



# Economic Development Action Plan 2016

Adopted March 15, 2016



**Update of the 2006  
Economic Development  
Action Plan**

**Goals and Strategies for  
Economic Development**



*Prepared for the City of El Cerrito by Management Partners*



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# Executive Summary and Background

## Executive Summary

This report is an update of the City of El Cerrito's first Economic Development Action Plan prepared in 2006. It contains a summary of the 2006 plan; subsequent accomplishments, policies and capital improvements that were implemented adopted, and constructed pursuant to that plan; new information about the real estate and business market; unfinished 2006 action items yet to be implemented; continued challenges and constraints to achieving economic development; and a set of goals, strategies and implementation action items for the next five years.

The update of the plan is guided by the City's vision and mission statement as set forth in the 2015 Strategic Plan:

### *Vision:*

*The City of El Cerrito is a safe, connected, transit-oriented and environmentally focused destination with welcoming neighborhoods, thriving businesses and vibrant public spaces, and diverse cultural, educational and recreation opportunities for people of all ages.*

### *Mission:*

*The City of El Cerrito serves, leads and supports our diverse and transit- rich community by providing exemplary and innovative services, public places and infrastructure, ensuring public safety, and creating an economically and environmentally sustainable future.*

The policies and implementation action items in this plan are designed to address the City's need for economic sustainability to support the City's vision.

## Background

The report builds on and consolidates information from previous documents and provides focus for current and future economic development efforts, including: adding to the unfinished but relevant recommendations of the 2006 plan; furthering implementation of the San Pablo Avenue Specific Plan; incorporating analysis from the Contra Costa County Transportation Authority (CCTA) Priority Development Area Implementation Plan of market conditions (underway); identifying opportunities and constraints to economic development; and recommending new El Cerrito specific economic development tools and tasks.

## Creating A New Action Plan For Economic Development



## Summary of 2006 Economic Development Action Plan

The 2006 plan contained information on market findings, challenges and constraints, action opportunities, and a set of action steps based on six major policy areas:

1. Sustain leadership and support for the implementation of the action plan
2. Improve the physical urban environment
3. Create product readiness
4. Create initial marketing efforts
5. Encourage new development and businesses in the San Pablo Avenue area
6. Pursue communications and promotions

Each of these policy areas had stated goals, which carry forth to this 2016 Plan Update. Action steps in the 2006 plan that have been completed or partially completed over the past decade are listed as accomplishments in this report.

## Summary of Subsequent Planning Efforts

A number of plans and policy efforts have been completed in the past ten years that have a relationship to City's economic development activities. These include the following policy documents:

- Ohlone Greenway Master Plan (2009)
- Strategic Plan (2013; 2015-2020)
- Climate Action Plan (2013)
- Arts & Culture Master Plan (2013)
- San Pablo Avenue Specific Plan and Complete Streets Plan (2014)
- Urban Greening Plan (2015)
- Priority Development Area Implementation Studies (underway 2016)
- Active Transportation Plan (2016)

This update of the Economic Development Action Plan takes into account economic development related policies and action items set forth in the above plans. A complete list of the economic development policies and strategies contained within the above-referenced plans is contained in Appendix A.

The City's Strategic Plan is of particular importance to this document as it expresses an overall statement of the City Council's priorities for all City operations. The 2015 Strategic Plan provides a framework for linking identified

**Building on  
Prior Policies**

**Assisted by  
Related Plans and  
Policies**



priorities to the budget process, capital improvement program, important policy considerations, economic development initiatives, and the organization's desire for continuous improvement. The updated Strategic Plan calls for a new Economic Development Action Plan to update the 2006 Economic Development Plan and build on El Cerrito's strengths, including its diversity, arts, culture, and environmental sustainability.

## Summary of Capital Improvements Completed

The 2006 plan contained a number of action items for infrastructure improvements to attract and serve as a catalyst for new private investment. Improvements completed in the past ten years included the following:

- San Pablo Avenue medians improvements and tree planting (Bay Friendly landscaping)\*
- New bicycle racks, street furnishings, and dual bin trash-recycling containers\*
- Refurbished light standards including replacement with LED bulbs\*
- Improved and additional crosswalks, in-pavement flashing crosswalks and countdown crossing signals\*
- Sidewalk rain gardens and interpretive signage\*
- Installation of way finding, service organization, and interpretive signage; historic pavers and banners\*
- Installation of public art\*
- A new City Hall\*
- Ohlone Greenway improvements, including new trail, play areas and the Ohlone Greenway Natural area
- Baxter Creek Gateway Park
- Cerrito Theater\*
- Ohlone Greenway Access, Safety and Placemaking project (at both BART stations, currently in design)
- Del Norte BART Station Gateway improvements (currently in design; by BART)

Projects marked with an asterisk are improvements that have taken place along San Pablo Avenue, although not exclusively.

## Updated Market Information

Two grant-funded Priority Development Area implementation studies are in progress and will contain market information to assist policy makers, businesses and developers in understanding the economic context for El Cerrito. These studies are the result of the City designating the San Pablo Avenue

**Supported by  
Completed Public  
Improvements**



corridor as a Planned Development Area (PDA).

The PDA study funded by the Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC) will not be underway until after this plan is adopted, but will provide information to assist with the plan implementation in the future. Another PDA study is funded by the Contra Costa Transportation Authority (CCTA), and has contributed the following market analysis (by Opticos and Strategic Economics):

### Residential Market Information

- The San Pablo Avenue Specific Plan, adopted by the El Cerrito City Council in 2014, articulates a vision for a walk-able, transit-friendly corridor with a mix of residential, commercial and public uses. The Specific Plan includes a form-based code that emphasizes higher density, mixed-use and multi-family development.
- Although El Cerrito's housing market is typically characterized by single-family homes, the market for multi-family housing is strong and growing. Although rents in El Cerrito remain lower than those in Berkeley or Emeryville, the average rent for apartments in buildings with 50 or more units has risen 71% since 2010, a faster rate than other market area cities.
- Brokers report that while the market for single family homes in El Cerrito is being driven by young families, the multi-family market is more likely to be young singles or couples who work in San Francisco or Oakland and value proximity to BART for their commute. The presence of BART in El Cerrito is therefore an important factor in the area's strengthening multi-family housing market.
- With over 500 new units in the pipeline, new development planned on or near the San Pablo Avenue area is diverse in size, scope, and affordability. Nearly half of all new units currently approved or under construction in the area are dedicated affordable, and one-third is mixed use. While the affordable projects are further along in the planning process, much of the more recently proposed development is market rate. Planned product types and densities vary from small-scale infill townhomes to high-density apartments and condominiums.
- Multi-family rents are approaching a point where higher density

**With a  
Foundation of New  
Market Information**

new development is likely to be feasible in the short term. Although the lack of recent development indicates that multi-family projects have generally not been feasible in the San Pablo Avenue corridor during the last 15 years, market rents in El Cerrito are beginning to approach the \$3.50 to \$3.75 per square foot threshold needed to support this type of construction.

- Although vertically mixed-use development on San Pablo Avenue is possible, it may require higher residential rents than a single-use residential project because the higher revenues are needed to subsidize the ground floor retail space. As a result, mixed-use projects are more likely only in locations where higher residential rents and/or sales prices can subsidize the cost of the retail space.
- Three to four story apartments with at least one parking space per unit are most likely to be feasible in the short term, and may prove the market for even higher density products in the next phase of development. Although five- to six-story rental apartments with podium parking and/or parking lifts were also considered possible in the short-to mid-term, this building type would require higher rents to achieve feasibility due to the more expensive type of construction.
- Although parcels over one acre are most desirable for larger developers, the number of planned and proposed projects on smaller parcels indicates that developers can and do undertake small-lot development. Smaller development firms represent an important opportunity for new development in the area.

#### Retail Market Information

- Large, big box retailers in the Uptown and Downtown subareas are important generators of sales tax revenue for the City of El Cerrito. San Pablo Avenue is the retail center of El Cerrito, accounting for 83% of taxable retail sales in the City.
- The San Pablo Avenue corridor and the Midtown subarea in particular, also contain a number of smaller, older, strip-style retail businesses. The majority (66%) of the smaller retail buildings were constructed before 1970. While some of these buildings have historic character, others are perceived as functionally obsolete and are therefore unable to achieve competitive rents or to be updated.



- Although El Cerrito's retail market is not as strong as some surrounding cities, rising rents indicate the market is returning to health. Brokers report that retail spaces in newer buildings, in centers with strong anchor stores, and in high-visibility locations are able to achieve rents above \$2.00 per square foot; significantly higher than the corridor average of \$1.58 per square foot in the third quarter of 2015.
- Although vacancy rates have risen since 2006, brokers report that much of the vacant square footage is concentrated in a few large buildings (such as the old Safeway and Guitar Center locations) and that vacancy rates along the rest of the corridor are much lower.

### Survey of Economic Development Programs in Other Cities

The City conducted a survey of other Bay Area cities of similar size or with active economic development programs, to determine if there are innovative new programs or versions of traditional programs that have application to El Cerrito. The survey of eleven cities included questions on the use of the following tools:

- Property improvement districts
- Façade improvement programs
- Tenant improvement programs
- Business incubator programs
- Infrastructure assistance for new development
- Job training and specialized education programs
- Promotional and marketing programs
- Market assessment and survey programs

Programs and tools used most often by other cities include: property or business improvement districts; façade grants (some funded by the city, others funded by business improvement districts); downtown cultural and entertainment events; sales tax rebates for key businesses; and participation in the state I-Hub business assistance program (used by larger cities with industrial land uses).

Some of these activities, such as downtown events, are beginning to be implemented by El Cerrito. Other activities such as reinstating a façade or tenant improvement program and initiating business improvement districts are included in the recommended strategies and implementation tasks set forth below.

**Including  
Learning from others**

## Review of 2006 Economic Development Action Plan Accomplishments and Implementation of the 2006 Plan

### 1. **Sustained leadership and vision for implementation of the action plan.**

Accomplishments includes completion of the San Pablo Avenue Streetscape project, construction of City Hall, adoption of San Pablo Avenue Specific Plan (and its Environmental Impact Report), the Form Based Code, and the Complete Streets Plan, including the buffered bike lane on San Pablo Avenue.

2. **Improved the physical commercial environment.** Accomplishments include the implementation of numerous San Pablo Avenue streetscape and multimodal improvements (set forth in the completed capital improvements section above), Ohlone Greenway improvements and adoption of the Form Based Code and San Pablo Avenue Complete Streets Plan, Urban Greening Plan and Ohlone Greenway Master Plan.

3. **“Product Ready” activities.** Accomplishments include completing the San Pablo Avenue Specific Plan, an updated Zoning Ordinance and General Plan, and completion of a programmatic Environmental Impact Report; and identifying nodes of development opportunity and establishing sub areas of San Pablo Avenue.

### 4. **Completed three different types of initial marketing**

#### *Marketing*

- Shop Local program “Shop El Cerrito,” website marketing campaign to promote the benefits of local shopping (not currently active)
- Taste of El Cerrito took place in 2006, 2007 and 2010 to bring local restaurants to one location
- Home Improvement Expo 2009-2010, featured local home improvement businesses from each sector of the industry
- First El Cerrito Restaurant Week in 2015 with 18 participating restaurants
- Community Mixers hosted by the El Cerrito Economic Development Committee and Chamber of Commerce for the business community, residents and visitors

#### *Targeted Advertising*

- West Contra Costa Marketplace (occasionally)
- Participating in the Chinook Book (2008-present)

## Celebrating Past Accomplishments

### *Business Development and Support*

- Entrepreneur Training Program sponsored by the El Cerrito Economic Development program for four years (2010 to 2014), for qualifying El Cerrito businesses (11 week program)
- Economic Development webpage
- Promoted the Contra Costa Small Business Development Center business planning workshops
- Small business video surveillance loan program (2007 and 2008)

5. **Partially Restored Economic Development Staff Capacity.** Recently created and filled a new replacement position of Community Development Analyst to support economic development activities. Previously, the Redevelopment Agency supported an Economic Development program manager, Redevelopment Manager and Housing program manager.

### **Unfinished Business from 2006 Plan**

The following is a summary of the action items in the 2006 plan not yet completed. Some are carried forward in the goals, strategies and implementation items section below.

1. Make a staffing commitment for consistent EDAP implementation
2. Complete San Pablo Avenue gateway projects, and district signage
3. Provide signage and way finding for Fairmount Avenue
4. Prepare specific development concept plans for key sites and areas of opportunity at BART stations, San Pablo Avenue and Fairmount Avenue infill sites
5. Negotiate agreements with BART for development of the Del Norte and El Cerrito Plaza BART station sites
6. Consider façade and tenant improvement grants for buildings at prime nodes, especially Fairmount Avenue
7. Investigate the feasibility and benefits of creating a Neighborhood Business District on San Pablo Avenue
8. Create an updated inventory of potentially developable sites and

## **Recognizing Unfinished Business**

buildings including information on zoning, ownership, rents/sale price, sizes of parcels, buildings and parking, site maps/photos, contact info; to be included on city website and converted to promotional hard copy packets

9. Retain a retail broker or consultant to evaluate development sites and existing buildings for retail opportunities
10. Provide ongoing communication with residents and businesses on San Pablo Avenue concerning new business activities. Communication to include web info, post cards, and/or a quarterly newsletter
11. Conduct periodic surveys of shoppers, business owners, and property owners

### Challenges and Constraints

The 2006 plan set forth a number of challenges and constraints to implementing economic development policies and programs. Some of these constraints have been addressed (e.g., zoning development limits) and were removed from the list; some challenges continue to be relevant (e.g., unmotivated property owners) and are carried forward or identified in the new list, and some are new challenges identified in the CCTA study, as follow.

1. Inconsistent vision, commitment, and resource allocation;
2. Inconsistent response to development opportunities;
3. Market competition, uncertainty, and timing;
4. Insufficient budget resources, including loss of redevelopment funding;
5. Outdated buildings with low rents and tenant improvement budgets or “readiness” (i.e., for new restaurants);
6. Small parcels for new development;
7. Unmotivated or reluctant land owners; and
8. Perception of community resistance to new development.

**And  
Continued  
Challenges and  
Constraints**

# Goals, Strategies and Implementation

The following section outlines the goals, strategies and implementation steps. Four of the 2016 goals have been adopted from the 2006 Plan and one goal (Financial Sustainability) has been added. The policy framework is intended to provide concrete steps the City can take to **help existing, expanding and new businesses** to thrive; to continue its **placemaking** efforts to attract and support new businesses and support a vibrant commercial sector; and to **attract new development** to achieve the goals of the Strategic Plan, Climate Action Plan, San Pablo Avenue Specific Plan and this Economic Development Action Plan. Each goal statement contributes to the overall vision, and in turn is supported by more specific strategies. Each strategy in turn, is supported by specific measureable implementation or action items that become the work program for the staff, and the basis for the City Council to allocate funds in the operating and capital budgets. These action steps can be evaluated on an annual basis to measure progress for implementation of the goals and vision.

## Goal 1: 2020 Vision



***Create a consistent 2020 vision with a transition to an urban lifestyle environment attracting high-quality development in key commercial areas, and attracting new businesses for existing buildings, with a strong sense of community in dense commercial nodes***  
  
***(from 2006 Plan)***



## Strategies and Implementation Tasks

### A. Maximize opportunities for new and expanding businesses

- 1) Implement a permit fee study
- 2) Consider fee reductions for key businesses, areas or improvements
- 3) Survey existing businesses to understand how best to support their needs for growth and expansion
- 4) Create a Small Business Assistance Program to provide sources of technical information on running a business; provide façade grants and tenant improvement loans; and establish a permit ombudsman to help navigate City permitting as well as compliance with other permit requirements (e.g. Contra Costa Health Department and Stege Sanitary District)

### B. Maximize transit-oriented development (TOD) including higher density residential in-fill development close to existing infrastructure (BART, AC Transit, the Ohlone Greenway) to improve air and water quality and protect natural resources, through increased walkability and reduced auto use

- 1) Support reduced parking in new development by creating parking programs, expanding bike- and car-share programs and providing data on current parking ratios
- 2) Encourage staff and Planning Commission approval of dense multi-family residential uses between commercial nodes
- 3) Market the San Pablo Avenue Specific Plan to developers and new businesses

### C. Stimulate investment in vacant or underutilized sites at key focus areas

- 1) Maintain constant contact with property owners of vacant or underutilized properties to convey information about business inquiries and opportunities, and assess changing needs and attitudes of landowners
- 2) Develop brochures to interpret the San Pablo Avenue Specific Plan's



and EDAP's key features and provide to vacant site landowners and potential developers and businesses

- 3) Provide vacant site landowners with periodic newsletters and social media information on El Cerrito's business climate
- 4) Develop an electronic brochure of vacant buildings and underutilized sites for distribution to new businesses and developers
- 5) Conduct periodic meetings and communications with brokers and property owners to exchange information on site vacancies, tenants in need of space and general market conditions
- 6) Explore emerging platforms (such as OppSites) for attracting new investment

#### D. Build on recent and planned private and public investments, and leverage to catalyze new investments

- 1) Provide ongoing information to residents, landowners, brokers and businesses about planned and completed public improvement projects in the San Pablo Avenue area
- 2) Provide ongoing information to residents, landowners, brokers and businesses about planned and completed private development projects and planned new businesses

#### E. Implement a façade and tenant improvement program at prime commercial nodes

- 1) Annually appropriate funds to the program and establish a revolving program fund as part of the Small Business Assistance Program
- 2) Adopt program guidelines for façade grants and tenant improvement loans, and consider establishing geographic or other eligibility criteria
- 3) Consider including accessibility and sewer improvements as eligible expenses
- 4) Contract with an architect to design exterior improvements to ensure high quality

#### F. Participate in and promote state, regional and local business and entrepreneur assistance programs

- 1) Provide information on state and regional assistance programs to existing and prospective businesses such as the Contra Costa Small



Business Development Center, Renaissance Entrepreneurship Center's ([www.rencenter.org](http://www.rencenter.org)) entrepreneur training courses, and UC Berkeley Extension's business training program.

- 2) Consider partnering with other agencies and the Chamber to provide the City's Entrepreneur Training Program on a biannual basis
- 3) Identify loan programs for new small businesses to pay for Americans with Disability Act accessibility requirements.
- 4) Promote the City's partnership with the property assessed clean energy (PACE) program and Marin Clean Energy to provide financial assistance or incentives for business energy consumption reduction

#### G. Determine goals for inclusion of affordable/workforce housing, and resources available to create affordability in mixed-income projects

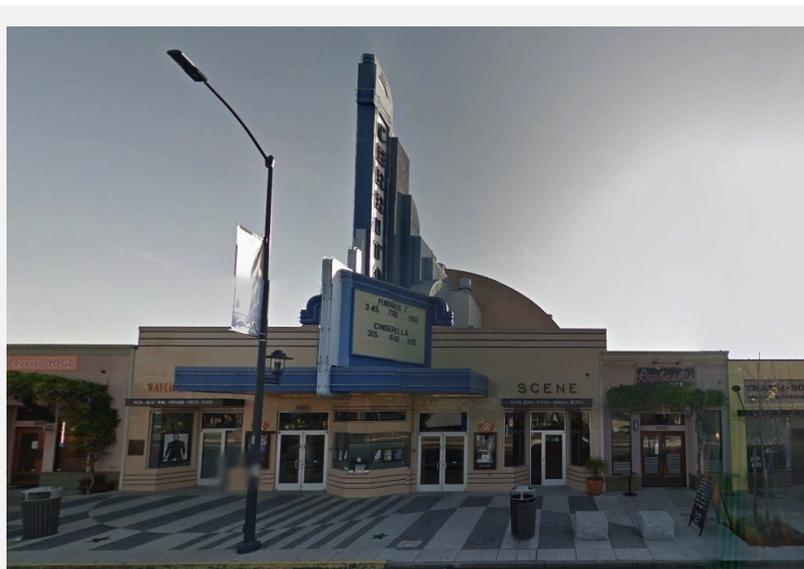
- 1) Develop an affordable housing strategy
- 2) Create a budget to provide financial assistance for affordable housing based on potential sources of funding including state Cap and Trade funds, tax credits and density bonuses
- 3) Determine the number of affordable units possible given potential funding sources and levels of affordability pursuant to the Housing Element, and assign affordable housing targets to appropriate development sites

#### H. Conduct periodic City Council reviews of the status of the strategies and implementation tasks of the Economic Development Action Plan

- 1) Submit a status report of all prior year activities and an annual implementation plan for activities in the upcoming year prior to the adoption of the City budget or mid-cycle budget update (see Attachment B for a sample report format)
- 2) Include in each staff report for a City Council action, an identification of the corresponding EDAP action policy being implemented (where appropriate)
- 3) Share the status report and annual implementation plan with the Economic Development Committee for integration with their annual work plan
- 4) Monitor effectiveness of EDAP recommended programs
- 5) Establish a five-year cycle for the update of the Economic Development Action Plan



## Goal 2: Strong Sense of Place



**Create a physical environment with a strong sense of place with high-quality, dynamic urban lifestyle development, supported by the market**

**(from 2006 Plan)**

### Strategies and Implementation Tasks

A. Promote arts and culture, and community celebrations to encourage economic development and create a strong identity for El Cerrito

- 1) Develop a commercial district arts and celebrations program with the Economic Development Committee and Arts and Culture Commission
- 2) Budget funds for the program on an annual basis from the General Fund and/or Public Art Fund (pursuant to the Arts & Culture Master Plan)
- 3) Foster public/private structure for promoting El Cerrito as a destination (for arts, entertainment, environmental activities)
- 4) Work with the Economic Development Committee and Arts and Culture Commission to survey El Cerrito residents to identify art resources and promote arts
- 5) Promote display of the arts and celebration of local culture in

*Creating a Sense of Place*



local businesses and in the public right of way (including utility boxes)

- 6) Involve the business community in the upcoming Centennial planning and celebrations
- 7) Integrate EDAP goals in the Centennial planning efforts to promote commercial areas

## B. Build the El Cerrito economic base to create more jobs, encourage greater vitality and more pedestrian-friendly economic activity

- 1) Develop a database with the number of current jobs by job type from state data
- 2) Update the database annually with new jobs created by business expansion or new businesses
- 3) Measure pedestrian-friendly economic activity as a category of job growth
- 4) Work with the Economic Development Committee to encourage and provide opportunities for networking within business sectors
- 5) Explore the feasibility of establishing a co-share office working space for small professional businesses

## C. Encourage developers to exceed California code requirements for green buildings and energy and water efficiency.

- 1) Provide information to planning and building permit applicants on the operating costs and tenant attraction benefits of certifying their buildings at LEED design levels
- 2) Consider fee reductions or expedited permit processing for applicants achieving high levels of certification (e.g., LEED or other equivalent and recognized programs)

## D. Optimize placemaking in all developments

- 1) Develop a list of place making design elements from the San Pablo Avenue Specific Plan and urban design literature on the website and as a handout for all planning and building permit applicants
- 2) Use the list as evaluation criteria for design review



E. Support economic activity through temporary and permanent open spaces and landscaping that create a sense of place and attract residents and visitors

- 1) Pursue development of public and private open spaces per the San Pablo Avenue Specific Plan, Urban Greening and Ohlone Greenway Master Plan
- 2) Contract with a planning and architectural firm for preliminary designs and cost estimates for high priority areas
- 3) Include funding in the Capital Improvement Program for one or more projects
- 4) Work with adjacent businesses and neighbors to implement Urban Greening plan concept for lower Fairmont Avenue
- 5) Develop an open space payment-in-lieu program pursuant to the San Pablo Avenue Specific Plan, to allow more flexibility in developing constrained parcels and develop a funding source for public open space improvements

F. Develop a program to provide opportunities for commerce and pop-up uses within the public right-of-way (sidewalks and streets), and in vacant store fronts, particularly along commercial corridors, to continue to build pedestrian activity

- 1) Work with the Economic Development Committee to identify goals of a pop-up and mobile business program
- 2) Identify locations and guidelines appropriate for mobile businesses
- 3) Incorporate infrastructure elements like electrical outlets, water sources, etc., into plazas, when feasible and appropriate
- 4) Work with the Economic Development Committee to identify businesses and property owners that would be in support of hosting pop-up uses on or near their property
- 5) Work with the Economic Development Committee to identify vacant buildings that could support pop-up businesses and contact property owners for permission to solicit businesses



- 6) Work with the Economic Development Committee and Farmer's Market to expand its profile and offerings within the City

#### G. Create and strengthen active commercial corridors that allow community members to gather, stroll, and interact while meeting their daily needs close to home

- 1) Identify key commercial corridors and nodes for community interaction including areas set forth in the San Pablo Avenue Specific Plan, upper and lower Fairmount and upper Stockton Avenue
- 2) Create and concentrate community activities, in partnership with others, in community interaction areas
- 3) Hold periodic meetings with business district property owners to identify needs and opportunities
- 4) Partner with the Economic Development Committee, businesses and Chamber of Commerce to develop a creative Shop Local Program and other activities

#### H. Install entry signage, way finding, and pedestrian lighting for Fairmount Avenue and key commercial nodes

- 1) Include enhanced pedestrian lighting and signage in commercial districts in the Capital Improvement Program
- 2) Identify possible funding sources for lighting and signage
- 3) Determine locations for installations and contract with designer to create signage and lighting program
- 4) Coordinate with Arts and Culture Commission for installation of public art funded by the Public Art Fund as part of the entry way identification



## Goal 3: Development Ready



***Ensure that development sites are ready for development that achieves the vision for higher quality sustainable urban development***

***(from 2006 Plan)***



## Strategies and Implementation Tasks

*Supporting Quality  
Development with  
City and Site  
Readiness*

### A. Adopt agreements with the Bay Area Rapid Transit District (BART) for cooperative development of the BART sites

- 1) Participate in the BART transit-oriented development (TOD) policy development (currently underway)
- 2) Identify steps to initiate and coordinate development and release of an RFQ/RFP for a mixed-use development at the Plaza BART station parking lot
- 3) Work closely with BART to understand development opportunities and constraints and to identify next steps for development of the Del Norte station parking area on San Pablo Avenue during the upcoming Metropolitan Transportation Commission Priority Development Area study to be completed in FY 2016-17.

### B. Create an inventory of potentially developable sites and buildings

- 1) Hire an architect to develop site-specific drawings of key development sites to illustrate translation of vision for specific sites. Use drawings for communications with property owners and developers. Focus on one or two sites each year that are likely to develop in the near future, or could have a transformative effect on the surrounding area.
- 2) Prioritize catalyst sites for on-going promotion to potential businesses/developers, and continued contact with property owners to motivate sale or redevelopment of underutilized property. Use site-specific drawings for promotion and contact with property owners to inform them about the new development friendly policies set forth in the San Pablo Avenue Specific Plan.
- 3) Promote development sites with information on zoning, ownership, rents/sale price, sizes of parcels, buildings and parking, site maps/photos, and contact information to be included on City website, converted to promotional hard copy packets and disseminated via social media and other methods.



### C. Create a program with Stege Sanitary District for more streamlined provision of new service

- 1) Initiate a project with Stege Sanitary District to develop a master plan for Stege sewer improvements, and jointly seek grants and reasonable development fees to reimburse the cost of the plan
- 2) Create a fund to assist key businesses (such as restaurants), or geographic business areas, with the cost of assessing sewer lateral condition, or other Stege imposed permit conditions (include as part of the Small Business Assistance Program)

### D. Proceed with the disposition and development of former redevelopment assets

- 1) Issue a request for proposals for the disposition and development of the Eastshore and Mayfair parcels
- 2) Negotiate purchase and sale agreements based on the development objectives of the San Pablo Avenue Specific Plan and Long Range Property Management Plan

### E. Streamline permit process

- 1) Develop a survey for all planning and building permit applicants to provide feedback on service quality and efficiency. Share results annually with Economic Development Committee and City Council.
- 2) Create a web toolkit and hard copy guide to starting a business in El Cerrito as part of the Small Business Assistance Program
- 3) Train staff on customer service techniques to improve permit processing service delivery reputation



# Goal 4: Financial Sustainability



***Achieve long-term financial sustainability by attracting and maximizing opportunities for new and expanding businesses and new development; and exploring opportunities for public/private partnerships***

***(New)***

## Strategies and Implementation Tasks

### A. Explore opportunities for public/private partnerships

- 1) Issue request for proposals for the Eastshore and Mayfair redevelopment parcel assemblages, for the sale of publicly acquired parcels to the private sector for development, pursuant to public development goals in the San Pablo Avenue Specific Plan
- 2) Retain a retail broker or consultant to evaluate key development sites for retail opportunities, review mixed-use development plans for appropriate retail design and help identify potential tenants in mixed-use projects

### B. Determine feasibility of improvement districts

- 1) Prepare a report on the feasibility of creating a Neighborhood Business District, or Business Improvement District, and/or Economic Development Corporation for San Pablo Avenue and key commercial nodes to support the Small Business Assistance Program and capital improvements
- 2) Work with the Economic Development Committee to survey



commercial businesses and property owners to determine support for a business district

- 3) Investigate and prepare a report on the feasibility of establishing an enhanced infrastructure facilities district (EIFD)

### C. Create staffing capacity to implement ongoing business assistance programs

- 1) Develop a list of programs that are desirable to pursue and estimate the administration hours required. Prioritize list based on available City budget.
- 2) Determine if permanent staffing or consulting services are the most efficient and sustainable means of providing consistent program services over a five-year implementation period
- 3) Explore feasibility of alternate economic development structures, such as establishment of a local economic development corporation

### D. Explore social and community capital methods of supporting economic development activities

- 1) Work with the Economic Development Committee to survey residents and businesses about their willingness to support economic development activities through volunteer efforts, crowd funding and networking
- 2) Identify and implement methods to locate and leverage local talent and resources

### E. Investigate the feasibility of allocating a portion of property taxes created by new development to economic development activities to replace redevelopment tax increment funds

- 1) Create a table with all known development sites that estimates the total value of potential new development and the amount of new property taxes that could accrue to the City



# Goal 5: Communicate Opportunities



***Communicate with residents, local businesses, key brokers, developers to create awareness of the market and development opportunities***

***(from 2006 Plan)***

## Strategies and Implementation Tasks

*Creating Understanding Through Communication*

A. Communicate regularly with businesses and potential developers to understand barriers and opportunities and develop proactive responses

- 1) Work with the Economic Development Committee to conduct periodic surveys, focus groups and in-person meetings with businesses and property owners
- 2) Develop a program with the Economic Development Committee and Chamber of Commerce for business outreach including welcome letters/visits, newsletters, Facebook/Twitter information dissemination, business recognition events and mixers, coordinated advertising of El Cerrito businesses, and meetings of groups of businesses by geographic sub-areas
- 3) Disseminate electronic and hard copy brochures for key development sites, including use of social media sites



## B. Communicate regularly with residents concerning proposed new businesses and development, closed businesses, changing market conditions, and City economic development activities

- 1) Establish or continue resident communications including periodic newsletters, post cards, Facebook/Twitter information pushes, news articles and shopper surveys. Utilize the content and distribution recommendations in the 2006 Economic Development Action Plan.
- 2) Update the website as the major source of business, developer and resident information on business and development opportunities
- 3) Explore application of other social media platforms for resident and business communication such as OppSites

## C. Continue programs to encourage resident and visitor experience in the commercial area

- 1) Partner with the Economic Development Committee and local civic organizations (such as the Historic Society, Trail Trekkers, Chamber of Commerce, Rotary Club, local businesses) to develop programs to promote El Cerrito as a destination through sponsoring movie nights, pop up events, "Friday night" events and promotional campaigns
- 2) Host joint session with Economic Development Committee, Arts and Culture Committee, and Human Relations Commission to determine events and strategies that promote and build on El Cerrito strengths, including diversity, arts, culture, and environmental sustainability



# Conclusion

The 2016 Economic Development Action Plan provides a solid policy foundation for the economic activities in the next five years. Notwithstanding the Great Recession, the City made significant strides in implementing the 2006 plan even though the economic downturn started shortly after its adoption. Although the economy will always be cyclical, the 2016 action plan has the advantage of momentum created by the implementation of prior policies plus a more favorable economic climate.

This plan is purposefully broad in scope to capture the many exciting and fertile ideas expressed by the City Council, Economic Development Committee, businesses, residents, and staff. Its successful implementation however, will require focusing on a few implementation activities at a time. The limited staff resources cannot advance all of the policies at once, and emphasis should be placed on a few areas staff can support well. Establishing that focus will be essential to maximize the City's limited staff and financial resources for implementation of the plan.

El Cerrito is at a great milestone in its economic development journey as the market data informs us. Rents and land values are rising to the threshold of supporting new development, new businesses are being established, and the basic advantages El Cerrito has with its proximity to major job centers, and transportation linkages, all combine to make the policies and action steps in this updated plan feasible and compelling.





## Project Team

Community Development Department

Economic Development Committee

Management Partners



## Attachment A - Implementation Tasks Timing - Cost - Effort

The following table sets forth the timing, staff or consultant contract implementation, estimated cost, current level of effort and result for each of the implementation tasks in the plan. This table will assist staff in developing annual work plans to focus their efforts, and provide information for the City Council to prioritize implementation by allocating funds in the budget process to priority tasks.

The “Cost” column sets forth ranges of estimated cost:

\$ - Under \$10,000      \$\$ - \$10,000 to \$25,000      \$\$\$ - Over \$25,000

The “Effort” column has three levels of ranking:

Strong = Tasks the City is implementing or has experience to implement

Some = Tasks the City is partially or sporadically implementing

New = New tasks requiring new staff resources and/or funding for implementation

The “Result” column sets forth the type of outcome that is expected for each task:

ND = New Development is the outcome or result of the task implementation

SB = Support of businesses is the result

PM = Placemaking is the result

POLICY	TASK	YEAR	WHO	COST	EFFORT	RESULT	COMMENTS
	<b>GOAL 1: 2020 VISION</b>						
#1 A. 1)	Implement a permit fee study	2016	Staff/ Contract	Staff Time/\$\$	New	ND & SB	
#1 A. 2)	Consider fee reductions for key businesses, areas or improvements	2016	Staff	Staff Time/\$\$	New	ND & SB	
#1 A. 3)	Survey existing businesses on needs to support growth and expansion	2017	Staff/ Contract	Staff Time	New	SB	
#1 A.	Create a Small Business Assistance Program	2017	Staff	Staff Time	New	SB	Technical information, façade grants, tenant improvement loans, permit ombudsman
# 1 B. 1)	Support reduced parking	On-going	Staff	Staff Time	Strong	ND & SB	Parking programs, expansion of bike- and car-share programs
#1 B. 2)	Encourage staff and Planning Commission approval of dense multi-family residential uses in between commercial nodes	On-going	Staff	Staff Time	Strong	ND & SB	
#1 B. 3)	Market the San Pablo Avenue Specific Plan to	On-going	Staff	Staff Time/\$\$	Some	ND & SB	



POLICY	TASK	YEAR	WHO	COST	EFFORT	RESULT	COMMENTS
	developers and new businesses						
#1 C. 1)	Maintain constant contact with property owners of vacant or underutilized properties	On-going	Staff	Staff Time	Some	ND & SB	Convey information about business inquiries and opportunities, and assess changing needs and attitudes of landowners
#1 C. 2)	Develop brochures to interpret the San Pablo Avenue Specific Plan's and EDAP's key features	2016	Staff/Contract	\$	Strong	ND & SB	Provide to vacant site landowners and potential developers and businesses
#1 C. 3)	Include vacant site landowners on periodic newsletters and social media outputs	On-going	Staff	Staff Time	Strong	ND & SB	Information on El Cerrito business climate
#1 C. 4)	Develop electronic brochure of vacant buildings and underutilized sites for distribution to new businesses and developers	2016	Staff/Contract	\$	Strong	ND & SB	
#1 C. 5)	Conduct periodic meetings and communications with brokers and property owners	On-going	Staff	Staff Time	Strong	ND & SB	Exchange information on site vacancies, potential tenants, general market conditions
#1 C. 6)	Explore emerging platforms (such as OppSites) for attracting new investment	2016	Staff	Staff Time	Strong	ND & SB	
#1 D. 1)	Provide on-going information to residents on public improvements	On-going	Staff	Staff Time	Strong	ND & SB	Disseminate to brokers and developers as well
#1 D. 2)	Provide on-going information to residents on planned and approved private projects	On-going	Staff	Staff Time	Strong	ND & SB	Disseminate to brokers and developers as well
#1 E. 1)	Annually appropriate funds to the Façade/Tenant Improvement Program and establish a revolving program fund	2017	Staff	\$\$	Some	SB	As part of the Small Business Assistance Program
#1 E. 2)	Adopt program guidelines for façade grants and tenant improvement loans	2017	Staff	Staff Time	Some	SB	
#1 E. 3)	Consider including accessibility and sewer improvements as eligible expenses for TI Program	2017	Staff	Staff Time	New	SB	
#1 E. 4)	Contract with an architect to design exterior improvements to ensure high quality	2017	Staff/Contract	\$\$	New	SB	Retainer contract
#1 F. 1)	Provide information on state and regional entrepreneur assistance programs to businesses	On-going	Staff	Staff Time	Some	SB	Revive prior efforts
#1 F. 2)	Consider partnering with other agencies and Chamber to provide City's Entrepreneur Training Program biannually	2017	Staff	Staff Time/\$\$	Some	SB	Continue prior efforts
#1 F. 3)	Identify loan programs for new small businesses to pay for Americans with Disability Act accessibility	2017	Staff	Staff Time	New	SB	

POLICY	TASK	YEAR	WHO	COST	EFFORT	RESULT	COMMENTS
	requirements.						
#1 F. 4)	Promote City's partnership with property assessed clean energy (PACE) programs	On-Going	Staff	Staff Time	Some	SB	Including Marin Energy program
#1 G. 1)	Develop an Affordable Housing Strategy	2017	Staff/Contract	\$\$	Strong	ND	Includes items 2) & 3) below
#1 G. 2)	Create a resources budget for providing financial assistance for affordable housing	2017	Staff/Contract	See G.1	Strong	ND	Including Cap and Trade, tax credits, density bonuses
#1 G. 3)	Determine the number of affordable units possible	2017	Staff/Contract	See G.1	Strong	ND	Per resources & Housing Element
#1 H. 1)	Submit a status report of all prior year EDAP activities and submit annual implementation plan	2016	Staff	Staff Time	New	ND, SB, PM	
#1 H. 2)	Identification in staff reports the EDAP action policy being implemented	On-going	Staff	Staff Time	New	ND, SB, PM	
#1 H. 3)	Share status report and annual implementation plan with Economic Development Committee	On-going	Staff	Staff Time	New	ND, SB, PM	For inclusion of parts in ECD work program
#1 H. 4)	Monitor effectiveness of EDAP recommended programs	On-going	Staff	Staff Time	New	ND, SB, PM	Include results in annual report
#1 H. 5)	Establish five year cycle for Economic Development Action Plan update	2021	Staff	Staff Time	New	ND, SB, PM	
<b>GOAL 2: STRONG SENSE OF PLACE</b>							
#2 A. 1)	Develop a commercial district arts and celebrations program	2016	Staff/EDC	Staff Time	Some	PM	With the Arts and Culture Commission
#2 A. 2)	Budget funds for arts & celebrations program on annual basis	2016	Staff	Staff Time/\$\$	New	PM	From General Fund and/or Public Art Fund
#2 A. 3)	Foster public/private structure for promoting El Cerrito as a destination	2016	Staff/EDC	Staff Time	New	PM	For arts, entertainment, environmental activities
#2 A. 4)	Survey El Cerrito to identify art resources and promote arts	2017	Staff/EDC	Staff Time	New	PM	
#2 A. 5)	Promote display of arts, celebrate local culture in local businesses and public right of way	2016	Staff/EDC	Staff Time	Some	PM	Including art on utility boxes
#2 A. 6)	Involve the business community in the upcoming Centennial planning and celebrations	2016	Staff/EDC	Staff Time	New	PM	
#2 A. 7)	Integrate EDAP goals in Centennial planning efforts	2016	Staff/EDC	Staff Time	New	PM	To promote commercial areas
#2 B. 1)	Develop data base on number of current jobs by job type from state data	2017	Staff	Staff Time	New	ND & SB	

POLICY	TASK	YEAR	WHO	COST	EFFORT	RESULT	COMMENTS
#2 B. 2)	Update data base annually with new jobs created by business expansion or new businesses formed	2017	Staff	Staff Time	New	ND & SB	
#2 B. 3)	Measure pedestrian friendly economic activity as a category of job growth	2017	Staff	Staff Time	Some	ND & SB	With the assistance from Economic Development Committee
#2 B. 4)	Encourage and provide opportunities for networking within business sectors	On-going	Staff/EDC	Staff Time	Some	SB	
#2 B. 5)	Explore feasibility of establishing a co-share office working space for small professional businesses	2017	Staff/EDC	Staff Time	New	SB	In an existing vacant building
#2 C. 1)	Provide information to planning and building permit applicants on green design benefits	On-going	Staff	Staff Time	Some	ND & SB	LEED and other types of certification
# 2 C. 2)	Consider fee reductions or expedited permit processing for green certification	On-going	Staff	Staff Time/\$\$	New	ND & SB	
#2 D. 1)	Develop handout list of San Pablo Avenue Specific Plan place making design elements for planning and building permit applicants	2017	Staff	Staff Time	New	PM, ND & SB	Include info from urban design literature
#2 D. 2)	Use list of placemaking design elements as evaluation criteria for design review	2017	Staff	Staff Time	Strong	PM, ND & SB	
#2 E. 1)	Pursue development of public and private open spaces per the San Pablo Avenue Specific Plan, Urban Greening and Ohlone Greenway Master Plan	2018	Staff	See Urban Greening Plan	Strong	PM	
#2 E. 2)	Contract with a planning and architectural firm for preliminary designs and cost estimates for high priority areas	2018	Staff/Contract	\$\$	New	PM	
#2 E. 3)	Include funding in the Capital Improvement Program for one or more projects	2018	Staff	\$\$\$	New	PM	Cost to be determined by estimates from action #2. E. 2) and Urban Greening Plan
#2 E. 4)	Implement Urban Greening plan concept for lower Fairmont Avenue	2018	Staff	\$\$\$	Some	PM	Coordinate with adjacent businesses and neighbors
#2 E. 5)	Develop open space payment-in-lieu program	2016	Staff	Staff Time	Some	PM	For public open space
#2 F. 1)	Identify goals of a pop-up retail and mobile food program	2017	Staff/EDC	Staff Time	Some	PM & SB	
#2 F. 2)	Identify locations and guidelines appropriate for mobile businesses	2017	Staff/EDC	Staff Time	New	PM & SB	
#2 F. 3)	Incorporate infrastructure elements: electrical outlets, water sources into plazas,	On-going	Staff	Unknown	New	PM & SB	To support mobile businesses. Develop cost estimates.
#2 F. 4)	Identify businesses and property owners in support of hosting pop up uses on or near their property	2016	Staff/EDC	Staff Time	New	PM & SB	
#2 F. 5)	Identify vacant buildings for pop up businesses	2016	Staff/EDC	Staff Time	New	PM & SB	Contact property owners for permission to solicit businesses

POLICY	TASK	YEAR	WHO	COST	EFFORT	RESULT	COMMENTS
#2 F. 6)	Work with the Farmer's Market to expand its profile and offerings within the City	2017	Staff/ EDC	Staff Time	New	PM	
#2 G. 1)	Identify key commercial corridors and nodes for community interaction	2016	Staff	Staff Time	Strong	PM	Including areas set forth in the San Pablo Avenue Specific Plan, upper/ lower Fairmount and upper Stockton Avenue
#2 G. 2)	Create and concentrate community activities in community interaction areas	2017	Staff/ EDC	Staff Time	Some	PM	
#2 G. 3)	Hold periodic meetings with business "districts" to identify needs and opportunities	2016	Staff/ EDC	Staff Time	New	SB	
#2 G. 4)	Partner with businesses and Chamber to develop creative Shop Local program and other activities	2017	Staff/ EDC	Staff Time	Some	SB	
#2 H. 1)	Include enhanced, pedestrian lighting and signage in commercial districts in the Capital Improvement Program	2017	Staff	\$\$	New	PM & SB	Develop CIP Project
#2 H. 2)	Identify possible funding sources for lighting and signage: 1) design and 2) installation	2017	Staff	\$\$\$	New	PM & SB	As part of CIP project for design costs
#2 H. 3)	Determine locations for installations, contract with designer to create signage and lighting program	2017	Staff/ Contract	\$\$	New	PM & SB	For design costs
#2 H. 4)	Coordinate installation of public art as part of the entry way identification program	2016	Staff	Staff Time	New	PM	With Arts and Culture Commission funded by the Public Art Fund
<b>GOAL 3: DEVELOPMENT READY</b>							
#3 A. 1)	Participate in the BART TOD policy development	2016	Staff	Staff Time	Some	ND	Currently underway
#3 A. 2)	Identify steps to initiate development of RFQ/RFP for mixed-use development at BART Plaza station parking lot	2016	Staff	Staff Time	Some	ND	Upon completion of TOD policy
#3 A. 3)	Work with BART to understand development opportunities for development of the Del Norte station parking	2016	Staff	Staff Time	Some	ND	During Metropolitan Transportation Commission Priority Development Area study
#3 B. 1)	Hire an architect to develop site-specific drawings of key development sites	2017	Staff/ Contract	\$\$	Some	ND	Use drawings for communications with land owners and developers
#3 B. 2)	Prioritize catalyst sites for on-going promotion to potential businesses/developers, and continued contact with property owners	2016	Staff	Staff Time	Some	ND	To motivate sale or redevelopment of underutilized property.
#3 B. 3)	Promote development sites with information on zoning, ownership, rents/sale price, sizes of parcels, buildings and parking, site maps/photos, and contact info;	On-going	Staff	Staff Time	Some	ND	To be included on City website, converted to promotional hard copy packets and disseminated via social media and other methods
#3 C. 1)	Initiate a project with Stege Sanitary District to develop a master plan for Stege sewer	2016	Staff	\$\$\$	New	ND & SB	Jointly seek grants and development fees to reimburse the cost of the plan

POLICY	TASK	YEAR	WHO	COST	EFFORT	RESULT	COMMENTS
	improvements						
#3 C. 2)	Create a fund to assist key businesses with cost of assessing sewer lateral condition, or other Stege imposed permit conditions	2016	Staff	\$\$\$	New		Include as part of the Small Business Assistance Program
#3 D. 1)	Issue Request for Proposals for the disposition and development of the Eastshore and Mayfair parcels	2016	Staff	Staff Time	New	ND	Current contract
#3 D. 2)	Negotiate purchase and sale agreements for development of the Eastshore and Mayfair parcels	2016	Staff/ Contract	Staff Time	New	ND	Based on the development objectives of San Pablo Avenue Specific Plan, Long Range Property Management Plan
#3 E. 1)	Develop survey for planning and building permit applicants for feedback on service quality and efficiency.	2016	Staff	Staff Time	New	ND & SB	Share with EDC and Council
#3 E. 2)	Create a web toolkit and hard copy guide to starting a business in El Cerrito	2016	Staff	Staff Time	New	SB	As part of the Small Business Assistance Program
#3 E. 3)	Train staff on customer service techniques to improve permit processing service delivery reputation	2016	Staff	Staff Time	Some	ND & SB	
<b>GOAL 4: FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY</b>							
#4 A. 1)	Issue Request for Proposals for the Eastshore and Mayfair redevelopment parcel assemblages	2016	Staff	Staff Time	New	ND	Per Specific Plan regulations
#4 A. 2)	Retain a retail broker or consultant to evaluate key development sites for retail opportunities	2017	Staff/ Contract	\$\$	New	ND & SB	
#4 B. 1)	Prepare a report on the feasibility of creating a Neighborhood Business District	2017	Staff/ Contract	\$\$	New	SB	
#4 B. 2)	Survey businesses and landowners to determine support for a business district	2017	Staff/ Contract	Staff Time	New	SB	
#4 B. 3)	Investigate feasibility of establishing an enhanced infrastructure facilities district (EIFD)	2017	Staff	Staff Time	New	SB	
#4 C. 1)	Develop a list of relevant business assistance programs	2016	Staff	Staff Time	Some		Estimate hours and budget required
#4 C. 2)	Determine if staffing, a local development corporation, or consulting services are the most efficient means of implementing the plan	2016	Staff	Staff Time	New	PM, SB, ND	
#4 D. 1)	Survey residents/ businesses for supporting economic development activities with volunteer efforts, crowd funding and networking	2016	Staff/ EDC	Staff Time	New	PM & SB	
#4 D. 2)	Identify and implement methods to locate and leverage local talent and resources	2016	Staff	Staff Time	New	PM & SB	
#4 E. 1)	Investigate feasibility of allocating a portion of property taxes created by new development to economic development activities	2017	Staff	Staff Time	New	PM & SB	Estimate total value of potential new development and new property taxes
<b>Goal 5: COMMUNICATE</b>							

POLICY	TASK	YEAR	WHO	COST	EFFORT	RESULT	COMMENTS
	<b>OPPORTUNITIES</b>						
#5 A. 1)	Develop a program with Chamber of Commerce for business outreach Conduct periodic surveys, focus groups and in-person meetings with businesses and property owners	On - going	Staff	Staff Time	Some	SB	Including welcome letters/visits, newsletters, Facebook/Twitter information dissemination
#5 A. 2)	Disseminate electronic and hard copy brochures for key development	2016	Staff	Staff Time	Some	ND & SB	Including welcome letters/visits, newsletters, Facebook/Twitter information dissemination
#5 A. 3	Disseminate electronic and hard copy brochures for key development sites, including use of social media sites	2016	Staff	Staff Time	Some	ND	
#5 B. 1)	Establish or continue periodic resident communications	On - going	Staff	Staff Time	Some	PM, SB & ND	Newsletters, post cards, Facebook/Twitter info pushes, news articles and shopper surveys
#5 B. 2)	Update website as the major source of business, developer and resident info	2017	Staff	Staff Time	Some	PM, SB & ND	On business and development opportunities
#5 B. 3)	Explore application of other social media platforms for resident and business communication	2017	Staff	Staff Time	Some	PM, SB & ND	Such as OppSites
#5 C. 1)	Partner with local civic organizations to promote El Cerrito as a destination through sponsoring movie nights, pop up events, "Friday night" events and promotional campaigns	2016	Staff/ EDC	Staff Time	Strong	PM	Including the Historic Society, Trail Trekkers, Chamber of Commerce, Rotary Club, local businesses
#5 C. 2)	Host joint session with Economic Development Committee, Arts and Culture Committee, and Human Relations Commission to determine events and strategies that promote and build upon our strengths, including our diversity, arts, culture, and environmental sustainability	2017	Staff	Staff Time	New	PM & SB	

***Note: Some items will require City Council approval and budget appropriation.***

# Attachment B – Sample Annual Implementation Steps Status Report

## 2016 EDAP Summary

The 2006 Economic Development Action Plan (EDAP) was updated in 2016 to build upon and consolidate information from previous documents, and provide focus for current and future economic development efforts, including: building upon unfinished but relevant recommendations of the 2006 plan; furthering implementation of the San Pablo Avenue Specific Plan; incorporating analysis from the Contra Costa County Transportation Authority (CCTA) Priority Development Areas Implementation Plan of market conditions (underway); identifying opportunities and constraints to economic development; and recommending new El Cerrito specific economic development tools and tasks.

In accordance with Goal 1.H 1) of the 2016 EDAP (pg. 13), this Annual Status Report implements the following tasks:

- Submit a status report of all prior year activities and submit an annual implementation plan for activities in the upcoming year, prior to the adoption of the City budget or mid-cycle budget update
- Share the status report and annual implementation plan with the Economic Development Committee for integration with their annual work plan process
- Monitor effectiveness of recommended programs

## Summary of 2016 Accomplishments

In 2016, a number of new accomplishments took place that supported the 2016 EDAP. From 2016 to 2017 the City witnessed *[add achievements here such as job growth, new businesses, new developments, civic events, etc. Also add challenges encountered]*

The following table highlights the City's progress towards implementing specific goals and strategies of the 2016 EDAP during 2016. [Sample Table]

Policy/Task	Timing	Responsible Party	Accomplishment	Status
#1 A.1) Implement a Permit Fee Study	2016	Staff		Not Started

**2017 Priority Goals, Strategies and Implementation Plan:** *[Insert table of proposed 2017 activities, which duplicates the table in Attachment A].*



## Appendix 1: Related Policies from Other Adopted Plans

The following is a list of policies from other plans the City has adopted since 2006 that relate to economic development activities. They are included in an appendix so they are not duplicated in the 2016 Economic Development Action Plan, but are easily accessible in one place. The policies are from the 2013 Climate Action Plan, 2013 Arts and Culture Master Plan, 2014 San Pablo Avenue Specific Plan, 2015 Urban Greening Plan, and the 2015 Strategic Plan.

### **CLIMATE ACTION PLAN (2013)**

#### LAND USE, TRANSPORTATION AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

#### **Sustainable Community Goal 1: Encourage more compact, higher density infill development along transportation corridors to reduce vehicle miles traveled in El Cerrito and beyond. (p.23)**

Objective SC-1.1: Update the El Cerrito General Plan and other applicable plans and ordinances to allow greater residential and commercial density along major transportation corridors and establish Transit Oriented Development (TOD) near both BART stations. (pp. 24-25)

- Strategy: Utilize the results of the San Pablo Avenue Specific Plan and TOD studies to inform the General Plan Update.
- Strategy: Continue to participate in the development of the Bay Area SCS's Plan Bay Area process.
- Strategy: Position El Cerrito to be competitive for SCS Plan Bay Area Grants by developing a Complete Streets Plan and implementing the City's 2007-2014 Housing Element to facilitate the development of housing to meet regional housing needs.
- Strategy: Continue to pursue developments of TOD in both the Del Norte Station area and El Cerrito Plaza areas.
- Strategy: Partner with all regional transportation agencies serving west Contra Costa County to develop a congestion relief plan that mitigates automobile and parking impacts at the Del Norte Station area.

Objective SC-1.2: Create planning mechanisms and development standards to encourage the right mix of high density, mixed-use and affordable housing development along major transportation corridors. (p.25)

- Strategy: Strive to meet the City's Regional Housing Needs Allocation goal for 2014 and 2012.
- Strategy: Develop regulatory programs and incentives, such as an inclusionary housing ordinance and/or other innovative approaches to ensuring the creation of mixed-income housing in new multi-family development.
- Strategy: Develop strategies to streamline planning entitlement processes in targeted PDA areas.
- Strategy: Revise development standards along major transportation corridors to encourage higher density development.
- Strategy: Prioritize potential development sites along the Avenue and work with owners to redevelop their parcels.



- Strategy: Assist and collaborate with non-profit, private and public entities to maximize opportunities to develop affordable housing.

Objective SC-1.3: Develop and implement a parking demand management strategy in TOD areas that both responds to market conditions and encourages higher density development along transit-oriented corridors and alternatives to driving. (p. 26)

- Strategy: Consider instituting parking pricing strategies around the BART stations, particularly the Del Norte Station where a majority of commuters drive alone to the Station and come from outside El Cerrito and other adjacent cities.
- Strategy: Allow building owners to unbundle parking to be rented separately from the building space.
- Strategy: Allow on-street parking to meet off-street parking requirements.
- Strategy: Consider instituting flexible parking requirements for transit-oriented development that provides services, infrastructure and/or mitigations to reduce parking demand, such as:
  - Access to car sharing and bicycle sharing programs;
  - Dedicated parking for low carbon fuel vehicles;
  - Resident and/or employee transit incentives;
  - Certification under regional trip reduction programs; and
  - Higher than required bicycle parking.

**Sustainable Community Goal 2: Increase El Cerrito's economic base to create more jobs, encourage greater vitality and more pedestrian-friendly economic activity. (p. 27)**

Objective SC-2.1: Create a physical environment and stronger sense of place that supports high quality, walk-able commercial and retail development and invites people to spend time in El Cerrito's commercial areas. (p. 27)

- Strategy: Continue to pursue projects in such nodes of activity as the Theater Block, the El Cerrito Plaza area, Midtown, and Del Norte to identify El Cerrito's portion of San Pablo Avenue as a special place of dynamic activity.
- Strategy: Create a reason for people to shop in El Cerrito by developing a unique El Cerrito experience that builds upon local assets.
- Strategy: Link the City's main commercial nodes through a network of open space, public art, and other cultural and historic amenities that encourage people to linger longer.
- Strategy: Develop and implement design guidelines that promote a pedestrian-friendly commercial environment along transit-oriented nodes, such as allowing and encouraging outdoor seating and activities that enliven the street.
- Strategy: Pursue innovative street parking solutions that support pedestrian access.

Objective SC-2.2: Enhance neighborhood-serving commercial nodes and encourage the development of commercial spaces in mixed-use areas that can better serve the daily needs of residents, businesses and people who work in El Cerrito. (p. 28)

- Strategy: Identify nodes and properties in commercial corridors that are economically feasible for commercial and/or mixed-use development.



- Strategy: Develop conceptual area plans for priority nodes that communicate the City’s vision, goals and expectations to the development community.
- Strategy: Develop study areas to more fully realize the potential for neighborhood-scale commercial nodes, such as the Stockton and the upper and lower Fairmount areas, as part of the next General Plan update process.

Objective SC-2.3: Encourage existing businesses to adopt environmentally friendly practices, and attract “green economy” businesses to El Cerrito. (p. 28)

- Strategy: Participate in the regional Green Business Program and support projects and policies to promote resource efficiency, waste reduction and pollution prevention in the commercial sector.
- Strategy: Develop a business attraction strategy that investigates the types of “green economy” businesses (for example, community food enterprises or green building supplies and services) that would be successful in El Cerrito.
- Strategy: Support the development of a local food economy in El Cerrito by:
  - Recruiting local food enterprises to locate in El Cerrito; and
  - Expanding the frequency and enhancing the quality of local farmers’ markets.

**Sustainable community Goal 3: Continue to invest in infrastructure that invites people to walk, bike, and take transit more in El Cerrito. (p. 29)**

Objective SC-3.1: Create design standards for developments in commercial areas to require pedestrian-friendly improvements. (p. 29)

- Strategy: Develop design standards to improve building facades so that they are pedestrian-scaled with windows and entries along the pedestrian frontages.
- Strategy: Encourage the creation of both privately and publicly maintained pedestrian right-of-ways between San Pablo Ave and neighboring streets and amenities in order to break up long blocks and increase the number of pedestrian connections per block.

Objective SC-3.2: Maintain and expand an active program of streetscape improvements that enhance the pedestrian environment, character and continuity of residential and commercial districts and create greater connectivity between residential and commercial districts. (p. 30)

- Strategy: Identify and pursue additional opportunities to create and/or modify city street crossings, long blocks, and other city right of ways (pedestrian trails and stairs) to increase pedestrian and bicyclist convenience.
- Strategy: Participate in regional efforts to create a way finding signage program connecting neighborhoods and the Ohlone Greenway to major transportation hubs.
- Strategy: Develop a way finding signage program to promote use of pedestrian trails and stairs, especially as a way to improve pedestrian access to schools and transit.

Objective SC-3.3: Continue implementation of the Ohlone Greenway Master Plan and create greater connections between the Greenway, San Pablo Avenue and other regional trail networks. (p. 30)

- Strategy: Secure funding to design and develop key “Activity Areas” as defined in the Ohlone Greenway Master Plan.



- Strategy: Encourage the creation of pedestrian right-of-ways and bicycle facilities between San Pablo Avenue and the Greenway to increase connectivity, including the redesign of parcels as they redevelop and create partnerships or incentives for existing businesses to incorporate such access.
- Strategy: Develop a comprehensive way-finding information program to inform Ohlone Greenway and other pedestrian users about connections to San Pablo Avenue and surrounding destinations.

### **Sustainable Community Goal 5: Develop alternative transportation outreach, education, and incentive campaigns tailored to El Cerrito. (p. 36)**

Objective SC-5.1: Encourage residents and businesses to use vehicle trip reduction programs. (p. 36)

- Strategy: Work with WCCTAC, 511 Contra Costa, and other transportation agencies to promote their programs to El Cerrito's business and residential communities.
- Strategy: Create a welcome packet for new businesses and residents in El Cerrito, which will provide information on trip reduction options, as well as bicycling and pedestrian amenities, in El Cerrito.
- Strategy: Pursue funding to develop trip reduction incentive and education programs specific to El Cerrito and to increase community participation in such events as Bike-to-Work Day.

## **ARTS AND CULTURE MASTER PLAN (2013)**

### **Goals**

Based on the needs assessment and survey data, goals for Arts and Cultural development within the City of El Cerrito were developed with basic suggested actions and objectives for implementation.

#### **GOAL A: INCREASE ACCESS TO PUBLIC ART IN COMMUNITY**

##### *Suggested Arts and Culture Commission Actions*

- Support development of promotional materials highlighting points of interest in El Cerrito (p. 3)
- Partner with WCCUSD and the City's Recreation Department to promote and enhance arts and cultural programming (p. 3)

#### **GOAL B: SUPPORT THE LOCAL ARTISTIC AND CULTURAL COMMUNITY**

##### *Suggested Arts and Culture Commission Actions*

- Encourage and support the development of facilities available for arts (p. 4)
- Identify ways that arts and culture can assist with the City's efforts to promote economic development and create a strong identity for El Cerrito (p. 4)
- Identify funding sources for groups and individuals and disseminate to the community (p. 4)
- Support City beautification programs that "make El Cerrito a more pleasant environment to live, work, and play." (p. 4)

## **SAN PABLO AVENUE SPECIFIC PLAN (2014)**

### **1.03 URBAN DESIGN FRAMEWORK (p. 1-12)**

1.03.01 Downtown - (p. 1-15)



- Create an identifiable green southern gateway to the City that highlights where Cerrito Creek meets San Pablo Avenue.
- Encourage placemaking through active ground floor commercial spaces and open spaces in key areas.
- Connect destinations to the Bay Trail through pedestrian and bicycle improvements.
- Construct higher-intensity mixed-use developments in proximity to the BART station.
- Improve connectivity through El Cerrito Plaza and to San Pablo Avenue.
- Explore closure of lower Fairmount Avenue from Carlson Boulevard to San Pablo Avenue to create a gathering space.

#### 1.03.02 Midtown - (p. 1-16)

- Provide midblock connections to improve pedestrian and bicycle connectivity on large blocks.
- Enhance the Moeser and Stockton neighborhood commercial nodes to promote economic activity.
- Construct a mix of mid-density residential and mixed-use developments along the corridor.
- Create a continuous cycle track to improve bicycle safety, access and connectivity.

#### 1.03.03 Midtown - (p. 1-17)

- Provide midblock connections to improve pedestrian and bicycle connectivity on large blocks.
- Encourage placemaking through active ground floor commercial spaces and public open spaces.
- Widen sidewalks to improve accessibility and pedestrian connectivity.
- Construct higher density development on large underutilized lots in proximity to the BART station.
- Construct bicycle and pedestrian connectivity improvements within the Plan Area to close important circulation gaps.

### 1.0 PLAN GOALS AND POLICIES (p. 1-18)

#### Goal B: Ensure Return on Investment (p. 1-18)

- Strategy 1: Maximize TOD potential (BART and AC Transit).
- Strategy 2: Stimulate investment in vacant/underutilized sites at key focus areas.
- Strategy 3: Build on recent and planned private and public investments.
- Strategy 4: Leverage all investments to catalyze new investments.
- Strategy 5: Help the City achieve long-term financial sustainability.

#### Goal C: Encourage Practical and Market Friendly Development (p. 1-18)

- Strategy 1: Provide development clarity to encourage investment.
- Strategy 2: Incorporate flexible development codes that respond to constrained parcels, surrounding context and the market.
- Strategy 3: Allow ground floor residential development to provide flexibility and expand the Specific Plan Area's residential base.

### 3.02 VISION AND OVERARCHING FRAMEWORK (p. 3-15)

#### 3.02.01 Complete Streets Goals (p. 3-15)

- CS.6 Enhance and catalyze economic development by enhancing existing parking where possible, and allowing sidewalks to be repurposed for commercial uses such as outdoor dining. (p. 3-15)
- CS.7 Design a balanced and comfortable streetscape environment to attract activity and be enjoyed by all users. (p. 3-15)



## **URBAN GREENING PLAN (2015)**

### **4.02 OVERARCHING GOALS**

The following overarching goals define the community's priorities for urban greening. They guide development of the objectives, strategies and projects to ensure a robust and transformative Plan.

#### **GOAL 5: ECONOMIC VITALITY**

Support economic activity through temporary and permanent open spaces and landscaping that create a sense of place and attract residents and visitors. (p. 51)

#### **GOAL 6: URBAN LIVABILITY**

Create an urban environment that is sustainable, resilient and livable by providing places that not only improve the natural environment, but are designed for interaction, recreation and reprieve. (p. 51)

### **4.03 OBJECTIVES**

The following objectives seek to accomplish the overarching goals through policies and programs that achieve measurable outcomes. The strategies build upon existing policies and programs, while formalizing current City practices and incorporating relevant best practices to create a policy toolkit that advances the Plan's vision framework.

#### **OBJECTIVE 1: IMPROVED TRAILS AND PATHS**

Continue to invest in bicycle, pedestrian, trail and pathway improvements to reduce reliance on the private automobile, provide active recreation opportunities and support the local economy. (p. 52)

**1.8** *Consider including trails projects in the San Pablo Avenue Specific Plan Open-Space In-Lieu program to improve connectivity between higher density neighborhoods and public parks and open space amenities.* (p. 54)

#### **OBJECTIVE 3: STRENGTHENED OHLONE GREENWAY**

Continue to strengthen the Ohlone Greenway through public projects and private developments that increase connectivity, create community gathering spaces and activity nodes, and improve community health and safety. (p. 60)

**3.1** *Work with private developers and property owners to implement the San Pablo Avenue Specific Plan - Ohlone Greenway Street Type guidelines.* (p. 60)

- Encourage private developers to emphasize their project's connection to the Greenway early in the process to maximize opportunities for pocket parks, plazas, entrances and mews onto the Greenway.
- Emphasize safety in use and design, encouraging "eyes on the Greenway" and increased levels of activity throughout the day to reduce crime.

#### **OBJECTIVE 5: ACTIVE COMMERCIAL CORRIDORS**

- Create and strengthen active commercial corridors that allow community members to gather, stroll and interact while meeting their daily needs close to home. (p.66)



**5.1** *Develop district specific landscaping guidelines to reinforce neighborhood and district identity, and support economic development.* (p. 66)

- Engage the business community in planting and maintaining street trees.
- Work with the Design Review Board to review street tree selection for opportunities to create and reinforce district identities, while complying with the Master Street Tree list and district-specific landscaping guidelines, as developed. Species selection should be compatible with the needs and constraints of each planting site, with considerations for overhead and underground utilities, sidewalk and street pavement protection, and pedestrian visibility. Selected trees should not exceed the planting space available at maturity.
- Work with the Tree Committee to identify appropriate tree species to maximize the benefits of trees, while being sensitive to planting conditions.

**5.2** *Develop a program to provide opportunities for commerce, play and pop-up uses within the public right-of-way (sidewalks and streets), particularly along commercial corridors.* (p. 67)

- Complete a policy analysis to remove barriers to appropriate street activity.
- Incorporate sustainable elements, such as alternative energy generation technologies, rainwater capture devices, permeable pavers, etc. into 1% for Public Art Projects and consider amending the requirements to allow for funds to be spent on sustainable elements.
- Identify locations appropriate for mobile businesses and incorporate infrastructure elements like electrical outlets, water sources, grease drains, etc., into these streets during maintenance projects.
- Ensure that the San Pablo Avenue Specific Plan Open Space requirements result in a diversity of open space types along the public right of way.
- Support community-generated events on the PROW by providing tables, chairs, waste receptacles, and other furnishings, promotional support and streamlined permitting.
- Develop a pop-up use policy that streamlines permitting to ensure that parking lots and street ROW allow for flexible uses.
- Identify underutilized existing parking lots for strategic open space improvements. Include these sites in parking demand analysis and propose conversion as part of parking demand phasing plans.

**5.3** *Identify funding to develop and implement the San Pablo Avenue Specific Plan Open Space In-Lieu program to develop green multipurpose open spaces, such as pocket parks and plazas, that create active social gathering spaces and streetscape amenities to increase walkability and connectivity, catalyze continued investment, and support high density neighborhoods.* (p. 68)

- Incorporate environmental guidelines into the project design review process to ensure that these open spaces are providing environmental services, such as nodes along a pollinator pathway, storm water capture and treatment, community gardening, connectivity, etc.

**5.5** *Develop an Adopt-a-Streets Program to encourage community members and business owners to clean and maintain the public right of- way.* (p. 68)

- Provide supplies, such as tools and garbage bags, to help program members adequately maintain their portion of the ROW.



- Projects and improvements should help promote and highlight local business by providing and maintaining ROW amenities and marketing the efforts of local business owners to contribute to their community.

## **STRATEGIC PLAN (2015)**

### **Goal A: Deliver exemplary government services**

#### *Strategies*

- Develop and strengthen relationships with public and private partners, residents, businesses, schools, and community groups (p. 11)

### **Goal B: Achieve long-term financial sustainability**

#### *Strategies*

- Maximize opportunities for existing and expanding businesses. (p. 12)

### **Goal C: Deepen a sense of place and community identity**

#### *Strategies*

- Develop a vision for underdeveloped and underutilized properties through advanced planning efforts that encourage investment and/or new development. (p. 12)
- Develop an Economic Development action plan to build on our strengths, including our diversity, arts, culture, and environmental sustainability. (p. 12)
- Encourage dense business nodes to minimize or eliminate automobile traffic. (p. 12)

