



# The Built Environment



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**T**he Built Environment refers to the structures and places where we conduct our everyday activities, from the largest-scale civic buildings to the smallest plazas and parks. The Built Environment also includes vital community support systems, such as the infrastructure beneath our streets and the efforts we make to maintain economic vitality. As a leader in sustainability, Redwood City has planned the built environment to encourage walking and reduced use of cars. The City has adopted design practices that preserve historic resources and enhance the appearance and character of our neighborhoods and business centers. Our strategies for economic development provide local jobs and support the continued success of local businesses. Finally, we pay attention to the sometimes invisible but critical infrastructure systems that support all of the features that make Redwood City a desirable place to live, work, and visit.

## Introduction

The Built Environment Element sets forth the policy framework to shape the physical environment of Redwood City through comprehensive guidance on urban form and land use, circulation, economic development, historic resources, and infrastructure.

The future of Redwood City depends upon our careful planning. Since incorporation, Redwood City has drawn inspiration from the physical environment and its influences, while fostering change that benefits our residents and local businesses. As we look forward and anticipate changes that will affect our lives and those of the next generation, the goals and policies in this Built Environment Element will guide choices toward a high quality, balanced community that residents and businesses value and appreciate.

## Related Regional Plans

State law places the General Plan atop the hierarchy of land use planning regulations. The General Plan sets the broad policy framework for planning and decision making, with the policies implemented through specific regulations in the zoning and subdivision ordinances, specific plans and precise plans, design guidelines, and similar regulatory documents. At the same time, regional governmental agencies may also have land use review authority over specific portions of Redwood City. Regional issues of significance that cross jurisdictional boundaries, such as the San Francisco Bay and impacts associated with the San Carlos Airport, are regulated by regional plans. Transportation issues also generally cross boundaries; as such there are a multitude of regional transportation plans. A variety of these are discussed in the Circulation Chapter.

## San Carlos Airport Land Use Plan

San Carlos Airport is located within the neighboring city of San Carlos, and is owned and operated by the County of San Mateo. The Airport lies northwest of Whipple Road near the Bay, separating Redwood Shores from the rest of the city. The City/County Association of Governments of San Mateo County (C/CAG) Board of Directors serves as the State-mandated airport land use commission for the county. The Board established the C/CAG Airport Land Use Committee (ALUC) to review proposed land use policy actions and related development in jurisdictions surrounding the three airports in the county. The ALUC makes

recommendations to the C/CAG Board regarding the consistency of proposed land use policy actions and related development with relevant airport/land use compatibility policies and criteria within defined Airport Influence Area (AIA) boundaries for each airport. The City of Redwood City is a member of the ALUC and the C/CAG Board.

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For more information on San Carlos Airport Influence Areas, refer to the Airport Influence Area and Height Restrictions Maps on file with Redwood City. The Hazards Management Chapter of the Public Safety Element also includes maps and information on San Carlos Airport.

The adopted airport influence area (AIA) boundary for San Carlos Airport consists of two parts: Area A and Area B. Area A defines a geographic area that is subject to real estate disclosures of potential airport/aircraft impacts. All of Redwood City is located within Area A. Area B defines an area within which, in addition to the real estate disclosure provisions, affected jurisdictions must refer their proposed land use policy actions (including General Plan land use amendments) to the ALUC and to the C/CAG Board for a formal airport/land use compatibility review. Area B includes most of Redwood Shores, the inner bayfront area, a portion of the Veterans Boulevard Corridor, Centennial Neighborhood, and a portion of Downtown.

## San Francisco Bay Conservation and Development Commission Bay Plan

The San Francisco Bay Conservation and Development Commission was created out of the McAteer-Petris Act in 1969. The Bay Conservation and Development Commission (BCDC) is dedicated to the protection and enhancement of San Francisco Bay and to the encouragement of the Bay's responsible use. The BCDC is a review authority for both Bay filling and dredging, as well as Bay-related shoreline development. BCDC's jurisdiction includes the San Francisco Bay, tidal areas up to the mean high tide level, and marshlands up to five feet above sea level.

An essential part of BCDC's regulatory framework is the Bay Plan. Projects approved by BCDC must be consistent with the McAteer-Petris Act and the Bay Plan. The Bay Plan includes priority land use designations for certain areas around the Bay, including portions of the bayfront in Redwood City. In addition, the Bay Plan includes a Seaport Plan that the Metropolitan Transportation Commission uses for maritime issues. Projects within BCDC's jurisdiction that are inconsistent with these designations would require an amendment to the Bay Plan.

## Association of Bay Area Governments Projections

The Association of Bay Area Governments is responsible for making long-term forecasts for population, housing, and employment for the nine-county Bay Area. These forecasts assist local governments in planning for our changing environment.

ABAG produces updated forecasts every two years and publishes them as Projections. In recent updates, the Projections forecasts have presented a realistic assessment of growth in the region, while recognizing trends in markets and demographics, as well as local policies that promote more compact infill- and transit-oriented development.

## Built Environment Vision - 2030

*Here in Redwood City, the synergistic planning of land use, urban design, housing, circulation, economic development, historic resources, and infrastructure create a community that is treasured by residents, visitors, workers, and businesses.*

*Redwood City uses innovative land use policies that reveal a continued commitment to land use balance and diversity. Redwood City pays close attention to the design of buildings and public spaces, respecting and taking cues from historic structures and places, while celebrating new designs that contribute to and enhance established neighborhoods and centers. Well-designed streetscapes inspire high-quality and thoughtful infill development along our corridors. We celebrate our heritage through our historic resources, are committed to active cultural and architectural preservation, and encourage learning from our past.*

*Through the integration of land use and mobility planning, and provision of a balanced, safe, and efficient transportation system, Redwood City encourages travel by non-automobile modes, such as walking, biking, and transit via bus, rail, streetcar, and ferry. To facilitate these types of travel, we prioritize new development near transit stations in our Downtown and along major corridors, and we work to provide adequate facilities for cyclists and pedestrians.*

*Redwood City is a jobs-rich community, providing opportunities for people of diverse backgrounds and skills to find well-paying and satisfying jobs. We recognize that the City's land use and economic development policies must continue to maintain and encourage a diverse and entrepreneurial*

*economy in Redwood City, ensuring continued economic growth and financial stability.*

*Sound infrastructure planning and maintenance allow the City to provide residents and businesses with water, wastewater, energy, telecommunications, and flood control support systems that encourage economic growth and innovation, and that further environmental goals.*

*Consistent with this vision, City leaders continue to take action with regard to the built environment to maintain and promote Redwood City as the premier location on the Peninsula to live, work, learn, and have fun.*