



Revised July 2014

To download: lomaprieta.sierraclub.org/sustain/guidelines

Executive Summary



The Sierra Club Loma Prieta Chapter supports grouping new homes, jobs, and services near transit. These communities are more walkable, bikeable, transit-accessible, reduced greenhouse gas emissions and can provide a variety of housing types, sizes, and affordability. Transportation accounts for nearly half of emissions in the Bay Area¹ and reducing transportation demand is the most significant opportunity to meet California's climate change goals.

The Sierra Club Loma Prieta Chapter uses these guidelines to make recommendations on **Downtown Plans and Station Area Plans within ½ mile of major transit hubs and along major transit corridors**. They are also used when we review general plans. We publish these to make our evaluation process more transparent for residents, decision makers, planners, and developers and to provide a model for cities to meet AB32 and SB375 climate change goals. The first three pages are our guidelines, which can be treated as a menu of options for a municipality to consider when developing a Downtown Area Plan or Station Area Plan, followed by a page of footnotes. The final two pages include a score sheet which is used when we consider endorsing a Downtown Area Plan or Station Area Plan.

Municipalities that are developing a Downtown Area Plan or Station Area Plan (D/SAP) within ½ mile radius around major transit stations (i.e. Caltrain, BART, Bus Rapid Transit) and along transit corridors (i.e. El Camino Real) should focus on five goals:

1. **Compact Development**
2. **Community and Economic Benefits**
3. **Pedestrian Priority**
4. **Transportation Alternatives**
5. **Energy and Resource Efficiency**

1. Compact Development

uses less land than conventional low density development. In compact neighborhoods, people are more likely to walk, bicycle and ride transit



a. Compact development

- i. Healthy jobs/housing balance²: Outline the city's strategy to achieve a healthy jobs/housing balance for the city using the D/SAP to help achieve goals
- ii. Height limits are raised in the station area plan zone and along transit corridors
- iii. Commercial (office and retail) development is allowed a higher FAR (floor-area-ratio) than existing, provided FAR is consistent with planning for a jobs/housing balance that will allow employees to live near their place of work
- iv. Residential or Mixed Use Developments at least 40 units/acre or higher
- v. Affordable housing³ is required for any upzoning change the city grants

b. Affordable Housing

- i. Minimum of 15% of the unit total or higher
- ii. Affordable Housing³ is incentivized – Requires affordable workforce housing or paying into an in-lieu fund for affordable housing within the SAP as part of any zoning change that the city grants (higher height limits, increased FAR, smaller minimum dwelling unit sizes, setback variance, open space requirements, etc.)

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2. Community and Economic Benefits
are part of a win-win development strategy to create a sense of community and help to ensure new projects result in a positive impact in the community



- a. Active streets serving a wide diversity of users**
 - i. Form-based zoning code⁴ focuses on creating a high quality public realm
 - ii. Ground floor retail is required along designated pedestrian priority
 - iii. Sidewalk improvements are required for buildings being remodeled or replaced
 - iv. Local and family businesses are given high priority as businesses turn over
 - v. Clearly articulates intent to achieve a wide variety of housing types, sizes and affordability to meet the needs of different age groups, lifestyles, income, and abilities
- b. “Walk Score”**⁵ or household trip survey implemented to ensure neighborhood needs (jobs, school, senior center, medium-sized grocery store, and recreation) can be met through walking. Walking to services should make up at least 50% of trips
- c. Plan includes attractive place-making** with attractive usable plazas and sidewalks and appealing street facades. Community aesthetic and high quality standards must be achieved
 - i. Pedestrian-friendly sidewalks⁶ and intersections are wide, level, marked & well-lit
 - ii. A central public plaza or open space will be used as the focus of the district
 - iii. Appealing street facades fronting on streets, using design guidelines, with parking concealed behind, underground, on top of the buildings, or offsite to encourage priority of pedestrian activity and access along street fronts is required.
 - iv. The open space requirements for projects within 500 feet of the transit station will be combined into a common pedestrian space to work as a “place-making” setting.
 - v. Existing natural features restored (creeks, wetland, wooded areas, native plants, etc)
- d. Access to services** including open space, parks, health care, schools, recreation or day care
- e. Plan includes other community benefits:**
 - i. Community Benefit District (CBD)⁷ created to ensure ongoing funding for public amenities and allocate project fees and taxes to public benefits
 - ii. Mandates compliance with regional air quality goals⁸ to ensure new construction safeguards residents’ health by reducing airborne emissions
 - iii. Assures benefits funded by impact fees accrue only to the D/SAP so area receives direct benefits from development
 - iv. Reclaims streets for community benefits, within D/SAP, such as pedestrian-only uses
 - v. Encourages urban agriculture or community gardens
 - vi. Studies cumulative development impact projections⁹ for anticipated build-out
 - vii. State of the art telecommuting resources to reduce driving, e.g. free access to wi-fi
 - viii. Master plan for shuttle stops or car share approximately every 3 blocks
 - ix. Transfer of development rights (TDR) is allowed to protect natural features like city creeks, hillsides, bay front or wooded areas by transferring the development rights into the D/SAP where the receiving property can qualify for zoning exemptions
 - x. Other Community Benefits not covered above (describe)

3. Pedestrian Priority
should be the primary goal for streets and public spaces



- a. Create a Walkable City**
 - i. **Pedestrian** priority is the primary design criteria for block size, streets and public spaces, with bikes second, transit third, and automobiles last, controlling speed wherever possible to create pedestrian convenience within ½ mile of the downtown or station area.
 - ii. **Traffic speed limited to 15 mph** maximum for most streets within D/SAP for pedestrian and bicycle safety and priority. Fatalities rise exponentially above 15 mph.
 - iii. **“Safe Routes to School”**¹⁰ integrated within D/SAP to accommodate the most vulnerable street users first and to serve all ages and abilities
 - iv. **Mid-block pedestrian cross walks**, paseos¹¹, paths and pass-through lobbies every 50 ft. are encouraged to increase neighborhood walkability.
 - v. **Coordinates with regional planning processes**¹² such as Plan Bay Area, adopted Climate Action Plans and the Grand Boulevard Initiative to meet goals and targets

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4. Transportation Alternatives

The D/SAP should include a Transportation Master Plan so that residents have options to conveniently and safely commute and run errands without a car. There should also be an emphasis on "Complete Streets"¹³



- a. Reduces Parking Requirements and Reduces Incentives to Drive**
 - i. Requires unbundled parking. When parking is unbundled and users pay to park, fewer spaces are needed and construction cost savings can be passed on to tenants and home buyers as rent reduction or reduced residential unit cost
 - ii. Implements Residential Permit Parking¹⁴ zone for existing residential neighborhoods, within or adjacent to SAP, where needed to protect neighbors from overflow parking
 - iii. Collects in-lieu fees to build public satellite parking¹⁵ to avoid prime real estate in D/SAP being used for parking garages in new developments and control traffic
 - iv. Implements parking congestion pricing in a community benefit district⁷ (CBD) to ease parking congestion by using price signals to alter automobile usage behavior
 - v. Implements metered parking and shared parking¹⁶ and combines all parking in a parking authority that can qualify under the State's Air Resource Board's "Parking Cash-Out Program," including satellite public parking
- b. Bicycle Convenience**
 - i. Implements Bicycle Master Plan¹⁷ which includes bicycle-only lanes on major corridors and bicycle boulevards at half mile frequency for urban bike trail system
 - ii. Bicycle parking in a safe, visible, well-lit areas
 - iii. 10% bike-to-car parking ratio for public parking in safe, well-lit areas
 - iv. Signage and direct connection to designated bike lanes, routes or paths to create a "way-finding"¹⁸ system for pleasant and safe bike use, storage, and travel
 - v. Bike share approximately every three blocks
- c. Public Transit / Transportation Management**
 - i. Requires incentives for transit use with transit passes provided or subsidized by developers to residents and by companies to employees at least for the first year
 - ii. Provides or supports public shuttles to transit hubs, with stops approximately every three blocks, financed through development fees or Community Benefit District.
 - iii. Implements a Mobility Management program¹⁹ to provide or support car share, etc.
 - iv. Requires a Traffic Demand Management (TDM) program²⁰ for major developments
 - v. Includes convenient²¹ bus stops along major bus line corridors
- d. Multimodality**
 - i. Rates each street's priority as: Pedestrian priority, auto priority, or mixed traffic
 - ii. De-emphasizes or removes automobile "Level of Service" within D/SAP
 - iii. Uses modal splits²² to set goals for each mobility mode such that each gets equal share
 - iv. Includes pedestrian-only public space within one block of transit station
 - v. Provides car and bike share at transit stations

5. Energy and Resource Efficiency *prioritized so that buildings and streets provide healthy work and living environments with a low carbon footprint*



- a. Resource Efficient Features**
 - i. Strives for zero waste and plans for efficient water usage, sewage disposal, and energy use, working with local water and sewage agencies and public utilities (e.g. PG&E) to minimize and mitigate environmental impacts
 - ii. Requires Low Impact Development²³ for improved storm water management
 - iii. Includes electric car parking with Class 2 charging spots in, at minimum 5% of public parking spaces as a public benefit
 - iv. Meets LEED Neighborhood Development or LEED Equivalent – Gold or Platinum
- b. Additional innovative features can include:**
 - i. Grey water system
 - ii. Direct connection to urban trail system
 - iii. Requires sustainable landscaping²⁴ / rooftop gardens
 - iv. Integrates bird-friendly building and site design²⁵
 - v. Includes plan for the urban forest

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Endnotes:

- ¹ **Bay Area Air Quality Management District** – Emissions Inventory Summary Report, May 17, 2011
- ² **Healthy jobs /housing balance** - The California Department of Finance considers a 1.5 jobs-to-housing unit ratio to be healthy. Any ratio above 1.5 Jobs/housing unit signifies there is insufficient number of housing units to meet the needs of the local workforce. The EIR for the precise plan should specify the anticipated jobs growth and the anticipated number of residential units generated by the precise plan.
- ³ **Affordable Housing** – Housing affordable to individuals and families making between 30% to 120% of Area Median Income (AMI) as defined by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban development (HUD).
- ⁴ **Form-based codes** address the relationship between building facades and the public realm, the form and mass of buildings in relation to one another, and the scale and types of streets and blocks to foster predictable built results and a high-quality public realm. <http://www.formbasedcodes.org/>
- ⁵ **Walk Score** - A web tool for comparing the walkability of a neighborhood by computing the time it would take a person to walk from a their home or place of work to common destinations such as the local coffee shop, a grocery store, a car share location, etc. The walkscore varies from 1 to 100 with 100 the most convenient and 1 the least convenient. www.walkscore.com Walking convenience can also be measured by a Household Trip Survey - www.bts.gov/programs/national_household_travel_survey/
- ⁶ **Pedestrian-Friendly Sidewalks** – Minimum width of 7' wide, level, with planting strip if directly adjacent to moving traffic, designed for enhancing and encouraging pedestrian traffic and pedestrian priority.
- ⁷ **Community Benefit District (CBD)** – CBDs are established by a negotiated legal agreement between the city and a broad community coalition that outlines the benefits that will accrue to the community as the district is developed and ensures community support for the project. CBDs ensure that developers receiving the benefits of Transit Oriented Districts are held accountable to generate the project benefits that were promised. Benefits addressed in CBDs may include living wages, local hiring and training programs, affordable housing, environmental remediation, funds for community programs, and infrastructure development and maintenance. One of the principal goals of a Community Benefit District should be to achieve the goals of a truly Transit Oriented District. Some research reveals that newly created transit rich districts can set in motion a cycle of unintended consequences in which core transit users- such as renters and lower-income households- are priced out in favor of predominantly higher income, car-owning residents who are less likely to use and support public transit for commuting. See <http://www.dukakiscenter.org/storage/TRNEquityFull.pdf>
- ⁸ **Regional Air Quality** – Meet requirements of the Bay Area Air Quality Management District (BAAQMD) 2010 Clean Air Plan and 2009 Regional Transportation Plan for the San Francisco Bay Area to protect and improve public health, air quality and global climate. During construction, strategies to reduce project emissions include new diesel equipment with hybrid motors. <http://www.baaqmd.gov/Divisions/Strategic-Incentives/Heavy-Duty-Vehicles.aspx>. After construction, strategies include increasing affordable housing (residents own fewer cars), un-bundle parking, reduce parking to one space per unit, offer transit passes, etc. http://www.mtc.ca.gov/planning/2035_plan/.
- ⁹ **Cumulative Development Impact Projections** – The overall impact to a designated neighborhood once all anticipated developments are built in that neighborhood. This is used to analyze future traffic impacts and parking needs, but can also be used to determine future levels of pollution, noise, visual impact, and other impacts.
- ¹⁰ **Safe Routes to School** – A travel route designed to increase the number of children who walk or bicycle to school by removing the barriers that currently prevent them from doing so. Those barriers include lack of pedestrian infrastructure, unsafe intersections, and lack of programs that promote walking and bicycling. www.dot.ca.gov/hq/LocalPrograms/saferoutes/saferoutes.htm
- ¹¹ **Pedestrian Allée, pass-through lobby, path:** A pedestrian-only passageway separated from auto traffic. e.g. In Mountain View along Castro Street downtown, there are attractive mid-block allées connecting Castro Street sidewalks with parking lots located behind buildings.
- ¹² **Regional Planning Process** Plan Bay Area Priority Development Areas - www.bayareavision.org/initiatives/prioritydevelopmentareas.html, Grand Boulevard Initiative - www.grandboulevard.net, and FOCUS - www.bayareavision.org/initiatives/index.html
- ¹³ **Complete Streets** are roadways designed and operated to enable safe, attractive, and comfortable access and travel for all users, including pedestrians, bicyclists, motorists and public transport users of all ages and abilities. www.completestreets.org/webdocs/media/cs-ca-pressrelease.pdf
- ¹⁴ **Residential Parking Permit** – City parking restriction program to protect residential area street parking for area residents. Plan for getting parking right: http://www.mtc.ca.gov/planning/smart_growth/parking/2-2-12/12-Jeff_Tumlin_Nelson_Nygaard_Summary_and_Key_Lessons.pptx
- ¹⁵ **Satellite Parking** – Some cities, such as Portland, Oregon have low or no parking requirements in downtown buildings because the city provides public parking structures, in preferred locations, using “in-lieu” developer fees.
- ¹⁶ **Shared Parking** – Private parking open to public use at certain times e.g. parking in office buildings is open for public parking at night; in Mountain View, CA, condo residential parking is shared with CalTrain commuters during the day.
- ¹⁷ **Bicycle Master Plan** - a document that describes long-range planning for developing bicycle infrastructure in a city, with emphasis on designating and expanding bike routes, fostering a safe environment for cycling, and promoting bicycling as a viable transportation option. It usually details connecting bike lanes to create continuous, safe bicycling routes.
- ¹⁸ **Way-finding System**- Signage and other visual cues to help people move through a city and feel comfortable doing that because of the way-finding design
- ¹⁹ **Mobility Management Program** – Used to increase the demand for multimodal transportation by providing convenience and cost savings through the use of advanced technologies (e.g., cell phones and contactless smart cards) to link travelers with transportation alternatives. This concept promotes sustainable transport by changing travelers’ attitudes and behavior. At the core of Mobility Management are “soft” measures like information and communication, organizing services and coordinating activities of different partners. “Soft” measures most often enhance the effectiveness of “hard” measures within urban transport (e.g., new streetcar or bus lines, new shuttles and new bike lanes). Mobility Management measures (in comparison to “hard” measures) do not necessarily require large financial investments and may have a high benefit-cost ratio e.g. www.avego.com, www.ridejoy.com and other sites provide peer-to-peer car-share
- ²⁰ **Traffic Demand Management Program** – e.g. The City of San Carlos requires TDM for residential projects over a certain size and includes a good description of TDM in its new zoning code at: www.codepublishing.com/CA/SanCarlos/html/SanCarlos18/SanCarlos1825.html#18.25
- ²¹ **Convenient bus stops** are comfortable, safe, lighted, have map and schedule, have protected seating and next bus locator service.
- ²² **Modal Splits** establish goals/metrics for the percentage of traffic planned to use each different mode of travel- walking, biking, bus, shuttle, scooters, cars, etc.
- ²³ **Low Impact Development (LID)** – Low Impact Development is a sustainable practice that benefits water supply, increases infiltration and storage of storm water and contributes to water quality protection. <http://www.lowimpactdevelopment.org/links.htm>
- ²⁴ **Sustainable Landscaping** - Sustainable landscaping is in balance with the local climate and requires minimal resource inputs, such as fertilizer, pesticides, gasoline, time, and water, is re-generative, and can actively contribute to the development of healthy communities. Sustainable landscapes sequester carbon, clean the air and water, increase energy efficiency, restore habitats, and create value through significant economic, social and environmental benefits.
- ²⁵ **Bird-friendly design:** Reduced glass reflectivity and light pollution plus other means; e.g. <http://www.birdsandbuildings.org/docs/TorontoDevelopGuidelines.pdf>

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SCORESHEET FOR DOWNTOWN AND STATION AREA PLANS, Page 1 of 2		Project Name, City: Belmont Village SAP, Belmont Submitted by, Date: David Crabbe, September 12, 2016					
Items in green shaded rows are mandatory to consider endorsing a Downtown or Station Area Plan							
FOCUS	GOAL	SCORING Instructions: To score project, go row-by- row and write total at end of each row unless "***" is written next to the total score – in that case, select the highest score applicable. Add up totals column for project score					TOTAL
1. Compact Development	a. Compact Development	i. Healthy Jobs/housing balance ² strategy (5 pt.)	ii. Raised height limits (5 pt.)	iii. Higher FAR for commercial development (5 pt.)	iv. Residential development minimum 40 units/acre (5 pt.)	v. Affordable housing ³ is required for zoning change (5 pt.) TBD	20/ Max. 25
	b. Affordable Housing ³	At least 15% of units affordable (2 pt.)	At least 20% of units affordable (4 pt.)	At least 25% of units affordable (6 pt.)	At least 30% of units affordable (8 pt.)	35% of units affordable or more (10 pt.)	TBD/ Max. 10
2. Community and Economic Benefits**	a. Creates a vibrant community with diversity of users	i. Form-based code ⁴ creates quality public realm (1 pt.)	ii. Ground floor retail (1 pt.)	iii. Sidewalk improvements required (1 pt.)	iv. Local businesses given high priority (1 pt.) TBD	v. Variety of housing types, sizes, and affordability (1 pt.)	4/ Max. 5
	b. Estimated "Walk Score" ⁵ Household Trip Survey (HTS)	75-80 Walk Score or 50% HTS (1 pt.)	81-85 Walk Score or 60% HTS (2 pt.)	86-90 Walk Score or 70% HTS (3 pt.)	91-95 Walk Score or 80% HTS (4 pt.)	96-100 Walk Score or 90% or more HTS (5 pt.)	5/ Max. 5
	c. Attractive place making	i. Pedestrian-friendly sidewalks ⁶ and intersections (1 pt.)	ii. Public Plaza / Park or Open Space (1 Pt.)	iii. Appealing street facades, minimal parking in front of buildings (1 pt.)	iv. Open space requirements combined to create public space at transit station (1 pt.)	v. Restores some natural features on or offsite TBD	4/ Max. 5
	d. Access to Services	Public Open Space within ½ mile (1 pt.)	Healthcare Facility within ½ mile (1 pt.)	Recreational Center within ½ mile (1 pt.)	Schools within ½ mile (1 pt.)	Day Care Facility within ½ mile (1 pt.) TBD	4/ Max. 5
	e. Other Community benefits	i. Community Benefit District ⁷ (1 pt.) TBD	ii. Meets Regional Air Quality Goals ⁸ (1 pt.)	iii. Benefits of impact fees used for D/SAP area (1 pt.) TBD	iv. Streets reclaimed for communitybenefit (1 pt.)	v. Includes urban agriculture (1 pt.) TBD	1/ Max. 5
vi. Includes cumulative development impact projections ⁹ (1 pt.)		vii. Includes state of the art telecommuting resources (1 pt.)	viii. Includes master plan for shuttle stops or car share approx. every 3 blocks TBD	ix. Allows transfer of development rights (TDR) to protect natural features (1 pt.)	x. Other community benefits, (describe) (1 pt.) TBD	2/ Max. 5	
3. Pedestrian Priority	a. Create a Walkable City	i. Pedestrian convenience is the primary design criteria for streets and open space (1 pt.)	ii. Limits traffic speed to 15 mph maximum on most streets for safety (1 pt.) TBD	iii. Integrates with "Safe Routes to Schools" ¹⁰ (1 pt.) TBD	iv. Mid-block cross walks, pedestrian allée, pass-through lobby, or path every 50' ¹¹ (1 pt.)	v. Coordinates with regional planning processes ¹² (1 pt.)	3/ Max. 5

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<i>Write PAGE 1 TOTAL here</i>							43
SCORESHEET FOR DOWNTOWN AND STATION AREA PLANS, Page 2 of 2		Project Name, City: Belmont Village SAP, Belmont Submitted by, Date: David Crabbe, September 12, 2016					
<i>Items in green shaded rows are mandatory to consider endorsing a Downtown or Station Area Plan</i>							
FOCUS	GOAL	SCORING					TOTAL
		Instructions: To score project, go row-by- row and write total at end of each row unless "***" is written next to the total score – in that case, select the highest score applicable. Add up totals column for project score					
4. Transportation Alternatives¹³	a. Reduce Parking Requirements and Driving Incentives	i. Requires unbundled parking (1 pt.) TBD	ii. Implements Residential Permit Parking ¹⁴ (1 pt.) TBD	iii. Collects in lieu fees to build public satellite parking ¹⁵ (1 pt.) TBD	iv. Implements parking congestion pricing (1 pt.) TBD	v. Includes metered and shared parking ¹⁶ (1 pt.) TBD	TBD/Max. 5
	b. Bicycle Convenience	i. Implements Bicycle Master Plan ¹⁷ (1 pt.)	ii. Bicycle parking is safe, visible, and well-lit (1 pt.)	iii. Includes 10% or more bike-to-car parking ratio for public parking (1 Pt.) TBD	iv. Includes way-finding signage or direct connection to designated bike route ¹⁸ (1 pt.)	v. Locates bike Share approx. every 3 Blocks (1 pt.) TBD	3/Max. 5
	c. Public Transit and Transportation Management	i. Requires developers to provide incentives for transit use (1 pt.) TBD	ii. Requires developers or CBD ⁷ to provide or support public shuttles (1 pt.) TBD	iii. Implements a Mobility Management program ¹⁹ (1 pt.)	iv. Implements a monitored Traffic Demand Management (TDM) program ²⁰ (1 pt.) TBD	v. Includes convenient . stops along major bus line corridors ²¹ (1 pt.)	2/Max. 5
	d. Multi modality	i. Rates each street's priority (1 pt.)	ii. Removes level of service requirements. (1 pt.) TBD	iii. Uses modal splits ²² measurable goals (1 pt.)	iv. Includes pedestrian-only public spaces (1 pt.)	v. Provides car and bike share at transit stations (1 pt.) TBD	2/Max. 5
5. Energy and Resource Efficiency	a. Resource Efficient Features	i. Zero waste, efficient water use, sewage disposal and energy use (1 pt.) TBD	ii. Requires Low Impact Development ²³ (1 pt.) TBD	iii. Electric car parking with Class 2 charging, 5% or more spaces (1 pt.) TBD	iv. Meets LEED-ND Neighborhood Development – Gold TBD (1 pt.)	v. Meets LEED-ND Neighborhood Development - Platinum (2 pt.) TBD	TBD/Max. 5
	b. Additional Innovative features	i. Grey water reuse program or other feature, (describe) (1 pt.) TBD	ii. Connection to urban trail system or other feature, (describe) (1 pt.)	iii. Sustainable landscaping ²⁴ or other feature, (describe) (1 pt.) Drought tolerant plants	iv. Bird-friendly design ²⁵ or other feature, (describe) (1 pt.) TBD	v. Urban forestry or other feature, (describe) (1 pt.)	3/Max. 5
Page 1 Total							45
Page 2 Total							10
TOTAL PROJECT SCORE							55/Max.100
Minimum 50 points to be considered for endorsement							