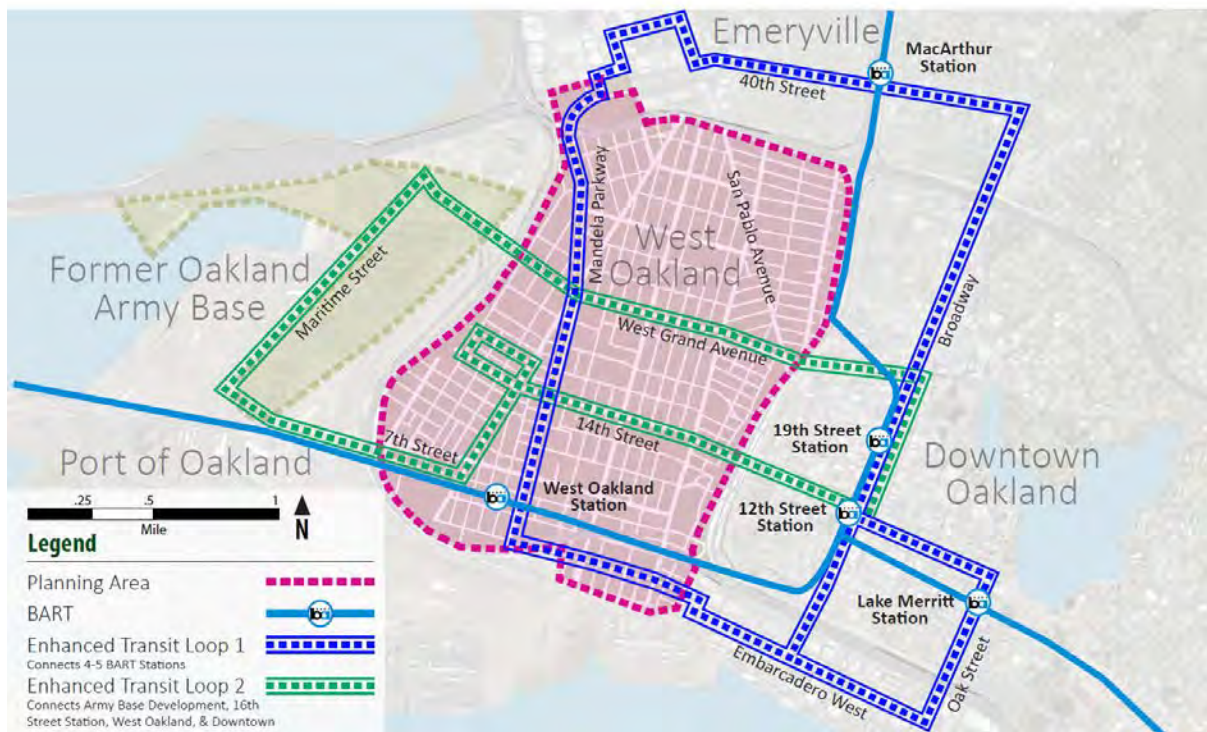


A separate but coupled transit loop would connect the 16th Street Train Station area, the Mandela/West Grand Opportunity area and downtown Oakland. In addition this loop could service development at the former Oakland Army Base.

Together these two transit loops could provide West Oakland with a local-serving system that connects and unites employment and housing centers (see **Figure 2.8** and Section 5.2

'Enhancing Transit' for more details). As indicated in the text boxes on Figure 2.0.7, both household and employment growth has already been sustained at important activity nodes along the proposed transit loop between 2000 and 2005; additional growth can be anticipated in the future along this proposed transit route as improvements are made to the Plan Area.

Fig. 2.8: Proposed Transit Enhancement - Initial & Secondary Transit Loops



Internal streets will better serve pedestrians and bicyclists as well as the new transit loop, becoming “complete streets” serving all transportation needs rather than just cars and trucks. Streets and sidewalks will be repaired where needed, and deficiencies in the infrastructure will be resolved.

Linkages to Other Important Projects

Additional elements of the Vision include West Oakland’s anticipated ability to capitalize on other major development projects and efforts.

Oakland Army Base Redevelopment

Current as well as future residents and businesses will benefit from linkages to new development activities at the former Oakland Army Base.

- New transit linkages are envisioned to connect West Oakland to the former Army Base and surrounding locations, taking advantage of the increased development activity anticipated from both areas.
- New job-generating development in West Oakland will complement redevelopment plans at the former Army Base.
- Certain existing industrial uses that are less compatible with adjacent residential and commercial areas are expected to re-locate to the former Army Base development, creating new opportunities for reuse of large sites that will be vacated. These sites will be redeveloped with new development that is more compatible with the surrounding West Oakland neighborhoods.

The Specific Plan identifies specific individual recommendations to implement these themes in order to achieve the synergistic goals of both projects.

16th Street Station

As further delineated in Chapter 4: Land Use, the former 16th Street Train Station is envisioned to be redeveloped as a centerpiece for West Oakland, with the Train Station and front plaza serving as community assets. Suggested uses include event space, a commercial kitchen, and a café/restaurant, with common space for community members to gather and other space for revenue generating uses.

Emeryville / Berkeley / Oakland Transit Study

The Emeryville/Berkeley/Oakland Transit Study (EBOTS) envisions the creation of a multi-city transit corridor that will supplement and enhance existing public transportation, and support new job-producing commercial enterprise and residents in West Oakland, West Berkeley and Emeryville.

This West Oakland Specific Plan supports implementation of the EBOT study's vision of development and revitalization by charting a new path for future strategic decisions and actions, implemented over a long time period.

2.1: Community-Based Goals & Objectives

COMMUNITY PLANNING GOALS & OBJECTIVES

Drawing from prior West Oakland planning and revitalization efforts and the comments and suggestions received at the various public venues, the following goals and objectives, which were identified as most important to community members, have become the “drivers” of this West Oakland Specific Plan. All of the strategies and implementation actions recommended in this Specific Plan relate back to these overall community-based goals and objectives.

Economic Goal & Objectives:

Goal: Strengthen the economic base and expand the local economy of West Oakland through equitable land use development and inclusive economic revitalization.

Objectives

1. Create new employment opportunities at living wages;
2. Retain businesses that are compatible with surrounding neighborhoods;
3. Revitalize and create retail commercial centers;
4. Rehabilitate underutilized, vacant, and neglected properties;
5. Attract new businesses that contribute to economic and environmental health.

Housing Goal & Objectives:

Goal: Expand upon, improve and stabilize the range of available housing opportunities.

Objectives

1. Avoid displacement of existing residents;
2. Stabilize rents;
3. Expand opportunities for affordable home ownership without concentrating low income housing;
4. Locate new housing near transit, including restricted affordable units where appropriate;
5. Improve existing housing stock;
6. Reduce conflicts between neighborhoods and industrial uses and limit the intrusion of truck routes and heavy traffic into residential areas;
7. Build a better relationship with the Oakland Housing Authority.

Transportation & Infrastructure Goal & Objective:

Goal: Make necessary investments in public transportation and infrastructure systems to support and sustain new development.

Transportation Objectives

1. Provide a network of “Complete Streets;”
2. Improve the attractiveness of West Oakland streets;
3. Improve the network of pedestrian and bicycle routes through West Oakland;
4. Reduce truck traffic impacts on residential neighborhoods;

5. Create an enhanced local transit system involving streetcar, light rail, buses, and/or shuttles to serve employment, business, and community centers;
6. Ensure adequate parking to attract and support development while encouraging alternative travel modes;

Infrastructure Objectives

1. Ensure a safe, reliable and efficient wastewater collection system;
2. Ensure adequate water systems for new development;
3. Ensure the monitoring of water runoff through active engagement in Ettie Street Pump Station and Alameda County Flood Control;
4. Improve lighting and street appearance so as to deter dumping and blight.

Environmental & Sustainable Development Goal:

Goal: Create a safe, physically attractive and environmentally sustainable community.

Objectives

1. Reduce land use conflicts, remediate environmental hazards, and discourage illegal dumping and graffiti;
2. Relocate recycling operations, trucking operations, and other uses that contribute to unhealthy conditions;
3. Promote the environmental health of the community through new development;
4. Protect and preserve important natural and cultural resources, including historic structures;
5. Ensure that new development employs sustainable “green” building practices, facilitates access to pedestrian and transit networks, and enhances streetscapes and open spaces;

6. Promote energy efficiency throughout all aspects of new development and redevelopment.
7. Characterize and seek remediation resources for brownfields, especially large Opportunity Sites and infill sites on strategic community corridors.
8. Encourage sustainable development that incorporates innovative approaches to storm water management and air pollution mitigation, and continues to enhance the well-being of residents of West Oakland.

Social & Cultural Goal:

Goal: Develop, foster and enrich the multi-cultural diversity of West Oakland.

Objectives

1. Improve access for seniors, youth, and families to social services, education, cultural arts and recreation;
2. Encourage and celebrate the arts as a basis of social and economic activity;
3. Create safe and attractive public places where people will want to gather and participate in their community;
4. Restore and preserve cultural and historic buildings, and maintain the community fabric that makes West Oakland unique;
5. Recognize and market the artisan and arts community for their contribution to social, cultural, youth education and the economic development in West Oakland.

PROJECT PRINCIPLES

In reference to the goals and objectives identified above, this Specific Plan identifies three common principles to ultimately shape the development recommendations:

1. Future development should be “organic”; it should build upon the

unique characteristics already found in West Oakland pertaining to proposed land uses, building types, and culture, history and legacy;

2. Future development should occur incrementally and be flexible; it should accommodate a range of acceptable uses under differing circumstances (i.e., “plug in / plug out”), be appropriate in both the short- and long-term, and allow for variety; and
3. Future development should be visionary. The “sum is more than the parts” should be an applicable statement to each individual development project, and each new development should contribute to the character and vision of not only West Oakland, but to the City of Oakland and the Bay Area region.