

PREAMBLE: TELLING THE STORY OF OAKLAND

Welcome to Oakland.....a city of progressive change, rich in cultural, natural, economic, and historic resources, and a city that is aggressively planning and strategically investing to welcome the new century.

Oakland shares many of the same challenges as many older cities -- poverty, crime, disinvestment, and an ever-increasing need for social services. But Oakland will overcome these challenges and take advantage of the opportunities they present.

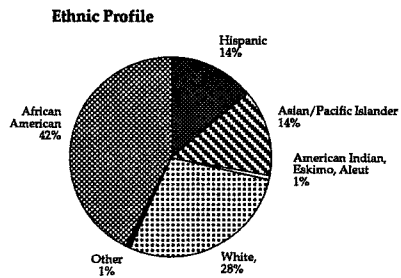
Oakland's strengths provide a strong framework for renewal and rebirth: the creative diversity of its population and cultures, a prime geographic location, temperate weather, an extensive transportation system, excellent telecommunications networks, redevelopment potential in land and buildings, and the distinctive character of many varied and exciting urban neighborhoods.

While some of our residents (including the American Indian and Latino populations) can trace their lineage back to the earliest days of the City, many African Americans arrived in large numbers in a cross country migration, seeking to work in the railroad or shipbuilding industries. Asian Americans sought work on the railroad, in the construction of water systems, and in providing services to the work force. Still others, of many nationalities and cultures, have recently emigrated and are new to Oakland and to the country. This mingling of histories and cultures offers Oakland extraordinary opportunities as the nation and the world become increasingly multi-cultural.

Oakland's ethnic, racial, and cultural diversity cuts across all economic strata and through neighborhoods from the hillsides to the working waterfront. The Port and Airport are linked to global markets, with room and consensus to expand. The City stands ready to target its resources to neighborhoods and commercial districts most in need. Most importantly, Oakland boasts the commitment of hundreds of citizens, informed leaders, and professional staff teams who have banded together to create a new General Plan that will boldly guide the City into the next century. All of Oakland, under the guidance of City leaders and the General Plan, will be better able to live together, work, recreate, learn, and enjoy the riches of this great City.

"Diversity is very important. All of our communities should have input and access to this Plan."

- Marguerite A. Fuller, General Plan Congress, 1996



As the most diverse city in the nation, where more than 125 languages and dialects are spoken, Oakland is uniquely positioned to welcome national and international business, tourism, and new residents.

Source: 1990 Census.

The General Plan, along with a citywide economic development program, offers strategic policies and actions that will make room for economic expansion.

Meeting the Challenges

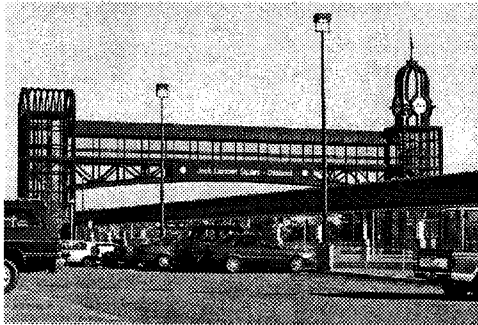
Paying tribute to Oakland’s virtues and envisioning the future go hand-in-hand with determining how to prepare for the first decades of the 21st century. This document focuses on the physical form of the city. As the General Plan Congress, the “framers” of this Element recognize clearly, the form and placement of buildings, roads, public facilities, commerce, and open spaces all affect our social life, our economy, and the pleasure we can get from being in Oakland.

To meet both current and future city challenges related to economic development, housing and neighborhoods, and the environment, this Plan establishes an agenda for change where it is needed and conservation for areas that are thriving. This Plan is centered around five principal themes that define the unique attributes of Oakland. The concept of sustainability is interwoven in each of the following areas of focus: Industry and Commerce, Transportation, Downtown, Waterfront, and Neighborhoods.

Industry and Commerce

Today, Oakland is a powerful, exciting, working community composed of many diverse economic interests and skills. The city is in the midst of a transition, however; most of the city is built out, and there is relatively little vacant land or space that does not require improvements to make it suitable for future development. Residents and workers often travel outside the City to buy retail goods, and growing businesses which cluster around the seaport and airport tend to order equipment and services from other cities and regions.

The Plan targets growth sectors and locations for regional commerce, business services, and industry. The economic engines of the City -- the Seaport, Airport, Downtown, Waterfront, and Coliseum areas -- are a central focus of the plan, forming a crescent of “Showcase Districts” along Oakland’s 19 mile waterfront. Plans and strategies will build long term economic strength, better access to the Pacific Rim, urban satellite campuses for bioscience and biotechnology, and long term linkages to the City and region’s world-renowned research universities and laboratories. Oakland’s plans encourage sustainable economic development that fosters industries that respect the human and natural environment.

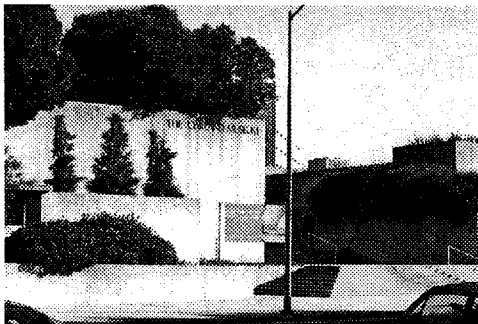


Amtrak at Jack London Square

Transportation and Transit-Oriented Development

Today, Oakland's ideal location contributes to its stature as the transportation hub of the Bay Area. Oakland's transportation infrastructure is unmatched, including rail, roads and freeways, waterways, and mass transit systems, which move tremendous numbers of goods and people, and provide a solid framework on which business can thrive. Oakland residents also enjoy a transportation system with many options: bus, BART, driving alone, carpools, shuttles, ferries, bicycling, and walking. However, cuts to mass transit funding have endangered the ability of those people who use transit to get to and from work, shopping, and home. Our regional freeways are approaching their capacity limits; safe and accessible bicycle and pedestrian routes are much needed. Our economy is supported and driven by Oakland's strong Port, Airport, and intermodal rail system, which require infrastructure improvements to continue to compete successfully.

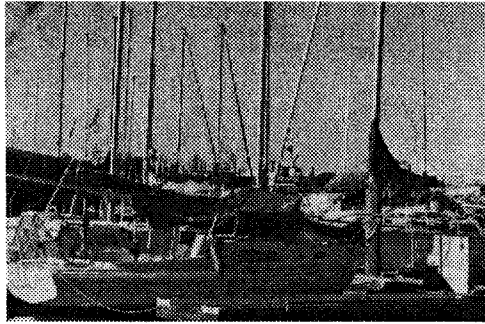
As the "Transportation Hub" of the East Bay, Oakland must take steps to ensure and build upon its significant investment in transportation and infrastructure. The new Plan urges us to address these issues through concurrent land use and transportation planning, coordination strategies between the service providing agencies, and realization of infrastructure improvements along major routes and corridors. The Plan supports the creation of "transit-oriented districts" that offer a wide range of local services, housing, and retail shops, combined with immediate access to public transit such as BART or multiple AC Transit lines.



The Oakland Museum

Downtown

Today, Oakland has a strikingly attractive downtown with buildings of architectural and historic distinction, a skyline with regional visibility, vital downtown neighborhoods, outstanding regional transportation and communications networks, and a beautiful natural edge on Lake Merritt Park. Efforts to increase housing development, capitalize on the excellent communications infrastructure, and prime East Bay office location are key strategies of this Plan. General plan policies and strategies reinforce the preeminence of Oakland's downtown and offer extremely generous opportunities for added high density residences and high intensity office, entertainment, commercial, retail, and educational enterprises.



Jack London Waterfront Marina

Waterfront

Today, Oakland has a diverse waterfront supporting the fourth largest container Port in the United States, the fastest growing airport in California, and a mixed use waterfront area that ranges from intensive commercial mixed uses to wetlands and shoreline parks. The closure of several large military bases near the seaport has provided Oakland with additional opportunity to plan for an integrated set of new land uses that could benefit everyone in the community and the region. While it is clear that the airport and seaport need to be protected and enhanced, portions of the estuary shoreline are no longer needed for industry-based maritime uses, and are underutilized. People now visit Jack London Square, but know little of what happens on other extensive harbor and estuary lands.

This Plan identifies the areas that can be reclaimed as open space and active recreational areas, reinforces commercial, industrial or mixed-use centers where they are appropriate, and lays the groundwork for an exciting urban district and a regional amenity that will redefine the waterfront edge of the City. The new Oakland waterfront will be a place to live, to recreate, to relax, to work, to watch Oakland grow, and to simply contemplate the magnificent views from the city edge.



Havenscourt Neighborhood

The Plan recognizes that both industry and housing must thrive for the City to be successful.

Neighborhoods

Today Oakland has a family of unique neighborhoods, from hill area districts, and solid single family tracts in the flatlands, to “live-work” lofts in industrial districts, and urban density living downtown. This diversity in neighborhood types support a range of lifestyles and incomes in over 60 neighborhoods. Neighborhood Activity Centers, as identified in the Elements, are to be a focal point for activity and identity, and are located along the major corridors which link neighborhoods together, while protecting neighborhood interiors from potentially incompatible growth.

Some Oakland neighborhoods, however, suffer from the ill effects of industry abutting residences. These industries, however, provide much needed employment for Oakland residents. Key plan initiatives resolve incompatible uses, while at the same time introducing a bold new concept -- a “housing business mix” district where environmentally sound businesses and low impact industry coexist with housing. As such, Oakland recognizes that locating jobs and housing together benefits business, minimizing transportation needs and increasing evening security, while providing a daytime presence of residential areas.

In other Oakland neighborhoods, uncertainty about the future of development is frequently the

cause of long, drawn out battles between project proponents and opponents. Through application of the policies and classifications of the new General Plan, the character of established neighborhoods will be maintained and enhanced, while new housing, new business, and new City services will be concentrated in neighborhood centers and along key corridors. Each center and corridor will have its own identity drawn from the family of Oakland neighborhoods that it serves.

The Vision for Oakland

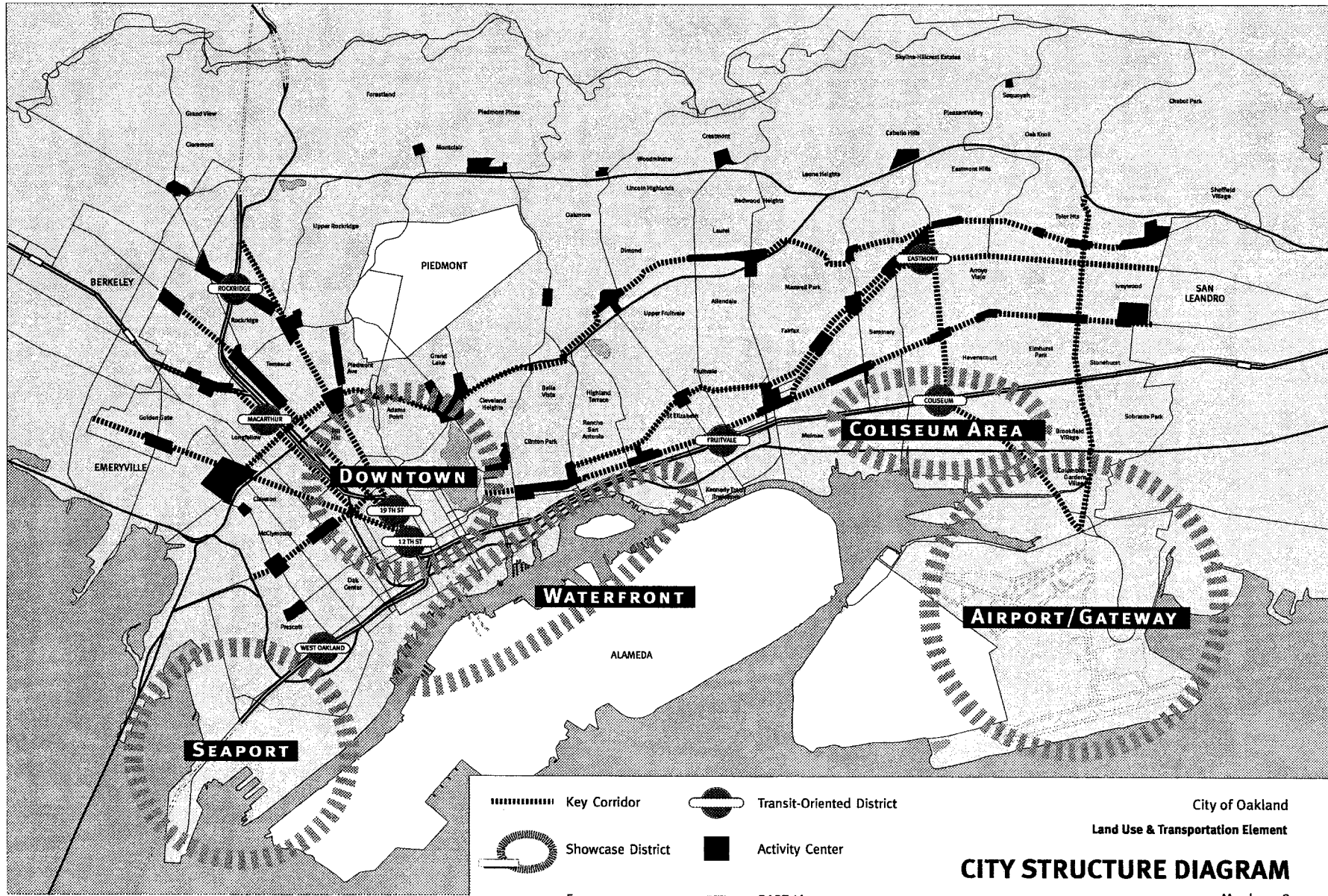
In the year 2015, Oakland will be a safe, healthy, and vital city offering a high quality of life through:

- ◆ dynamic economy that taps into Oakland’s great economic potential and capitalizes on its physical and cultural assets
- ◆ clean and attractive neighborhoods rich in character and diversity, each with its own distinctive identity, yet well integrated into a cohesive urban fabric
- ◆ a diverse and vibrant downtown with around-the-clock activity
- ◆ an active and accessible waterfront that is linked to downtown and the neighborhoods, and that promotes Oakland’s position as a leading United States Port and a primary regional and international airport
- ◆ an efficient transportation system that serves the needs of all its citizens and that promotes Oakland’s primacy as a transportation hub connecting the Bay Area with the Pacific Rim and the rest of the United States
- ◆ awareness and enjoyment of Oakland’s magnificent physical setting—hills, views, water, estuary—in every district and neighborhood

The Places that Make Oakland Work

The City’s General Plan is about places -- places to live, work, invest; play, learn and grow, and the relationship between them. The places that make Oakland work are many, because the physical side of the city is as varied as its culture and its economy. The story of the city’s past and its future is captured in an appreciation of the types of places that make Oakland work.

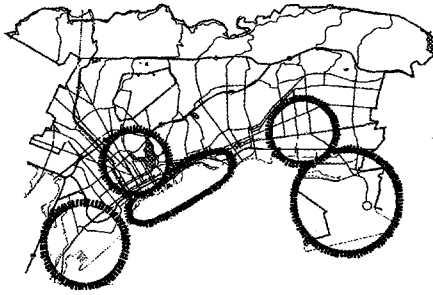
The City Structure Diagram on the following page identifies these places and is followed by a description of their key characteristics.



City of Oakland
Land Use & Transportation Element

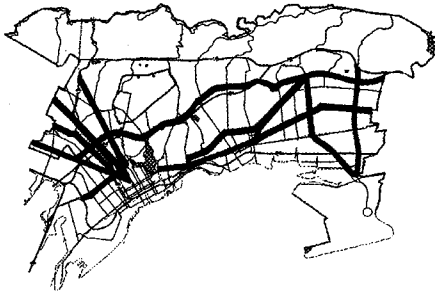
CITY STRUCTURE DIAGRAM

March 1998



Showcase Districts

Oakland's regional economic generators are five places forming a crescent framing the Bay. They will be centers of transformation as the City moves into the 21st Century. The Seaport, Downtown, the Mixed Use Waterfront, the Coliseum Area, and the Airport/Gateway -- these are the districts where activities will link Oakland with the region, the nation and the Pacific Rim. Far-reaching economic activities will be complemented by the cultural, recreational and commercial choices that make a world-class city. The Showcase districts are enhanced by Oakland's location as the transportation hub of the East Bay. Facilities which support growth include a strong regional transportation system, communications network, and infrastructure for rail, sea, and air movement for goods and passengers.



City Corridors

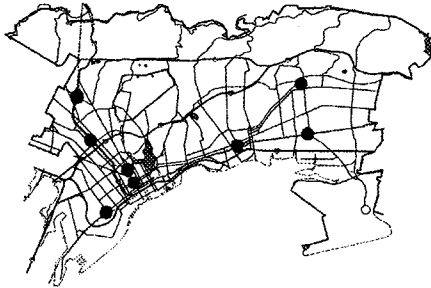
The city contains long corridors that serve as the link and major thoroughfare for travel between different areas of the city. However, many of these corridors, which were upstaged by region-serving freeways, have become neglected and are not economically viable in some stretches. These long, undifferentiated corridors are the target of strategies to bring them back into use. The corridors highlighted on the Structure Diagram are those envisioned as mixed use urban environments (activity centers) with concentrations of commercial and civic uses linked by segments of multi-family housing. In this way, sustainable economic growth is fostered by the strategic location of housing, related to transit and neighborhood revitalization efforts. The corridors will continue to have important circulation and access functions, and several are designated as "Transit Streets" to emphasize the importance of maintaining a choice of travel options. Provisions for bike routes and other bicycle and pedestrian-friendly facilities along the corridors can reduce congestion and improve the local environment.



Oakland's Neighborhoods and Activity Centers

The fabric of Oakland's neighborhoods covers most of the City's land. Each has its own personality, forged from the physical character of its housing areas, neighborhood and community activity centers, parks, schools, and natural features. Neighborhood activity centers, which are the focus of commerce, civic activity and community identity, can be enhanced by pedestrian-friendly design and access features. Diversity of Oakland's neighborhoods is one of its key assets. From hillside neighborhoods to single family areas with

a small town feel to high density urban living, Oakland has a variety of housing types to support a full spectrum of lifestyles and incomes. These features must be continued and maintained by targeted housing development along the corridor and by reintroducing the neighborhood center as a unique identifier of Oakland's neighborhoods. Neighborhoods then become the originating factor for city services and community-oriented governance



Transit-Oriented Districts

Transit-Oriented Districts (TODs) are designated to take advantage of the opportunities presented by Oakland's eight region-serving BART stations and one location -- Eastmont Town Center -- served by multiple AC Transit lines. Many of these station locations, and the areas surrounding them, offer significant opportunities for compact mixed use types of development that could include housing, business and other services. This strategy supports city and regional goals to foster sustainable development linking transit with higher density housing types. Downtown stations, for example, offer expansion opportunities for office, business, and housing development. Because each location offers unique possibilities, the TODs are discussed individually in the Transportation and Transit-Oriented Development section of the Policy Framework. Easy pedestrian, bicycle, and transit access, as well as a strong identity created through careful design and a mix of activity, will be a part of each transit-oriented district.

In Summary

Oakland is a City that can lead the country into the new Century with a record of success. This success can only be achieved if Oakland harnesses its resources to support its people, their hopes, their dreams and their economic future. Human, natural, architectural, historic, and economic resources must be layered, linked and channeled to reap the greatest reward: to attract the investment resources of the Region, the country, and the Pacific Rim, to reinforce the City's distinctive neighborhoods, to invest in transportation hand in hand with commerce and industry, and to preserve and restore the beauty of the water's edge, the hills, the forests, and the creeks, and give them back to the citizens of Oakland for all to enjoy. The General Plan is the City's strategy to fulfill these goals and aspirations. The challenges are great and Oakland stands ready to meet them.

