



## Local and Regional Planning Context

Other local and regional planning efforts parallel planning efforts in the City. Surrounding jurisdictions, as well as regional agencies and school districts, all have land use and transportation initiatives with implications for Santa Clara. Planning initiatives and development projects moving forward in neighboring cities may affect Santa Clara residents and land use decisions near the City's border. In addition, regional initiatives, including planning efforts along El Camino Real, may provide development and funding opportunities for the City. Any conflicts between plans or improvements proposed within Santa Clara's jurisdictional boundaries and the City's General Plan Land Use Diagrams, Transportation and Mobility Diagrams or text should be resolved through a General Plan Amendment, in order to evaluate the broader implications of the proposal and maintain internal consistency of the Plan, prior to any City endorsement or funding contribution. Figure 6.1-1 provides an overview of other local and regional efforts.



## 6.1 LOCAL PLANNING CONTEXT

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### 6.1.1 City of Santa Clara Planning Efforts

#### **Santa Clara Station Area Plan**

The cities of San José and Santa Clara, and the Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority (VTA) have cooperated in the development of a plan for 432 acres of land surrounding the Santa Clara Transit Center and future Bay Area Rapid Transit (BART) Station. Approximately 244 acres of the area is located in Santa Clara. The Santa Clara Transit Center is currently served by Caltrain, Altamont Commuter Express (ACE) and VTA bus lines. Amtrak's Capital Corridor train and the future high speed rail line pass through the area. The future BART extension will also terminate at this location. An Automated People Mover is also proposed to connect the Norman Y. Mineta San José International Airport (Airport) with both the Santa Clara Transit Center and VTA's Airport light rail station. With direct rail service to virtually all parts of the San Francisco Bay Area and beyond, the expanded Santa Clara Transit Center is an important intermodal transit hub for the region.

The Santa Clara Station Area Plan has been incorporated into this General Plan as the Santa Clara Station Focus Area, with specific land uses and policies included in Chapter 5. It provides opportunities for the development of housing, offices, retail, hotels, restaurants, parks and other amenities. Approximately two million net new square feet of commercial uses and 1,650 housing units are anticipated within the City of Santa Clara's jurisdiction.

#### **Downtown Plan**

Revitalization of Santa Clara's historic Downtown is a priority for the City. In 2007, the City initiated a Downtown Plan for the City-owned 7.3 acres bounded by Homestead Road and Lafayette, Jackson and Benton Streets. This plan was the subject of a Request for Proposals (RFP) to solicit developer interest. The RFP suggested an urban, mixed-use center, including over 129,000 square feet of retail commercial space with 396 residential units for the site. This project is currently on hold pending improvement in overall economic and real estate conditions.

The Downtown includes a City-owned site as well as some surrounding properties and is designated as a Focus Area in this General Plan.

## 6.1.2 Adjacent Jurisdictions' Planning Efforts

### City of Cupertino

#### ***City of Cupertino General Plan***

Cupertino shares a small portion of Santa Clara's western boundary. For this area, Cupertino's General Plan identifies streetscape and other landscaping improvements along Stevens Creek Boulevard to support residential and office uses mid-block, and neighborhood commercial uses at corners. The South Vallco Park area, just west of the shared boundary, is approved for 711 housing units. The Cupertino General Plan allows building heights of up to 60 feet in this area.

#### ***North Vallco Master Plan***

The City of Cupertino has initiated planning for the North Vallco area, bounded by Homestead Road, Tantau Road, Interstate 280 and Wolfe Road. Already a substantial employment center, the intensification of commercial office and industrial uses as well as retail services is anticipated. Residential development is also under consideration in conjunction with currently allowed hotels.

### City of San José

#### ***City of San José General Plan Update***

Santa Clara shares its eastern, northern and southern boundaries with the City of San José. To the south along Stevens Creek Boulevard, San José's current General Plan supports auto sales and discourages residential development. To the east, adjacent to the Norman Y. Mineta San José International Airport, San José's General Plan promotes the redevelopment of the area under the Rincon South Planned Community which includes residential, retail, commercial and industrial uses to take advantage of light rail access and Airport proximity. To the North, plans are underway for the Alviso area. The City of San José is currently looking at these areas through an update of its General Plan.

#### ***Alviso Specific Plan***

The Specific Plan for the historic Alviso neighborhood in the City of San José, which borders Santa Clara to the north, projects modest growth to accommodate some retail, commercial and light industrial uses on a closed landfill site and an existing industrial site. Residential uses are currently allowed within the existing residential areas.



### ***North San José Vision Plan***

The City of San José has approved a Vision Plan for North San José. The area for this plan is located adjacent to Santa Clara's eastern boundary. This plan provides opportunities to increase office, industrial and research and development uses by over 26 million square feet to create up to 80,000 new jobs. The plan also proposes to convert 285 acres of existing industrial land to residential use and allow mixed-use residential development within industrial areas. This could result in up to 32,000 new residential units adjacent to Santa Clara.

### **City of Sunnyvale**

#### ***City of Sunnyvale General Plan Update***

Santa Clara shares its western boundary with the City of Sunnyvale. Sunnyvale's 1997 General Plan designates the area bordering Santa Clara for industrial uses north of the Caltrain railroad tracks and residential uses south of the railroad tracks, with the exception of the existing residential and mobile home park between U.S. 101 and Tasman Drive. The Calabazas Creek provides a natural buffer between these Sunnyvale neighborhoods north of the Caltrain railroad tracks and the existing and planned employment centers in Santa Clara. The City of Sunnyvale is currently in the process of updating several elements of its General Plan.

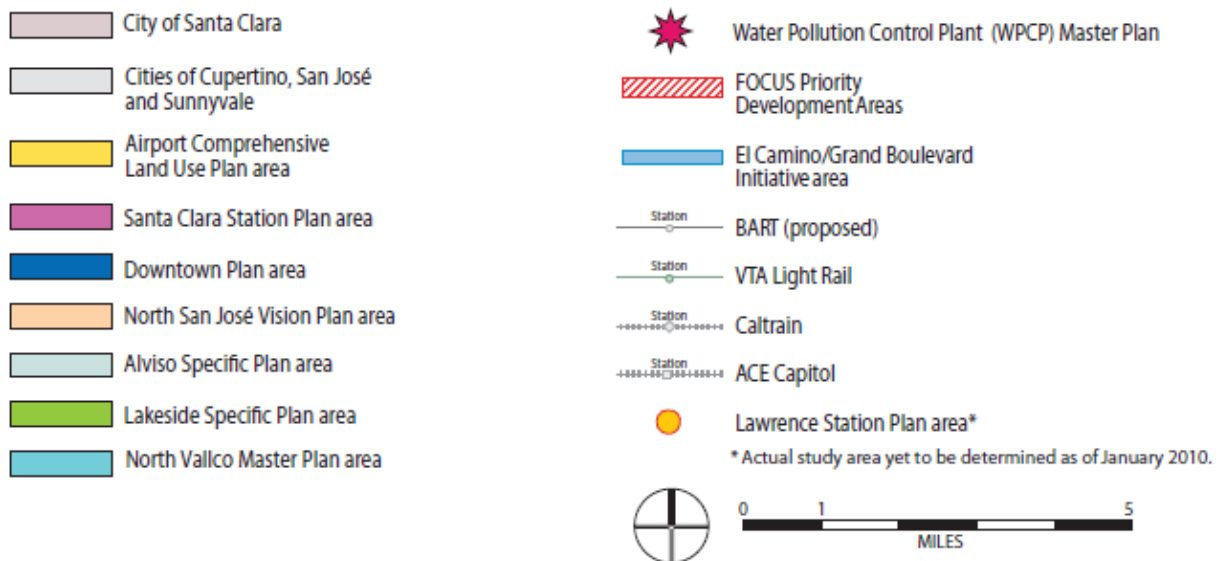
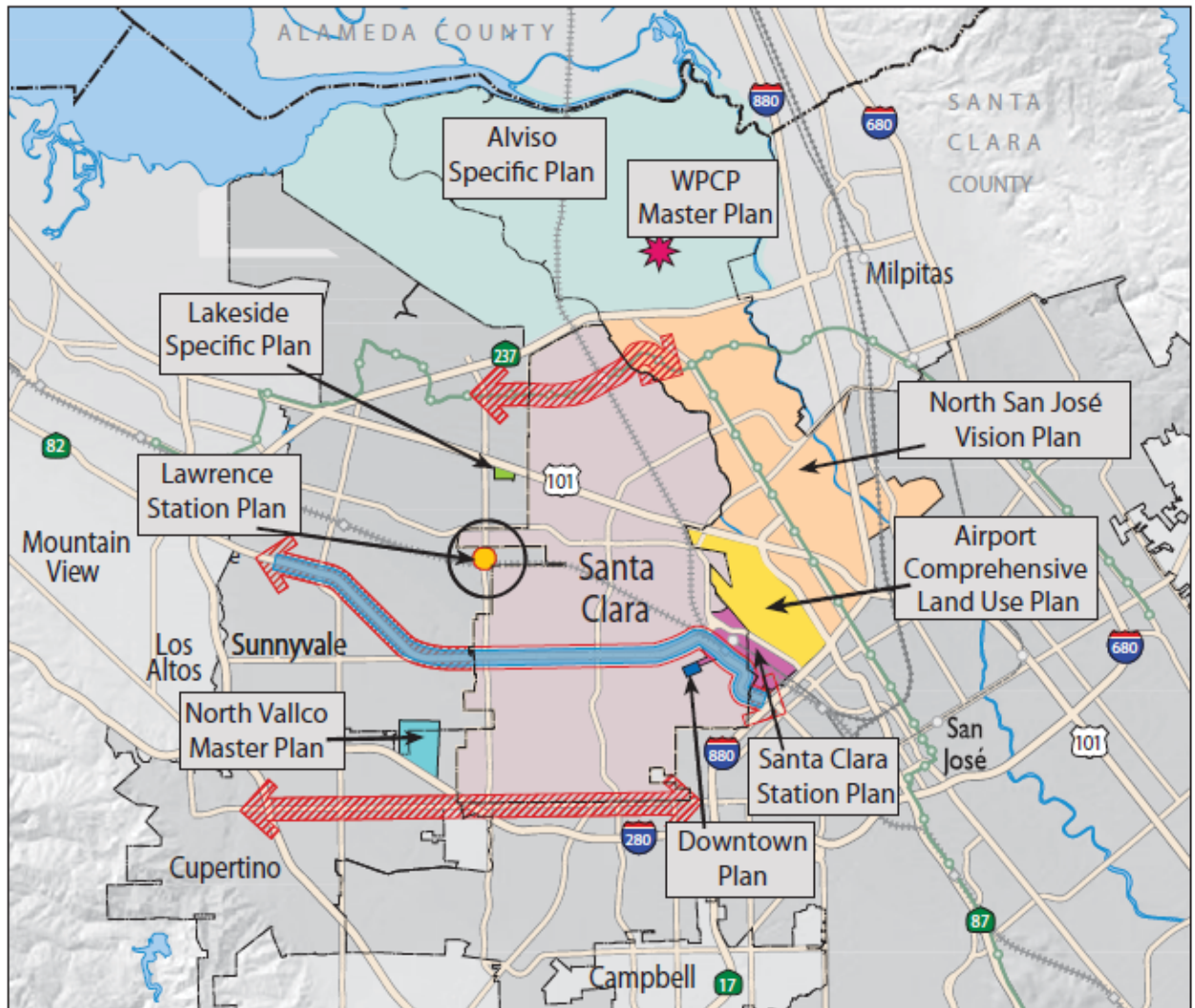
#### ***Lawrence Station Area Plan***

In cooperation with the City of Santa Clara, the City of Sunnyvale has initiated a Station Area Plan for the area around the Lawrence Caltrain Station. This effort is expected to identify opportunities for higher-density residential and office development near the station; add neighborhood commercial services to serve existing and future residents; and improve access to the station, including enhanced signage and circulation for pedestrians, bicyclists and motorists. Santa Clara's comprehensive planning prerequisites for this area are described as part of the Future Focus Areas discussion in Chapter 5.

#### ***Precise Plan for El Camino Real***

The City of Sunnyvale has adopted a precise plan for its portion of El Camino Real, providing design guidelines and identifying opportunities for redevelopment at specific locations. It includes the "gateway" into Santa Clara at Lawrence Expressway. The design guidelines encourage landscaping and signage to signify arrival into Sunnyvale. Sunnyvale's zoning ordinance allows building heights of up to 75 feet and residential densities of up to 45 units per acre.

Figure 6.1-1  
Regional Planning Efforts





### ***Lakeside Specific Plan***

Just southeast of the U.S. 101 and Lawrence Expressway intersection, and west of the Calabazas Creek, the City of Sunnyvale approved the redevelopment of an existing hotel into a mixed hotel and residential development.

### **Mission College**

Mission College is the only public community college in Santa Clara. Currently, the College is undergoing an update to their Master Plan, planning for future facilities. Mission College has spoken with the City about future housing on their property, as well as other future expansion opportunities.

### **Santa Clara Unified School District**

Santa Clara Unified School District (SCUSD) covers approximately 90 percent of the City, enrolling 89 percent of the City's student population (2009). Demographic trends indicate an increase in school age children, possibly requiring additional school facilities in the future. The City maintains an open relationship with the District, with members of staff sitting on the long range planning committee and District representatives sitting on the General Plan Steering Committee.

### **Santa Clara University**

Santa Clara University (SCU) is one of the major universities in the region. SCU is an asset to the community, providing highly educated graduates to the workforce. The City works closely with the University regarding new buildings, both on and off campus, as well as regarding community relations and student activities.

## 6.2 REGIONAL PLANNING CONTEXT

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### 6.2.1 Regional Land Use and Transportation Planning

#### **Joint Venture: Silicon Valley Network**

Joint Venture: Silicon Valley Network is a collaboration of city, regional and business leaders that have worked together on several region-wide initiatives for a sustainable future and improved quality of life for Silicon Valley. Initiatives include Climate Protection, Disaster Planning, Economic Development and the El Camino Real Grand Boulevard (discussed below). Planning efforts include A Greenprint for Silicon Valley, county-wide greenhouse gas inventories and the creation of a Disaster Resiliency Center at Moffett Field.

#### ***El Camino Real Grand Boulevard Initiative***

The revitalization of El Camino Real is a collaborative effort of cities and counties located between South San Francisco and San José. Through the efforts of Joint Venture: Silicon Valley Network, the El Camino Real Grand Boulevard Initiative encourages residential development and job growth in targeted areas and promotes urban design and landscape improvements along the corridor. The project is intended to improve mobility for pedestrians, bicyclists and motorists. The Association of Bay Area Governments (ABAG) is also sponsoring a “corridors program” to encourage coordination of transportation and land use, as well as infill residential development, along major State-owned roadways, including El Camino Real.

#### **San José/Santa Clara Water Pollution Control Plant**

##### ***Master Plan***

The San José/Santa Clara Water Pollution Control Plant (WPCP) is in the process of developing a Master Plan for its 2,600-acre property in Alviso, at the southern tip of the San Francisco Bay. Co-owned by and serving the cities of San José and Santa Clara, the WPCP also serves Milpitas, Cupertino, Campbell, Los Gatos, Monte Sereno and Saratoga, as well as several sanitation districts in unincorporated areas of Santa Clara County. The master plan will address the facility’s infrastructure, land uses and technologies in order to better serve the Plant’s growing service population over the next 30 years. The three-year planning process began in 2008 and includes a short-term five-



year improvement plan to address existing deficiencies, as well as a 10 - to - 15-year improvement plan to upgrade, improve and rebuild the Plant.

### ***South Bay Water Recycling Project***

The South Bay Water Recycling Project (SBWR) includes extensive infrastructure serving the cities of San Jose, Santa Clara and Milpitas. Recycled water is used to irrigate public and private facilities including golf course, parks, schools and agricultural lands, and for industrial processes such as cooling towers. SBWR is a collaboration between the three cities, five sanitation districts, U.S. Bureau of Reclamation, Environmental Protection Agency, California Department of Water Resources, Department of Health Services, Regional Water Quality Control Board, Santa Clara County Health Department, and Santa Clara Valley Water District. For more information on water recycling in the South Bay, visit the Santa Clara Valley Water District at [www.valleywater.org/media/pdf/Attachements\\_SCRWMP\\_FRP.pdf](http://www.valleywater.org/media/pdf/Attachements_SCRWMP_FRP.pdf).

### **Metropolitan Transportation Commission**

#### ***Transportation 2035 Plan for the San Francisco Bay Area***

The Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC) has adopted Transportation 2035, which is the Regional Transportation Plan for the Bay Area. This plan outlines eight goals: Maintenance and Safety, Reliability, Efficient Freight Travel, Security and Emergency Management, Clean Air, Climate Protection, Equitable Access and Livable Communities. These goals are framed by the three 'E's' of sustainability: Economy, Environment and Equity. It transitions transportation priorities from purely moving people and goods, to emphasizing the relationship between land uses and transportation in order to improve the region's natural, built and social environment. The Plan also addresses the challenges associated with meeting climate change goals, in response to AB 32, and reducing greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions.

Major transit projects included in the Transportation 2035 Plan include a BART extension from Fremont to San Jose/Santa Clara; electrification of the Caltrain system; enhanced service along the Amtrak Capitol Corridor; and improvements to local and express bus services (including Bus Rapid Transit services on San Jose's Santa Clara Street/Alum Rock Corridor).

***FOCUS Program: Priority Development Areas***

The Bay Area's regional agencies of ABAG, Bay Area Air Quality Management District, San Francisco Bay Conservation and Development Commission, and Metropolitan Transportation Commission initiated the FOCUS Program. The purpose of this program is to encourage growth and revitalization near transit facilities in existing communities. The program provides planning and construction funding for projects in "Priority Development Areas" (PDAs) with high transit accessibility and potential for redevelopment. The Santa Clara and Lawrence station areas, VTA light rail stations, El Camino Real and Stevens Creek Boulevard all have the potential to be PDAs in the City of Santa Clara, subject to a land use plan and resolution adopted by the City Council.

**Valley Transportation Authority*****Valley Transportation Plan 2035***

The Valley Transportation Plan 2035 (VTP 2035) identifies the programs, projects and policies the Valley Transportation Authority (VTA) would like to pursue by 2035. It connects projects with anticipated funds and lays out a framework for the development and maintenance of the transportation system over the next 25 years. It considers all travel modes and addresses the links between transportation and land use, air quality, energy use and community livability. VTP 2035 incorporates themes for a new direction for the future of Santa Clara County. These themes include Connectivity, Congestion Pricing, Transportation Efficiency, Land Use and Air Quality. This Plan shares common themes with the Transportation 2035 Plan for the San Francisco Bay Area, prepared by the Metropolitan Transportation Commission.

***Transit Sustainability Policy and Service Design Guidelines***

VTA's Transit Sustainability Policy (TSP) is a ridership-based policy that provides a framework for the efficient and effective expenditure of transit funds, and for realizing the highest return on investment in terms of public good and ridership productivity. It is intended to assist the VTA Board of Directors with its decision-making process by making available the most complete information possible regarding options, cost, benefits, and trade-offs for various transit projects and service proposals prior to a selection of mode and funding decisions. The Service Design Guidelines (SDG) associated with the TSP



were developed to evaluate and make recommendations on design, implementation and the monitoring of transit services in the region.

### ***Bus Rapid Transit Facilities Design***

VTA is studying design options for bus rapid transit (BRT) and other express bus service throughout Santa Clara County, including potential BRT lines along El Camino Real and Stevens Creek Boulevard. As a first step to BRT along El Camino Real, VTA introduced the Rapid 522 transit line, which provides fast, frequent and more direct service between San José and Palo Alto. The land uses and policies for the El Camino Real and Stevens Creek Boulevard areas in Santa Clara's General Plan support BRT service and provide preferred design options for VTA consideration.

### **California High-Speed Rail**

In July 2008, the California High-Speed Rail Authority (CHRA) selected the Pacheco Pass-San Francisco and San José alternative as the preferred corridor and alignment for the future High-Speed Train (HST) service. The selected alignment uses the Caltrain right-of-way through the City of Santa Clara, between San Francisco and San José along the San Francisco Peninsula. Stations are proposed in San Francisco, Millbrae and San José, with another potential station in the same reach. In December 2008, the CHRA issued a Notice of Preparation, and the Federal Railroad Administration issued a Notice of Intent for a Project Environmental Impact Report/Environmental Impact Statement (EIR/EIS) for the San Francisco to San José section of the HST system; initiating the State environmental review process under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and the federal environmental review process under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). Additionally, 2009 federal economic stimulus funding for the project could add further incentives for the HST project.

### **Caltrain Electrification Project**

Electrifying Caltrain will result in a more efficient and environmentally-friendly rail system, than the current diesel powered trains. Electric trains accelerate and decelerate faster than diesel trains, which could provide a savings of up to 13 percent in travel time between San Francisco and San José. Additionally, the switch to electric locomotives will reduce air pollutant emissions from trains by up to 90 percent, and

decrease energy consumption. Most of the design work has been completed, and the recent federal economic stimulus package will provide funding for construction. Work will occur along the length of the rail corridor for the overhead wires contact system that powers trains and enables speeds of up to 90 miles per hour. The electrification of this system will provide a capacity of 114 trains at ten-minute headways during the peak.

### **Airport Comprehensive Land Use Plan**

The Airport Land Use Commission (ALUC) develops comprehensive land use plans to provide the orderly growth of the area surrounding each airport within the County, one of which is directly adjacent to Santa Clara. Although the ALUC has no jurisdiction over existing land uses, its role is to ensure that new land uses or other proposed actions are compatible with the Airport environment. The ALUC produces the Airport Comprehensive Land Use Plan (CLUP), which provides guidance for compatible land uses in Santa Clara near the Airport. The ALUC is currently in the process of updating its CLUP. The current and future plan outlines development intensities, uses, building height, safety and noise constraints. These constraints have been taken into consideration for this General Plan. Specific policies related to land proximate to the Airport are included in Chapter 5. City amendments to the General Plan and Zoning are reviewed by the ALUC for consistency with its CLUP.

## **6.2.2 Regional Environmental Planning**

### **ABAG Local Hazard Mitigation Plan: Taming Natural Disasters**

The City participates in a multi-jurisdictional hazard mitigation planning effort led by the Association of Bay Area Governments (ABAG). This hazard mitigation planning effort addresses natural disasters such as earthquake, landslide, wildfire and flooding. The goal of this effort is to maintain and enhance the disaster resistance of the region and to fulfill the requirements of the Disaster Mitigation Act of 2000. The City is currently participating in an update of the Local Hazard Mitigation Plan.

### **Santa Clara Valley Habitat Conservation Plan**

The Santa Clara Valley Habitat Conservation Plan/Natural Communities Conservation Plan (HCP/NCCP) project is a regional partnership between six local partners (the County of



Santa Clara, Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority, Santa Clara Valley Water District, the cities of San José, Gilroy and Morgan Hill), and the California Department of Fish and Game, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the National Marine Fisheries Service. In association with stakeholder groups and the public, the HCP/NCCP will develop a long-range plan to protect and enhance ecological diversity for part of Santa Clara County, including a portion of the City of Santa Clara.<sup>1</sup> The plan will help to preserve natural resources and create new habitat reserves, as well as streamline and improve the environmental permitting process for both private and public development. The final plan is due for completion in 2010.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> See Project Area map: [http://www.scv-habitatplan.org/www/Portals/\\_default/maps/StudyAreaMap.pdf](http://www.scv-habitatplan.org/www/Portals/_default/maps/StudyAreaMap.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> Santa Clara Valley Habitat Conservation Plan website: [http://www.scv-habitatplan.org/www/site/alias\\_default/291/default.aspx](http://www.scv-habitatplan.org/www/site/alias_default/291/default.aspx)