

City of Burlingame

ENVISION BURLINGAME General Plan

Public Review Draft City Council Hearing Draft
November 2018~~August 2017~~

Chapter I. Introduction

THE BURLINGAME GENERAL PLAN articulates the shared community vision for preservation and change in our community. This General Plan is a long-range policy document that guides decision-making and establishes the “ground rules” for the design and development of new projects, conservation of resources, economic development, mobility and infrastructure improvements, expansion of public services, and community amenities. As the blueprint for our future, this General Plan directs how Burlingame will look, and how residents, business owners, and visitors will experience our City today and in the future. This Plan defines our future, and is intended to provide direction through the year 2040.

State law requires that every city and county prepare and adopt a comprehensive and long-range [General Plan](#) (California Government Code Section 65300) and that the plan inform the content and application of the various programs and ordinances that are used to govern. The Burlingame General Plan and its maps, diagrams, and policies are reflected, for example, in the Zoning Ordinance, the Capital Improvement Program, and economic development strategies. Also, under California law, all specific plans, area plans, community plans, zoning ordinances, subdivision maps, and public works projects must be consistent with the General Plan.

While a [General Plan](#) can cover a variety of topics based on a community’s specific needs, each one is required by State law to address these seven topics, or elements: Land Use, Circulation/Transportation, Housing, Conservation, Open Space, Noise, and Safety. These seven elements must establish policy direction relating to:

- The use and development of properties citywide
- Accommodation of all modes of transportation
- The provision of parks and other open spaces to meet community needs

- The types of housing available in the community
- Use and protection of natural resources
- The provision of public safety services and protection against natural and human-caused hazards (including noise) in the city

Preparation of a [General Plan](#) is also subject to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), which means that local jurisdictions must analyze and mitigate (where necessary) the plan’s significant environmental impacts.

About Envision Burlingame

Envision Burlingame is the community-led planning process that guided development of the Burlingame General Plan. When the City initiated the *Envision Burlingame* process in 2015, it had not comprehensively updated the General Plan in over 30 years. *Envision Burlingame* presented the unique opportunity to engage the entire Burlingame community and ask: “How do we want Burlingame to look, function, and feel 25 years from now?” The process had three broad objectives:

1. **Develop a vision for Burlingame**, with particular attention paid to the topics of stability and opportunities for desired change.
2. **Update policies and regulations** to ensure they address all applicable regional, State, and federal requirements.
3. **Create an updated and digital General Plan** that is easily accessed, understood, and applied by residents, property and business owners, and decision makers.

Envision Burlingame was a robust community-driven process that included multiple community workshops and surveys, a Community Advisory Committee (CAC) that met 18 times over the two-plus-year process, and extensive input from the Burlingame Planning Commission and City Council. The effort also made a priority of engaging the “next generation” with involvement from local Burlingame high school students, as well as students from [University of California, Berkeley and](#)

[San Francisco State University](#) ~~area universities~~. A summary of the *Envision Burlingame* community engagement process is included in Chapter 2: Community Context.

The community process resulted in a series of Guiding Principles that helped structure policy objectives throughout the General Plan. These Guiding Principles, outlined below and presented in detail Chapter 3: Plan Principles, were shared at Community Workshop #2 in May of 2016 and were refined throughout the process:

- Balanced and Smart Growth
- Community Character
- Connectivity
- Economic Diversity and Vitality
- Healthy People and Healthy Places
- Education
- Civic Engagement

Using the Plan

The Burlingame General Plan is structured around topics that emerged through community conversations. General plans are required to contain a minimum of seven (7) state-mandated elements, but municipalities have flexibility in the organization of the elements to reflect local sensibilities. **Table INT-1** indicates how the General Plan chapters and themes relate to the State-required General Plan elements.

Table INT-1
General Plan Chapters

Burlingame General Plan Chapters	Land Use	Circulation	Housing	Conservation	Open Space	Noise	Safety	Optional
Chapter 1 Introduction								•
Chapter 2 Community Context								•
Chapter 3 General Plan Principles								•
Chapter 4 Community Character	•							
Chapter 5 Economic Development								•
Chapter 6 Mobility		•						
Chapter 7 Infrastructure		•						
Chapter 8 Community Safety						•	•	
Chapter 9 Healthy People and Healthy Places				•	•			•
Chapter 10 Engagement and Enrichment								•
Chapter 11 Implementation								•
Glossary								•

Plan Chapters

Community Character

The Community Character chapter fulfills State requirements for the Land Use Element, and identifies policies to focus growth in targeted areas to preserve Burlingame's historic and single-family neighborhoods, the character of El Camino Real, the jobs base along the Bayfront and Rollins Road, and commercial districts of Burlingame Avenue and Broadway. This chapter is organized around areas of stability and areas of change, highlighting the unique characteristics, land uses, and design aesthetics of each Burlingame district.

Economic Development

The Economic Development chapter addresses a topic emphasized by community members, but is not required by law. This chapter provides policies to diversify the economic base and expand employment opportunities by attracting new and retaining existing businesses.

Mobility

The Mobility chapter fulfills State requirements for the Circulation Element, and outlines policies to improve all modes of travel throughout Burlingame, with an [increased](#) emphasis on improvement for cyclists and pedestrians. Particular attention is focused on California Drive, with the aim of better accommodating pedestrians and bicyclists. Attention is also given to the importance of better connections across Highway 101 for all travel modes.

Infrastructure

The Infrastructure chapter addresses topics required for the Circulation Element: water supply storage and delivery, wastewater collection and treatment, flood control [and stormwater management](#), solid waste management, and telecommunications.

Community Safety

The Community Safety chapter meets State requirements for the Safety and Noise Elements. This chapter establishes goals and policies

regarding adequate emergency services and response systems, encompassing both preventative and proactive practices. It also outlines policies to protect the community from noise hazards, sea level rise, and storm surge events.

Healthy People and Healthy Places

The Healthy People and Healthy Places Chapter fulfills California requirements for the Conservation and Open Space Elements, which focus on resource preservation, park space, and recreation resources. Optional topics important to community members included in the discussion are public health and scenic resources.

Engagement and Enrichment

The Engagement and Enrichment Chapter provides optional content that supports Burlingame’s aim to embrace education, arts, culture, and civic engagement in all aspects of community life.

Key Terms

Each chapter contains goals, policies, and implementation programs crafted to achieve the community’s vision.

- A **goal** is an overall statement of community desires and consists of a broad statement of purpose or direction. For each goal in this General Plan, associated and more definitive policy statements follow.
- A **policy** provides more specific guidance to the City Council, Planning Commission, other City commissions and boards, and City staff in their review of development proposals and other actions taken.
- Implementation **programs** provide further articulation regarding how the City will achieve its goals and policies.

Implementation Categories

An implementation plan is included in Part III, establishing processes, timelines, and tools to monitor progress. Each policy and program throughout the General Plan includes one or more of the following

abbreviations that correspond to the specific implementation categories utilized in Part III:

Development Review [DR]

Many General Plan policies are implemented through regulations based on the City's "police power" to protect public health, safety, and welfare. City ordinances also create a development review process that provides for review of individual project proposals and authorizes the City to approve, conditionally approve, or deny projects based on their consistency with the General Plan. The following lists plans, ordinances, and procedures commonly used by the City of Burlingame to implement the General Plan:

- Specific Plans
- Zoning Code
- Design guidelines
- Subdivision Code
- Building code and other codes
- Development review process

Master Plans [MP]

The City has adopted master plans, strategies, and programs for various City services and facilities, types of development, or geographic areas. These are prepared to provide more specific direction for decision makers, staff, and the public about how the General Plan will be implemented. They are not elements or components of the General Plan; rather they are tools that implement the General Plan. Specific General Plan implementation programs call for the annual or periodic review of many of these master plans, strategies, and programs, in addition to adoption of new [master](#) ones.

Financing and Budgeting [FB]

The development, maintenance, and operation of public facilities such as parks and libraries require financial resources derived from various sources. Programming of City capital projects and their funding over time

is outlined in the Capital Improvement Projects list, which is updated annually. The following revenue sources used by or available to the City will continue to support the development, maintenance, and operation of public facilities and services:

- Property tax revenue
- Sales tax revenue
- User fees
- Development impact and linkage fees
- Community facilities and special assessment districts
- Municipal bonds
- Special taxes
- Regional agency, State and federal grants
- Other State and federal funding

Studies and Reports [SR]

The City conducts studies and produces reports to collect and evaluate information related to specific issues. These studies and reports are undertaken at the direction of the City Council as needed or are prepared annually to report on the status and implementation of the General Plan.

Services and Operations [SO]

The City provides a broad range of services to its residents, businesses, and visitors, and manages and operates its facilities to meet community needs. How the City provides services and carries out its operations influences the effectiveness of General Plan implementation.

Agency Coordination [AC]

The City must coordinate with numerous local, regional, State, and federal agencies to implement the General Plan. These agencies provide services, facilities, or funding, and administer regulations that directly or indirectly affect many issues addressed in the General Plan. The following is a partial list of public agencies that may play a role in implementing the General Plan:

- Adjacent cities [and towns including such as](#) Millbrae, San Mateo, and Hillsborough
- Local water and wastewater providers
- Regional agencies such as the Association of Bay Area Government, Metropolitan Transportation Commission, and San Francisco Bay Conservation and Development Commission
- State agencies such as Caltrans, General Services, State Parks, Bay Conservation and Development Commission, California Department of Fish and Wildlife, and the California Environmental Protection Agency
- Federal agencies such as U.S. Fish and Wildlife Services, U.S. Park Service, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, and Federal Emergency Management Agency

Partnerships with the Private Sector [PA]

The City may coordinate its activities with private sector efforts to improve public service delivery, manage public sector assets, or leverage private sector investment. By exploring new partnerships with the private sector, the City can use its technical, management, and financial resources in creative ways to achieve the goals of the General Plan.

Public Information and Education [PI]

A critical City function is providing information to residents and the business community about the policies and programs being carried out to achieve community goals.

Health and Sustainability [H] and [S]

Health and sustainability are two topics that deserve particular attention in the Burlingame General Plan. Because health and sustainability are cross-cutting issues, the policies and programs relating to health and sustainability are woven throughout the entire General Plan. An **[H]** is used to indicate that a policy or program specifically relates to community health, and an **[S]** is used to indicate that a policy or program relates to sustainability. Policies tagged with an **[S]** will be used to guide the update of Burlingame’s Climate Action Plan.

User Groups

The Burlingame General Plan is intended for use by a variety of individuals and organizations, including residents, businesses, developers, City staff, the City Council, and appointed boards and commissions. Below is a brief summary of how various individuals and groups can use the General Plan.

Residents

For Burlingame residents, the General Plan indicates the overall uses that are permitted in various Burlingame neighborhoods and districts, the long-range plans and changes that may affect different areas of the City, the programs and services the City will develop or enhance to improve quality of life, and the policies the City will use to evaluate future development applications. Sections of the General Plan that are likely to be of most interest to residents include the Plan Principles (Chapter 3) and the following General Plan Elements (Part II): Community Character, Mobility, Community Safety, Healthy People and Healthy Places, and Engagement and Enrichment.

Businesses

For Burlingame businesses, the General Plan outlines the actions that the City will take to help support local business and expand and diversify the local economy. Sections of the General Plan of most interest to businesses include the Plan Principles (Chapter 3) and the following General Plan Elements (Part II): Community Character, Economic Development, Mobility, Community Safety, and Engagement and Enrichment.

Developers

For developers looking to build in and contribute in a positive manner to Burlingame, the General Plan provides an overview of the Burlingame community, summarizes its vision for the future, and outlines the overarching policies and expectations for development. Developers should review all elements of the General Plan to gain an understanding

of challenges and opportunities related to land use and economic development. Other applicable documents, such as specific plans and the Zoning Ordinance, should also be reviewed to gain a complete perspective on the City's regulatory documents and processes.

City Staff

The General Plan is a tool to help City staff make decisions related to programs and services, capital improvement projects, and land use and development applications. It also provides the goal and policy framework for City staff to make land use recommendations to the City Council, Planning Commission, and other boards and commissions. In addition, the General Plan provides a detailed implementation program that identifies actions to be completed by City staff. The implementation programs can be used as a guide to establish annual work programs and budgets.

City Council, Boards, and Commissions

For the City Council and appointed boards and commissions, the General Plan guides policy and development decisions and actions on capital improvement projects. Future land use and development decisions and infrastructure improvements must be consistent with the General Plan. As a result, the General Plan provides the policy framework to be considered by the City Council, Planning Commission, and other appointed boards and commissions.

Partnering and Supporting Agencies

The City of Burlingame will rely on partnerships with outside agencies to implement the General Plan, including CalTrain, SamTrans, the Burlingame School District, San Mateo Union High School District, San Mateo County Parks Department, the Association of Bay Area Governments (ABAG), Mills-Peninsula Medical Center, [Sisters of Mercy-Center Burlingame](#), and San Francisco International Airport. The success of the General Plan will also rely on coordination with the neighboring cities of [Hillsborough](#), Millbrae, and San Mateo, [the Town of](#)

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[Hillsborough](#), and other peninsula jurisdictions. The General Plan is intended to help these agencies and jurisdictions as they contemplate actions that affect the Burlingame community, and help the City form partnerships to achieve the community's vision within a regional context.