

CITY OF NOVATO GENERAL PLAN

Adopted by Novato City Council on March 8, 1996
by Resolution No. 21-96

Latest Revision May 13, 2014
by Resolution No. 39-14
Refer to General Plan Amendments Table for Complete List of Revisions.

City of Novato
Community Development Department
922 Machin
Novato, CA 94945
(415) 899-8989

Please check with the Community Development Department on the status of any General Plan Amendments.

Acknowledgment

City Council

Ernest J. Gray, Mayor
Patricia Eklund, Mayor Pro Tem
Cynthia L. Murray, Councilmember
Michael Di Giorgio, Councilmember
Carole Dillon-Knutson, Councilmember

Planning Commission

Ned Lagin, Chair
Judith A. McClarin, Vice Chair
Wayne Capers
Annette Conklin
Kevin J. Cleek
Terri Nevins
A. Gerald Peters

General Plan Steering Committee

Dennis Fishwick
Cynthia Murray
Gail Wilhelm
Joyce Applen

Susan Stompe
Terri Nevins
Dietrich Stroeh

Economic Advisory Committee

Cynthia Murray, Chair
Charles Bennett
Marie Davalos
Gary Gustafson
Mary Jaeger
Ned Lagin
Doug Martin
Mary McEachron

Don Means
Dietrich Stroeh
Bill White
Pat Eklund
Rick Fraites
Lawrence Smith
Bill Haigwood

City Staff

Roderick J. Wood, City Manager
Vi Grinsteiner, Community Development Director
Mark Westfall, City Planner
Paul Bickner, Senior Planner

Ramona Boothroyd, Reprographic Technician	Maureen McNiff, Word Processor
Brian Brady, Chief of Police	Nancy McPherson, Planning Aide
Mae Chinn, Word Processor	Norma Medeiros, Administrative Clerk I
ito, Community Services Director	Larry D Tom Nolan, City Engineer
John Eastman, Assistant City Attorney	Shirley Novak, Office Supervisor
David Freed, Planning Aide	Petria O'Reilly, Reprographic Assistant
Roy Gorman, Contract Attorney	Bill Philbrick, Maintenance Superintendent
Harry Graves, Chief Building Official	Michelle Rudd, Contract Attorney
Ellen Greenberg, Consultant	Dick Scott, Principal Engineering Technician
Shirley Gremmels, City Clerk	Sonia Seeman, Deputy Director
Mark Hakes, Engineering Technician II	John Stepler, Administrative Clerk II
Rich Hill, Assistant City Manager	Phil Vince, Senior Management Analyst
Patricia Howell, Senior Administrative Clerk	Jeff Walter, City Attorney
Lyn Kael, Administrative Clerk I	

Consultants

Marjorie W. Macris/PAS & Associates:
Marjorie W. Macris, AICP, and Paul-Andre Schabracq, AICP
Planning Consultants (Preparation of Original Public Hearing Draft) Leonard
Charles & Associates: Environmental Consultant
Illingworth & Rodkin: Noise Consultant
Mundie & Associates: Suzanne Lampert, Economic/Fiscal Consultant
Whitlock & Weinberger Transportation, Inc.: Steve Weinberger, Transportation Consultant

GENERAL PLAN AMENDMENTS

The General Plan is intended to be a dynamic document, providing guidance on major policy issues, but also flexible enough to allow amendment from time to time. State law limits the number of amendments to four per year for each mandatory element of the General Plan. The following summarizes the amendments that have been approved since the General Plan was originally adopted in 1996. Refer to the resolutions listed below for the actual changes. These changes have been incorporated into the maps and text of the General Plan.

Date	Resolution	Element	Description/Summary
5/13/97	70-97	Land Use	Changed Development Standards for Novato Industrial Park, Land Use Table 2.
9/9/97	127-97	Noise	Changed reference to exterior noise standard for office to 70 dB and deleted reference to interior noise standard for offices.
11/4/97	Ord. 1379A Voter Initiative	Land Use	Adoption of the Urban Growth Boundary coterminous with the existing City limits and including area north of limits along Redwood Boulevard to Birkenstock building.
6/30/98	97-98	Land Use	Amendment of the Downtown Specific Plan B boundary and four changes to land use designations: Redwood Mobile Home Park to General Commercial; northwest corner of Redwood Boulevard/DeLong Avenue to General Commercial; west side of First Street from Vallejo to Olive Avenue to Mixed Use; Goodman's 950 Seventh Street to Community Facilities.
7/14/98	103-98	Land Use	Adoption of the Downtown Specific Plan.
1/12/99	8-99	Land Use	Revised FAR in Downtown Core, change land use on three City-owned properties (DeLong Avenue) to Mixed Use.
3/23/99	42-99	Land Use	Amend Urban Growth Boundary (UGB) to include portion of Marin Valley Mobile Country Club.
8/24/99	114-99	Land Use	UGB changes in Land Use to reflect existing uses.
8/24/99	115-99	Land Use	Amend UGB for eight existing homes in Novato Heights.
8/24/99	116-99	Land Use	11 Land Use Map Amendments to recognize existing land uses.
1/25/00	10-00	Land Use	27 Land Use Map Amendments to recognize existing land uses.

Date	Resolution	Element	Description/Summary
2/22/00	22-00	Land Use	Text Amendments to revise Floor Area Ratios for Downtown Core, Commercial Industrial, Mixed Use, Light Industrial Office and Community Facilities.
6/13/00	69-00	Land Use	Amend Urban Growth Boundary for 560 Trumbull Avenue.
3/27/01	33-01	Land Use	Fifty Land Use Map Amendments to recognize existing land uses; text amendments to Land Use and Environmental Element and Downtown Specific Plan to clarify intent, correct internal inconsistencies and clarify references to new Zoning Code; revise Environmental Element maps for Waterways, Baylands and Scenic Resources.
3/18/02	28-02	Environment	Revise EN Map 6 to delete Spyglass Park.
5/28/02	76-02	Land Use	Amend Urban Growth Boundary (UGB) to include 12 Harbor Drive (House of Daniels), APN 157-091-47.
6/11/02	86-02	Environment	Amend General Plan Environment Chapter revising EN Objective 14, Policy 50 and Program 50.5; adding Programs 51.1 and 51.2; and revising EN Map 5 to reflect a revised Bay Trail alignment.
6/25/02	101-02	Transportation	Revise description of intersection improvements for Redwood Boulevard/Diablo Avenue/DeLong Avenue contained in General Plan Transportation Chapter Table 4 (TR Table 4).
12/10/02	185-02	Community Identity	Adopt amendment to General Plan to add Policy prohibiting placement of gates on private streets/creation of gated communities.
3/25/03	33-03	Housing Element	Complete Housing Element Update for the January 1999-June 2006 planning period.
7/22/03	100-03	Land Use (Map)	Approve General Plan Land Use Amendment for 34 parcels at vicinity of McClay Road, Brookside Court, Tree Lane, Saddlebrook Court & Chardonnay Lane
9/12/06	79-06	Land Use (Map)/ Environment	Adopt amendment to General Plan Land Use Map and EN MAP-5 for Hanger Avenue Subdivision Project

Date	Resolution	Element	Description/Summary
3/13/07	31-07	Land Use (Map)/ Environment	Adopt amendment to General Plan Land Use Policy LU-1A and EN MAP-1 for Hamilton Marketplace
10/9/07	122-07	Land Use (Map)	Adopt amendment to General Plan Land Use Map for Proposed Residential Development at 1625 Hill Road, Canyon Green
5/13/14	39-14	Transportation	Adopt amendment to General Plan Transportation Chapter to add Policy 10a to retain the existing no-access strip at the terminus of Clausing Ave.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

SUMMARY	i
INTRODUCTION	
1. WHAT IS A GENERAL PLAN?	1
2. ORGANIZATION AND CONTENT OF THE PLAN	2
General Plan Elements	2
Goals, Objectives, Policies, and Programs	3
Background Information	4
3. GEOGRAPHIC SCOPE OF THE PLAN	4
4. THE GENERAL PLAN PROCESS	5
5. ADMINISTERING THE PLAN	5
Implementing the Plan	5
Amending the Plan	6
6. VISION AND GOALS FOR NOVATO	6
Vision	6
Goals	7
LAND USE	
1. INTRODUCTION	I-1
Growth Management Program	I-2
Applying Land Use Policies to Specific Properties	I-2
Related Policies in Other Parts of the General Plan	I-3
2. BACKGROUND	I-4
Comparison with 1981 General Plan	I-4
Existing Conditions and Potential Development	I-7
Hamilton Field	I-7
Buck Center for Research in Aging	I-8
Projected Growth of Population and Jobs	I-8
Evolution of the Plan	I-8
Relationship to the Marin Countywide Plan	I-8
3. OBJECTIVES, POLICIES, AND PROGRAMS	I-9
Land Use Designations Map	I-9
Infrastructure and Public Services	I-17
Constraints Analysis	I-19
Sphere of Influence	I-20
Interjurisdictional Coordination	I-25

TRANSPORTATION

1. INTRODUCTION II-1
 What is “Level of Service”? II-2
 Coordinating Regional Transportation Planning II-3

2. BACKGROUND II-4
 Streets and Roads II-4
 1995 Levels of Service II-5
 Coordinating Land Use and Transportation II-5

3. OBJECTIVES, POLICIES, AND PROGRAMS II-7
 Alternatives to the Automobile II-12
 Bicycle and Pedestrian Facilities II-14
 Access for the Mobility-Impaired II-16
 Transportation Funding II-17
 Air Transportation II-17

HOUSING

This chapter has been replaced by the approved 2007-2014 Housing Element III-1

<Click Link Below to open>

<http://www.novato.org/Modules/ShowDocument.aspx?documentid=11555>

ENVIRONMENT

1. INTRODUCTION IV-1

2. BACKGROUND IV-1
 Streams and Other Bodies of Water IV-2
 Wildlife, Vegetation, and Habitats IV-2
 Wetlands IV-4
 Ridgelines and Other Scenic Resources IV-4
 Energy Conservation IV-5
 Archaeological Resources IV-5
 Historic Resources IV-5
 Air Quality IV-5
 Water Quality IV-6
 Solid Waste IV-7
 Mineral and Geological Resources IV-7
 Open Space and Parks IV-7

3. OBJECTIVES, POLICIES, AND PROGRAMS IV-13
 Watercourses, Wetlands, and Bayfront Areas IV-13
 Wildlife and Native Plant Protection IV-19
 Agriculture IV-19
 Woodlands IV-20
 Scenic Resources IV-21

Energy Conservation	IV-22
Air Quality	IV-23
Water Resources	IV-24
Solid Waste Reduction	IV-25
Mineral Resources	IV-26
Open Space	IV-26
Parks and Trails	IV-27

SAFETY & NOISE

1. INTRODUCTION	V-1
2. OBJECTIVES, POLICIES AND PROGRAMS AND BACKGROUND INFORMATION	V-2
Seismic Hazards	V-2
Non-Seismic Geologic Hazards	V-5
Flood Hazards	V-6
Emergency Preparedness	V-9
Fire Protection	V-11
Police Service	V-14
Emergency Medical Care	V-15
Hazardous Materials	V-16
Electromagnetic Fields	V-18
Aviation Hazards	V-19
Noise	V-20
Noise Characteristics	V-20
Human Response to Noise	V-24
Noise and Land Use Compatibility Standards	V-25
Existing Noise Environment	V-28
Future Noise Levels	V-29

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND FISCAL VITALITY

INTRODUCTION	VI-1
Economic Development	VI-2
Existing Conditions	VI-3
Office, Retail, and Industrial Activity	VI-3
Employment: Novato Workers and Novato Residents	VI-6
Downtown.	VI-7
Visitor and Tourism Activity	VI-7
Issues and Concerns Facing the City	VI-8
Land	VI-8
Social Capital	VI-9
Industries and Infrastructure in Transition	VI-11
City’s Influence on a Sustainable Economy	VI-11

Objectives, Policies, and Programs for Economic Development	VI-15
Fiscal Vitality	VI-24
Existing Conditions	VI-24
Fiscal Conditions of City (Current)	VI-24
Trend/Projected Fiscal Condition of City	VI-29
Issues and Concerns Facing the City	VI-34
Increasing Demands for City Services/Decrease in City’s Revenue	VI-34
Fiscal Impacts of Development	VI-34
Estimated Costs of General Plan Implementation	VI-35
Existing/New Sources of Revenue	VI-36
Administrative Reform & Accountability	VI-37
Regional Planning	VI-38
Public/Private Partnerships/Privatization	VI-38
Objectives, Policies, and Programs for Fiscal Vitality	VI-38

HUMAN SERVICES

1. INTRODUCTION	VII-1
2. BACKGROUND	VII-2
Care of Senior Citizens	VII-2
Child Care	VII-5
Care of Disabled People	VII-6
Youth Services	VII-6
Social Service Programs	VII-7
Medical Services	VII-7
Other County Programs	VII-8
3. OBJECTIVES, POLICIES, AND PROGRAMS	VII-8

PUBLIC FACILITIES AND SERVICES

1. INTRODUCTION	VIII-1
2. BACKGROUND	VIII-1
Water	VIII-2
Wastewater Treatment and Disposal	VIII-2
Flood Control and Storm Drainage	VIII-2
Schools	VIII-3
Fire Protection and Emergency Medical Services	VIII-5
Other Public Facilities	VIII-5

COMMUNITY IDENTITY

1. INTRODUCTION	IX-1
2. BACKGROUND	IX-2
3. OBJECTIVES, POLICIES, AND PROGRAMS	IX-2

Open Areas and Landscaping	IX-8
Pedestrian Circulation	IX-8
Downtown	IX-9
Historic Resources and Public Art	IX-12
Conservation of Architectural and Historic Resources	IX-12
Public Art	IX-15
Appendix A: Novato Neighborhoods	A-1
Appendix B: Reference Materials	B-1
Novato General Plan Glossary	GL-1
Bibliography	BI-1

FIGURES

LU Figure 1:	Buildout Under the 1981 and 1996 General Plans	I-6
HO Figure 1:	Estimated Distribution of Novato Households by Income Category (2000)	III-12
HO Figure 2:	Marin County FY 2002 Median Household Income	III-13
HO Figure 3:	Estimated Distribution of All Households in Novato by Age and Income (2000)	III-14
HO Figure 4:	Estimated Income Distribution of Novato Households by Age (2000)	III-14
EC Figure 1:	Adopted City Budget 1995/96 - Revenues & Appropriations	VI-25

TABLES

IN Table 1:	Relation of General Plan Chapters to State-mandated Elements	2
LU Table 1:	Buildout Under the 1981 General Plan	I-5
LU Table 2:	Land Use Designations	I-10
TR Table 1:	Level of Service Definitions	II-2
TR Table 2:	Street Classification System	II-4
TR Table 3:	Committed Roadway Improvements	II-6
TR Table 4:	Major Roadway Improvements	II-10
HO Table 1:	Marin County and Novato Planning Agency Projections (1995-2020)	III-7
HO Table 2:	Housing Conditions in the City of Novato	III-9
HO Table 3:	Rents in Novato by Unit Type in Apartment Complexes of Over 50 Units (1999-2000)	III-15
HO Table 4:	Estimate of the Ability to Pay for Sales Housing in Novato (2001)	III-16
HO Table 5:	Estimate of the Ability to Pay for Rental Housing in Novato (2001)	III-17
HO Table 6:	Summary of Special Needs Households	III-18
HO Table 7:	Programs Administered by Marin Housing (2000)	III-18
HO Table 8:	Number of Households Headed by Seniors (2000) (Householder Age 65 or More)	III-20
HO Table 9:	Number of Large Households (2000) (Households with Five or More Persons)	III-20
HO Table 10:	Summary of Need Groups Met by Housing Developments Built or Approved in Novato (1999-2002)	III-26
HO Table 11:	ABAG Housing Needs Determinations in Marin County (January 1999 to June 2006)	III-29
HO Table 12:	Summary of Novato Accomplishments Compared to Regional Housing Needs (1999-2002)	III-30
HO Table 13:	Specific Housing Developments Built or Approved in Novato by Income Category (1999-2002)	III-30
HO Table 14:	Summary of Housing Sites at 25+ Units/Acre Compared to Remaining Very Low Income Housing Need (2003-2006)	III-33
HO Table 15:	City of Novato Zoning Standards for Residential Districts	III-38
HO Table 16:	Parking Standards in Novato	III-41
HO Table 17:	Development Review Process in Novato	III-42
HO Table 18:	Planning Fees in Novato (2003)	III-44
HO Table 19:	City of Novato Construction Permit Fees	III-45
HO Table 20:	Public Facilities and Traffic Impact Fees for Residential Development in Novato	III-45
HO Table 21:	Example Fees for Single Family and Multifamily Unit	III-46
HO Table A1:	Summary of 1990 Novato Housing Element Accomplishments and Quantified Objectives (1990-2002)	IIIA-1
HO Table A2:	Summary of Novato Area Housing Funds (FY 2001-02 through FY 2002-03)	IIIA-6
HO Table A3:	1990 Housing Element - Evaluation of Existing Programs	IIIA-11
HO Table B1:	Potential Residential Development Sites	IIIB-3
HO Table C1:	Summary of Novato Housing Element Implementing Programs	IIIC-3
EN Table 1:	Publicly Owned Developed and Undeveloped Parks in Novato	IV-11

EN Table 2:	Publicly Owned Recreational Facilities in Novato	IV-12
EN Table 3:	Potential Publicly Owned Recreational Facilities – Hamilton	IV-13
SF Table 1:	Definition of Acoustical Terms	V-22
SF Table 2:	Typical Noise Levels	V-23
SF Table 3:	Noise and Land Use Compatibility Standards	V-26
EC Table 1:	Novato Labor Force	VI-4
EC Table 2:	Novato Taxable Sales Trend by Category 1987-1992	VI-5
EC Table 3:	1992 Novato Estimated Taxable Sales Leakage by Type of Outlet	VI-6
EC Table 4:	The City’s Influence on Economic Variables	VI-13
EC Table 5:	Municipal Revenues & Costs, Novato and Other San Francisco Bay Area Cities of Similar Size, Fiscal 1992/93	VI-26
EC Table 6:	Marin and Sonoma Cities’ Comparison – Revenues per Capita	VI-27
EC Table 7:	Revenue & Expenditure Trends	VI-27
EC Table 8:	Ten-Year Trend in Novato Net Taxable Assessed Value	VI-29
EC Table 9:	Future Growth Scenarios Analyzed by the Fiscal Model	VI-31
EC Table 10:	Developed Acreage in the Future Growth from this General Plan	VI-32
EC Table 11:	Projected Cumulative Fiscal Balance, Historic Growth Rate Projection	VI-33
EC Table 12:	Projected Cumulative Fiscal Balance, ABAG 94 Growth Rate Projection	VI-34
EC Table 13:	Funding Options	VI-41

MAPS

Follows Page

LU Map 1:	Land Use Designations	BI-2
LU Map 2:	Redevelopment Area	I-26
TR Map 1:	Existing and Planned Street System	II-4
TR Map 2:	1995 Traffic Volumes	II-4
TR Map 3:	Projected Traffic Volumes	II-6
TR Map 4:	Bikeways	II-14
EN Map 1:	Waterways	IV-14
EN Map 2:	Bayfront Areas	IV-18
EN Map 3:	Scenic Resources	IV-22
EN Map 4:	Open Space	IV-28
EN Map 5:	Park and Recreation Facilities and Trails	IV-28
EN Map 6:	Future Park Development	IV-28
SF Map 1:	Earthquake Hazard Zones	V-4
SF Map 1A:	Fault Traces	V-4
SF Map 2:	Slope Instability	V-6
SF Map 3:	Flood Hazards	V-8
SF Map 4:	Fire Hazard and Response Constraints	V-12
SF Map 5:	Major Electric Transmission Lines	V-18
SF Map 6:	Sensitive Noise Receptors	V-28
SF Map 7:	Future Noise Contours	V-30
SF Map 8:	Gross Field Future Noise Contours	V-30
CI Map 1:	Historic Preservation District	IX-16
CI Map 2:	Downtown Specific Plan	IX-16
NN Map 1:	Novato Neighborhoods	A-2

General Plan Summary

March 1996

City of Novato

General Plan

March 1996

Summary

The Novato General Plan is a statement of the community's vision for the future. The Plan is a comprehensive, long-range plan and identifies Novato's land use, transportation, environmental, economic, fiscal, and social goals and policies as they relate to the conservation and development of land in Novato. The Plan is the result of over five years of community participation, research, and preparation. The March 1996 Plan supersedes the City's existing 1981 General Plan. This General Plan is one of the strongest, if not the strongest, environmental plans in the State of California assuring the quality, protection, and conservation of the natural and built environment. The Plan balances its responsibilities of meeting the needs of Novato's residents with meeting the needs of Novato's environs.

Goals of the Plan

The General Plan was developed through an extensive public participation process, including a community survey. Early public comments created a foundation of goals adopted by the City Council. The goals are as follows:

1. Preserve and improve the quality of life in Novato. Conserve and where appropriate restore the natural environment and strive for high quality in the built environment that complements the natural environment.
2. Retain and promote the small town character of Novato including preservation of the historic features and landmarks.
3. Keep Novato relatively compact in physical size by establishing firm urban limit lines. Provide areas where land uses, densities and intensities create a gradual transition from the developed suburban area to the surrounding rural area. Coordinate with the County to maintain rural land uses within the Novato sphere of influence.
4. Maintain and revitalize Downtown Novato as the heart of the community.
5. Preserve, protect and enhance the natural setting throughout the community, including creeks, hillsides, ridgelines, woodlands, wildlife, native plants, wetlands and open space.
6. Preserve bay front lands and diked wetlands for agriculture, resource restoration, conservation and recreation.

7. Increase job opportunities and income of residents by encouraging a diversified local economy. Foster the economic vitality of Novato businesses, the City of Novato and other local governmental agencies by encouraging a healthy economy which provides for diversity of economic enterprises.
8. Provide for a variety of housing opportunities through new construction and maintenance of existing housing for an economically and socially diverse population, while preserving the character of the community. Low and moderate income housing of all types (including mobile homes, mobile home and recreational vehicle parks) will be given special consideration.
9. Coordinate transportation, economic and land use planning to help provide effective transit services which reduce dependence on the single-occupant automobile.
10. Encourage local job opportunities to avoid the need to commute out of Novato for employment.
11. Manage growth by requiring the coordination of development with adequate infrastructure, public facilities, public services and promoting conservation, reuse and recycling strategies while meeting the needs of the community with the limited land available for development.
12. Provide and maintain greater recreational, educational, (including the College of Marin Indian Valley Campus (IVC) of Marin Community College District, and cultural opportunities for all segments of the community. Pursue all efforts with community and neighborhood organizations, nonprofit organizations, for profit organizations, and public agencies to provide care and services, including medical, counseling, recreational, educational, cultural, shelter, and housing opportunities to meet the needs of Novato's citizens.
13. Protect the integrity of residential neighborhoods from conversion and/or intrusion of incompatible land uses. Create transition buffers separating incompatible land uses.

Implementation of the Plan

The General Plan is a document that will be used by the City Council, Commissions, staff, and the community to determine whether public and private development proposals are in harmony with the goals, objectives, policies, and programs of the Plan. The City will change the Zoning Ordinance to conform with the Plan and will adopt procedures for carrying out the Plan's policies and programs.

Highlights of The General Plan

The Plan contains nine chapters:

- Land Use
- Transportation
- Housing
- Environment
- Safety and Noise
- Economic Development and Fiscal Vitality
- Human Services
- Public Facilities and Services
- Community Identity

Appendix A, “Novato Neighborhoods,” and Appendix B, “Reference Materials,” are not an adopted part of the Plan but contain information relating to the General Plan.

Highlights from each chapter of the Plan are as follows:

Land Use Chapter

The Land Use Chapter contains a growth management program. The program consists of the following components:

- Land Use Designations Map
- Infrastructure and Services
- Constraints Analysis

The Land Use Designations Map illustrates the pattern of conservation and development that the General Plan envisions. Development is managed so that growth consistent with the General Plan can occur while the adequacy of infrastructure and public services is maintained. The constraints analysis is a process of investigating a site’s natural resources and hazards relative to property development so that environmental values are imparted throughout project design and construction and hazards to people and property are minimized.

The constraints analysis portion of the growth management program reflects the high value the community places on protecting the rich mix of environmental resources in Novato and the concern over safety issues such as unstable slopes and flooding. Most undeveloped properties in Novato have environmental and safety constraints to consider.

The General Plan reduces the overall density from the 1981 Plan and thus many of its impacts such as traffic, noise, and pollution; protects and advocates stronger neighborhoods; enhances livability; and reduces impacts on services and infrastructure. Residential growth potential is reduced by approximately 13 percent, and nonresidential by approximately 10 percent.

The General Plan restricts new retail centers and focuses on providing corporate development like Fireman’s Fund, Broderbund, Mindscape, Harris Digital, and other similar leading edge corporations, to provide a strong local economy and provide well paying job opportunities to Novato residents. This will greatly improve the jobs/housing balance in Novato reducing the amount of commute traffic and enhancing the sense of community.

Transportation

The Transportation Chapter, in conjunction with the Land Use Chapter, contains many policies and programs to tie growth to the resolution of traffic impacts created by development. The reduced development under the 1996 General Plan means lower traffic volumes than from the 1981 Plan and less congestion on local streets. The chapter also reflects the City’s participation in the Marin Congestion Management Agency dealing with regional traffic issues including Highways 101 and 37. Only regional and state actions can substantially reduce congestion in the 101 and 37 corridors, but the General Plan policies and programs will ensure that Novato does its part – the Plan includes land use changes suggested by the Congestion Management Agency staff. The chapter promotes transit use and provides policies and programs to help reduce dependency on

automobiles and eliminates the unnecessary intrusion of arterial streets through neighborhoods. The General Plan provides for a comprehensive bicycle and pedestrian system.

Housing

The Housing Chapter focuses on neighborhood preservation and provision of housing for all segments of the community. The chapter reflects the substantial progress the City has made in meeting Novato's fair share of homeless and transitional housing needs as well as affordable housing through the Hamilton Reuse Plan for the former military base. An affordable housing program is adopted and provides many options for development of affordable housing such as requiring a percentage of units developed to be affordable or payment of equivalent in-lieu fees. Programs included in the General Plan could provide over 1,500 units of affordable housing over and above the 783 affordable units specified in the Hamilton Reuse Plan.

The General Plan provides for significant affordable housing opportunities for Novato residents, seniors, persons working in and supporting our community and local economy. Opportunities are provided for the children of Novato residents to be able to find affordable housing and be able to remain in and be a vital part of the Novato community. Policies for greater consideration of neighborhood values in the location of larger group homes and second dwelling units are also a part of the chapter.

Environment

The Environment Chapter contains many policies and programs that strengthen Novato's identification and preservation of environmental resources. In fact, the Novato General Plan provides in the aggregate the strongest environmental protection programs of any General Plan in the state. The chapter contains policies and programs to develop the following special overlay zones for protection of environmental resources:

- Bayfront areas
- Wetlands
- Watercourses
- Scenic Resources which includes ridgelines

Additional ordinances will be developed to protect native vegetation and Novato's community forest. Policies also require the protection of species diversity and habitat. Environmental reviews will include screening for animals and plants of value on lists not required by state and federal law but important to the local area. The Environment Chapter contains policies and programs designed to reduce the impacts of development on air quality and water quality.

This chapter also contains programs for open space, parks, and recreational facilities. New in this General Plan is the consideration for preservation of locally significant open space in addition to significant Countywide open space. The General Plan provides for the development and expansion of parks and the development of many desirable community facilities including:

- Community center
- Cultural arts center
- Athletic facilities
- Gymnasium
- Swimming pools
- Tennis courts
- Gymnastics center
- Senior center
- Historic museum
- Youth facilities

Safety and Noise

The Safety and Noise Chapter deals with the protection of the community from unreasonable risks associated with the effects of earthquake, flooding, landslides, slope instability, subsidence, and other known geologic hazards. Other hazards or potential hazards such as fire hazards, aviation hazards, electromagnetic fields and hazardous materials are covered in this chapter. The City's emergency response capacity is also outlined in this chapter. The General Plan protects and maintains vital City services such as police and fire.

The Noise section identifies and evaluates community noise sources and problems. Policies and programs are keyed to ensuring that development is compatible with established noise standards.

Economic Development and Fiscal Vitality

This chapter is new to the General Plan. The chapter provides a framework for the City's commitment to foster a vital and sustainable local economy that balances, and is consistent with, the broader social and environmental goals of the community. The Economic Development section describes the City's objectives, policies, and programs to strengthen and diversify Novato's economy. The second section presents objectives, policies, and programs relating to the City's financial well being and the City's ability to provide services such as police protection, parks and recreation, planning, public works, and maintenance of City parks, streets, and facilities. The General Plan provides for fiscally sound government and obligates growth to pay its fair share.

An Economic Development Commission is proposed to foster public and private cooperation and to lead to implementation of the policies and programs in this chapter.

Human Services

The Human Services element reflects Novato's interest and concern for the well being of Novato residents. This chapter defines ways Novato can better provide and coordinate services and facilities to those members of the community with special needs. The chapter outlines the City's commitment to services such as care of seniors, children, disabled persons, youth services, home services, and social programs. The City supports health care services for all segments of the community. The approval of the new Community Hospital is an example of the City's commitment to superior health care for Novato residents.

Public Facilities and Services

This chapter establishes the objectives, policies, and programs for the major public facilities and services that Novato needs to support the development envisioned in the General Plan. Public schools are provided by the Novato Unified School District. The College of Marin Indian Valley campus in Novato is provided by the Marin Community College District. Many services are provided by public agencies other than the City of Novato as follows:

- Water service
- Wastewater collection, treatment and disposal
- Garbage collection
- Flood control
- Fire protection

The City provided services are as follows:

- Police protection
- Streets and storm drains
- Traffic monitoring
- Traffic signals
- Streetlighting
- Recreation facilities and programs
- Development services
- Administrative services
- Maintenance services
- Emergency services

The Public Facilities and Services Chapter commits the City to continuing a cooperative relationship with other agencies involved in the provision of facilities and services to Novato 's planned growth. Each agency retains independent decision-making authority over their area of responsibility. The City coordinates and communicates with these agencies on any development proposal. Policies also encourage the City to cooperate with local agencies on beneficial joint projects such as the reuse of wastewater.

Special attention is given in this chapter to working with utilities to accommodate the long-term needs of business and industry to take advantage of fast moving changes in technology.

Community Identity

The genesis of this chapter was to meet a community goal to retain and enhance the small town character of Novato and protect the integrity of residential neighborhoods. Objectives include ensuring that new development demonstrates quality, excellence of design and sensitivity to the character of the surrounding neighborhood. This chapter provides for establishing community design guidelines to apply as part of the Design Review process. The guidelines speak to physical building and site design, landscaping, utilities, lighting, parking, and pedestrian circulation. Policies include requiring landscaped open areas with outdoor furniture as gathering places for employees and customers in commercial, office, and industrial areas.

The Downtown is highlighted in this chapter. A specific plan for the Downtown is underway as a result of a grass roots effort started in 1993. Policies and programs in this section help support the goals of the specific plan as well as provide a framework for the Plan. The General Plan envisions the Downtown as the economic, social, and cultural center of Novato.

Archaeological and historic resources are required to be identified and protected by the policies and programs in this section. Public art is actively promoted with a program to work towards Novato becoming a center for artists in the Northbay.

Appendix A: Novato Neighborhoods

Novato Neighborhoods, while not an adopted part of the General Plan, summarizes General Plan policies that have a particular effect on the City's neighborhoods. There are seven neighborhoods that correspond with the 1992 Report Target 2000 districts established for distribution of parks and recreational facilities. Each neighborhood section describes the location, population, housing characteristics, environmental resources and hazards, major transportation facilities and public facilities in each district. It then summarizes land use policies that will guide development of major vacant or undeveloped areas in the district. The seven neighborhoods are as follows: Northwest, West, Central, Southwest, Midwest, Northeast, and Southeast.

Appendix B: Reference Materials

Appendix B contains information such as a map or summary of materials or documents that are referred to in the General Plan and where the documents can be located. As the Council adopts other plans, such as the Downtown Specific Plan, they can be referenced in this appendix so users of the General Plan are aware of other plans that relate to the General Plan.

Conclusion

Because there are a limited number of developable parcels in Novato, care was taken to create a balanced community. In summary, the General Plan strives to protect and continue the quality of life that Novato citizens have come to expect and enjoy while improving the economic vitality of Novato¹.

¹ Amended 11/4/97 by Ordinance No. 1379A.

INTRODUCTION

1. WHAT IS A GENERAL PLAN?

State law requires that all cities and counties prepare a comprehensive, long-range general plan for the physical development of the jurisdiction. The plan is the constitution for the City's development, and governs all land use regulations, including zoning.

The General Plan has the following purposes:

- To identify the community's land use, transportation, environmental, economic and social goals and policies as they relate to land use, conservation and development.
- To enable the City Council and the Planning Commission to establish long-range conservation and development policies.
- To provide a basis for judging whether specific private development proposals and public projects are in harmony with these policies.
- To inform citizens, developers, decision makers and other jurisdictions of the ground rules that will guide development and conservation within the Novato Area of Interest.

The Novato General Plan is a statement of the community's vision of the future. It is a long-range and comprehensive plan that coordinates all major components of the community's physical development for the next twenty years. Because the Plan is long-range and comprehensive, it is general. It serves as a framework for public and private development, and establishes requirements for additional planning studies where greater specificity is needed.

The "build-out," or full development, allowed by the General Plan is based on current projections of population and employment growth over the next twenty years. It is possible, however, that the total amount of development allowed by the Plan will not be constructed over this 20-year period, due to changes in economic conditions and other factors.

State law requires that General Plans be internally consistent. Accordingly, the objectives, policies, and programs for each topic area in this Plan relate to those in other topic areas.

The Plan has been prepared in accordance with State law (Government Code). State law provides a basic framework of requirements with considerable latitude for communities to shape their General Plans to local conditions (Gov. Code 65300.7). The State has also prepared Guidelines (Office of Planning and Research, November 1990) to suggest methods of General Plan preparation. The Guidelines are technically helpful, but are not binding; many issues and ideas in the Guidelines are not applicable to Novato and are not addressed in this Plan.

This revision of the Novato General Plan replaces the plan adopted in 1981, the last time the City comprehensively revised its General Plan.

2. ORGANIZATION AND CONTENT OF THE PLAN

General Plan Elements

The General Plan consists of text, diagrams, and maps, along with objectives, policies and programs. It is organized into nine chapters covering all of the elements required by State law. In addition to the mandated topics, Novato has included four optional chapters: Community Identity, Economic Development and Fiscal Vitality, Human Services, and Public Facilities. IN Table 1 presents the relationship of the chapters to the State-mandated elements.

IN Table 1: Relation of General Plan Chapters to State-m andated Elements	
Mandated Elements	Novato General Plan Chapter
Land Use Element	Land Use Chapter
Circulation Element	Transportation Chapter
Housing Element	Housing Chapter
Conservation Element	Environment Chapter
Open Space Element	Environment Chapter
Safety Element	Safety Chapter
Noise Element	Safety Chapter
	Economic Development and Fiscal Vitality Chapter (optional)
	Human Services Chapter (optional)
	Public Facilities and Services Chapter (optional)
	Community Identity Chapter (optional)

The Plan’s nine chapters are briefly summarized as follows:

Chapter I: Land Use. Establishes land use designations with types and intensities of use and sets policies and programs regarding growth management, annexation, and the City’s Sphere of Influence.

Chapter II: Transportation. Contains policies for the roadway system, Level of Service standards, transit, pedestrian and bicycle trails, transportation for the mobility-impaired, and ways of managing transportation demand, taking into account the relationship between land use and transportation.

Chapter III: Housing. Includes policies and programs to increase the variety and types of housing in the City, emphasizing infill sites, increased density, and mixed uses Downtown; and a discussion of housing needs and programs to provide additional housing for special groups.

Chapter IV: Environment. Includes the State-mandated open space and conservation elements. Emphasis is on identifying and protecting environmentally sensitive areas such as the Bayfront areas, maintaining ample open space and parks to meet the City’s needs, and preserving urban separators.

Chapter V: Safety and Noise. Includes the State-mandated safety and noise elements and contains policies and programs to protect the community from injury, loss of life, and property damage resulting from natural disasters and hazardous conditions; to protect the community from exposure to hazardous materials transportation, storage, and disposal; and to reduce the adverse effects of noise.

Chapter VI: Economic Development and Fiscal Vitality. Addresses the economic and fiscal needs of Novato. Policies and programs are directed at broadening the City’s employment base, increasing retail sales tax revenue, and implementing an economic development strategy.

Chapter VII: Human Services. Addresses the community’s needs for child care, services for senior citizens, youth programs and a variety of human services.

Chapter VIII: Public Facilities and Services. Discusses public facilities such as water, storm drainage and schools.

Chapter IX: Community Identity: Discusses urban design guidelines to ensure that new development is attractive and contributes to Novato’s unique sense of place. This chapter contains a section specifically relating to the Downtown, as well as programs to preserve historic resources and to develop a public art program.

Appendix A: Novato Neighborhoods, Appendix B: Reference Material, and the Glossary are not adopted parts of the General Plan and are included to assist the reader in using the plan. Similarly, the Background Reports for the General Plan listed in the bibliography are not adopted parts of the General Plan.

Goals, Objectives, Policies, and Programs

Goals, objectives, policies and programs are the essence of the Plan and are defined below:²

- Goal: An ultimate purpose expressing community values toward which the City will direct effort.

Section 6 of this Introduction contains goals for Novato that were adopted by the Novato City Council on September 29, 1992.

- Objective: A desired result or accomplishment related to a broader goal.
- Policy: A statement of principle or guiding action that implies a clear commitment. A direction that the City elects to follow in order to meet its goals and objectives.
- Program: An action or strategy carried out in response to adopted policy to achieve a specific objective.

² Refer to the Glossary for definitions of terms used in the General Plan

Policies and programs establish the “who,” “where,” and “what” of the goals and objectives. Implementation of the programs described in the Plan will be the responsibility of one or more City departments, often with the cooperation of other agencies or jurisdictions. In the majority of cases, responsibility for implementation rests with the City’s Community Development Department. Where a department other than Community Development is responsible for program implementation, their responsibility is noted in the Plan following the program description. Because the City cannot assure or compel action by other agencies, implementation responsibilities are not assigned to outside agencies.

Background Information

Explanatory text is included throughout the General Plan in order to provide additional information about policies and programs, or to describe how a program might be implemented. Explanations are printed in italics in order to differentiate them from policy language which commits the City to specific action.¹

Additional explanatory material is available in separately published documents that provide information for the General Plan. The Existing Conditions Background Report contains information and analysis for each of the topic areas covered by the General Plan. It is a reference document that provides the factual basis for General Plan policies. The Environmental Impact Report (EIR) determines the type and extent of environmental impacts that would result from implementation of the General Plan. It is a program-level analysis, and identifies requirements for more detailed environmental analysis that may be required for specific projects considered in the future. Several other background reports prepared for the General Plan revision are listed in the bibliography.

3. GEOGRAPHIC SCOPE OF THE PLAN

The Plan establishes policies for all lands within the Novato City limits and its Sphere of Influence. The Plan includes an Urban Growth Boundary, approved by the voters in 1997, to encourage planned, managed growth.¹

A larger area was identified as Novato’s Planning Area in the past, because of the City’s interest in its watershed lands and activities outside the Sphere of Influence including Redwood Landfill and Olompali State Historic Park. Some of the boundaries of special districts serving Novato also extend beyond the City’s Sphere of Influence. The City’s choice not to adopt land use designations and other policies for lands outside the Sphere of Influence does not signify a lack of interest in those areas. This Plan identifies an “Area of Interest” outside the Sphere of Influence. The General Plan includes some discussion of City concerns in the “Area of Interest,” but does not include specific policies.

If the City chooses to adopt policies for a larger Planning Area in the future, a comprehensive study of the area would be necessary prior to a General Plan amendment. Studies sufficiently detailed to allow preparation of policies for a larger area were not conducted as part of the present General Plan revision. The policies of the Marin Countywide Plan apply in all lands outside the City limits.

4. THE GENERAL PLAN PROCESS

¹ Amended 11/4/97 by Ordinance No. 1379A.

The City decided to update its General Plan in 1991. An extensive public participation program took place to ensure that the revised Plan reflected the concerns and views of the community. Key milestones of the public participation program included the following:

- The General Plan Steering Committee (GPSC), comprised of members of the public, the Planning Commission and the City Council, was established by the City Council to facilitate public participation. The GPSC held over thirty meetings and workshops.
- A community survey of residents and business people was carried out to identify their concerns and viewpoints on key issues.
- A leaflet on the General Plan revision was sent to all residents and business people in Novato.
- A series of community workshops on General Plan issues was held.
- A Vision and Goals Statement was adopted by the City Council on September 29, 1992.
- A detailed description of the plan alternatives was included in the local newspaper. This was followed by public meetings on the Plan Alternatives, and public hearings before the Planning Commission and City Council. This series of public meetings concluded with selection of the Preferred Alternative which was then used in drafting the General Plan.
- Planning Commission/City Council workshops on the Draft General Plan were held.
- Public hearings were held by the Planning Commission and the City Council certifying the Environmental Impact Report and adopting the General Plan.

The result of this process is a General Plan that reflects the concerns and values of the residents and business people of Novato. It is a plan that seeks a balance among the economic, environmental and social needs of the community.

5. ADMINISTERING THE PLAN

Implementing the Plan

Although the General Plan covers a long-range period, it is not intended to be cast in stone. This General Plan revision is based on estimates of future growth and development. As time passes, certain assumptions made in the General Plan may no longer be valid, due to changing circumstances or new information. Cities should monitor the relevance of their General Plans to ensure that they remain in touch with their evolving communities. The California Government Code (§ 65400[b]) requires each planning department to report annually to the City Council “on the status of the plan and progress in its implementation, including the progress in meeting its share of regional housing needs determinations.” The report on housing needs is made to the State Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD).

The General Plan is implemented by the City staff in making administrative decisions; by actions of the Planning Commission and City Council; by the City's zoning and subdivision ordinances, specific plans and redevelopment plans; by the City's Capital Improvement Program; by actions of other agencies and districts; and by actions of developers and other private entities. The Zoning Ordinance, all subdivision map approvals, and all public works projects must be consistent with the General Plan. In some cases, programs in the General Plan will require changes to the City's current land use regulations.

Amending the Plan

State law permits up to four general plan amendments of mandatory elements per year (Government Code § 65358[b]). The City's procedures for filing a general plan amendment are available at the Community Development Department. To ensure consistency and compatibility with the Plan, general plan amendments initiated by the City or other public agencies must follow the same notice procedures and requirements that are followed for amendments initiated by private organizations and individuals.

6. VISION AND GOALS FOR NOVATO

The Novato City Council adopted the following statement of Vision and Goals for Novato on September 29, 1992. This statement provides the framework for the General Plan.

Vision

The citizens of Novato view the City as a "small town" in character, now and in the future. They are proud of its beautiful setting and environment and want to preserve those physical attributes and incorporate them into its designs for the future. The hillsides, wetlands, bayfront, streams, woodlands, and open space corridors are among the highly prized features of Novato's natural environment which Novato seeks to preserve, protect, and restore where needed. Novato's future built environment should complement its natural environment.

Novato's character is defined by the safe, quiet neighborhoods where single-family homes predominate. Townhouses, condominiums, apartments and mobile homes provide a mix of housing in the Downtown area and along the freeway. Old Town captures the small town image Novato strives to retain. As part of the City's Downtown, it typifies the heart of a small town by offering buildings that link Novato's past and its future. Throughout Novato the type of structures that predominate should be buildings which harmonize with their physical surroundings.

It is important that new development within the community reflect quality of design and compatibility with the existing community character. New development must also provide the proper balance and mix of non-residential development and housing with a variety of types and prices that meet the community's needs. It is crucial to plan how best to develop the remaining land for the benefit of the entire community.

The community has demonstrated its willingness to pass bond measures to pay for better services, public improvements and open space rather than attempt to achieve this only through new development.

Hamilton Field is the largest remaining property left for development in Novato. It should be planned so that the development beneficially integrates into the rest of the community. Development should address Novato's jobs, housing and transportation needs while preserving wetlands and other biotic resources. In keeping with long-standing City policy based on voter direction, there shall be no aviation uses.

Our town exhibits a great deal of community pride. The community is supportive of its citizens and wants services provided in an amount and manner that meet the needs of all its residents. The increasing educational level and standard of living of the average resident has made for a broader economic base of support. At the same time the family, ethnic and economic characteristics of Novato's households are changing. Increasingly, they are comprised of single parents, smaller families, and seniors, with a greater disparity of incomes. These are changing the demands on human services such as counseling and homeless shelters.

We like our small, independent businesses and want the business community to thrive. We recognize that a strong and diverse economy is important to provide an adequate tax base for the City's fiscal health as well as providing jobs for its residents. The community wants to attract major employers and retailers to Novato, but doesn't want to lose the locally owned and operated businesses that make up a part of Novato's small town character. New commercial ventures that provide goods and services which are not already in adequate supply in town should be encouraged. Ideally, Novato's future economic development should attract a variety of businesses that can provide a range of job opportunities suitable for residents to work within the community, thereby reducing out-commuting and traffic congestion.

Congestion on the freeway and local streets is a major concern in Novato. Increased traffic is weighed very heavily as a constraint by the community when new development is proposed. The community wants solutions to transportation problems which reduce the number of cars on local streets and the freeway and improve public transit.

Goals

The following 13 goals form the foundation of what is intended to be achieved by the Novato General Plan.

1. Preserve and improve the quality of life in Novato. Conserve and where appropriate restore the natural environment and strive for high quality in the built environment that complements the natural environment.
2. Retain and promote the small town character of Novato including preservation of the historic features and landmarks.
3. Keep Novato relatively compact in physical size by establishing firm urban limit lines. Provide areas where land uses, densities and intensities create a gradual transition from the developed suburban area to the surrounding rural area. Coordinate with the County to maintain rural land uses within the Novato sphere of influence.
4. Maintain and revitalize Downtown Novato as the heart of the community.
5. Preserve, protect and enhance the natural setting throughout the community, including creeks, hillsides, ridgelines, woodlands, wildlife, native plants, wetlands and open space.
6. Preserve bay front lands and diked wetlands for agriculture, resource restoration, conservation and recreation.
7. Increase job opportunities and income of residents by encouraging a diversified local economy. Foster the economic vitality of Novato businesses, the City of Novato and other local

governmental agencies by encouraging a healthy economy which provides for diversity of economic enterprises.

8. Provide for a variety of housing opportunities through new construction and maintenance of existing housing for an economically and socially diverse population, while preserving the character of the community. Low and moderate income housing of all types (including mobile homes, mobile home and recreational vehicle parks) will be given special consideration.
9. Coordinate transportation, economic and land use planning to help provide effective transit services which reduce dependence on the single-occupant automobile.
10. Encourage local job opportunities to avoid the need to commute out of Novato for employment.
11. Manage growth by requiring the coordination of development with adequate infrastructure, public facilities, public services and promoting conservation, reuse and recycling strategies while meeting the needs of the community with the limited land available for development.
12. Provide and maintain greater recreational, educational, (including the Indian Valley Campus (IVC) of Marin Community College, and cultural opportunities for all segments of the community. Pursue all efforts with community and neighborhood organizations, nonprofit organizations, for profit organizations, and public agencies to provide care and services, including medical, counseling, recreational, educational, cultural, shelter, and housing opportunities to meet the needs of Novato's citizens.
13. Protect the integrity of residential neighborhoods from conversion and/or intrusion of incompatible land uses. Create transition buffers separating incompatible land uses.

Work on the General Plan continued following adoption of these goals in 1992. As a result of continuing efforts to prepare the Plan, two important additional themes of the Plan emerged, as follows:

Maintain the character of existing residential neighborhoods. In predominantly developed areas, the Land Use Designations Map largely reflects existing conditions.

Emphasize infill rather than annexations. To encourage a compact, efficient City and discourage sprawl, the future growth of Novato will be based on more infill projects – development that occurs on individual vacant parcels of land located within the developed portions of the City, and less by annexation of large tracts of vacant land outside City boundaries.

These two themes may appear to some readers of the Plan to be in conflict. Though local experience has demonstrated the possibility of infill development threatening neighborhood character, this need not be the case. Policies in the Land Use and Community Identity chapters establish policies for Plan implementation that seek to bring these themes into harmony by describing the elements of compatible development.

CHAPTER I: LAND USE

1. INTRODUCTION

The Land Use Chapter, required by the State planning law, designates the general distribution and intensity of uses of land for housing, business, industry, open space, education, public buildings and facilities. It specifies standards of population density and building intensity for each land use category. (Refer to LU Map 1: Land Use Designations.)

This chapter is the primary statement of how land in Novato should be used or reused. It sets the framework for all other chapters in the Plan, all of which must be consistent with each other.

This chapter contains objectives, policies, and programs for land use designations, infrastructure and public services, constraints analysis, the City's Sphere of Influence, and interjurisdictional coordination. Central issues addressed are how to relate the development goals of Novato to the capacity of the transportation system and other infrastructure and to environmental constraints, and how to define limits to urbanization through a tightly drawn Sphere of Influence.

The objectives, policies, and programs of the Land Use Chapter advance primarily five of the goals for the Novato General Plan in the statement of Vision and Goals Statement adopted by the City Council on September 29, 1992:

- Preserve and improve the quality of life in Novato. Conserve and where appropriate restore the natural environment and strive for high quality in the built environment that complements the natural environment.
- Retain and promote the small town character of Novato including preservation of the historic features and landmarks.
- Keep Novato relatively compact in physical size by establishing firm urban limit lines. Provide areas where land uses, densities and intensities create a gradual transition from the developed suburban area to the surrounding rural area. Coordinate with the County to maintain rural land uses within the Novato Sphere of Influence.
- Maintain and revitalize downtown Novato as the heart of the community.
- Manage growth by requiring the coordination of development with adequate infrastructure, public facilities, public services and promoting conservation, reuse and recycling strategies while meeting the needs of the community with the limited land available for development.

These goals shape the Growth Management Program that is included in this chapter of the General Plan.

Growth Management Program

Growth Management is a system for achieving the City's General Plan goals and objectives. A key element of Growth Management is the regulation of development so that it is consistent with the availability of infrastructure and public services, as well as being compatible with protection of environmental resources. Three parts of the Land Use Chapter comprise the Growth Management Program as follows:

Land Use Designations Map illustrates the pattern of conservation and development that the City will work to achieve over the coming decades, designating significant areas for conservation, agriculture and open space as well as locating future residential and commercial development.

Infrastructure and Public Services policies make commitments to continuing existing City practices and instituting new ones in order to best manage development so that growth consistent with the General Plan can occur while the adequacy of public services and infrastructure is maintained. Infrastructure policies are also found in the General Plan chapters on Transportation, Economic Development and Fiscal Vitality, and Public Facilities.

Constraints Analysis policies reflect the rich mix of environmental resources in the Area of Interest as well as the high value placed on those resources by Novato residents. Considering a Constraints Analysis of multiple resources early in the development process is intended to impart environmental values throughout project design and construction.

Each of the above components of the Growth Management Program is addressed in greater detail in the Objectives, Policies and Programs section of this Chapter.

Applying Land Use Policies to Specific Properties

The Land Use Chapter of the General Plan provides the basis for City decisions on development applications. Private and publicly-sponsored projects must be consistent with all parts of the General Plan, but the Land Use Chapter is the best place to find out what type of development would be appropriate in a specific location, or what location would be suitable for a particular development type.

There are three basic components to the General Plan's regulation of land use:

Location: Through the Land Use Designations Map, the chapter illustrates the location of future sites for development and preservation

Activities: For each land use classification shown on the Map, LU Table 3 lists typical activities.

Density and Intensity Standards: Residential density ranges control the number of units on each acre of land, and standards for floor area ratio (FAR) establish the intensity of non-residential buildings. Multiplying the low and high ends of the ranges by a parcel's acreage provides the range of potential development envisioned by the Plan. As discussed below, these standards are modified by policies in a number of other parts of the Plan.

The Land Use Chapter and the Land Use Designations Map identify the range of potential development envisioned for all properties in the City and Sphere of Influence. (The major undeveloped properties are identified in the February 1995 Preferred Plan Alternatives Report.) The range of potential development for each site is affected by the Growth Management Program of the Land Use Chapter as well as other policies of the General Plan. The Growth Management Program contains policies regulating development to be consistent with the availability of public facilities and services and environmental and safety constraints on properties. Consideration of Constraints Analysis early in the project design stage should result in a project design that is sensitive to property characteristics and meets General Plan policies. Users of the Land Use Designations Map must refer also to other maps in the General Plan that show the locations of public facilities and environmental resources, and to the Zoning Ordinance, which contains detailed descriptions of land uses permitted in each designation, as well as development standards that implement the General Plan.

Maximum densities of the applicable land use designation may in some cases be achieved during project development but there is no guarantee of achieving the maximum density. Also, on properties with many constraints to development, the minimum density of the applicable land use designations may not be attained.

The precise configuration of development, conservation areas, and buildout potential of individual properties will be based on site specific analysis and design prepared by an applicant. Proposals must be consistent with the provisions of the General Plan, the Zoning Ordinance, CEQA and other relevant land use regulations. As always, the characteristics of each project will ultimately be determined by review and action by City decision-makers.

Related Policies in Other Parts of the General Plan

Land use policies and programs protect natural resource lands, hillsides, agricultural lands, and bayfront. Flood conditions are recognized by lower-intensity, compatible land uses, and Policies and Programs in the Safety and Noise Element. Lands subject to flooding are identified in the Safety Chapter, pages V-7 to V-9 and SF Map 3. Land use designations provide for economic development to encourage jobs for Novato residents; however, the total amount of land designated for commercial development is less than in the City's 1981 General Plan. (See LU Table 1.)

Policies and programs in the chapters on Housing, Environment, Safety, Economic/Fiscal, and Community Identity establish standards for development that expand upon and are consistent with the policies and programs of the Land Use Chapter. The Novato Neighborhoods Chapter summarizes General Plan policies for subareas of the City, but is not an adopted part of the General Plan.

2. BACKGROUND

Comparison with 1981 General Plan

The 1996 General Plan revises a number of land use provisions of the City's last General Plan, adopted in 1981. The site of the proposed Buck Center for Research in Aging and the portion of the St. Vincent's/Las Gallinas Valley Sanitary District property adjacent to Hamilton Field are added to the City's Sphere of Influence.

The new plan adds one new residential designation; reduces the number of office designations from four to one; and adds the designations of Downtown Core, Commercial Industrial, Mixed Use, and Agriculture. There are 20 land use categories in the 1996 plan, compared with 17 in 1981. The 1996 plan also places more emphasis on downtown revitalization.

The 1996 General Plan reduces the amount of residential, commercial, industrial, and office development from that allowed under the 1981 plan, as shown in LU Table 1.

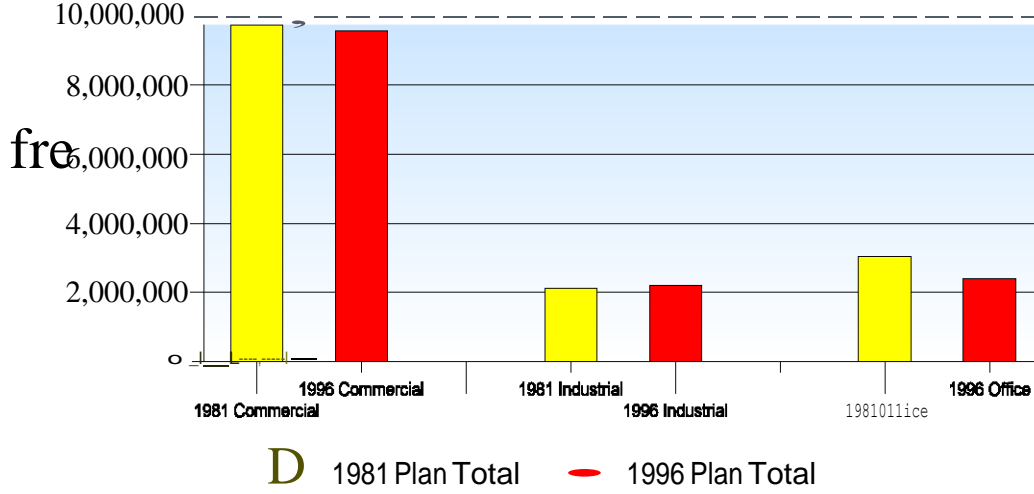
LU Table 1				
Buildout Under the 1981 General Plan				
Land Use	Existing Built and Vested 1995	1981 General Plan Estimated Increase Above 1995		1981 General Plan Total Estimated Buildout
Residential	21,044 DUs	6,267 DUs	30%	27,311 DUs
Commercial	6,207,352 SF	3,546,838 SF	57%	9,754,190 SF
Industrial	135,549 SF	1,998,105 SF	1,474%	2,133,654 SF
Office	1,138,793 SF	1,892,962 SF	166%	3,031,755 SF
Buildout Under the 1996 General Plan				
Land Use	Existing Built and Vested 1995	1996 General Plan Estimated Increase Above 1995		1996 General Plan Total Estimated Buildout
Residential	21,044 DUs	5,465 DUs	25%	26,509 DUs
Commercial	6,207,352 SF	3,372,103 SF	54%	9,579,455 SF
Industrial	135,549 SF	2,080,229 SF	1,534%	2,215,778 SF
Office	1,138,793 SF	1,253,848 SF	110%	2,392,641 SF
Notes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Existing built and vested” includes development under construction as of May 1995 and development which is “vested” as guaranteed by a Development Agreement or other means. • “Commercial” includes all development not strictly defined as “Industrial” or “office.” It includes retail, wholesale, services, mixed non-residential uses, etc. • Buildout estimates include development on all vacant or under-developed land not publicly owned. 				

The figures in LU Table 1 show the estimated maximum development allowed under the Plan; actual development may be considerably less. Maximum potential is used to ensure worst-case assessment of environmental impacts and infrastructure and service needs.

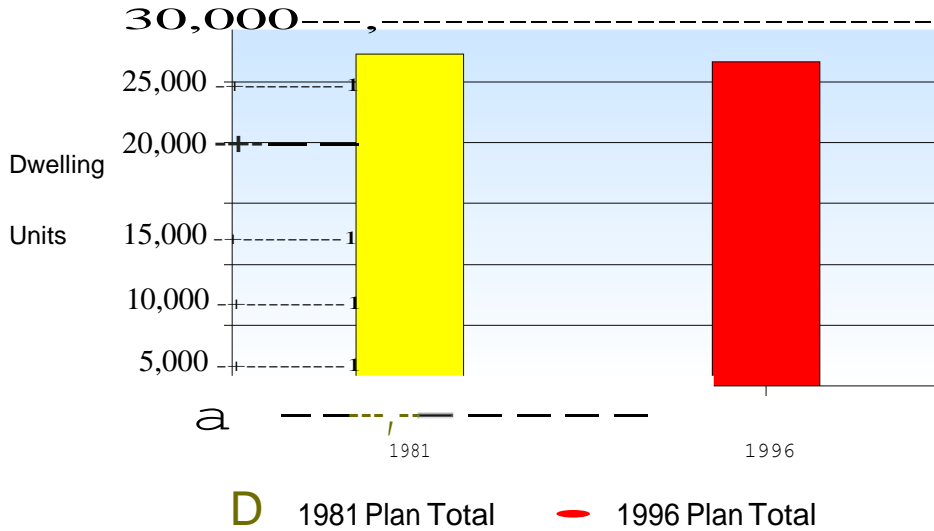
A major issue addressed in the Land Use Chapter is the fact that the capacity of the existing transportation system and funded improvements is inadequate to support the amount of development allowed in the 1981 General Plan. The 1996 General Plan includes policies and programs for growth management to assure that Levels of Service for transportation and other public facilities and services are maintained. In addition, a significant portion of the land still unbuilt is difficult to develop because of slopes, wetlands, and other environmental constraints.

LU Figure 1: Buildout Under the 1981 and 1996 General Plans

1981/1996 General Plan Buildout Non-Residential



1981/1996 General Plan Buildout Residential



Existing Conditions and Potential Development

Existing land use in Novato is predominantly residential, in the valley areas west of Highway 101 and in pockets along the San Pablo Bay historic flood plain east of the freeway. Most units are single-family detached on lots under one acre in size. With the increasing costs of land, however, the number of attached and multi-family units has increased.

Commercial uses are concentrated downtown along Grant Avenue, along Redwood Boulevard, in pockets along Highway 101, and in various small clusters and convenience centers. The Vintage Oaks Shopping Center, located east of the freeway and south of the Rowland Boulevard interchange, in the Novato Redevelopment Project Area, opened in 1991. The Novato Redevelopment Project is among the special land use controls in place in the City. It was established to replan and reuse a previously underutilized area by developing a regional shopping center, to increase employment opportunities and the supply of low- and moderate-income housing, and to provide public improvements. The project area covers approximately 400 acres east of Highway 101, north of Route 37, and south and west of Novato Creek. (See LU Map 2.)

Offices are located along the freeway, in and around Downtown, near the Novato Community Hospital, along Novato and South Novato Boulevards, and within the industrial parks. Novato Industrial Park contains the bulk of the City's warehousing, distribution, and manufacturing uses. Several industrial operations remain near the downtown, between the railroad and Redwood Boulevard.

Agricultural activities continue primarily outside the City Limits, in the areas west of Gness Field, south of Bel Marin Keys, and within the Indian Valley area.

A network of open space surrounds the Sphere of Influence defined in the Marin Countywide Plan as bounded by the Inland Rural Corridor on the west and north, San Pablo Bay on the east, and the San Rafael Sphere of Influence on the south. The Ignacio Valley and Indian Valley Open Space Preserves form the southwestern edge of the Sphere of Influence the Verissimo Hills Open Space Preserve, O'Hair Park site, and Mt. Burdell Open Space Preserve form the northwestern edge; Pacheco Valley and Loma Verde form the southeastern edge; and the Petaluma River and San Pablo Bay from the eastern and northeastern edges.

Several public and private projects have been the subject of great attention in recent years. Among the most significant to the City's future are:

Hamilton Field

Hamilton Field was closed in 1974; approximately 450 acres were declared surplus in 1979 and auctioned to private sector bidders in 1984. Approximately 270 acres adjacent to San Pablo Bay were transferred to the State for open space preservation. In 1993 the City approved plans of the New Hamilton Partnership for mixed use; with subsequent revisions the project will have up to 955 residential units; 825,000 square feet of office, light industrial, and retail use; and 200 acres of parks, open space, and sport fields. Construction of the Hamilton Master Plan area started in 1995.

The City, in cooperation with Marin County, has adopted a plan for the remaining 1,099 acres, known as the "Hamilton Reuse Plan." This plan includes: Low Density, Medium Density, and Medium Density Multiple Family Residential uses, representing 1,208 units; 43 acres of Community Facilities and Civic Uses (including an 80-bed homeless housing and services facility and up to 60 transitional housing units); 8 acres of commercial uses (including Neighborhood and General Commercial uses); 24 acres of parkland; and 795 acres of open space and wetlands.

Buck Center for Research in Aging

The Buck Center for Research in Aging (BCRA) project is will to be located within the northern City limits, west of Highway 101. The project, which consists of a 355,000-square-foot laboratory and research facility and 130 units of housing for research assistants and other BCRA personnel, was approved by the Marin County Board of Supervisors in 1994. Subsequently, an initiative (Measure B) was passed by the voters of the City of Novato approving a general plan amendment and rezoning project and paving the way for annexation of the 180-acre development site. The General Plan supports the development of the Buck Center at this location through expansion of the City's Sphere of Influence and the land use designation of Research/Education-Institutional.

Projected Growth of Population and Jobs

Between 1980 and 1990, the City of Novato and its Sphere of Influence (SOI) grew from a population of 51,209 to 53,015, an increase of 3.5 percent. The number of jobs in Novato increased by a far greater percentage – 31 percent – over this ten-year period; the majority were service and retail jobs. Population in 1995 was 54,900, reflecting the slow growth after 1990 due to a national and state recession. ABAG projects the population in 2015 to be 66,400. There has been much more job growth since 1990, with the opening of the Vintage Oaks shopping center.

The Association of Bay Area Governments (ABAG) projects a total of 25,750 households in Novato by the year 2010. The General Plan projects a higher number of housing units, about 27,000, at buildout, which could occur later than the year 2015. ABAG projects jobs in Novato to increase by 82 percent between 1995 and 2015. (See Housing and Economic/Fiscal Chapters.)

Evolution of the Plan

In January of 1994, a Plan Alternatives Report was published to help the community consider a basic direction for the new Plan. After public review and discussion and recommendations from a Steering Committee and the Planning Commission, the City Council approved a "Preferred Plan Alternative." This outlined the key elements of the Plan in broad terms and included an estimated development potential for key vacant (or underdeveloped) sites.

Relationship to the Marin Countywide Plan

The revised Marin Countywide Plan, adopted in January 1994, designates land use and densities for the unincorporated areas adjacent to Novato: Bel Marin Keys, Black Point, North Novato, Indian Valley, Southwest Novato, and Loma Verde. Most of these designations are low-density agricultural and residential, generally consistent with the policies of the Novato General Plan. There are, however, some areas of conflict. Discussed below is the major area of conflict; see the Novato General Plan Environmental Impact Report for a description of minor conflicts.

The Countywide Plan contains the following designation that differs from the policies of this General Plan.

- The undeveloped portion of Bel Marin Keys, which is outside the City's Sphere of Influence but inside the Novato Area of Interest: Agriculture and Conservation: 1 unit per 2 to 10 acres. The Novato Plan applies Conservation, 1 unit per 10 to 60 acres to such diked baylands, to preserve bayfront resources and preserve agricultural use, and would therefore not support the higher density shown in the Countywide Plan.

The Countywide Plan acknowledges that Novato is revising its General Plan and preparing a Downtown Specific Plan, and states, “When this process has been completed, the County shall review the City’s General Plan and consider revising land use information and land use designations for the unincorporated areas in the Area of Interest.” (Marin Countywide Plan, page CD-37)

Novato is a member of the Marin Countywide Planning Agency, which consists of representatives of the 11 cities and the County. The Agency establishes advisory Countywide standards for transportation and other public services and for environmental protection. It also reviews major development projects that individual jurisdictions submit on a voluntary basis. In addition, the Countywide Planning Agency serves as the Marin Congestion Management Agency, which establishes Level of Service standards on major roadways and recommends disbursement of certain transportation funds to local jurisdictions, based on their compliance with transportation standards.

3. OBJECTIVES, POLICIES, AND PROGRAMS

Land Use Designations Map

Objectives, Policies and Programs in this section are part of the Growth Management Program.

The General Plan establishes designations for land in the City and outside the City Limits within the Novato Sphere of Influence. Residential land use categories are intended to retain the small town character of Novato while providing opportunities for needed housing. Densities are generally the same as those that prevail in predominantly developed residential areas, so that new development on infill sites will be harmonious in character with the surrounding neighborhood. Densities are generally higher downtown, where there are opportunities for mixed use and higher density housing served by public transit, and generally decrease moving to the edge of the City, where lower densities can serve as a buffer between suburban and rural areas.

Office, commercial, and industrial land use designations generally provide for the same character and intensity found in existing office, commercial, and industrial areas in Novato. Neighborhood shopping centers are designated Neighborhood Commercial, which permits mixed residential and commercial uses. Office and industrial sites along Highway 101 are intended to encourage development in campus-like settings that will attract employers of Novato residents. Additional retail development is planned to focus on the Downtown, to encourage the revitalization of existing uses.

Conservation, Agricultural, and Public Use designations are intended to preserve agricultural use throughout the Area of Interest, limit urban development to areas within the Sphere of Influence, protect environmental resources and public open space and parks, and provide for needed public facilities.

The General Plan establishes 20 land use categories as shown on the Land Use Designations Map and described in LU Table 2. Each category is described relative to development density or intensity, and the types of activities, or land uses, which are found in areas designated with that category. For residential uses, residential density is shown in dwelling units per gross acre. Maximum residential density shall be calculated based on the gross acreage and then rounded down to the nearest whole number. Approximate population density can be derived by multiplying the dwelling unit density by average population per unit. For example, 5 units/acre x 2.6 persons = 13 persons/acre.

For non-residential designations, building intensity is defined by Floor Area Ratio (FAR), which is the ratio between the amount of gross floor area and the gross site area. For example, an FAR of 0.5 would allow a one-story building over half of a site, or a two-story building over one quarter of a site. The Zoning

Ordinance contains detailed descriptions of land uses permitted in each designation, as well as development standards that implement the General Plan. For development standards which apply to the Novato Industrial Park, please see LU Policy 2A.¹ Users of the Land Use Designations Map must refer also to other maps in the General Plan that show the locations of public facilities, environmental resources, and development constraints.

LU Table 2: Land Use Designations		
Residential Designations		
Designation	Uses included	Allowable Density Range (Dwelling Units Per Gross Acre)
Rural Residential	Detached single-family dwellings, limited agricultural uses, processing of agricultural products, outdoor recreation and other similar uses.	Up to 0.49
Very Low Density Residential	Detached single-family dwellings, recreation, home occupations, community facilities, and other similar uses.	0.5 to 1
Low Density Residential	Detached or attached single-family dwellings, recreation, home occupations, community facilities, and other similar uses.	1.1 to 5
Medium Density Detached Residential	Detached single-family dwellings, recreation, home occupations, community facilities, and other similar uses.	4.1 to 7
Medium Density Residential	Two-family dwellings, detached or attached single-family dwellings, recreation, home occupations, community facilities, and other similar uses.	5.1 to 10
Medium Density Multiple Family Residential	Multiple-family dwellings, two-family dwellings, detached or attached single-family dwellings, recreation, home occupations, community facilities, and other similar uses.	10.1 to 20
High Density Multiple-Family Residential	Multiple-family dwellings, two-family dwellings, limited commercial uses to serve building residents, attached single-family dwellings, recreation, home occupations, community facilities, and other similar uses.	20.1 to 30

¹ Amended 5/13/97 by Resolution No. 70-97.

Office, Commercial and Industrial Designations		
Designation	Uses Included	Maximum Floor Area Ratio (FAR)
Business and Professional Office	Office activities, including office campuses, research and development activities, hospitals, and administrative, medical, dental, business offices, and visitor serving hotel/motels with ancillary commercial and service establishments, and other similar uses.	0.4
General Commercial	Established commercial areas with off-street parking and/or clusters of streetfront stores; regional and local-serving retail establishments; specialty shops, banks, professional offices; business and personal services; visitor serving hotel/motels with ancillary commercial and service establishments, and other similar uses. This designation is typically assigned to larger parcels, located on a major arterial street.	0.4
Neighborhood Commercial	Established neighborhood shopping areas, to meet the retail and service needs of nearby residents. This land use designation allows a variety of retail stores, and personal services such as grocery stores, dry cleaners, professional and administrative offices, restaurants, residential care facilities for the elderly, and other similar uses. Multi-family housing integrated with commercial uses is permitted.	0.4, with an increase to 0.6 if housing is included, provided the difference between FAR of 0.4 and 0.6 is used for housing.
Downtown Core	This designation will be used for part of the Downtown Specific Plan area. It permits office, commercial, and retail uses, mixed commercial/residential use with commercial uses located principally on the ground floor, and other similar uses.	1.2 with potential for a maximum of 2.0 where housing is incorporated or the project is found to be of historical significance or of exceptional design quality in conformance with Downtown Specific Plan Design Guidelines.
Commercial/Industrial	A wide range of commercial and industrial uses, including motor vehicle service uses, contractor uses and yards, manufacturing, storage uses, wholesale, incidental employee serving retail/service uses, specialty retail uses consistent with industrial uses, rock, sand and gravel plants, solid waste management and recycling facilities, trucking yards or terminals, ancillary office and small offices. This designation applies to the area north of Grant Avenue and east of Redwood Boulevard, which now contains a mixture of commercial, construction-related, and industrial uses. The intent of the designation is to encourage existing businesses to remain and make improvements.	1.0

Office, Commercial and Industrial Designations		
Designation	Uses Included	Maximum Floor Area Ratio (FAR)
Mixed Use	Applies to sites where the surrounding area is currently developed with both commercial and residential land uses. Office, commercial, retail uses and residential uses are permitted. The combination and intensity of land uses shall be compatible with the development pattern and character of the surrounding neighborhood and existing adjacent land uses. Commercial only or office only land uses are permitted. Housing development may be permitted only in conjunction with either commercial and/or office uses.	The FAR is 0.4 with potential for an increase to 0.8 when housing is incorporated into a project.
Light Industrial/Office	A wide variety of manufacturing, office, wholesale, service, and processing uses that do not generate excessive adverse environmental impacts. Other uses permitted include; distribution, warehousing and agricultural products sales and services; auto sales and service, and repair; food and drink processing; local serving retail; solid waste transfer facilities, recycling facilities, and other similar uses.	0.4, except for the Novato Industrial Park and Hamilton hangar areas where the maximum FAR shall be 0.6.
Research/ Education-Institutional	A mix of medical research, educational, and laboratory uses, with related multi-family residential, recreation, office and commercial, and other similar uses in a campus or open space setting.	Maximum floor area ratio is 0.2, and the maximum residential density is one (1) unit per acre.
Conservation, Agricultural and Public Use Designations		
Designation	Description	Allowable Density Range
Conservation	Applies to privately-owned land that is mainly unimproved. Permitted uses are agriculture, detached single-family dwellings, preservation of natural resources, outdoor recreation, cemeteries and associated facilities, and other similar uses. Examples include bayfront, watercourse, and hillside areas.	1 dwelling unit per 10 acres to 1 dwelling unit per 60 acres.
Agriculture	This designation is intended to protect, preserve and enhance agricultural uses. Uses include agriculture; greenhouses; farm and ranch buildings; single-family dwellings; horse stables; fishing and hunting clubs; flood control facilities; animal hospitals; and institutional uses for educational, scientific, outdoor recreation, or religious purposes, related to the primary agricultural use of the property.	1 dwelling unit per 60 acres.
Open Space	Publicly-owned land that is largely unimproved and devoted to the preservation of natural resources, outdoor recreation, floodways and flood control, and the maintenance of public health and safety	Not applicable.

Parkland	Existing and undeveloped active and passive parks, recreation areas, and community playfields. Permitted uses include shelters, rest rooms, storage sheds, other structures needed to accommodate public use or provide for maintenance of the land, and cultural and recreational facilities.	Not applicable.
Community Facilities, Public Utilities and Civic Uses	Public buildings, schools, recreation and cultural facilities, museums, public libraries, utility facilities, transformer stations, water and sewage treatment plants, solid waste transfer facilities, recycling facilities, and related easements, City offices, fire and police stations, hospitals, churches and privately-owned uses operating in conjunction with public uses.	0.8

LU Objective 1 Promote development and conservation of land in Novato in the pattern shown on the Land Use Designations Map.

LU Policy 1 Implementation of Land Use Map. Implement the Land Use Designations Map by approving development and conservation projects consistent with the land use definitions, densities and intensities indicated in LU Table 2. Ensure consistency between the General Plan, the Zoning Ordinance, and other land use regulations.

LU Program 1.1: Amend the Zoning Ordinance and other land use regulations so that they are consistent with the land use designations of the General Plan.

LU Program 1.2: Use the Zoning Ordinance to specify uses allowed in each zoning district, consistent with LU Table 2. Not all uses listed for a particular designation will be allowed in all locations so designated. The Zoning Ordinance establishes districts allowing some uses by right (permitted uses) and others with a use permit (conditional uses).

The descriptions and lists of uses in LU Table 2 describe the intent of the General Plan which will be implemented through City regulations. In some cases, the use of designated property at the time of General Plan adoption is different from the uses described in the General Plan. Properties which become legally nonconforming retain certain rights under the Novato Municipal Code to continue in existence. The fact that a property designation in the General Plan results in a property becoming legally nonconforming does not necessarily signify any intent to eliminate any rights enjoyed by any legally nonconforming property under the Municipal Code.

LU Program 1.3: Request that the County of Marin revise the Marin Countywide Plan in accordance with the policies of the revised Novato General Plan.

LU Program 1.4: Develop a program to facilitate and streamline all permit processing.

LU Policy 1A Visitor Serving Uses. Sites with freeway visibility that are designated for Business and Professional Office (BPO) ~~and General Commercial (CG)~~ use on the General Plan Land Use Map shall include visitor serving hotel/motel and accessory commercial uses. This policy shall apply to the ~~three~~ areas in northern ~~and southern~~ Novato at the northwest corner of Redwood Blvd. and Wood Hollow Drive (San Marin Business Park); ~~and, the southeast corner of Nave Drive and northbound Highway 101 Bel Marin Keys Blvd. off ramp.~~

LU Policy 2 Development Consistent with General Plan. Allow development at any density within the range shown by the Land Use Designations Map provided applicable objectives, policies and programs of all chapters of the General Plan are met. Maximum densities (top of stated density range applied to total gross acreage) may in some cases be achieved, but there is no guarantee of achieving the maximum density.

The density and intensity ranges in LU Table 2 will be applied to a site's gross acreage, i.e., to the total site including land area that will subsequently be used for public rights-of-way or retained in an undeveloped state to preserve environmental resources. See also LU Policy 4 and associated comment.

LU Policy 2A Novato Industrial Park. Allow development in the Novato Industrial Park in conformance with the standards specified in Appendix C of Resolution No. 70-97 to the extent said standards comprehensively and completely cover the standard addressed in that Appendix C. To the extent said standards in that Appendix C do not comprehensively and completely cover the standards or development features addressed therein, applicable provisions of this General Plan shall control the development of the property encompassed within the Novato Industrial Park. The property encompassed within the Novato Industrial Park shall be that area so indicated on the map accompanying Resolution No. 70-97.¹

LU Policy 3 City/Property Owner Cooperation. Work with property owners so that proposed developments will both attain density/intensity within the ranges stated and be consistent with community objectives, City regulations, and environmental and infrastructure constraints. Recognize that in some cases, the minimum density of the applicable land use designation may not be attained.

LU Program 3.1 Consider policies and ordinances that address the issues involved with home occupations, home businesses, and working from the home activities.

LU Policy 4 Clustering of Development. Encourage clustering of development on sites with environmental constraints in order to achieve environmental goals and attain gross densities within the range of the land use designation. Clustering of development may result in net densities on some portions of a site exceeding the maximum densities in LU Table 2.

Consistent with LU Policy 2, a site's maximum allowable development potential will be based on its gross acreage. If units are clustered, there may be portions of the site where net densities exceed the maximum of the stated density range. Using a 10-acre site designated for low density residential at 1.1 to 5 dwelling units per gross acre as an example, the maximum unit potential would be 50 units. If five acres were environmentally constrained and the 50 units clustered on the unconstrained areas, the net density of those five acres where all building sites would be located would be ten units per acre. Clustering will be permitted only when all General Plan goals and policies can be attained. See also LU Policy 5.

LU Policy 5 Compatibility with Surroundings. Ensure that clustered development is compatible with the surrounding residential neighborhoods.

Compatibility is to be determined by the appropriate City authority judging a development project, based on appearance, use characteristics, proximity, and other factors. Compatibility does not require, in the case of two residential neighborhoods, that housing

¹ Amended 5/13/97 by Resolution No. 70-97.

type, lot size, or density be the same. Rather, visual conflict, interference with established use, and negative physical impacts are to be avoided.

LU Policy 6 Northwest Quadrant. Update and revise the Northwest Quadrant Plan and adopt it as an Area Plan. Retain existing General Plan policies for the Northwest Quadrant until the Plan is adopted, as follows¹:

1. The interface between the Grant Avenue commercial frontage and the residential areas on Second through Seventh Streets shall provide buffering between the noise, lights, etc., from parking areas and living environments. This area will not be approved for new residential development unless parcel size, aggregation of parcels, or site plan design, provides for barriers, setbacks, residence orientation/location, etc., which will reduce intrusion of noise, fumes, and light into dwellings. Offices, institutions, or similar nonresidential uses in this area are encouraged, in order to provide a transition between the commercial and residential uses.

In approving any design for residential development in the buffer area, the Design Review Committee shall find that the design provides the maximum feasible reduction of noise, fumes, and light intrusion into residential units.

2. In the remaining areas of the Northwest Quadrant, the objective is to maintain a desirable living environment with a broad variety of housing types and prices.
 - a. Allow duplexes or two single-family homes per lot anywhere in the area.¹
 - b. Allow multi-family housing only in cases where the City makes the following findings¹:
 - (1) That the rezoning would not encourage the demolition of a sound dwelling; in order to demonstrate that rezoning would not encourage the demolition of a sound dwelling, an applicant must either present a factual report on the physical condition of the existing dwelling, including an estimate of the cost of needed repairs; or present a feasible site plan showing incorporation of the existing dwelling into future development.
 - (2) That the rezoning would not lead to the intrusion of apartments into a predominantly single-family area.
3. Rezoning, if it meets the findings and Policy 3, shall be for maximum densities as follows:
 - a. For lots less than 7,500 square feet in area, maximum density shall be two units.
 - b. For lots 7,500 to 14,999 square feet in area, maximum density shall be limited to one unit per 2,500 square feet. Where a parcel has an average width of less than 60 feet, the number of permitted dwellings shall be reduced by 20 percent, requiring 2,700 square feet per unit.¹

¹ Amended 8/24/99 by Resolution No. 116-99.

- c. For lots 15,000 square feet and larger, maximum density shall be limited to one unit per 2,200 square feet¹.
4. Uses such as churches and other institutions, private recreational facilities, etc., should also be allowed on a case-by-case basis, where such development will not have a negative impact on the residential character of the particular block in question. Such uses are generally allowed by use permit, rather than rezoning.
5. Aggregation of parcels to achieve higher densities will require simultaneous development of the aggregated parcels.

LU Program 6.1: Prepare an Area Plan for the Northwest Quadrant¹.

The City adopted the Northwest Quadrant Plan for the area northwest of the intersection of Redwood Boulevard and Grant Avenue in 1977. The objective of the plan was to maintain a mixed residential area near downtown, with a high population concentration to support downtown activities, but to preserve the existing small, single-family homes that are in sound condition. Single-family homes and duplexes are allowed throughout the area, but apartments are allowed only if they would not demolish sound dwellings or intrude into a predominantly single-family area. The plan includes a sliding scale of maximum densities: two units on lots less than 7,500 square feet, one unit per 2,000 square feet for lots 7,500 to 15,000 square feet, and one unit per 1,875 square feet for lots 15,000 square feet and larger. Neighborhood residents have expressed concern that present regulations continue to allow the replacement of single-family homes with multi-family units.

The maximum allowable densities referenced above are reduced to 10 to 20 dwelling units per acre to conform to the densities shown on the Land Use Map.¹

Infrastructure and Public Services

Objectives, Policies and Programs in this section are part of the Growth Management Program.

Policies on Infrastructure and Services make commitments to continuing existing City practices and instituting new ones in order to best manage development so that growth consistent with the General Plan can occur while the adequacy of public services and infrastructure is maintained. Infrastructure policies are also found in the General Plan chapters on Transportation, Economic Development and Fiscal Vitality and Public Facilities.

Throughout the Plan there are references to “infrastructure” (e.g., roads or storm drains) and to “public services,” e.g., police or schools. These two categories are differentiated by the fact that, while both require resources for capital investments and ongoing operations, infrastructure costs are primarily capital costs, and public service costs are primarily operating costs. This distinction means that different types of funding mechanisms are appropriate in the two cases.

¹ Amended 8/24/99 by Resolution No. 116-99.

LU Objective 2 Allow development consistent with infrastructure and adequate public services.

LU Policy 7 Growth Management. Recognize the available and planned capacity of infrastructure and public services when considering proposals for development.

LU Program 7.1: Manage growth and infrastructure capacity through coordination and communication with provider agencies.

The City will continue to communicate and exchange information with agencies and districts responsible for providing transportation, schools, water, flood control, and waste water treatment.

LU Program 7.2: Analyze project impacts on infrastructure capacity and services as part of CEQA review, and require design and mitigation measures in consultation with provider agencies. If CEQA review or other analysis of development projects concludes that a proposed project would result in a deterioration of service or would cause available capacity to be exceeded, respond in one or more of the following ways:

- a. Require project redesign in order to prevent service from deteriorating or capacities being exceeded, provided that all economic use of the property is not prevented;
- b. Condition the project on developer funding of improvements needed to maintain services and/or provide additional infrastructure capacity;
- c. The project may be approved if it can be found that the project will do one or more of the following:
 - i. generate substantial overriding public benefits
 - ii. be in compliance with all of the other goals, objectives, and policies of the General Plan, and
 - iii. benefit the public health, safety, and general welfare of the community.
- d. Deny the project.

LU Policy 8 Development to Pay Fair Share. Require new developments to pay their fair share of infrastructure improvements and public service costs to maintain infrastructure capacity and service levels in the City, to the extent allowed by law and except as provided by other policies and programs in this Plan.

LU Program 8.1: Continue the five-year Capital Improvement Program.

LU Program 8.2: Conduct Planning Commission review of the Capital Improvements Program annually to ensure consistency with the General Plan.

LU Program 8.3: Establish and periodically review public facilities impact fees.

Adequate public facilities should be provided for new urban development, and new developments should bear their fair share of providing such facilities. In order to make reasonable provision for new facilities, the City of Novato will establish public facility impact fees. These fees are intended to provide for facilities that are required in addition to normal on-site and off-site development improvements. Impact fees may vary by location, according to the cost of improvements needed in the vicinity and the proportional share of the cost to be applied to the development.

Such fees will be established to implement the policies of the General Plan and may include charges for drainage improvements, traffic and roadway improvements, and other capital improvements such as parks and public buildings. See the Transportation and Public Facilities and Services chapters for policies on impact fees.

LU Program 8.4: Support efforts to charge and collect equitable fees by other agencies providing infrastructure and public services in Novato so that levels of service consistent with agency standards can be attained.

LU Program 8.5: Continue to maintain a computerized land use database system to accurately track fair share contributions.

This system contains updated parcel-specific information regarding General Plan, Zoning, parcel size, developments pending and approved, and other relevant factors. Using a computerized land use database permits the City to monitor development and implement growth management programs, as well as to cooperate effectively with regional agencies such as ABAG and the County Congestion Management Agency (CMA).

Constraints Analysis

Objectives, Policies and Programs in this section are part of the Growth Management Program.

Constraints analysis is a process of investigating a site's natural resources and hazards in order to accomplish three aims: (1) preserve environmental value, (2) minimize hazards to people and property, and (3) accommodate development types and densities envisioned by the General Plan. This General Plan recognizes constraints analysis as a key part of the environmental review and development process for many properties in Novato. Because of the extent and the mix of natural resources in the area, the precise development potential of individual properties cannot be determined solely by the Land Use Designations Map. The results of the Constraints Analysis followed by sensitive project design, consistency with General Plan, Zoning Ordinance, and other land use regulations, as well as City review will ultimately determine attainable development density. Constraints analysis is encouraged early at the project development stage so project design is sensitive to property constraints.

This Plan's requirements for Constraints Analysis is consistent with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) because it requires developers to take into account the potential for adverse impacts on the environment when planning their projects. The information developed as part of Constraints Analysis will be incorporated into environmental documents when applicable.

LU Objective 3 Assure that Development Recognizes Environmental Constraints.

LU Policy 9 Constraints Analysis. Assess environmental constraints when considering development of lands with high environmental value or significant hazards. Encourage development sponsors to use such Constraints Analysis in designing their projects, to avoid unnecessary expense in redesigning their project to incorporate the issues defined by Constraints Analysis. The Constraints Analysis expands the City's current development analysis on property. The property owner is being provided the option of submitting the Constraints Analysis prior to submittal of the project application and environmental documentation or submitting it with the environmental documentation. The Constraints Analysis is an analysis in addition to that required by CEQA.

LU Program 9.1: Prepare a guide to Constraints Analysis to:

1. Identify lands with high environmental value or significant hazards. These would generally include wetlands and watercourses, native woodlands, habitat important to special species, wildlife travel corridors, scenic resources (including scenic hillsides and ridgelines) and land subject to flood or fire hazards. Other resources and hazard areas in addition to these may be included.
2. Adopt a process to integrate Constraints Analysis with project design, preliminary review, formal development application, completeness review, environmental review, and project decision. This process should ensure that there is no conflict or duplication of effort between Constraints Analysis and other actions under State and local regulations.
3. Identify information resources, standards, methodologies and other tools to assist Constraints Analysis. One such standard shall be specific conditions to ensure that species of broom, acacia, and pampas grass are not planted as part of any future development of the site.

Sphere of Influence

State law provides for the establishment of Spheres of Influence, to indicate the areas that may be annexed to a City and for which urban services, if available, could be provided. The purposes of Spheres of Influence are to ensure that urban development takes place in an orderly manner, and that the land use and development policies of a City are recognized in areas that will eventually be part of a City. Within the Sphere of Influence, the City may consider establishing Urban Service Areas to indicate areas where urban development can best be accommodated over the next five to ten years.

The General Plan establishes policies for the Sphere of Influence, which are functionally related to the conservation and development goals of the City. There are areas in Novato's Sphere of Influence exclusive of the urban services area which the City does not intend to annex, such as the developed unincorporated communities of Black Point and Indian Valley. These areas are nonetheless appropriately included in the

Sphere because they closely effect and are effected by Novato, and because other agencies which provide urban services extend beyond the Novato City Limits. There are also areas (such as “Conservation” areas) that are in the City limits, or could be annexed, that do not require urban services, but are appropriately included in the Sphere of Influence due to their location.

The establishment of any Urban Service Area shall be consistent with the Urban Growth Boundary policies set forth below.

Urban Growth Boundary

The City seeks to protect agricultural, natural resources, open space and community separator uses, public and private outdoor recreation, uses that foster public health and safety, and farming enterprises as well as encourage efficient growth patterns that foster and protect the rural character of Novato while encouraging appropriate economic development in accordance with the City’s unique local conditions.

The establishment of an Urban Growth Boundary will protect the quality of life of the citizens of Novato by concentrating future residential, commercial and industrial growth in areas already served by urban services. The Urban Growth Boundary will improve the City’s ability to provide municipal services and discourage the provision of City services to sprawling developments in outlying agricultural and open space lands which greatly increases the cost of such services.¹

LU Objective 4 Establish clear limits to urban development outside the Novato City Limits.

LU Policy 10 Boundaries of Sphere of Influence. The Sphere of Influence boundaries are shown on LU Map 1 (and most maps in the Plan) and includes the site of the proposed Buck Center for Research in Aging and the portion of the St. Vincent’s/Las Gallinas Valley Sanitary District property adjacent to Hamilton Army Air Base.

LU Program 10.1: Request that the Marin County Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCO) revise the Novato Sphere of Influence in accordance with the Novato General Plan.

LU Program 10.2: Study potential Urban Service Areas as defined by LAFCO and consider amending the General Plan to delineate them and adopt appropriate policies.

LU Program 10.3: Request that LAFCO and the County of Marin Recognize the Urban Growth Boundary in their official plans.²

LU Policy 10A Urban Growth Boundary. An Urban Growth Boundary is established, as shown on LU Map 1. Land use designations outside the Urban Growth Boundary have been established for long-term planning purposes. For the 20-year duration of the Urban Growth Boundary, development outside the Urban Growth Boundary shall be limited to nonurban uses such as agricultural, conservation, parkland, and open space uses except as provided herein. The City, its departments, boards, commissions, officers and employees, shall not grant, or approve any general plan amendment, rezoning, or zoning ordinance amendment, specific plan,

¹ Amended 11/4/97 by Ordinance No. 1379A.

² Amended 11/4/97 by Ordinance No. 1379A.

master plan, precise development plan, tentative or final subdivision map, conditional use permit, building permit or any other discretionary or ministerial land use or development approval or entitlement for urban land uses outside the Urban Growth Boundary except as provided in this policy.

All City departments, boards, commissions, officers and employees shall act on applications for land use approvals or entitlements outside the Urban Growth Boundary consistent with state law in a manner that avoids any approval of such applications by operation of state or other law.

Until November 4, 2017, the foregoing Policy 10A, and LU Map 1 as it depicts the Urban Growth Boundary may be amended only by a vote of the people or pursuant to any of the procedures set forth below.

- a. To comply with state law regarding the provision of housing for all economic segments of the community, the City Council may amend the Urban Growth Boundary in order to accommodate lands to be designated for residential uses, provided that no more than ten acres of land may be brought within the Urban Growth Boundary in any calendar year. Such an amendment may be adopted only upon the affirmative vote of a majority of the Council, and if the City Council makes each of the following findings:
 - (1) That the land is immediately adjacent to existing comparably developed areas and the applicant for the redesignation (or the City if City-initiated) has provided evidence that the Novato Fire Protection District, Novato Police Department, Novato Community Development Department, the North Marin Water District, Novato Sanitary District, and the School District have adequate capacity to accommodate the proposed development and provide it with adequate public services;
 - (2) That the proposed development will consist of primarily low and very low income housing pursuant to the Housing Element of the General Plan;
 - (3) That there is no existing residentially designated land available within the Urban Growth Boundary that can feasibly accommodate the proposed development;

- (4) That it is not reasonably feasible to accommodate the proposed development by redesignating lands within the Urban Growth Boundary for low and very low income housing; and
 - (5) That the proposed development is necessary to comply with state law requirements for the provision of low and very low income housing.
- b. To avoid an unconstitutional taking of private property, the City Council may extend the Urban Growth Boundary, by the affirmative vote of a majority of the Council, if it finds that:
- (1) The implementation and/or application of the UGB would otherwise constitute a taking of a landowner's property for which compensation must be paid; and
 - (2) The extension of the UGB and land use designations associated with the extension will allow additional land uses only to the minimum extent necessary to avoid such a taking of the landowner's property.
- c. To promote the public health, safety, and welfare, the City Council may, by the affirmative vote of a majority of the Council, amend the Urban Growth Boundary if it finds that such amendment is necessary for the development of a public park, public school, public facility, or public open space project, and such amendment is otherwise consistent with the General Plan then in effect.
- d. To promote the public health, safety, and welfare, the City Council may, by the affirmative vote of a majority of the Council, amend the Urban Growth Boundary if they make each of the following findings:
- (1) The amendment is the only feasible method of addressing a significant threat to the public health, safety, and welfare;
 - (2) The amendment would not provide for new development; and
 - (3) The amendment only involves developed or substantially developed lands.
- e. The City Council may, by the affirmative vote of a majority of the Council, exempt projects that have a vested right under law to proceed with development, if the Council determines that the exemption is necessary for the project to proceed consistent with that vested right.¹

LU Policy 11 Annexations to Sanitary District. Consider, on a case-by-case basis, supporting connection of property outside the City limits to the Novato Sanitary District, if the City determines it necessary for public health and safety, or for any reason defined in the exceptions to the Urban Growth Boundary listed above².

¹ Amended 11/4/97 by Ordinance No. 1379A.

² Amended 11/4/97 by Ordinance No. 1379A.

LU Program 11.1: Request that the Marin County Local Agency Formation Commission refer proposals for inclusion in the area served by the Novato Sanitary District to the City for review and comment and act favorably on the City's recommendations.

LU Policy 12 Area of Interest. Monitor issues within the Area of Interest for their effect on Novato.

LU Program 12.1: Request that the County of Marin and other applicable agencies refer all proposed projects and programs within the Area of Interest to the City of Novato for review and comment, and act favorably on the City's recommendations.

LU Program 12.2: Request that the County of Marin adopt land use policies consistent with the Novato General Plan for the areas outside the City's Sphere of Influence but within the Area of Interest. In particular, recommend that the Bel Marin Keys area be designated as part of the Bayfront Overlay Zone and that lands now in agricultural use be designated Agriculture, or Conservation.

LU Policy 13 Annexation Guidelines. Require annexations to meet all of the following guidelines:

- a. Areas to be annexed must be able to be served by existing City facilities and by facilities provided by other agencies, or by environmentally and economically feasible extensions to these facilities. Findings to support annexations must be made to indicate that improvements to support the development are available. These include transportation, water supply, fire, waste water treatment, schools, and other public services and facilities.
- b. Proposed annexations must be contiguous to existing developed areas. Annexation and development that "leapfrogs" over vacant and undeveloped land will not be allowed.
- c. Annexation of an area should not have either short-term or long-term negative impacts on the City's fiscal condition.
- d. For proposed developments seeking annexation, a specific development plan, including maps and text, must be prepared for the proposed annexation, showing how the proposed development contributes to the attainment of General Plan goals and policies.
- e. Proposed developments must be consistent with the proper land use designation and meet all other requirements of the General Plan.

- f. Other relevant policies are found in the Economic Development and Fiscal Vitality Chapter. EC Program 23.2 would establish annexation fees and EC Policy 25 and EC Program 25.1 call for a Fiscal Impact assessment of projects as appropriate.

Interjurisdictional Coordination

Development and environmental protection in Novato involve various agencies in addition to the City of Novato. School, fire, water, wastewater disposal, flood control, and transportation services are provided by other public agencies. Land use policies and development in other cities and in unincorporated areas near Novato affect the City. Therefore, cooperative planning among jurisdictions is important to avoid land use conflicts and ensure efficient allocation of public services.

It is particularly important for the City and County to coordinate. Communication, referral, and sometimes formal agreements will ensure consistent implementation of the City's General Plan and the Marin Countywide Plan.

The establishment of an Urban Growth Boundary increases the need for City-County coordination on lands immediately surrounding the City.¹

LU Objective 5 Establish effective coordination of planning efforts among interrelated jurisdictions and special authorities to implement the General Plan.

LU Policy 14 Congestion Management Agency. Coordinate with the Marin County Congestion Management Agency and support its role in addressing Countywide transportation problems.

The Countywide Planning Agency serves as the County Congestion Management Agency (CMA) and performs the State-mandated CMA functions for Marin County. Refer to Policies and Programs in the Transportation Chapter.

LU Program 14.1: Support the continuation of the CMA's responsibilities of reviewing and maintaining transportation standards and reviewing local general plan amendments for consistency with these standards.

LU Policy 15 Redevelopment Plan. Use the Redevelopment Plan to help attain General Plan goals, objectives, and policies.

LU Program 15.1: Continue to implement the redevelopment plan within its existing boundaries. (See LU Map 2.)

Responsibility: Novato Redevelopment Agency.

LU Policy 16 Coordination with Marin County. Coordinate policies and land use planning with the County of Marin for areas outside the Urban Growth Boundary, including the Gness Field area, Black Point, Indian Valley, and other areas.²

¹ Amended 11/4/97 by Ordinance No. 1379A.

² Amended 11/4/97 by Ordinance No. 1379A.

LU Program 16.1: Request the County of Marin to work with the City to prepare a specific plan for the Gness Field area and for other areas, as necessary¹.

CHAPTER II: TRANSPORTATION

1. INTRODUCTION

Government Code § 65302[b] requires that every General Plan include a circulation element that consists of “the general location and extent of existing and proposed thoroughfares, transportation routes, terminals, and other local public utilities and facilities, all correlated with the land use element of the General Plan.” This Chapter conforms with the requirements of the Government Code.

The Transportation Chapter discusses transportation issues for the Novato area. It briefly describes the existing circulation system and travel characteristics, projects future traffic based on the buildout of the land uses described in the Land Use Chapter, and identifies the resulting anticipated roadway conditions¹. In addition, this Chapter takes into account the traffic impact of anticipated regional development and the roadway improvements adopted in the Marin County Congestion Management Plan. Policies and implementation programs in this Chapter provide a guide for decisions regarding transportation system improvements to accommodate Novato’s anticipated growth.

The Transportation Chapter is based on several underlying themes and findings. They are:

- Transportation is both a local and a regional problem. Effective improvements to the transportation system depend on the cooperative effort of other agencies such as the State of California, Marin County, adjacent cities and counties, the Metropolitan Transportation Commission, and public transit districts.
- Land use and transportation are inextricably connected. They must be coordinated so that future development and transportation will be balanced with each other. The land use and growth management policies in this Plan reflect this relationship.
- Highway 101 is the main inter-city roadway that is at capacity. This situation will only worsen unless transportation service levels are improved and greater emphasis is placed on alternatives to the single-occupant automobile, such as bus and rail transit, bicycling, and ridesharing. Reducing the demand for travel through growth management and transportation management plans and technology (as telecommuting) and economic development strategies (such as job creation) so that future development does not exceed the capacity of the transportation system is essential.
- Transportation facilities must serve all sectors of the community – seniors, children, the disabled and those who depend on public transportation.
- Future improvements to the transportation system must complement and support the other goals and objectives of the General Plan.

¹ Three background reports were prepared for this Chapter; Traffic Model Zone Structure and Trip Distribution Assumptions, DKS Associates, October 14, 1993, Evaluation of General Plan Alternatives: Circulation Issues, DKS Associates, December 13, 1993, and Analysis of Novato Transportation Needs, Whitlock & Weinberger Transportation, Inc., May, 1995.

- Minimizing the intrusion of through-traffic onto local streets is essential to avoid overloading local streets. As congestion on Highway 101 increases, more traffic may divert onto Redwood Boulevard, South Novato Boulevard, Sunset Parkway and Ignacio Boulevard.
- Providing efficient routes for transit service, emergency and other service vehicles continues to be a high priority for the City.

The objectives, policies and programs of the Transportation Chapter are based largely on the following goal in the Vision and Goals statement adopted by the City Council in 1992:

Goal Coordinate transportation, economic and land use planning to help provide effective transit services which reduce dependence on the single-occupant automobile.

What is “Level of Service”?

The Level of Service (LOS) for roadways is a scale that compares the amount of traffic on a roadway or at an intersection to the capacity of that location. Level of Service is expressed using letters A through F, with A representing best and F representing worst conditions. TR Table 1 below explains in more detail the Level of Service concept.

TR Table 1: Level of Service Definitions	
Level of Service	Description
Free Flowing LOS A	Relatively free-flow. No restrictions to vehicle maneuverability or speed. Very slight delay.
Minimal Delays LOS B	Stable Flow. Some slight reduction in maneuverability and speed. Vehicle platoons form. Slight delay.
Acceptable Delays LOS C	Stable flow operation. Higher volumes. More restrictions on maneuverability and speed. Acceptable delay.
Tolerable Delays LOS D	Approaching unstable flow operation. Queues develop. Little freedom to maneuver. Tolerable delays for short periods.
Significant Delays LOS E	Unstable flow or operation. Low operating speed; momentary stoppages. This condition is not uncommon in peak hours. Congestion and lengthy delays.
Excessive Delays LOS F	Forced flow or operation. There are many stoppages. The highway acts as a vehicle storage area. Jammed. Gridlock.

LOS is normally used to describe peak-hour conditions, which occur during the early morning or late afternoon when traffic is the heaviest.

Traffic engineers and planners use Level of Service to evaluate the relative congestion of roads and highways. It is used to design where and what type of roadway improvements are required, such as the location and timing of traffic signals, the configuration of intersections, and the number of lanes for new streets. LOS is

intended to provide an approximate measurement of roadway operations similar to the driver's perceptions of traffic conditions.

Coordinating Regional Transportation Planning

The growth in traffic is a regional problem closely related to the pattern of land use, an increasing population, and a reliance on the single-occupant vehicle that has evolved in the San Francisco Bay Area. Land use decisions made by surrounding cities and counties have a significant impact on transportation in the Novato area. Coordinating transportation planning with other agencies is essential, but alone will not solve transportation problems. The City is working with regional agencies and jurisdictions described below:

- Marin Countywide Congestion Management Agency: Develops and administers a Countywide Congestion Management Plan (CMP) as required of every urbanized county in the State under the terms of a State referendum approved in 1990. The State law requires all State highways plus the principal arterials in Marin County to be on the designated CMP system. The following facilities in Novato are on the CMP designated system:

- N US 101
- N SR 37
- N Bel Marin Keys Boulevard from US 101 interchange to Commercial Boulevard
- N South Novato Boulevard from Diablo Avenue to US 101
- N Rowland Boulevard from South Novato Boulevard to US 101
- N Novato Boulevard from Sutro Avenue to Diablo Avenue

The Marin County CMP establishes LOS standards and reflects multi-agency capital improvement programs. Non-freeway routes on the designated system must maintain a Level of Service (LOS) D or better on the CMP network, while the US 101 freeway is subject to a LOSE . Road segments which were operating below those stipulated levels at the time the Marin CMP was first adopted were grandfathered at their lower service levels. If any roadway falls below a currently adequate standard, the City must go through a procedure to prepare a "deficiency plan" or risk losing a portion of the gasoline taxes it receives for road purposes from the state.

- County of Marin: Maintains and plans the county road system.
- Golden Gate Bridge, Highway and Transportation District: Operates Golden Gate Transit with express and local bus service, ferry service and the Golden Gate Bridge linking Novato to Sonoma and Marin County cities, and San Francisco.
- Metropolitan Transportation Commission: Prepares and carries out a Regional Transportation Plan, establishes priorities for federal and state funding, and conducts studies of transportation corridors.
- The Marin Countywide Planning Agency: The City is a member of this agency which is conducting a Sonoma/Marin multi-modal transportation and land use study.

2. BACKGROUND

Streets and Roads

The street system has shaped land use in Novato and continues to be the principal element of the City’s transportation system. Streets and highways are classified according to their function. TR Map 1 shows the classification of Novato’s existing and planned circulation system. TR Table 2 describes the street classification system. TR Map 1 does not show local streets. New local streets are not required to be shown on the map but must conform to all relevant City regulations. This table is for descriptive purposes and is not intended to precisely define street improvement standards, future improvement projects, or other decisions which would be subject to specific engineering and policy analysis.

TR Table 2: Street Classification System	
Freeway	A high-speed, limited-access roadway used primarily for long trips. California State Department of Transportation (CalTrans) controls the design, operation and maintenance of freeways.
Arterial	A medium-speed, medium capacity roadway typically averaging 10,000 to 35,000 trips daily that provides travel and access within the City and access to expressways and highways. Direct access to land fronting an arterial is usually prohibited.
Collector	A relatively low-speed, relatively low-volume street typically averaging 5,000 to 10,000 trips daily that provides access within and between neighborhoods. Collectors usually serve short trips and are intended for collecting trips from local streets and distributing them to arterial streets. Collector streets may have restricted access under certain circumstances, for safety reasons.
Local Street	A low-speed, low-volume street that provides access to adjacent properties. Local streets are designed for trips within neighborhoods and to collector and arterial streets, and not to serve through-traffic.
Rural Road	A relatively low-speed, low-volume roadway that provides access to adjacent land. Rural roads are designed for trips within low density areas where there is relatively little locally-generated traffic. The City has adopted special standards for rural roads.

1995 Levels of Service

During the non-commute hours of the day, traffic generally moves well, experiencing little delay. Most intersections are operating at a LOS of A to C, indicating that the street system is relatively uncongested.

Traffic congestion occurs, however, during the peak commute hours. Most of Highway 101 is currently operating at LOS F in the Novato area. During the morning commute hours backups occur from the Alameda del Prado or Miller Creek interchanges to as far north as Atherton Avenue interchange, causing significant diversion of traffic onto City streets.

Local streets and roads generally remain at acceptable levels of service during the peak hours. The exceptions include Bel Marin Keys Boulevard and the Redwood Boulevard/Olive Avenue intersection. The latter operates at LOS E during the morning peak period.

Traffic congestion will continue to worsen as more development occurs in Marin and Sonoma Counties. In response, Novato is working to adopt innovative measures to reduce impacts of Highway 101 traffic on City streets, implement growth management programs, and emphasize alternatives to the single-occupant vehicle.

Coordinating Land Use and Transportation

Land use and transportation must be coordinated, so that the capacity of the transportation system accommodates the traffic generated by the development of the community. In order to understand the relationship between land use and transportation, a traffic forecasting model was used in preparing this General Plan¹. The model predicted the amount of traffic that will occur when all of the land covered by the General Plan is built out. With these traffic projections it is possible to estimate how much traffic will be generated by new development, what traffic problems will occur, and what roadway improvements, if any, could relieve traffic congestion.

Public transit is mainly provided by the Golden Gate/Marin County system. The routes and stops use the local street and freeway system, and so are not delineated in this Plan as a separate system. Bus routes are shown in the Existing Conditions Report.

The traffic projections showed that the highways and roads in the Novato area in 1995 cannot accommodate all of the development projected to the year 2015, even with the roadway improvements that are under construction or funded (see TR Table 3). The projections confirm that there is currently no reserve capacity on Highway 101. The General Plan includes a list of additional projects in Novato that, when implemented, will accommodate traffic generated by development consistent with the Plan. TR Map 3 shows projected traffic volumes for key intersections and roadways. TR Table 3 lists projects that would provide additional roadway capacity for vehicles or bicycles in the Novato Area of Interest that are already committed.

¹ Transportation Background Report #3: Evaluation of the Preferred Plan and Alternatives, Whitlock & Weinberger Transportation, Inc., June 15, 1995.

TR Table 3: Committed Roadway Improvements		
Project Name	Capacity Improvements	Status As of 3/96
South Novato Boulevard improvements between Rowland Boulevard and Diablo Avenue	One additional lane in each direction, increased storage capacity at intersections, traffic signal coordination. Class II bike lanes.	Under construction
Park-and-Ride lot at Rowland Boulevard Interchange.	Parking for 250 vehicles.	Design in progress by CalTrans
Atherton Avenue improvements from Olive Avenue to Highway 37	Turn lanes, Class II bike lanes.	Design in progress
Downtown traffic signal and intersection improvements	Coordination of the traffic signals on De Long Avenue from U.S. 101 to Diablo Avenue and coordination of the traffic signals on Redwood Boulevard from Lamont Avenue to Grant Avenue.	Design not yet started; fund allocation has been delayed
South Novato Boulevard improvements from Rowland Boulevard to U. S. 101	Class II bike lanes, underground existing overhead utilities.	Design in progress
Tamalpais/Hill/Bradley pavement and Drainage improvements	Sidewalk on one side of Tamalpais Avenue between Center Road and Hill Road and on Hill Road between Tamalpais Avenue and Diablo Avenue.	Reconstruct pavement, improve drainage, provide Class III bikeway
Highway 101	Auxiliary Lane improvements in San Rafael, none in the Novato Area of Interest.	Approved and partially funded by CalTrans

Following are the principal intersections which will experience severe traffic congestion at buildout if improvements listed in TR Table 4 are not constructed when travel demand increases.

- Novato Boulevard/Seventh Street/Tamalpais Avenue, which operates at a LOS D during the P.M. peak hour.
- Novato Boulevard/Diablo Avenue, which operates near capacity a LOS E in the P.M. peak hour.
- Redwood Road/Diablo Avenue/DeLong Avenue, which operates at mid LOS D in the P.M. peak hour.
- Ignacio Boulevard/Nave Drive/Northbound US 101 Ramp, which operates at low LOS D during the A.M. peak hour, and at capacity (LOS F) during the P.M. peak hour.

- DeLong Boulevard/Enfrente Road/US 101 Ramps southbound, which operate at mid-LOS D during the A. M. peak hour and at near capacity (high LOS E) during the P.M. peak hour.
- Novato Boulevard/Sunset Parkway, which operates at LOS E in the A.M. peak hour.
- Redwood Road/Olive Avenue which operates at LOS F during the P.M. peak hour.
- Atherton Avenue/Bugeia Lane which operates at LOS F during the P.M. peak hour.

This General Plan coordinates land use and transportation by permitting a level of potential development that can be served by the existing and planned transportation system. The Growth Management Section of the Land Use Chapter contains policies and programs to phase new development so that it does not exceed the capacity of the roadway system and other public services. (Refer to Land Use Chapter 1 and programs following LU Objective 2.) Highway 101 is excluded from service level standards because it is already over capacity and will continue to worsen regardless of any action taken by the City of Novato. The County CMP has “grandfathered” traffic service levels on Highway 101.

In addition, the plan includes land use policies and designations that reduce the need to travel for work, recreation and shopping. The mixed use designations downtown and in neighborhood commercial centers, combined with the higher density residential development near public transportation, will permit more Novato residents to live closer to their jobs and will encourage public transit use.

3. OBJECTIVES, POLICIES, AND PROGRAMS

TR Objective 1 Help reduce regional traffic growth.

TR Policy 1 Regional Transportation Efforts. Participate in regional transportation planning efforts.

Marin County’s Congestion Management Plan (CMP) employs growth management techniques, including traffic Level of Service requirements, standards for public transit, trip reduction programs and capital improvement programming for the purpose of controlling and reducing the cumulative regional traffic impacts of development.

TR Program 1.1: Continue to provide City Council and staff representation to the Congestion Management Agency and other regional transportation planning agencies.

Responsibility: Central Administration

TR Program 1.2: Work with the Marin Countywide Planning Agency to carry out the Congestion Management Plan.

TR Program 1.3: Continue to work with regional agencies to attain the objectives of the Marin Congestion Management Plan related to Highway 101. Do not adopt City standards for Highway 101, recognizing its regional function and State ownership and control.

TR Program 1.4: Support the extension of an HOV lane on Highway 101 in both directions within the City limits.

TR Policy 2 Regional Alternatives to the Single-Occupant Vehicle. Support regional transportation policies and programs that increase the use of public transit, carpools, bicycles and other alternative modes of transportation and limit the growth of single-occupant vehicle traffic.

TR Program 2.1: Continue to provide staff resources to review, analyze, and monitor the effects of regional transportation plans on the use of alternative transportation modes.

Responsibility: Central Administration

TR Objective 2 Improve and manage the City's roadway system to accommodate future growth and maintain acceptable levels of service.

TR Policy 3 Land Use and Transportation Coordination. Manage community growth and infrastructure projects so development can be adequately served by transportation facilities.

There are several measures that can be used to balance transportation with land use in addition to financing and building additional roadway improvements. Transportation Demand Management programs such as flexible hours, employer-financed shuttle buses, and growth management programs can reduce transportation impacts.

TR Program 3.1: Develop and maintain a Citywide traffic model to evaluate the balance between development and transportation.

TR Program 3.2: Continue to assess the cumulative traffic impacts of development proposals on the City's transportation system.

TR Policy 4 Level of Service Standards. Establish traffic Level of Service (LOS) standards for use in (1) evaluating the impacts of proposed development projects so the project can be redesigned or effective mitigation measures can be implemented, (2) making improvements to the roadway system, and (3) determining appropriate traffic impact fees.

TR Program 4.1: Establish traffic Level of Service standards as follows:

- a. At intersections with signals or four-way stop signs: operation at LOS D
- b. At intersections with stop signs on side streets only: operation at LOS E.

Mitigation measures which reduce side street delay, such as traffic signals, all-way stops and/or center two-way left turn lanes will be considered when LOS F conditions are projected for side street traffic. The volume of traffic should also be considered when evaluating the severity of side street traffic operations.

Refer also to LU Program 7.2 which describes the different actions the City may take if analysis of a proposed development project indicates that it would be likely to result in a violation of LOS standards.

TR Policy 5 Roadway Improvements Adopt a list of improvements that accommodates future growth consistent with the General Plan, enabling the roadway system to operate safely and efficiently.

TR Program 5.1: Prioritize construction of roadway improvements based on consideration of the following factors: periodic analysis of traffic service levels, the location of new development, and safety considerations.

TR Program 5.2: Construct the improvements listed in TR Table 4. New local streets are not shown on TR Table 4 and will be subject to review during the development review process.

TR Table 4: Major Roadway Improvements	
Novato Boulevard/Seventh Street/Tamalpais Avenue	Add an additional through lane on the northbound and southbound approaches on Novato Boulevard
Redwood Boulevard/Diablo Avenue/DeLong Avenue	Change the southbound Redwood Boulevard approach to include two left-turn lanes and a shared through/right-turn lane. Change the eastbound Diablo Avenue approach to include two left-turn lanes, two through lanes, and a right-turn lane. ¹
U.S. 101 North Ramp/Nave Drive/Bel Marin Keys Boulevard	Change the eastbound Bel Marin Keys Boulevard approach to include a through lane, a shared through/right-turn lane.
South Novato Boulevard/Sunset Parkway	Install a traffic signal.
Redwood Boulevard/Olive Avenue	Install a traffic signal.
Atherton Avenue/Bugeia Lane	Install a traffic signal.
Bel Marin Keys/Highway 37	Construct a connector.
Rowland Boulevard	Construct an extension to Highway 37. The extension may be limited to an emergency access way.
Redwood/San Marin Intersection and 101 South Ramps	Add turn lanes.

The City's Capital Improvement Program supported by specific project mitigation improvements will provide for roadway and intersection improvements as determined necessary to meet traffic service and safety requirements and comply with all of the other goals and policies of the General Plan. Annual review of consistency of the City's Capital Improvement Program with the General Plan is required by State law. The timing and need for construction of projects listed in TR Table 4 will depend on the rate and location of new development and on trends in travel behavior.

TR Policy 6 Funding. Ensure that development contributes to funding and/or implementing traffic mitigation measures.

TR Program 6.1: Prepare, adopt and implement a Citywide Traffic Impact Fee ordinance.

¹Amended 6/25/02 by Resolution No. 101-02.

TR Program 6.2: Include in conditions of project approval measures other than roadway improvements, such as Traffic Demand Management requirements, to reduce traffic impacts.

See also LU Policy 8, which pertains to impact fees for infrastructure improvements and public services.

TR Objective 3 Ensure that the transportation system contributes to the quality of life of the community.

TR Policy 7 Public Participation and Education in Transportation Decisions. Actively seek public participation in the preparation and review of regional and local transportation plans.

TR Program 7.1: Continue to hold public meetings on proposed transportation plans and improvements.

TR Policy 8 Impacts of Transportation Improvements. When transportation improvements are expected to have negative impacts, seek to reduce them through design changes or mitigation.

TR Program 8.1: Review proposed transportation improvements to ensure that adequate measures will be implemented to reduce any anticipated air quality, noise, visual, or other impacts.

Some proposed transportation improvements require Environmental Impact Reports, while other, smaller projects do not. This program requires that proposed transportation improvements in the City be reviewed for potential negative impacts and that appropriate measures be included to make these less severe.

Refer to the Safety and Noise Chapter for policies and programs to reduce transportation noise.

TR Policy 9 Resource Protection: Design transportation facilities so that irreplaceable resources such as important open space lands, environmental resources, recreational facilities and neighborhood integrity are protected.

TR Program 9.1: Review proposed transportation improvements so that measures will be implemented to protect important open space lands, environmental resources, recreational facilities, and neighborhood integrity.

TR Policy 10 Through Traffic on Local Streets: Reduce through traffic on local streets to preserve the peace and quiet of residential areas.

TR Policy 10a: Retain the existing no-access strip at the terminus of Clausing Avenue to preclude vehicular, bicycle and pedestrian access from Landing Court.¹

TR Program 10.1: Adopt and enforce a truck route plan for Novato that limits trucks to selected arterial and collector streets, specifies weight limitations and fines for noncompliance. Install route signs as required.

¹Amended 5/13/14 by Resolution No. 39-14.

TR Program 10.2: Develop measures to limit through traffic on residential streets when traffic studies confirm that traffic volumes on such streets exceed the Levels of Service established by the City. (Draft EIR, page 135, Impact 4.5B)

TR Objective 4 Develop a circulation system that is safe and efficient.

TR Policy 11 Traffic Safety. Improve the safety of the roadway system.

TR Program 11.1: Periodically analyze the locations of traffic accidents to identify problems and use this information to set priorities for improvements as a part of the City's Capital Improvement Program.

Responsibility: Police and Community Development Departments

TR Policy 12 Continuation of Streets. Facilitate the continuation of streets and bicycle and pedestrian paths through developments wherever reasonable and feasible.

TR Program 12.1: Review site plans of developments to facilitate the continuation of streets, bicycle paths, and pedestrian paths to improve local circulation. Continuation of existing streets shall be considered with the development of parcels located between streets where this will not generate adverse impacts for traffic movement, public safety and the character of the neighborhood. Priority shall be given to providing pedestrian and bicycle routes to connect streets wherever reasonable and feasible.

Alternatives to the Automobile

Traffic congestion will continue to worsen significantly despite the roadway improvements recommended in this Plan. Building more roads is not the only solution. Providing effective alternatives to the single-occupant vehicle (SOV) and taking advantage of improvements in technology must become an essential component of transportation planning. This includes increased use of public transit, carpools, staggered and flexible work hours, and bicycling combined with land use patterns and measures to reduce travel demand. In addition, alternatives to the automobile contribute to energy conservation, reduce pollution and the immense cost of building and maintaining additional highways and roads.

TR Objective 5 Reduce dependence on the automobile.

TR Policy 13 Higher Density Land Uses Adjacent to Public Transit. Encourage higher intensity land uses such as mixed use, multiple family residences, public services and commercial retail centers near transit routes and facilities to reduce vehicle trips.

TR Policy 14 Alternatives to the Single-Occupant Vehicle. Encourage alternatives to the use of the single-occupant vehicles (SOVs).

TR Program 14.1: Work with organizations promoting the use of alternatives to single-occupant vehicles.

TR Policy 15 Transit. Encourage use of public transit.

TR Program 15.1: Continue to support service by the Golden Gate Bridge District and Marin County Transit District.

TR Program 15.2: Continue to require the provision of bus stops, bus shelters, benches, turnouts, and related facilities in all major new commercial, industrial, residential, and institutional developments that might be served by transit.

TR Program 15.3: Work with public transit providers to obtain changes to schedules and routes as needed to serve the community.

TR Program 15.4: Explore feasibility of establishing an intracity transit system.

TR Program 15.5: Explore development of a multimodal facility(ies) along the Railroad Corridor.

TR Program 15.6: Investigate the feasibility of ferry service both via the Golden Gate Bridge, Highway and Transit District and in Sonoma County or in other appropriate locations.

TR Program 15.7: Help alleviate congestion on major thoroughfares such as Highway 101 and Highway 37 by encouraging use of public transit in other locations and ways, including but not limited to park and ride lots, van pooling, bus shelters, convenient schedules and reasonable fares.

TR Policy 16 Reducing Travel Demand: Promote measures to reduce travel demand.

TR Program 16.1: Develop programs for trip reduction and implement as permitted by law.

Measures to reduce travel demand (called Transportation Demand Management, or TDM programs) are directed at reducing the number of single-occupant vehicles during the peak hour commute periods.

TR Policy 17 Railroad Right-of-Way. Support the acquisition of the Northwestern Pacific Railroad right-of-way for future transit and possible bike route use, with the mode of transit to be subject to further study.

TR Program 17.1: Support the acquisition of and coordinated planning for the use of the NWP Railroad right-of-way.

TR Policy 18 Support construction of park and ride facilities to increase transit ridership and carpooling.

TR Program 18.1: Identify additional sites for park-and-ride commuter lots that are directly accessible to major arterials and Marin County transit lines and/or freeway interchanges.

TR Program 18.2: Identify mechanisms to provide for and seek developer participation in construction of park and ride facilities by requiring land to be set aside for park-and-ride lots where possible, or including the cost of park and ride facilities into the City's traffic impact fee ordinance, to the extent that new development increases demand for such facilities.

CalTrans operates three park-and-ride lots in Novato: at the Highway 37/Atherton Avenue interchange, at the Highway 101/Atherton Avenue interchange, and at the Highway 101/Alameda del Prado interchange. A fourth lot is planned at the Highway 101/Rowland Boulevard interchange. These facilities are at or over their capacity.

TR Policy 19 Bus Shelters and Benches. Encourage attractive, well-lighted and comfortable bus shelters or benches placed in convenient locations that are compatible with surrounding neighborhoods.

TR Program 19.1: Identify appropriate locations for bus stops, benches and shelters as part of development plans in City Capital Improvement Projects.

TR Program 19.2: Review bus shelter and bench designs and plans. Provide additional facilities or features for bus shelters and benches in key areas serving a large ridership, as necessary.

Although Golden Gate Transit and Marin Transit have specifications for bus shelters, the City should participate in the location of new bus stops.

Bicycle and Pedestrian Facilities

Bicycling and walking can become a more significant part of the transportation system with better facilities, Novato has many opportunities to promote cycling and walking: most of the City is reasonably flat; the weather is mild; and there are relatively short distances between residential areas, parks, schools and commercial centers. General Plan policies that increase residential density downtown, establish mixed uses, and favor infill development rather than urban sprawl also promote cycling and walking for local trips.

The California Street and Highways Code has established three categories of bicycle routes based on needs and the physical conditions of the right-of-way.

“Bikeway” means all facilities that provide primarily for bicycle travel.

- a. Class I Bikeway (Bike Path). Provides a completely separated right of way for the exclusive use of bicycles and pedestrians with crossflow minimized.
- b. Class II Bikeway (Bike Lane). Provides a striped lane for one-way bike travel on a street or highway.
- c. Class III Bikeway (Bike Route). Provides for shared use with pedestrian or motor vehicle traffic.

TR Objective 6 Make it easier and safer for people to travel by bicycle and on foot.

TR Policy 20 Comprehensive Bicycle Path System. Establish a comprehensive and safe system of bicycle routes that connects all parts of the City.

TR Program 20.1: Work towards completing the bicycle route system in the Citywide Bikeways Plan

TR Program 20.2: Incorporate bicycle facilities into the design and construction of roadway improvements.

TR Program 20.3: Continue to participate in the Marin Countywide Bicycle Advisory Committee.

TR Program 20.4: Utilize grant funding, and other means, as appropriate, to acquire rights-of-way needed for a comprehensive bike route system, and to provide bike racks and other bicycle-related facilities.

TR Program 20.5: Distribute maps of Novato's bicycle routes at public buildings, the library, schools and other public places.

TR Program 20.6: Construct bike routes according to the standards established by CalTrans' Planning Development and Design Criteria for Bikeways. Alternative designs may be required in environmentally sensitive areas.

TR Program 20.7: Consider adoption of a Citywide Bikeways Plan based on the recommendations of the City's Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee.

This plan would specify in more detail and perhaps enlarge upon the bicycle routes indicated in TR Map 4. CalTrans and MTC have adopted criteria for bicycle plans. Adoption of a bicycle routes plan conforming to these criteria makes the City eligible for California Bicycle Lane Act funding grants.

TR Program 20.8: Require employers to provide appropriate facilities to encourage bicycling.

TR Program 20.9: Continue the bicycle safety programs offered by the Police Department.

Responsibility: Police Department

The Police Department provides an innovative bicycle safety education program in the elementary schools.

TR Policy 21 Bicycle Parking. Promote and provide adequate bicycle parking at public transit facilities, park-and-ride lots, schools, the library, parks, city offices, and commercial areas, as feasible.

TR Program 21.1: Consider requiring new development, including remodeling and use changes, to provide adequate bicycle parking, as feasible.

Revisions to the parking standards in the Zoning Ordinance are required to implement this program. The Zoning Ordinance should specify the number of bicycle parking spaces required as a ratio of building floor area and the type of bicycle racks and locker designs which should be used. The specifications for bicycle racks should reflect the type of use. Long-term parking at bus stops and workplaces would require locker-type storage for bicycle, whereas short term parking at stores would require the simpler locking bicycle racks.

TR Program 21.2: Work with public transit providers to place bicycle parking at bus stops and to increase the number of buses able to take bicycles.

TR Policy 22 Pedestrian Facilities. Promote, provide, and maintain a safe and convenient pedestrian system.

TR Program 22.1: Require a sidewalk, path, or shoulder on all streets.

TR Program 22.2: Continue to provide traffic controls in areas with high volumes of pedestrian movement.

Responsibility: Police and Community Development Departments

Access for the Mobility-Impaired

Providing transportation facilities accessible to persons who are mobility-impaired is essential. Approximately three percent of the population in Novato cannot use conventional public transit due to a disability. The Federal Americans with Disabilities Act approved in 1990 contains many requirements to remove barriers for those with disabilities.

Paratransit provides transportation services for persons who cannot use conventional, fixed-route public transit. The Marin County Transit District contracts with two social service agencies to provide a door-to-door ride sharing program.

There are a number of private transportation services meeting the specialized needs of the community. These include the Marin Airporter, the Santa Rosa Airporter and local taxi service.

TR Objective 7 Encourage access to transportation for persons who are mobility-impaired.

TR Policy 23 Access Improvements. Support improved access to public transportation by people with disabilities.

TR Program 23.1: Continue to review all projects for disabled access and require the installation of curb cuts, ramps and other improvements facilitating access in conformance with state and federal regulations.

TR Program 23.2: Continue to support organizations that provide transit service to the elderly and the mobility-impaired.

TR Policy 24 Paratransit. Encourage the continuation and expansion of paratransit services in Novato.

TR Program 24.1: Monitor paratransit service providers in Novato to identify changes in service. Work with paratransit providers to facilitate a high level of service.

TR Policy 25 Development to Pay Fair Share. Consider developing an impact fee to require developments to pay their fair share to cover the cost of implementing the City's Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) transition plan and self evaluation of services plan to the extent allowed by law.

Transportation Funding

Transportation funding is predominantly a federal, state and regional responsibility. For many years the road system has received the largest proportion of public expenditures for transportation. Recent funding programs have recognized the increased need to support alternative modes of transportation.

TR Objective 8 Promote balanced funding for transportation systems.

TR Policy 26 Balanced Transportation Funding. Actively pursue funding for all transportation objectives consistent with the General Plan.

TR Program 26.1: Work with other jurisdictions in the County and the region and with the Metropolitan Transportation Commission to lobby for increased funding for alternative transportation modes.

Responsibility: Central Administration

TR Program 26.2: Obtain needed funding for transportation improvements and public transit facilities from federal, state and county governments and from Traffic Impact Fees.

See also LU Policy 8.

Air Transportation

Gross Field is located in the County outside of Novato's Sphere of Influence. It is a general aviation airport owned by the County and has no scheduled commercial flights. It has, however, a significant number of private aircraft operations and an air taxi service.

The County's Gross Field Master Plan describes the expected growth in airport operations and related development. It projects a doubling of based aircraft in the period 1986 to 2006, with an increase in operations (one landing or one take-off) from 189,000 in 1996 to 204,000 in 2006. The improvements called for in the Master Plan include facilities to maintain a fixed-based aviation operator.

Novato is represented on the County's Airport Land Use Commission (ALUC), which reviews all projects adjacent to Gross Field for compliance with their plan. Additional policies and programs dealing with Gross Field are in the Safety Chapter.

TR Objective 9 Encourage airport service consistent with Novato's community character.

TR Policy 27 Gross Field. Encourage the maintenance of Gross Field as a General Aviation Airport. Oppose improvements to Gross Field that could lead to commercial aviation.

TR Program 27.1: Work with the County, the ALUC and the FAA to ensure that no facilities to accommodate a commercial aviation airport will be built.

TR Program 27.2: Periodically review and continue to implement regulations on aviation (such as helicopter takeoffs and landings) in the City limits.

TR Policy 28 Airport Land Use Plan. Support safety provisions of the Airport Land Use Plan. (See Safety Chapter.)

TR Program 28.1: Continue to monitor the environmental effects of Gross Field by reviewing and responding, as appropriate, to all EIRs and related planning documents.

Noise and safety related issues of Gross Field are discussed in the Safety Chapter. Land uses on LU Map 1 are consistent with the Airport Land Use Plan.

TR Policy 29 Non-aviation Status of Hamilton Runway. Continue to ensure that the Bay Conservation and Development Commission, the Metropolitan Transportation Commission and other appropriate agencies recognize permanent non-aviation status of the Hamilton Field runway.

CHAPTER III. HOUSING ELEMENT

HOUSING ELEMENT

This chapter has been replaced by the approved 2007-2014 Housing Element

<Click Link Below to open>

<http://www.novato.org/Modules/ShowDocument.aspx?documentid=11555>

Streams and Other Bodies of Water

The Novato area contains a network of rivers, streams, creeks, lakes, and other water bodies, including:

- The Petaluma River, which originates approximately 20 miles north of the City of Petaluma and forms the northeast border of the Novato area. Petroleum and gravel products are transported from Petaluma to San Pablo Bay via the river. Marshlands along the Petaluma River have been considered for nomination as a federal estuarine sanctuary.
- San Pablo Bay, which borders the eastern edge of the area. This shoreline extends for approximately seven miles. San Pablo Bay is a navigable waterway that provides access to San Francisco Bay and the Pacific Ocean.
- Novato Creek, which flows from west to east and bisects the area. The watershed of Novato Creek encompasses the majority of the area, and its drainage basin encompasses 44 square miles. Numerous streams flow into Novato Creek, including Warner Creek, with a 5.1-square-mile drainage; Arroyo Avichi, with a 1.6-square-mile drainage; and Arroyo San Jose, with a 5.7-square-mile drainage.

In addition to these major waterways, numerous local drainage channels and storm drains discharge into Novato Creek and its tributaries. Pacheco Creek flows through the southern part of Novato.

- Rush Creek, which flows eastward from Highway 101 to the Petaluma River, north of the City limits.
- Stafford Lake, a reservoir and headwater for Novato Creek approximately 11 miles upstream from San Pablo Bay. The reservoir, which was established in 1951, stores water for domestic use and reduces flooding along Novato Creek. The reservoir has a storage capacity of 4,430 acre-feet and a water surface area of 245 acres.

Wildlife, Vegetation, and Habitats

The Novato Area of Interest contains a wide range of plant and animal communities, including:

- Diked Baylands which are those lands that were historically tidal marsh and were diked for agricultural use. These lands contain seasonal wetlands and some sloughs, which have important habitat value. These lands also filter runoff to the Bay thereby improving water quality, and they serve as ponding basins for runoff.

Seasonal wetlands provide essential feeding, nesting, and roosting habitat at a time of year when California's limited wetland acreage must support a much larger bird population. The seasonal wetlands play a critical role in supporting migratory shorebirds. Extensive surveys of seasonal wetlands conducted by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service indicate that 19 species of migratory waterfowl and 20 species of migratory shorebirds use these wetlands for feeding and roosting in the winter.

- Saltwater and brackish water marshland, found along the lower reaches of Novato Creek, the Petaluma River, and the shoreline of San Pablo Bay, where fresh water mixes with Bay saltwater.

The marshes in the area, in combination with other marshland communities in the San Francisco Bay Area, represent by far the largest estuary still existing along California's coastline, and provide essential resting, feeding, and wintering habitat for millions of birds of the Pacific Flyway extending from Canada to Mexico, as well as providing habitat for a range of species.

- Freshwater wetlands which are found where fresh streamwater or stormwater runoff permanently or seasonally inundates low-lying areas. Freshwater wetlands are typically among the most productive wildlife habitats in California, supporting a variety of birds, small mammals, reptiles, and amphibians.
- Riparian habitat which is found along the upper portions of Novato Creek and its tributaries. The complex structure and diversity of vegetation within riparian areas, as well as their close proximity to water, creates an extremely productive habitat for numerous mammal, bird, and reptile species. Riparian habitat is scarce because it only forms along watercourses and lakes, and because in California much of this habitat has been lost to agricultural uses, urbanization, and channelization for flood control. Shade provided by trees along watercourses helps maintain cooler water temperatures, retarding algae growth and enhancing fish habitat.
- Oak woodlands which are found on north-facing slopes and in canyons and ravines on more exposed slopes. In the Novato area, the proximity of oak woodland to open grassland and riparian habitat provides shelter and cover located close to feeding areas. This promotes a great diversity of wildlife, including a wide variety of animal, bird, reptile, and insect species. There are also forested areas, including redwood groves, within the oak woodlands.
- Grassland/oak savannah, in drier upland areas, interspersed with oak woodland, in the northern portion of the area. Most oak savannah lands in the area have been developed with urban uses, and few oaks have survived. The deep root system of oak trees make the savannah community particularly valuable for erosion control on slopes that otherwise support only grassland.
- Agricultural land, in valley areas and bayside plains that have been leveed. Important agricultural crops grown in the area include nut crops, vineyards, fruit orchards, and field crops. Agricultural land can also provide valuable wildlife habitat, including critical habitat for migrating waterfowl and shorebirds during the winter. The State Department of Conservation has classified much of Novato's agricultural land, particularly bayfront land, as Farmland of Local Importance (i.e., land currently in agricultural production that meets the criteria for Prime Farmland or Farmland of Statewide Importance, but is not irrigated). Some lands along the Bay produce oat hay, an important animal food source for ranches in Central and West Marin. Within the City limits, one active vineyard, the Pacheco Ranch, and one small chicken ranch is under a Williamson Act contract, which requires the property owner to maintain the land in agricultural use in exchange for reduced property taxes.
- Urban landscaped areas, concentrated in the Novato Valley where they occupy former grassland, oak woodland, and savannah areas. Exotic trees, shrubs, flowers, and vegetables in these areas have replaced native plants, providing habitat for many birds, rodents, mammals, reptiles, and insects.

According to data from the State Department of Fish and Game and California Native Plant Society, these habitats may support a variety of rare or endangered plant and animal species. Sensitive species such as the California black rail, California clapper rail, and salt marsh harvest mouse have been found in the Novato area, particularly in bayfront areas.

Wetlands

Wetlands in the area include saltwater and brackish water-marshland, and freshwater wetland. The marshes and much of the freshwater wetlands habitat are part of the San Francisco Bay Estuary. Saltwater marsh communities occur in the upper intertidal zone of protected shallow bays, estuaries, and coastal lagoons. Brackish-water marshes occur at the mouth of large streams which enter northern San Pablo Bay, creating a gradual transition zone between salt marsh and riparian vegetation communities. Marshlands are very productive ecosystems which provide food, cover, nesting and roosting habitat, generate organic matter to fuel aquatic food chains, and function as natural flood control and pollution filtration systems. The bayside plains adjacent to Novato Creek east of Highway 101, and those along the lower reaches of the Petaluma River and Miller Creek, are subject to tidal action and support saltwater marsh and brackish-water marsh biotic communities.

Many of the wetlands in the Novato area are seasonal freshwater wetlands occurring in areas that were once part of the Bay and have been diked off to provide agricultural land. Freshwater wetlands are typically among the most productive wildlife habitats in California. Their functions include providing food chain support, providing habitat for waterfowl, fish, and other wildlife, and moderating hydrologic processes.

Ridgelines and Other Scenic Resources

Ridgelines surrounding Novato generally enhance the community's visual resources. Mt. Burdell, located north of the City of Novato, is a significant landmark in the open space network surrounding the City. Pinheiro Ridge functions as a ridge and upland greenbelt separator between the Atherton area and Gness Field. Big Rock Ridge, with a high point of about 1,400 feet, forms the western and southern edge of the Area of Interest, with an eastward extension to San Pablo Bay separating Hamilton Field from the St. Vincent's Silveira property. A series of canyons stretches into the western edges of the Area of Interest, following creek corridors. Small ridgelines also have a role in providing visual barriers from one residential area to another.

Other scenic resources are hillsides, Bay plains, and Bay shorelines. Hillsides, whether open and grassy like southern Mt. Burdell, or heavily wooded, provide a backdrop for developed areas. Bay plains provide expansive views to the east and south and are important to maintain the scenic qualities along Highways 101 and 37. The Bay shoreline is a scenic resource that would be of greater value if more public access were provided.

Energy Conservation

Energy conservation is promoted to reduce dependence on non-renewable energy and materials. The Land Use, Transportation, and Environment Chapters of the General Plan promote energy conservation through land use patterns and policies to encourage reduction of the use of single-occupant vehicles and Building Code requirements.

Archaeological Resources

Prehistoric sites are capable of yielding a variety of information about the early peoples of the region. Such sites may include locations of cultural, social, or economic importance and may also have spiritual significance to the ancestors of these peoples or to living Native Americans.

The Novato area lies within the ethnographic territory of the Coast Miwok people and contains the site of the village of Tcokette. While Miwok villages were located adjacent to the bay, lagoons, and sloughs, the Miwok people were hunters and gatherers who made use of seasonal resources from a variety of local environments, including bay and ocean coasts, sloughs, tidal marshes, inland valleys, and hills. They tended to live in small family units that came together at certain times of the year when the greatest amount of labor was needed to obtain resources (e.g., during salmon runs). The Coast Miwok lifestyle rapidly disintegrated with the arrival of Europeans in the area, beginning with the establishment of the Spanish missions in the late 18th century.

The Novato area contains many recorded prehistoric archaeological sites, on terraces adjacent to watercourses, at the base of hills where watercourses enter the valley floor, on mid-slope terraces and ridgetops, and along historical marsh margins. Recorded sites within the area include habitation, burial, resources procurement, camp, and petroglyph sites. There is a high probability of additional, as yet unrecorded, prehistoric archaeological sites within unsurveyed portions of the area.

Specific policies and programs on archaeological resources are located in the Community Identity Chapter under CI Objective 11 and related policies and programs. Protection is also provided through the California Environmental Quality Act and the Cultural Resources Ordinance of the City Code.

Historic Resources

See the Community Identity Chapter for information, objectives, policies, and programs for historic and archaeological resources.

Air Quality

Novato is located within the Bay Area Air Quality Management District (BAAQMD), which regulates air quality in the San Francisco Bay Area. BAAQMD is primarily responsible for regulating air pollution emissions from stationary sources (e.g., factories) and from indirect sources (e.g., traffic associated with new development), and for monitoring ambient pollutant concentrations.

Novato lies on the west shore of San Pablo Bay, directly west of the main air flow through the Carquinez Straits, but sheltered from this marine flow by high terrain to the west and southwest. Wind speeds in the area are usually low, with winds of five miles per hour or less occurring about 45 percent of the time at Hamilton Field.

Levels of ozone, carbon monoxide, and suspended matter (PM-10) in the Bay Area currently exceed California Clean Air Act standards, and therefore the area is considered a “nonattainment area” for these pollutants. BAAQMD’s Bay Area '91 Clean Air Plan contains districtwide control measures to reduce carbon monoxide and ozone precursor emissions.

Air quality is a function of both local climate and local sources of air pollution. BAAQMD has found the air pollution potential in Novato to be high due to predominantly light winds, frequent temperature inversions, plentiful sunshine for photochemical reactions, and hills to the west that restrict the effectiveness of wind action in diluting pollution.

Despite these factors, pollutant monitoring results for the years 1988-1990 in San Rafael (the only ambient air quality monitoring station currently operating in Marin County) indicate that air quality in Marin County has generally been good, with only one violation of air quality standards, a single violation of the state ozone standard in 1988.

Water Quality

The Public Facilities and Services Chapter discusses the supply of potable water, and the Safety Chapter discusses flooding. Water is also an environmental resource because of its effects on wildlife and habitat.

Two general types of pollutant discharges affect the quality of surface water and groundwater in the Novato Area of Interest:

- Point source discharge, which consists of discharge from a pipe or other device directly into the receiving waters. Discharge of treated wastewater from a sewer plant or an industrial building are common examples. Point sources can be managed through periodic monitoring and treatment methods.
- Non-point source discharge, which consists of stormwater runoff that runs over streets, parking lots, farms, and minor watercourses before it reaches a major creek, river, or other water body. This “runoff” can contain debris, litter, soil, and other natural and man-made pollutants. Typical pollutants include organic materials that contribute to biochemical oxygen demand, suspended solids, pathogens, sediment from construction and erosion, air pollution fall-out, gasoline additives, oil and grease, nitrogen and phosphorus from chemical fertilizers, animal waste, leached acids from leaves, and pesticides. Once pollutants from surface runoff reach the receiving waters, they can cause water quality problems similar to those found in municipal and industrial point source discharges.

The San Francisco Bay Regional Water Quality Control Board requires that each Marin County municipality participate in the existing Baseline Plan, a program to prevent increased pollutant discharge from their storm drain systems, in particular by controlling erosion and sedimentation from construction projects.

Solid Waste

The City of Novato is responsible for solid waste and implementing state mandates. The Novato Sanitary District is currently responsible for trash disposal. They have granted a franchise to Novato Disposal Service for collection and disposal. Redwood Sanitary Landfill, about three miles north of the City, receives virtually all solid waste from Novato and the other cities in Marin. Serious public concerns have been expressed over the safety of the access to the landfill. The City has requested the operator, the County of Marin, and CalTrans to seriously investigate safety improvements or alternative access.

The Novato Sanitary District also operates the City’s recycling program, under a Countywide program to meet State requirements for reduction of the sources of solid waste. The Novato Disposal Service has the recycling franchise with the Sanitary District.

(See Safety Chapter for a discussion of hazardous materials.)

Mineral and Geological Resources

The primary extractive resources in and around the Novato area are sand and gravel. Crushed rock quarries are located on the southeast slopes of Mt. Burdell, but these operations are not currently active. Decorative fieldstone is located on the south side of Mt. Burdell. Sand and gravel have been produced in the Black Point area, but operations have not been active since the 1950s. The State Division of Mines and Geology has designated three sites as Resource Sectors in the Novato area (MRZ-2 zones) in Black Point, Burdell

Mountain, and Bowman Canyon. The California Surface Mining and Reclamation Act requires cities to adopt general plan policies to protect such sites.

Open Space and Parks

Open Space for Environmental Protection

In 1972, Marin County voters established the Marin County Open Space District and approved the assessment of a property tax for the purpose of acquiring and managing open space in the County. The District works cooperatively with federal agencies, the State Parks Department, and local communities to acquire open space in the eastern part of the County.

Open space areas in the Novato area that are identified in the Marin Countywide Plan include:

Community Separators

- Big Rock Ridge, separating the Novato basin from the Lucas Valley/Marinwood Communities, extending to Stafford Lake Park and bordering the Indian Valley Campus. (6,400 acres, of which 4,512 have been publicly acquired.)
- Hills east of Highway 101 south of Hamilton Field, separating Novato from the St. Vincent's property and extending to San Pablo Bay. (1,070 acres, of which 263 are publicly owned.)
- Pinheiro Ridge, the northern boundary of urban development east of the freeway, separating the Atherton area from Gness Field. (970 acres, of which 109 are publicly owned.)
- Mount Burdell, a major landmark of North Marin. (1,400 acres, all publicly owned. The Olompali State Historic Park borders to the north.)

Other ridges of local as well as Countywide importance are shown on EN Map 3: Scenic Lands.

Water Edge Lowlands

- San Pablo Bayfront, extending from Gallinas Creek to Novato Creek and containing McInnis County Park. (1,850 acres, 788 in public ownership.)
- Novato Creek to Black Point, including the entire tidal marsh and flood ponding area. (1,808 acres, publicly owned.)
- Petaluma River (950 acres, of which 196 acres of wetlands between Rush Creek and Basalt Creek are publicly owned.)
- Deer Island Open Space Preserve (120 acres northeast of the intersection of Novato Creek and Highway 37, owned by the Marin County Open Space District.)

Stream and Creek Reserves

- Arroyo San Jose, extending through the Novato Golf and Country Club and Rafael Village.

- Novato and Warner Creeks, among the few remaining natural streams in East Marin.

The City of Novato also owns approximately 200 acres of open space, obtained through acquisition or dedication, and located throughout the City. There is approximately 4,000 acres of open space land in public ownership (state, county, city) in the City limits with another 1,000 acres in the Sphere of Influence. These lands are shown on EN Map 4: Open Space. The former Hamilton Army Airfield is a 700-acre property currently under Federal ownership that is being processed through the Federal disposal process known as the Base Realignment and Closure Commission (BRAC). The Reuse Plan prepared by the Hamilton Local Reuse Authority envisions wetlands conversion for this property which is below sea level and currently protected by a levee. The future ownership of the property is not yet decided.

Another portion of the base has an approved development plan that also provides for open space and wetlands restoration as part of the projects required mitigation measure.

Parks and Recreation, Trails, and Cultural Facilities

The City of Novato owns over 59 acres of developed parks and 169 acres of undeveloped future park lands, as shown in EN Table 1 below. Since 1970, the City and the Novato Unified School District have co-developed recreation areas at nine school sites, providing another 12 acres of community play fields, neighborhood parks, and recreation areas. The City of Novato and the Community College District have also collaborated on joint use projects. Park and Recreation Facilities and Existing Trails are shown on EN Map 5. The City is working with the County of Marin to complete the Countywide Trails Plan.

EN Table 1 provides an inventory of recreational facilities in Novato. Recreational facilities consist of playing fields and other sports facilities, as well as museums, community house, and a community center for senior citizens.

The Community Services Department's 1992 report *Target 2000: Taking Novato's Park and Recreation Facilities into the 21st Century*, recommends a 10-year park program, emphasizing the improvement of existing City-owned land and undeveloped park land and the use of opportunities such as joint use with the School District, rather than acquisition of additional land for parks. This will be revised to be consistent with the 1996 General Plan. The General Plan Appendix on Novato Neighborhoods contains information about proposed park improvements in the various areas of the City.

The conversion and development of Hamilton Field will have significant impact on the City's inventory of recreational facilities, parks, and open space. There are three separate portions of the Base: a parcel with an approved major development plan, a Navy-owned parcel with existing facilities that is being processed through the Federal disposal process and an Army-owned parcel that is also involved in the Federal disposal process.

The Hamilton Field developer is obligated by agreement to provide such improvements and land in both Phase I and Phase II of their development. As part of Phase I, the developer will construct two neighborhood parks totaling 4.5 acres on two sites. These two parks will be built around important existing structures on the base. The first will improve approximately two acres around the original fire station. The fire station itself will be brought to code for public use and compliment the surrounding park. The second park will be developed around the old base amphitheatre and will provide opportunity for both recreational and cultural activities.

Also in Phase I, the developer will improve building complex 500-501-502, the headquarters building, in order to provide much needed space for City and local nonprofit organizations. A building will be a future hub for community arts, educational, cultural, and recreational programs.

As part of Phase II, the City will receive title or license to use the approximately 60-acre landfill which could be used for future active recreational playfields. The City also receives the benefit of new open space and wetlands restoration as part of the project's required mitigation measures.

Conversion of Navy properties will also yield potential for new community recreational facilities. Throughout the Federal reuse process and now through the Base Realignment and Closure Commission (BRAC) process, the City has pursued title and ownership of several major facilities on base. These include the swimming pool complex, the gymnasium complex, the officers' club, the base theater, and all existing ball fields currently used by local Little Leagues. Please refer to EN Table 3 for a listing of potential publicly-owned recreational facilities at Hamilton.

The 700-acre Olompali State Historic Park, north of the City and west of Highway 101, was established in 1981. The park contains sites once occupied by the Coastal Miwok people, as well as the Burdell House, which was built in the 1860s. The *Olompali State Historic Park General Plan*, adopted by the State Park and Recreation Commission in 1988, calls for improvements to historical resources and trails. Capacity of the park is currently limited to 225 visitors at any one time because of parking availability.

EN Table 1: Publicly Owned Developed and Undeveloped Parks in Novato	
Park Site	Number of Acres
Developed Parks	
Hill Recreation Area	13.00
Hillside Park (Aaron & Highland)	1.00
Pioneer Memorial	8.75
Josef Hoog	9.94
Miwok	6.14
Marin Highlands	4.07
Slade	3.10
Marion/Stafford Grove	2.75
Lee Gerner	1.88
Arroyo Avichi	0.58
Bahia Mini Parks (6)	1.00
Partridge Knolls	0.50
Olive/Elmwood	0.25
Joyce Street	0.25
Pansy Tong Lo	0.75
Robinhood	0.25
Pacheco Valle/Creekside	4.65
Fairway – Alameda	0.30
Total – Developed Parks:	59.16
Undeveloped Parks	
O’Hair/Fuchs	100.00
Lynwood Hill	13.30
San Andreas Park Site	4.43
Scottsdale Pond and Marsh	40.63
Pacheco Valle	2.37
Park Novato	1.30
Pell	0.88
Terry Circle	0.60
Spyglass Park	1.00
Hamilton Parks	4.50
Total – Undeveloped Parks	169.01
Total Park Acreage	228.77
Source: Community Profile, 1994, City of Novato	

EN Table 2: Publicly Owned Recreational Facilities in Novato	
Facility	Description
Specialized Facilities	
Babe Silva Field	Little League field
Hill Recreation Area	Soccer, softball fields; senior center, gymnasium, multi-purpose room
Margaret Todd Center	Multi-purpose senior center
Marin Museum of the American Indian	Local cultural resources museum, located in Miwok Park
Novato Community House	4,000-square-foot multi-purpose center and performing arts building
Novato History Museum	Local history and archives
Novato High School Pool	City-owned pool on Novato High School campus
Novato Fitness and Gymnastics Centers	10,000 square feet leased and operated by City
Jointly Developed Facilities	
Indian Valley Campus	6 tennis courts, 50-meter pool
Lu Sutton School Recreation and Pinheiro Field	Little League field, soccer field, softball field
Lynwood School Recreation Area	2 softball fields
Olive School/Hamman Field	Little League field, neighborhood park
Pleasant Valley School Recreation Area	Little League field, soccer field
Public School Facilities	
Hamilton/Meadowpark Elementary School	2-acre play field, multi-purpose room
Loma Verde Elementary School	2-acre play field, multi-purpose room
San Ramon Elementary School	4-acre soccer, softball fields*
San Jose Middle School	soccer, football field, softball field, multi-purpose/gym
Sinaloa Middle School	4-acre play field, 2 tennis courts, multi-purpose/gym*
Novato High School	6 acres of play fields, baseball field, softball field, soccer field, 8 tennis courts, pool (municipal) 2 gyms*
San Marin High School	6 acres of play fields, softball/baseball/football facilities, 3 tennis courts, gym*
*Partially developed for recreation with the City.	

EN Table 3: Potential Publicly Owned Recreational Facilities – Hamilton
--

Facility	Description
Neighborhood Parks	Two parks, 4.5 acres, including improvements to firehouse and amphitheater. Provided by developer as turnkeys.
Headquarters Building 500	Approximately 21,000 square feet to be improved and given to City as center for arts, educational, cultural, and recreational programs. Provided by developer.
Landfill Site	Future active recreational play field site for athletic activities. May be provided to City by license agreement as part of Phase II.
Swimming Pool Complex	Pool, cabana, locker rooms. To be acquired as part of BRAC proceedings.
Gymnasium Complex	Includes gym, exercise room, and bowling lanes. To be acquired as part of BRAC proceedings.
Officers' Club	Community center and office facility to be acquired as part of the BRAC proceedings.
Base Theater	Theater for use by local performing arts organizations and to be acquired as part of the BRAC proceedings.
Ballfields	Four existing Little League and Senior League fields on base, to be acquired by City for continued use for the Little League organization. To be acquired through BRAC.
Open Space, Parks, Wetlands	The City will may acquire approximately 200 acres of open space parks and wetlands as part of the development project

3. OBJECTIVES, POLICIES, AND PROGRAMS

Watercourses, Wetlands, and Baylands Areas

EN Objective 1 Preserve, protect, and enhance stream s and other bodies of water.

Streams and other water bodies are shown on EN Map 1. Areas next to streams contain environmental resources that are important to the ecology of the area, such as plants and animals that require a riparian habitat, scenic and open space values, and wildlife corridors. These areas are easily damaged by water pollution and construction activity, and therefore careful control of development is necessary.

EN Policy 1 Ecology of Creeks and Streams. Preserve and enhance the ecology of creeks and streams.

EN Program 1.1: Establish Stream Protection Zone for watercourses shown on EN Map 1 and their significant tributaries. The width of the Stream Protection zone shall include the watercourse itself between the tops of the banks (existing height) and a strip of land extending 50 feet laterally outward from the top of each bank. Include provisions to extend the Stream Protection Zone where critical habitat areas and riparian vegetation exist and can be restored, wherever feasible, or to reduce the zone if physical conditions so warrant. Establish standards to protect riparian habitat, water quality, provide long-term flood management and establish continuous wildlife corridors. Require a permit for any excavation, filling, or grading; removal or planting of vegetation; construction, alteration, or removal of any structure; or alteration of any embankment that is proposed in the Stream Protection Zone. Permits shall include mitigations to protect wildlife and to protect,

enhance, and restore native vegetation. The permit shall take into account aesthetic, scenic, environmental, and recreational impacts or benefits.

Under this program, the City will permit uses in Stream Protection Zone that are allowed in the underlying zoning district on parcels that fall entirely within the zone. On parcels partially within the zone uses will be permitted in the Stream Protection Zone where it can be conclusively demonstrated that development on any other part of the parcel is not feasible or would have a more adverse effect on water quality, flood management, vegetation or wildlife habitat. In addition, the City will encourage other public agencies to provide conditions to protect and preserve the natural resource qualities of the watercourse area:

1. Water supply projects
2. Flood control projects
3. Maintenance of water channels and levees for erosion control, flood control, and other public purposes

The waterways shown on EN Map 1 constitute important physical, habitat, aesthetic, and recreational assets to the residents of Novato. The Stream Protection Zone will implement the goals and policies of the General Plan related to reducing flood risk and damage, and to protecting and preserving natural resources. It will also reduce flood losses; minimize indirect costs to government caused by development in flood hazard areas; preserve biological diversity and habitat; prevent erosion of stream banks; prevent siltation of stream waters; and generally conserve and protect woodland and wildlife resources in the Novato Area of Interest. Marin County's Streamside Conservation Areas provide similar protections for watercourses.

EN Policy 2 Vegetation in Watercourse Areas. Protect vegetation in watercourse areas.

EN Program 2.1: Require mitigation for loss of riparian vegetation. On-site mitigation is preferred wherever possible.

EN Program 2.2: Encourage planting of native vegetation and discourage planting of exotic, invasive vegetation.

EN Program 2.3: Develop educational programs to inform property owners about protecting native vegetation in watercourse areas.

(See EN Programs 1.1 and 5.2)

The largest concentration of riparian vegetation occurs where land along streams has not been developed. Native vegetation can be protected by minimizing disturbances, encouraging removal of non-native species such as eucalyptus, palm, broom and other exotic, invasive plants, and replacing them with native plants. Planted trees and shrubs should include a variety of species that would grow naturally in riparian areas.

EN Policy 3 Wildlife Habitat. Endeavor to preserve and enhance wildlife habitat areas in watercourse areas and control human use of these areas as necessary to protect them.

EN Program 3.1: Refer to comment to the State Department of Fish and Game and Marin County Flood Control District any grading, filling, or construction proposal that would alter a watercourse shown on EN Map 1.

EN Policy 4 Erosion Control. Minimize soil disturbance and surface runoff in the Stream Protection Zones. Pursuant to the City's grading ordinance, work in and adjacent to the zones shall be conducted during the dry season only, at times when the Community Development Department determines that surface runoff will be minimal or containable.

(See EN Programs 1.1)

EN Policy 5 Habitat Restoration. Restore damaged portions of riparian areas to their natural state, wherever feasible.

EN Program 5.1: Continue to participate in the Petaluma River project to restore marshland habitat and provide public access as long as it does not adversely affect wildlife habitat.

EN Program 5.2: Prohibit further degradation and require restoration of previously-degraded riparian areas as a condition of development approval when restoration is feasible, taking into account the project's size and cumulative impacts.

See also EN Program 6.2

EN Program 5.3: Encourage riparian restoration as part of permit approval.

EN Policy 6 Public Access. Manage public access to watercourses shown on EN Map 1 in a manner that will not degrade the habitat.

EN Program 6.1: Develop guidelines for public access to watercourse areas. Include guidelines dealing with appearance and view preservation.

EN Program 6.2: Evaluate proposals for trails and waterway access relative to potential impact on habitat value. Consequences such as wetland impacts, removal or damage to trees or other habitats, or invasion by domestic animals should be avoided. Where avoidance is not possible, alternative access should be sought.

In most cases, point access rather than linear access will minimize adverse impacts. Use of vegetated buffer areas, rather than fences, to separate watercourses from paths will be considered. Bridges, increased access points and additional paths will be considered in watercourse corridors.

Responsibility: Community Services Department

EN Policy 7 Water Quality: Encourage protection of water resources from pollution and sedimentation, and preserve their environmental and recreation values.

EN Program 7.1: Develop practices to protect water quality and natural ecosystems in the Stream Protection area.

EN Policy 8 Environmentally Sound Flood Control Measures. Encourage flood control measures that retain the natural features and conditions of watercourses to the maximum feasible extent. (Also see sections on flooding in Safety Chapter).

EN Program 8.1: Ensure the retention of flood protection easements held by the Marin County Flood Control and Water Conservation District on private property to prevent development in these areas.

Ways to retain natural features for flood control include maintaining drainageways above ground, keeping an adequate flood plain area to enable runoff to spread out when needed, and/or providing naturally vegetated ponding areas.

EN Program 8.2: Encourage the Marin County Flood Control and Water Conservation District to manage floodplains in accordance with policies of the Novato General Plan.

EN Objective 2 Preserve, protect and enhance wetlands.

EN Policy 9 Determination of Wetlands. Recognized the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (ACE) as the designated permitting agency that regulates wetlands. In regulating wetland activities, the ACE consults with other agencies and organizations including but not limited to U.S. Fish and Wildlife and State Department of Fish and Game.

EN Program 9.1: The City shall establish programs and ordinances that develop a process for determining, regulating and permitting wetlands.

EN Policy 10 Wetlands Ecology. Preserve and enhance wetlands ecology.

EN Program 10.1: Establish Wetland Protection Standards for wetlands as defined in EN Policy 9. Include provisions to extend the Wetlands Protection area where critical habitat areas (including uplands) and riparian vegetation exist or to reduce the area if physical conditions so warrant. Establish standards and require a permit for any excavation, filling, or grading; removal or planting of vegetation; construction, alteration, or removal of any structure; or alteration of any embankment that is proposed in or near a Wetland area. Permits shall include mitigations to protect wildlife and to protect and replace native vegetation, and shall take into account aesthetic, scenic, environmental, and recreational benefits.

EN Program 10.2: Require development plans to avoid wetlands to the maximum extent feasible. If development is permitted within wetlands, require mitigation at 2:1 replacement to provide wetland habitat of the same type as the lost habitat. Require off-site mitigation of wetlands impacts in cases where on-site mitigation is not possible. Off-site mitigation sites should be as close to the project site as possible.

See also LU Policy 9 for consideration of Constraints Analysis of wetlands areas, and policies and programs in other sections of the Environment Chapter. Implementation of this program should be coordinated with the appropriate state and federal authorities.

EN Program 10.3: Encourage wetlands restoration where appropriate.

Restoration of historic wetlands such as those at the Hamilton Field runway is contributing towards restoring those lands that experienced a significant loss (over 80 percent) in the Bay Area.

EN Objective 3 Preserve, protect, and enhance historic bayland areas.

EN Map 2, Bayland Areas, shows the historic shore of San Pablo Bay. Areas near the Bay include wetlands, habitat areas for endangered plant and animal species, streams, and lands that are at risk for damage from flooding and earthquakes. Careful regulation of development is necessary to protect environmental resources and minimize the effects of natural hazards. Many diked historic bayfront areas are used for agriculture.

EN Policy 11 Bayland Overlay Zone. Establish a Bayland Overlay Zone to preserve and enhance natural and historic resources, including wildlife and aquatic habitats, tidal marshes, seasonal marshes, lagoons, wetlands, agricultural lands and low-lying grasslands overlaying historic marshlands. The Bayland Overlay Zone will be established as part of the adoption of the General Plan and all policies related to this zone (EN Policies 11-17) are effective with Plan adoption.

EN Program 11.1: Revise the Zoning Ordinance to include a Bayland Overlay Zone consisting of bayland areas as shown on EN Map 2, excluding land that has been filled or legally developed. Permit uses in accordance with the underlying General Plan designation and Zoning District that are consistent with the other specific regulations pertaining to the Overlay Zone, recognizing the range of values which may characterize different areas.

See LU Policy 9 regarding Constraints Analysis of Bayland Areas.

EN Policy 12 Bayland Area Protection. Regulate development in the Bayland Overlay Zone so that it does not encroach into wetlands or sensitive wildlife habitats, provided that this regulation does not prevent all use of a property. Discourage human activity that damages fisheries, or habitat for birds, fish or other wildlife.

EN Program 12.1: All new development within the Bayland Overlay Zone shall provide a buffer between wetlands and the development. The buffer shall be of sufficient width to protect wetland habitat values. The buffer will be commensurate with the habitat value and it will be established as part of a site-specific decision.

EN Program 12.2: Encourage protection of migratory and other birds, anadromous fish and endangered species.

EN Policy 13 Views. Encourage protection of visual access to the San Pablo Bay Shoreline and the Petaluma River. EN Map 3, Scenic Resources.

EN Program 13.1: Establish design guidelines for the Bayland Overlay Zone. Consider guidelines for signs, protection of views, and requiring design review for all development in the area.

EN Policy 14 Tidal Areas. Cooperate with State and Federal agencies to ensure that areas subject to tidal action remain in their natural state.

EN Policy 15 Agriculture in Bayland Areas. Encourage the continuation of agricultural uses in Bayland Areas that do not adversely affect wetlands or sensitive wildlife habitats and do not damage fish habitat.

EN 15.1: Work with the County to establish programs that will encourage agriculture that does not degrade the environment in the baylands or cause pollution of Bay waters.

EN Policy 16 Public Access and Water-oriented Uses. Encourage public access to shoreline areas, consistent with wildlife and habitat protection and safety considerations. Allow water-oriented uses such as public access, docks and piers, and low-intensity recreational and educational activities which provide or protect wetland or wildlife habitat, and which do not require diking, filling, or dredging. Encourage restoration to tidal status, and seasonal wetlands. Allow use of shoreline areas for flood basins, and wastewater reclamation.

Where feasible, the City will accept dedicated public access easements, to be improved and maintained by the city, provided City funds are available. These easements should separate public access from habitat areas. The design of paths and viewpoints should minimize conflicts between public and private uses.

EN Policy 17 Inter-Agency Coordination. Facilitate coordination and consultation with other agencies with jurisdiction over the bay in the review of development and conservation proposals in the Bayland Overlay Zone.

EN Program 17.1: Provide information to applicants about agencies with jurisdiction over baylands.

Wildlife and Native Plant Protection

EN Objective 4 Preserve and protect native plant and animal species and their habitat.

Protecting the diversity of plant and animal species is important to the environmental health of the community. The Novato area contains important habitat areas and wildlife corridors in hillsides, along streams, and along the Bay.

EN Policy 18 Species Diversity and Habitat. Protect biological resources that are necessary to maintain a diversity of plant and animal species.

EN Program 18.1: Develop standards and mitigations to help ensure protection of native plant and animal species and their habitat, including the preservation and enhancement of wildlife corridors and edge habitats.

EN Policy 19 Special Status Species. Cooperate with State and Federal Agencies to ensure that development does not substantially adversely affect special status species appearing on the State or Federal list for any rare, endangered, or threatened species. The environmental documentation will screen for the Federal Candidate Species, plants listed on lists 1A, 1B, or 2 of the California Native Plant Society (CNPS), inventory of rare and endangered vascular plants of California and animals designated by CDFG as species of special concern or their current equivalent.

Agriculture

EN Objective 5 Encourage continued agricultural use.

Encouraging agricultural uses is a complex task that involves, for example, maintaining parcel sizes large enough to sustain agricultural production; preventing conversion of agricultural land to non-agricultural uses; discouraging uses that are incompatible with agricultural activities; implementing programs that assist agricultural operators and owners to maintain and improve agricultural productivity of their land; and assisting local marketing of locally-produced agricultural products. Most of the agricultural land in the Novato area is outside the City limits, although some agricultural activity still takes place inside Novato.

EN Policy 20 Agricultural Lands. Encourage preservation of agriculture.

EN Program 20.1: Coordinate with the County of Marin to maintain policies to protect agricultural land.

EN Program 20.2: Revise development regulations as required to preserve agricultural and maricultural activities on lands designated for agricultural use, by retaining or establishing very low density zoning categories; by specifying appropriate land uses in agricultural and maricultural areas; and by requiring clustering of development for maximum protection of lands. (Refer to Land Use Chapter.)

EN Program 20.3: Assist public agencies or a non-profit land trust in the acquisition of conservation easements on agricultural lands in the Novato area.

EN Program 20.4: Develop appropriate City policies and programs to protect the right to farm and agricultural land.

EN Policy 21 Environmental Impacts of Agriculture. Encourage agricultural activities that minimize adverse effects on environmental resources.

EN Program 21.1: Permaculture. Encourage permaculture, the conscious design and maintenance of agriculturally productive ecosystems, which have the biodiversity, stability, and resilience of natural ecosystems, in the project design of developments and the activities of public agencies in the Novato area.

EN Policy 22 Mariculture. Consider maricultural use, the cultivation of marine organisms in their natural environment, of tidelands and on-shore production areas where possible along the shore of the Bay.

Woodlands

EN Objective 6 Preserve, protect, and enhance native woodland areas.

EN Policy 23 Native Woodlands. Maintain age and species diversity of native woodlands, and preserve the health of trees and other vegetation wherever feasible.

EN Program 23.1: Require replacement of native trees/woodland with native species when projects result in the loss of woodland habitat.

(See EN Program 26.1)

EN Policy 24 Trees on Public Land. Protect native woodlands and significant trees on public lands by planting additional trees needed to maintain age and species diversity, ensuring the proper and timely pruning of trees, and removing non-native species, particularly if they are invasive.

EN Program 24.1: Consider adopting a Tree Management Program, establishing varieties, size and spacing requirements, maintenance standards, and priority planting schedules.

Funding for such a program may be available from Federal forestry and transportation-related grants, State grants, assessment district funds, and other public and private sources.

EN Policy 25 Trees on Private Property. Encourage and, where appropriate, require actions by private property owners to protect the health of native woodlands and trees.

EN Program 25.1: Continue requiring the planting of trees in parking lots to provide shade and visual screening.

(The Community Identity Chapter has additional policies relating to landscaping parking areas.)

EN Program 25.2: Develop educational programs to inform property owners of good tree management practices.

EN Program 25.3: Adopt a tree preservation ordinance that incorporates the City's Heritage Tree Ordinance.

EN Policy 26 Trees in New Development. Require that the site planning, construction and maintenance of development preserve existing healthy trees and native vegetation on site to the maximum extent feasible. Replace trees and vegetation not able to be saved.

EN Program 26.1: Consider amending the City's Zoning Ordinance and other regulations to improve policies for tree and native vegetation preservation, planting, maintenance, and replacement.

Scenic Resources

EN Objective 7 Protect visual values on hillsides, ridgelines, and other scenic resources.

EN Map 3, Scenic Resources, shows areas characterized by the significant ridgelines, hillsides, and other scenic elements that help to form the visual character of Novato and that define community separators. It is important that development be located and designed in such a way that these resources are protected.

EN Policy 27 Scenic Resources. Protect visual values on hillsides, ridgelines, and other scenic resources.

EN Program 27.1: Establish Hillside and Ridgeline Protection Standards and Scenic Resource Protection standards to preserve visual values on hillsides, ridgelines, and other scenic resources. Existing policies would remain in effect until the standards are established.

This ordinance would include development standards and measures for hillsides and scenic ridgelines. A slope density regulation which decreases allowable development densities as

slope increases would be a practical method to protect hillsides. Refer to the Safety and Noise Chapter for additional policies and programs dealing with development controls for unstable slopes.

Energy Conservation

EN Objective 8 Reduce dependence on non-renewable energy and materials.

EN Policy 28 Energy Conservation. Consider land use patterns and policies that promote energy conservation.

The Land Use Chapter encourages mixed use projects in and near the Downtown and in neighborhood shopping centers. The Transportation Chapter contains policies and programs that encourage reductions in the use of single-occupant vehicles and encourage the use of bicycles and other travel modes that do not consume fossil fuels.

EN Policy 29 Energy Conservation Measures in Buildings. Reduce energy consumption by requiring structures to meet the energy conservation requirements stipulated in the State Building Code and State Title 24 regulations.

EN Program 29.1: Adopt a program to encourage retrofitting of energy-saving features in existing structures by providing information, technical assistance, and other incentives.

EN Program 29.2: Review, and if necessary revise, planning and regulatory documents to ensure if they adequately promote energy efficiency, make use of sustainable renewable resources, and protection of solar access.

EN Policy 30 Energy Efficiency in Public Programs. Assure energy efficiency in local government operations.

EN Program 30.1: Continue to conduct energy management studies to evaluate opportunities for energy savings and use of local renewable sources.

EN Program 30.2: Incorporate energy conservation measures in the design of capital improvement projects.

EN Program 30.3: Consider using electric, zero-emission vehicles or alternative fuel and alternate energy efficient building materials.

EN Policy 31 Development Review Process. Consider energy conservation in the development review process.

EN Program 31.1: Consider adopting a solar access ordinance that would require all development applications to be reviewed for potential energy conservation measures and design, including site orientation, building design and aesthetics and use of materials, landscaping and solar access.

EN Program 31.2: Make available to the public PG&E literature and other information on energy conservation and energy efficient design.

EN Program 31.3: Analyze energy consumption aspects of site design and service delivery, such as drive-up windows.

EN Program 31.4: Encourage use of alternative energy-efficient building materials.

Air Quality

EN Objective 9 Work to protect and improve air quality.

Refer to the Transportation Chapter for additional policies and programs regarding air quality.

EN Policy 32 Regional Planning to Improve Air Quality. Continue to cooperate with the Bay Area Air Quality Management District (BAAQMD) in implementing the regional Clean Air Plan.

EN Program 32.1: Use the environmental review process to determine whether air emissions from proposed development would exceed BAAQMD standards.

EN Program 32.2: If fireplaces or wood burning stoves/heaters are installed in new development, these fireplaces, stoves, and/or heaters shall meet the most current EPA standards regarding particulate emissions.

EN Program 32.3: The City shall monitor new development to ensure that projections made in the Draft General Plan are not exceeded. If there is substantial increase in development over projections; then the City shall investigate additional transportation, land use, and air quality beneficial measures to improve air quality.

EN Policy 33 Vehicle Trips. Encourage transportation facilities and modes that minimize motor vehicle use.

EN Program 33.1: Develop program for trip reduction and implement as permitted by law.

EN Policy 34 Local Efforts. Encourage local efforts to improve air quality.

EN Program 34.1: Use the City's development review process and California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) regulations to evaluate and mitigate the local and cumulative effects of new development on air quality.

EN Program 34.2: Continue to include responsible agencies in the review of proposed land uses that would handle, store or transport any potential air pollutant sources such as, but not limited to, lead, mercury, vinyl chloride, benzene, asbestos, beryllium, and all fossil fuels.

EN Program 34.3: Continue to require and enforce a dust emissions control plan for construction.

EN Program 34.4: Review all new industrial development for potential air quality impacts on sensitive receptors. Require adequate buffer zones between industrial development and sensitive receptors to ensure public health and to prevent odor-based nuisance.

EN Program 34.5: Support a strong street tree planting and community forest component of the proposed Tree Preservation Ordinance and tree management program to help improve local air quality.

Water Resources

EN Objective 10 Preserve, protect, and enhance water resources.

Reduce urban runoff pollutants that enter storm drains and infiltrates groundwater resources. Urban runoff pollution prevention is also accomplished by policies and programs in this chapter relating to wetlands and bayfront areas and riparian corridors.

Refer to the Public Facilities and Services Chapter for policies and programs regarding potable water quality.

EN Policy 35 Watershed Management. Minimize the effects of pollution in stormwater runoff. Retain and restore where feasible the natural hydrological characteristics of watersheds in the Novato Area of Interest.

EN Program 35.1: Continue to implement the Clean Stormwater Ordinance. As budget allows, increase storm drain maintenance to reduce urban runoff pollutants and increase street sweeping programs.

The City Council adopted the erosion and sedimentation controls in ABAG's "Manual of Standards for Erosion and Sediment Control Measures" in June 1995.

The City participates in the Marin County Stormwater Pollution Protection Program, designed to substantially reduce pollution, and minimize hydrological changes due to development and urbanization of watersheds. Federal mandates determine the basic level of participation and requirements of this program.

EN Policy 36 Point Source Pollution. Continue to prohibit discharges of any substances other than stormwater and prevent illicit dumping of wastes into storm drains and creeks.

EN Program 36.1: Investigate reports or evidence of illicit discharges or dumping into creeks or storm drains and work with the appropriate state and local agencies to determine causes and take measures to prevent such occurrences.

EN Policy 37 Using CEQA to Reduce Water Quality Impacts. Use the provisions of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) process to identify measures to prevent erosion, sedimentation, and urban runoff pollution resulting from development.

EN Program 37.1: Include analysis and mitigation measures to reduce the harmful effects of runoff as part of project review.

Solid Waste Reduction

EN Objective 11 Reduce the volume of solid waste generated by the City.

EN Policy 38 Solid Waste Reduction. Encourage solid waste reduction methods.

EN Program 38.1: Continue working toward implementing AB 939. The California Integrated Waste Management Act of 1989.

Responsibility: Central Administration

EN Program 38.2: Consider enacting ordinances that increase recycling, reuse, and waste reduction. This includes recycling of green waste, construction debris, etc.

EN Program 38.3: Purchase goods containing recycled materials for City use wherever feasible.

EN Program 38.4: Revise the Zoning Ordinance to allow a solid waste recycling transfer station and/or a Materials Recovery Facility MRF to locate in the Light Industrial and the Public Utilities Zoning Districts with Conditional Use Permit approval.

EN Program 38.5: Consider locating a compost facility within the City of Novato.

Responsibility: Central Administration

EN Policy 39 On-Site Recycling Areas. Require on-site areas for recycling in commercial/retail, office and multi-family residential developments as required by State law.

EN Program 39.1: Evaluate and revise the City ordinance to implement State requirements for recycling, requiring all commercial/retail, office and multi-family developments to provide on-site drop-off areas. Coordinate with the City's refuse disposal contractor or other recycling services to ensure regular pick-up.

EN Program 39.2: Encourage development to provide for areas for storage of recyclables in the design of new development and remodeling.

EN Program 39.3: Consider requiring in the ordinance a debris and reuse plan for recycling on construction sites and to include recycling of existing materials on site and construction materials. The Plan would require estimating the amount of construction derived solid waste the project will generate, identifying the market opportunities for recycling and reuse and developing a strategy and action plan to recycle and reuse material.

Mineral Resources

EN Objective 12 Designate mineral resources.

EN Policy 40 Mineral Resources. Designate mineral resources as required by the State Division of Mines and Geology as mineral resource sites.

EN Program 40.1: Use the environmental review process to determine areas that are potential mineral resources.

Open Space

Protection and acquisition of Open Space can be accomplished through public purchase, or through negotiated transfers of various types, including through development review.

EN Objective 13 Preserve open space for the protection of natural resources.

EN Policy 41 Open Space of Countywide and Local Importance. Protect designated open space of Countywide and local significance in the Novato area.

The Marin Countywide Plan designates portions of the following areas: Ridgelines (Community Separators): Big Rock Ridge, St. Vincent's, Pinheiro Ridge, and Mount Burdell; Water Edge Lowlands; San Pablo Bayfront; Novato Creek/Black Point and Petaluma River; Watercourse Areas: Arroyo San Jose, Novato and Warner Creeks; Safety Zone, Gness Field. (See EN Map 1: Waterways, EN Map 2: Bayfront Areas, and EN Map 3: Scenic Resources and EN Map 4, Open Space. The City will identify open space of local significance.

EN Program 41.1: Continue to work with the Marin County Open Space District to establish a preservation plan for open space.

EN Program 41.2: Coordinate with the Marin County Open Space District to establish a funding program to acquire and maintain open space of local importance.

EN Program 41.3: Work with state and federal agencies and non-profit organizations to obtain funds for acquisition of significant open space.

EN Program 41.4: Identify open space of local importance and prioritize for acquisition. Develop a strategy for local funding and donations. Provide technical assistance to property owners to establish assessment districts or other mechanisms to acquire open space.

EN Policy 42 Specific Use Objectives for Open Space. Protect publicly-owned open space areas in their natural state; limit uses to those with a minimal adverse environmental impact.

EN Program 42.1: Establish standards for the management and maintenance of City-owned open space.

EN Program 42.2: Establish an annual City open space maintenance and environmental needs inventory, and include a budget for open space maintenance.

EN Policy 43 Access to Open Space. Provide public access to public open space in a manner compatible with the preservation and enhancement of the natural environment.

EN Program 43.1: Provide access to public open space through the review of development proposals in adjacent areas.

Parks and Trails

EN Objective 14 Provide an attractive and comprehensive system of parks and trails throughout the city to meet the recreational needs of the entire community.

EN Policy 44 Park and Recreation Facilities. Develop and maintain to the maximum extent possible given available resources a system of parks to meet the needs of Novato residents.

EN Program 44.1: Review the 1992 report Target 2000 and develop an updated Master Plan for Parks and Recreation facilities. (See Novato Neighborhoods Appendix for more detailed recommendations.)

Responsibility: Community Services Department

Refer to EN Map 6 which shows future major park development.

EN Program 44.2: Coordinate recreation programs with the Novato Unified School District, the Community College District, other public and non-profit agencies, and commercial recreation facilities.

Responsibility: Community Services Department

EN Program 44.3: Evaluate parking and facilities for transit access at all recreation facilities.

Responsibility: Community Services Department

EN Program 44.4: Require design of screening, lighting, and noise protection to reduce impacts on nearby neighborhoods.

Responsibility: Community Services Department

EN Program 44.5: Review and update regulations establishing impact fees for residential development to provide a fair share of the costs of park and recreation facilities.

Responsibility: Community Services Department

EN Program 44.6: Conduct a nexus study to investigate the feasibility of establishing impact fees for non-residential development to provide a fair share of the costs of park and open space.

Responsibility: Community Services Department

EN Program 44.7: Consider geoseismic and other potential hazards prior to City acceptance of dedications of land for park or open space. Identified hazards shall be fully repaired and/or financial protection for liability provided to the City before acceptance of land.

EN Policy 45 Community and Neighborhood Parks. Consider implementing planning and funding for community parks. Encourage neighborhood parks emphasizing homeowner association ownership.

EN Program 45.1: Consider requiring developers to provide neighborhood parks in keeping with their project and also contribute toward communitywide parks consistent in the anticipated use of community facilities by potential residents of the proposed development.

EN Program 45.2: Consider evaluating existing underdeveloped park sites for feasibility of developing as community parks or consideration of other options such as neighborhood ownership or open space.

EN Program 45.3: Identify locations for additional community parks.

EN Policy 46 Existing Park Land and Facilities. Continue to emphasize improvement of the City's extensive holdings of undeveloped parkland over the acquisition of new land for parks and open space.

EN Program 46.1: Develop a financial plan to improve undeveloped park land, maintain existing facilities, and acquire land for new neighborhood parks .

Responsibility: Community Services Department

EN Policy 47 Hamilton Field. Develop and rehabilitate appropriate parks and recreation facilities on portions of Hamilton Field that become City-owned.

EN Policy 48 Greenways. Provide a system of greenways, consisting of natural lands, wildlife corridors, open space, watersheds, forests, landscaped borders, and landscaped pathways for pedestrians and bicycles. Greenways should connect major open space areas, and habitat areas including perimeter open space, creeks, Stafford Lake, O'Hair Park, and Scottsdale Pond, with the developed parts of the City.

EN Program 48.1: Consider developing a Greenways Plan indicating locations and design criteria for a City-wide system, including consideration of privacy issues along creeks and in other developed areas and minimizing impacts on wildlife.

Responsibility: Community Services Department

EN Policy 49 Annual Review of Open Space, Parks, and Trails Acquisition. Review the status of open space, parks, and trails acquisition and development.

EN Program 49.1: Prepare a report for the City Council and the Parks and Recreation Commission on the status of the acquisition and the improvement of parks and trails, including a list of existing and proposed projects, estimated cost and sources of funding. Determine what additional actions, if any, may be necessary to implement the policies of this Chapter.

Responsibility: Community Services Department

EN Program 49.2: Develop a financial plan for the improvement and maintenance of an urban trails system.

Responsibility: Community Services Department

EN Policy 50 Integrated Trails System. Facilitate the development of an integrated trails system and a continuous Bay Trail that connects regional trails, schools, open space, parks, recreation facilities, and residential areas. (See Transportation Chapter.)¹

EN Program 50.1: Continue to develop and enlarge a comprehensive and coordinated trails and paths system that serves both recreational and utilitarian travel.

Responsibility: Community Services Department

EN Program 50.2: Consider the access needs of a variety of users, including school-age children, the elderly, and those with disabilities when designing trails and paths.

Responsibility: Community Services Department

EN Program 50.3: Minimize impacts to habitats and wildlife in planning, construction and operation of trails.

EN Program 50.4: Require new developments to provide direct pedestrian connections to parks and trails and to dedicate portions of the mapped trail system that extend through the property, consistent with nexus considerations and applicable laws.

EN Program 50.5: Work with the Marin County Open Space District, the Association of Bay Area Governments, and other regional, state and federal agencies to implement the trail system as described in the Hamilton Bay Trail Public Access Plan, Marin Countywide Plan and ABAG Bay Trail Project.¹

¹Amended 6/11/02 by Resolution No. 86-02.

EN Map 5 shows the preferred alignment for the Bay Trail along the eastside of Pacheco Pond and connecting to the south through the Las Gallinas Sanitary District lands to the existing bayfront trail on the outboard levee. The Bay Trail Plan provides for alternate alignments to the north and south of Hamilton in case the preferred alignment cannot be implemented. An alternate alignment to the north provides for connection of the trail from Hamilton airfield/runway parcel to Bel Marin Keys Boulevard along the westside of Pacheco Pond. This alternative alignment may be supported by the City only if the state and federal agencies undertaking the Hamilton Restoration Project and Bel Marin Keys Unit 5 Restoration construct the alternate route as part of the restoration project in order to offset the potential impact to existing wetland habitats. Provision of point access along the southern cross levee and a connection to the south on the west side of Las Gallinas lands is shown as an interim connection with a recommendation for a future connection to the Las Gallinas Bay Trail segment along the outboard levee with appropriate habitat buffers.¹

EN Program 50.6: Obtain easements from the Coastal Conservancy to ensure access in perpetuity for the Bay Trail through Hamilton and Bel Marin Keys.¹

EN Program 50.7: Obtain formal support for the Bay Trail connection to the south from the Las Gallinas Sanitary District.¹

EN Program 50.8: Work with the Bay Area Ridge Trail Council to implement the Novato portion of the Bay Area Ridge Trail, encircling San Francisco Bay on ridge lines.¹

Responsibility: Community Development Department, Community Services Department

The Bay Area Ridge Trail is a proposed 400-mile multi-use trail system that will connect 75 parks and public open spaces along the ridges with the communities that encircle San Francisco Bay. In Marin County the system will mostly use existing trails shown on the Countywide trails plan. The Ridge Trail is planned to run along the perimeter of Novato on a yet to be determined route from Big Rock Ridge to Mount Burdell. The City has endorsed the Bay Area Ridge Trail and will participate in trail planning to assure the maximum recreational benefit to area residents.¹

¹Amended 6/11/02 by Resolution No. 86-02.

EN Policy 51 Environmental Education. Provide opportunities for environmental education, recreation and wildlife interpretation that integrate and link the City's parks and trails systems to environmental education, scientific research, and restoration activities within the watershed as well as, the community's cultural heritage.¹

EN Program 51.1 Work with regional, state and federal agencies and other interest groups to develop an environmental educational and interpretive center at Hamilton with connections to the Bay Trail, Hamilton community park and wetland restoration activities in the vicinity.¹

EN Program 51.2 Address potential wildlife disturbance from trail use by incorporating adequate buffers and screening into the design of restoration projects, providing physical and visual separations to minimize habitat conflicts, such as grade-separated trails, screening vegetation, point access and overlook areas, berms, and fencing. Consider seasonal closure of trail sections during nesting season, and prohibition of dogs adjacent to sensitive wildlife areas.¹

EN Program 51.3 Address potential security, parking and privacy issues for existing residences and businesses along trail routes by providing adequate trailhead parking, seating and viewing areas, and several access points along the trail to disperse trail use; incorporating adequate screening vegetation, fencing, gate controls, grade separation of trail paths, and providing appropriate signage, trash and animal waste receptacles, and restrooms.¹

Responsibility: Community Development Department, Community Services Department

EN Policy 52 Continue to work closely with the Rancho Olompali organization concerned with planning and improving the historic park, and the State Parks Department to enhance the park.

Responsibility: Community Services Department

¹Amended 6/11/02 by Resolution No. 86-02.

CHAPTER V: SAFETY & NOISE

1. INTRODUCTION

This chapter combines two state mandated elements. The first section contains the Safety Element [Government Code § 65302(g)]. The second section contains the Noise Element pursuant to the Noise Element Guidelines of the Government Code [§ 65302(d)].

The Safety Section deals with the protection of the community from unreasonable risks associated with the effects of earthquake, landslides, slope instability, subsidence and other known geologic hazards, flooding, and building collapse. This section includes a map of known seismic and other geologic hazards and also addresses locally relevant safety issues such as;

- wildland and urban fires;
- flooding, storm drainage; and
- emergency response capacity.

A second purpose of this section is to guide land use planning and policy decisions to reduce safety risks and achieve an acceptable level of public protection from known natural and man-made hazardous events.

The Noise section identifies and evaluates community noise sources and problems. State law requires that a noise element consider noise generated from a number of different sources including, but not limited to, highways, local streets, public transit, airports, and industrial operations. In brief, the Noise section contains:

- a map of the future noise environment using CNEL (Community Noise Equivalent Level) contours;
- standards for indoor and outdoor noise exposure; and
- policies and implementation programs to mitigate major noise problems where possible, both at present and in the foreseeable future.

Each subject area in this chapter is presented with background information followed by objectives, policies and programs.

2. OBJECTIVES, POLICIES AND PROGRAMS, AND BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Seismic Hazards

Novato is located in one of the most seismically active areas of the nation. The western edge of the continental plates runs along the California shoreline, and the resulting stresses have produced a complex network of faults in California.

The only “active” fault in Marin County is the San Andreas Fault located 12-14 miles west of the City; this fault is subject to a maximum credible earthquake of 8.3 (Richter Scale). However, a recent study of earthquake hazard prepared by ABAG (ABAG, 1995) concludes that the chance of a major earthquake on the northern segment of the San Andreas Fault in the next 30 years is only 2 percent. An inactive fault, the Burdell Mountain Fault, crosses the northeastern portion of the City.

The Hayward Fault (located about eight miles east of the eastern edge of the Novato Sphere of Influence) and the Healdsburg-Rodgers Creek Fault located northeast of the City are both active faults with maximum credible earthquakes of 7.5 and 7.2 respectively. The ABAG report predicts the probability of an earthquake of a magnitude of 7.1 during the next 30 years on the Healdsburg-Rodgers Creek Fault as 0.22 (i.e., 22 percent chance) and for an earthquake of a magnitude of 7.1 on the northern Hayward Fault as 0.28 (i.e., 28 percent chance). The most severe earthquake effects in Novato would be from the Hayward Fault.

The bayfront and marshland areas of Novato are potentially hazardous to buildings. Silt and mud deposits have accumulated over 10,000 years in flat areas with elevations generally below sea level. Formerly much of these lands would flood during high tide. Some of these lands have been “reclaimed” through the construction of levees and drainage channels and used for urban development. During an earthquake, the sandy soils may become fluid-like, in a process known as liquefaction, greatly increasing the potential damage to buildings. Urban development on bayfront areas is thus potentially exposed to a very high level of geologic risk and should be carefully planned in relationship to the geotechnical requirements of the site.

Potential hazards associated with earthquakes include:

- Rupture of the ground surface by displacement along faults.
- Shaking of the ground caused by passage of seismic waves through the earth.
- Ground failure induced by shaking, such as landslides, liquefaction, and subsidence of unstable ground, with associated effects, including fire and disruption of utilities and transportation routes.
- Tsunamis (often incorrectly called tidal waves) and seiches which occur in enclosed bodies of water such as reservoirs or lakes. This is an insignificant risk in Novato.

Seismic Effects on Structures and Public Facilities

The severity of damage to buildings from earthquakes is related to the intensity of ground shaking, soils and geologic characteristics, the type of building construction used, and other potential hazards listed above. The City of Novato does not have any critical facilities such as high occupancy buildings located in high-risk areas. A community hospital is proposed and has been approved for development on a site with fill over Bay mud. The hospital will be constructed to a hospital standard set by the Office of State Health, Planning and

Development in consultation with the Office of the State Architect which takes into consideration location and occupancy. The state Building Standards for hospitals are more stringent than the Uniform Building Code used by cities. Seismic risk for these types of structures are resolved consistent with current known design factors prescribed through engineering practices and the applicable regulation of the regulatory authority. The land use pattern that has evolved in Novato has, in general, avoided high-risk areas.

The City of Novato is within Seismic Zone 4. The seismic zones are in order of magnitude with Seismic Zone 4 being the area of greatest risk. The Uniform Building Code (UBC) requires a higher safety factor for construction in Seismic Zone 4.

The Unreinforced Masonry Law passed by the State Legislature in 1986 (SB 547), requires all cities and counties to identify potentially hazardous unreinforced masonry buildings. The City has complied with this legislation and reported all unreinforced masonry buildings to the State Seismic Commission. Implementation of an inspection and reinforcement program has been completed to mitigate hazards associated with the seismic effects on most structures. Novato has one remaining unreinforced masonry building.

The seismic status of buildings by their seismic classification is summarized below:

- a. Emergency buildings (police and fire stations) have been constructed recently and have been built with earthquake damage mitigating features. The existing hospital is an older structure which poses an appreciable risk.
- b. Many of the high priority buildings (City buildings, schools, limited care facilities) are mostly of recent construction. Many are steel or wood-frame buildings which are the least susceptible to earthquake damage.
- c. The majority of high-use buildings (commercial and office buildings, apartment buildings of 50 or more units and churches) are of recent construction and were designed to Seismic Risk Zone 4 standards.
- d. Duplexes and the majority of housing in Novato have been built with one- to two-story wood-frame construction which has a high survivability in the event of an earthquake.
- e. Bridges across Highway 101 could be vulnerable in the event of a major earthquake.
- f. Many of the older historical structures have not been retrofitted to meet recent seismic building standards.

The varying levels of seismic and geologic risk within the Novato area posed by a hypothetical earthquake on the Hayward Fault are illustrated by SF Map 1: Earthquake Hazard. SF Map 1A shows fault traces in Marin County and adjoining areas. A major earthquake would be expected to cause considerable damage to transportation systems. Roads, bridges and highway overpasses are susceptible to damage or failure in the event of a major earthquake. Landslides would be intensified as a result of ground shaking, and could affect portions of the roadway system located in landslide potential areas identified in SF Map 2: Slope Instability. Seismic damage could also occur to treated water and sewage pipelines, gas pipelines, and to telephone and power lines.

Effective planning and preparation can significantly reduce the risks and harmful effects of earthquakes and other natural disasters.

SF Objective 1 Reduce seismic hazards.

SF Policy 1 Seismic Hazards. Reduce the risk of loss of life, personal injury and damage to property resulting from seismic hazards.

SF Program 1.1: Continue to require geotechnical and engineering geology reports by consulting Certified Engineering Geologists and/or Registered Geotechnical Engineers for development proposals on sites in seismically and geologically hazardous areas and for all critical structures. These reports should include, but not be limited to: evaluation of and recommendations to mitigate the effects of ground shaking, landslides, surficial debris flows, expansive soils, subsidence and settlement, fault displacement, Bay mud areas, and all areas shown on SF Map 1 as damage level moderate or heavy. Reference must also be made to standard geological and geological hazards maps.

SF Program 1.2: Continue to require, as conditions of approval, measures to mitigate potential seismic hazards for structures.

SF Program 1.3: Continue to require professional inspection of foundation and excavation, earthwork and other geotechnical aspects of site development during construction on those sites specified in geologic, and geotechnical studies as being prone to moderate levels of seismic hazard, in accordance with the current version of the Uniform Building Code.

SF Program 1.4: Continue to monitor and review existing critical, high priority buildings to ensure structural compliance with seismic safety standards.

SF Program 1.5: Provide information to the public on ways to reinforce buildings to reduce damage from earthquakes and what to do in the event of an earthquake.

Publications from the California Seismic Safety Commission may be used.

SF Policy 2 Building in Areas with Significant Risk Potential. Discourage construction of high density residential, and other critical, high-occupancy or essential services buildings in high risk zones.

SF Program 2.1: Continue to require adherence to the Uniform Building Code for Seismic Risk Zone 4 in order to protect against seismic hazards.

SF Program 2.2: Establish setbacks from active or potentially active fault traces for structures intended for human occupancy.

There are no active faults identified in the Novato area. New information about faults may appear, however, in the future. The Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zones Act prohibits construction of new facilities within 50 feet of fault traces of designated active faults.

Non-Seismic Geologic Hazards

Potential hazards may be present when there are thick colluvial soils, soils on steep slopes, and expansive soils which, in the presence of moisture, swell and shrink when returning to a dry condition. This hazard is compounded when unstable colluvial soils overlay geologically unstable formations, such as fault zones prone to earthquakes. SF Map 2 identifies areas of slope instability.

Expansive soil hazards may also exist in areas with expansive soils which often cause cracking, heaving and break-up of pavements and concrete slab foundations. More information regarding the engineering geology of Novato is contained in publications by the California Division of Mines and Geology, available at the Community Development Department.

SF Objective 2 Minimize the risk of personal injury and property damage resulting from slope and soil instability.

Several types of downslope movements produce soil instability, including landslides, soil creep and debris flows. Landslides are the rapid slide of bedrock and/or overburden. Landslides are generally large and destructive, involving millions of tons of rock. Though landslides can be naturally occurring, a frequent cause of landslides in California is the undercutting of slopes for construction. Sometimes these types of landslides can be more expensive than naturally occurring slides because there is usually a road or building beneath them to be damaged or destroyed. Soil Creep is the slow downslope movement of overburden and is the most common type of downslope movement. Very commonly a creep will tilt trees, telephone poles, and fences. Debris flows are rapidly-moving thick mud flows which contain coarse-grained material.

Downslope movements may be triggered in many ways, including (1) undercutting of slopes, (2) surcharging of the slope so it cannot support its new weight, (3) strong shaking from earthquakes, and (4) loss of shear strength from water pressure, often due to intense rainfall.

SF Policy 3 Slope and Soil Instability. Continue to enforce existing regulations and procedures to identify potential hazards relating to geologic and soils conditions.

SF Program 3.1: Require evaluation of all slopes, unstable land, areas susceptible to liquefaction or settlement, and areas containing expansive soils for safety hazards prior to issuance of any discretionary approvals and require appropriate mitigation measures.

SF Program 3.2: Require that development in areas identified by SF Map 2: Slope Instability be evaluated and, as appropriate, supervised by a Certified Engineering Geologist or a registered Geotechnical Engineer.

SF Program 3.3: Require financial protection for public agencies and individuals as a condition of development approval where geological conditions indicate a potential for high maintenance costs.

The financial protection would ensure that developers of properties where geological analysis identifies a risk of high maintenance will have the resources to carry out such maintenance. This program would also serve to limit the City's liability, although none is assumed. Examples include bonds, liens, or other suitable security to ensure that landscaped slopes in areas with landslides or surficial debris flows are maintained to prevent hazardous movement. A geotechnical report prepared by a Certified Engineering Geologist or Registered Geotechnical Engineer would be required by the City.

SF Program 3.4: Require repair, stabilization, or avoidance of landslides, or areas of soil creep or possible debris flow as a condition of project approval.

SF Program 3.5: Review and consider revising the Grading Ordinance.

Flood Hazards

Much of the bayfront lands are in agricultural, conservation or open space uses and flood frequently. These areas are reclaimed marshlands which had been near high tide level when drained. Since reclamation, the loss of water within the Bay Mud has led to subsidence, and many areas are now below mean sea level and require pumping to drain. If levees and pumps are maintained, flooding in these areas represents minimal hazard to persons or structures. Most of these lands are shown on the Land Use Map for Agriculture, Conservation, or other low-intensity uses.

The frequency and severity of flooding has increased in recent years partly as a result of increasing urban development. As more land becomes covered with impermeable surfaces such as buildings, parking lots and roads, water cannot drain into the soil and surface runoff increases, thereby causing acute local flooding.

Novato Creek has a long history of flooding and is the main flood hazard to the community. Flooding along Novato Creek usually occurs in three stages; when the water levels rises above storm drains, resulting in flooded roads and lots; when Warner Creek and Arroyo Avichi rise and overflow their banks at the confluence with Novato Creek; and when Novato Creek itself rises to a level where it overflows at low points in its levees. In addition, localized flooding occurs periodically in certain locations. The frequency and severity of flooding has been reduced as a result of flood control improvements for Novato, Warner, and Avichi Creeks funded in 1985 and storm drainage projects funded in 1989.

Dam failure resulting from earthquakes is another potential source of flooding. Novato Creek Dam, an earth embankment constructed in 1951, is 71 feet high and under the jurisdiction of the California Division of Safety of Dams. This dam creates Stafford Lake, which has a capacity of 4,430 acre-feet of water. The dam, located upstream of Novato along Novato Creek at Stafford Lake, is designed to withstand an earthquake with a magnitude of 8.25 on the San Andreas Fault with a design epicenter located 10 miles from the dam. The inundation zone in the hypothetical event of a sudden failure of the dam is on file with the North Marin Water District and is in Appendix B of the General Plan.

The City has implemented a Local Drainage Master Plan to accommodate 25-year storm water flows which have a 4% chance of occurrence in any given year. In 1989, the voters approved a bond measure to provide \$4.2 million funding for storm drainage improvements. In addition, the Marin County Flood Control and Water Conservation District has implemented major improvements since 1985 to prevent flooding from 50-year storms. These improvements include a detention pond at Deer Island on the lower portion of Novato Creek, and improvements to the channels of Novato Creek, Warner Creek and Arroyo Avichi.

The Federal Emergency Management Agency updated its Flood Insurance Rate Map (FIRM) in 1989 to reflect these improvements. The FIRM is reproduced schematically in SF Map 3: Flood Hazards.

SF Objective 3 Reduce flood hazards.

SF Policy 4 Enhanced Floodwater Storage. Support measures to manage, protect and increase the floodwater storage capacity where appropriate.

SF Policy 5 Use of Updated Flood Rate Insurance Maps. Use the Federal Emergency Management Agency's Flood Insurance Rate Maps [FIRM] to reduce risk of flooding; identify 100-Year Flood Events; and calculate flow rates within identified stream channels.

SF Program 5.1: Use current Flood Insurance Rate Maps in the review of development proposals.

SF Program 5.2: Continue to enforce the City's Flood Damage Prevention Ordinance.

SF Program 5.3: Continue to participate in the National Flood Insurance Program.

This program involves continuing to implement the regulations of City Code Chapters 5-31: Floodplain Insurance Requirements and Chapter 19-11.056(f): Combining Floodways Regulations.

SF Policy 6 Cooperation with Marin County. Continue to work with the Marin County Public Works Department to minimize negative impacts of storm runoff.

SF Program 6.1: Request that the County refer all development proposals located outside the City limits of Novato but within the Sphere of Influence to ensure that additional storm drainage runoff resulting from development occurring in unincorporated areas is adequately mitigated through improvements on site and downstream.

SF Policy 7 Funding Sources. Continue to cooperate with the Marin County Flood Control and Water Conservation District and other Marin jurisdictions in pursuing all available sources of funding to finance improvements to storm drainage facilities.

See also PF Program 1.5 regarding storm drainage facility fees.

SF Policy 8 Reducing Flood Hazards. Reduce flood risk by maintaining effective flood drainage systems and regulating construction.

SF Program 8.1: Condition new development to maintain post development peak runoff rate and average volume similar to the predevelopment condition, to the maximum extent practicable.

SF Program 8.2: Require runoff rate/volume analysis of projects where deemed necessary by City staff.

SF Program 8.3: Require all development in the 100 year flood zone to comply with the Floodplain Zoning requirements in the Novato Municipal Code.

SF Program 8.4: Require approved projects to cover the costs of drainage facilities needed for surface runoff generated.

SF Program 8.5: Require analysis of the cumulative effects of development upon runoff, discharge into natural watercourses, and increased volumes and velocities in watercourses and their impacts on downstream properties. Include clear and comprehensive mitigation measures as part of project approvals with financial and other measures to ensure their implementation.

SF Program 8.6: Request that the North Marin Water District maintain a file of inundation maps and drainage plans for existing and new water storage tanks in the City.

SF Policy 9 Storm Drainage System. Maintain unobstructed water flow in the storm drainage system.

SF Program 9.1: Enforce measures to minimize soil erosion and volume and velocity of surface runoff both during and after construction through implementation of the Grading Ordinance.

SF Program 9.2: Continue to carry out annual inspection and maintenance of the drainage systems.

SF Program 9.3: Require, where necessary, construction and maintenance of siltation/detention ponds to be incorporated into the design of development projects.

SF Program 9.4: Periodically assess the need to establish improvement districts and other financing mechanisms to fund necessary storm drainage and watercourse improvements to minimize flood hazards.

See EN Policies regarding environmentally-sound flood control measures.

SF Policy 10 Hazards of Dam and Levee Failure. Ensure that the design and location of dams and levees are in accordance with all applicable design standards of the California Division of Safety of Dams.

SF Program 10.1: Continue to enforce City Code Chapter V regulating dams.

SF Program 10.2: Review new levees for seismic and hydrological safety.

SF Program 10.3: Request that the North Marin Water District keep dam inundation maps on file for review of property owners who are located in areas of possible inundation.

SF Policy 11 Rising Sea Level. Consider the potential for sea level rise when processing development applications that might be affected by such a rise.

SF Program 11.1: Work with the County Flood Control and Water Conservation District to prepare a plan for responding to a potential rise in sea level. Consider developing flood control projects and modifying the City's land use regulations for areas subject to increased flooding from sea level rise.

Policies and programs to ensure water quality are in Chapter 4.

Emergency Preparedness

The City adopted an Emergency Preparedness Plan in 1991. The purpose of the plan is to ensure that the City will be prepared to respond effectively in the event of emergencies to save lives and restore and protect property; repair and restore essential public services; provide for the protection and distribution of medical, food, water, shelter sites, and other vital supplies and services; and coordinate operations with emergency service organizations and other jurisdictions to maintain continuity of government.

SF Objective 4 Assure Emergency Preparedness.

SF Policy 12 Interagency Cooperation. Continue to cooperate with the appropriate federal, state and local agencies to implement effective emergency plans.

SF Policy 13 Multihazard Emergency Plan. Update the City's Emergency Preparedness Plan, as needed.

SF Program 13.1: Revise and implement, as appropriate, the City's Emergency Preparedness Plan to comply with the County's Plan and changing conditions. Revise the plan to conform to the new California Standard Emergency Management System (SEMS) by December 1996.

Responsibility: Police Department

SF Policy 14 Emergency Facilities. Identify essential emergency facilities and ensure that they will function in the event of a disaster.

SF Program 14.1: Identify specific facilities, such as City Hall, schools, fire stations, police building and hospitals, and lifelines, such as telephones, electric, gas, water and sewer service critical to effective emergency/disaster response, and evaluate their abilities to survive and operate efficiently immediately after a disaster. Designate alternative facilities for post-disaster assistance in the event that the primary facilities have become unusable.

Responsibility: Police Department

SF Program 14.2: Minimize potential earthquake damage to existing publicly owned buildings and emergency facilities through strengthening building structure, eliminating hazardous features, or relocating facilities to safer buildings where feasible.

Responsibility: Police and Community Development Departments

SF Program 14.3: Continue to maintain an emergency evacuation routes system. Consider establishing evacuation route standards, such as road widths.

Responsibility: Police Department and Community Development Department

This program should consider whether the City's rural street standards have any impact on evacuation routes.

SF Program 14.4: Publicize the City's evacuation routes and other aspects of its Emergency Preparedness Plan. Work towards creating neighborhood disaster systems and ways to identify and focus on people in need during emergencies.

Evacuation routes are included in the Emergency Preparedness Plan.

Responsibility: Police Department

SF Program 14.5: Maintain designated evacuation routes in a passable condition at all times, as feasible.

Responsibility: Police Department

Fire Protection

The combination of vegetation, topography, climate and population density create a significant potential for fire hazards. Fire hazards in the Novato area fall into two categories: wildland fires which occur in open chaparral, grassland and forest areas and urban fires which damage buildings in urbanized areas.

There are several rural areas where wildland fires could cause significant damage to buildings. The highest risk area is Black Point, which has narrow roads, older structures, limited access steep slopes and chaparral vegetation. The other areas are Wild Horse Valley, parts of Bahia, Ridge Road, and Pacheco Valley which have dense brush and grass near to homes.

The Novato Fire Protection District and the City have taken the following measures to reduce the risk of wildland fires:

- Implemented an ordinance prohibiting combustible roof materials.
- Developed a vegetation abatement and fire hazard reduction program.
- Published and distributed a homeowner's guide to help the public prepare for and survive a wildland fire.

The California Department of Forestry estimates that wildland fires, unless otherwise abated, are expected to increase by 47 percent to the year 2000. Increasing public awareness of wildland fire and developing stronger preventive measures is essential to reduce the risk of this type of natural disaster.

Urban fires are influenced by wind velocity and direction, the use of fire-resistant building materials, building design and height, site planning, accessibility and the availability of adequate water supply.

The Existing Conditions Report identifies several areas of Novato with high fire risk. These include commercial areas with older, wood-frame buildings constructed without fire walls or sprinkler systems, and residential neighborhoods located in grassy or wooded areas on top of ridges and/or on north or east-facing slopes. Refer to SF Map 4.

The Novato Fire Protection District's goal is to respond to 90 percent of all emergency incidents within five minutes. The District has four fire stations, and adequate equipment to meet local needs. In addition, the District's Fire Prevention Division establishes requirements for new buildings, carries out code enforcement, and conducts public education programs on fire prevention and safety. The City has strengthened the Uniform Fire Code requirements by requiring automatic sprinklers in all new single family dwellings and new buildings 2,500 square feet or larger. In cooperation with the Novato Fire Protection District it carries out weed abatement and other fire prevention programs and reviews new developments to reduce fire hazards.

The North Marin Water District and the Marin Municipal Water District have adopted minimum fire flow standards of 1,000 gallons per minute, as specified by Title 22 of the State of California, Administrative Code.

Despite all the efforts of public agencies to reduce fire hazards, it continues to be difficult to obtain fire insurance in high fire hazard areas.

SF Objective 5 Reduce fire hazards.

SF Policy 15 Fire Hazard Severity Scale. Adopt and use the Fire Hazard Severity Scale for the classification of fire hazards in wildland areas.¹

SF Policy 16 Fire Risk in New Development. Review all development proposals for fire risk, and require mitigation measures to reduce the probability of fire.

SF Program 16.1: Continue the Novato Fire Protection District's review of all development proposals to reduce fire risk.

The Zoning Ordinance includes requirements for clearances around structures.

SF Program 16.2: Require new development within mapped high fire hazard zones established by the Novato Fire Protection District and/or the Marin County Fire District to develop and implement a Vegetation Management Plan. (Refer to SF Map 4) The Plan shall be part of the development application and approved by the Novato Fire Protection District and the City. The Plan shall be developed by an arborist or vegetation management specialist. The City shall work with the Fire District to ensure that actions recommended in the Plan are implemented. The Novato Fire Protection District has the right to review properties to judge whether actions recommended in the Vegetation Management Plan are being properly implemented in a timely fashion.

SF Program 16.3: Establish overlay zoning districts for high fire hazard areas establishing several types of fire-resistant vegetation buffer zones around structures.

SF Program 16.4: Assess development applications on sites beyond a five-minute response time from a fire station to ensure that acceptable mitigation measures are provided.

SF Program 16.5: Continue to enforce the Fire Safety Ordinance requiring sprinkler systems for all new commercial/industrial development greater than 2,500 square feet and all new residential development regardless of size.

SF Program 16.6: Limit building envelopes in high fire risk areas to provide for "defensible space" against fires.

Defensible space refers to a buffer area around buildings which is cleared of highly combustible vegetation and which is readily accessible by fire fighting equipment.

SF Policy 17 Level of Fire Protection. Work with Novato Fire Protection District to help ensure a continued high level of fire protection.

SF Program 17.1: Continue to require all new development to meet the adopted fire safe regulations originally developed by the state and currently adopted as an appendix to the Fire Code.

¹ This scale was developed by the U.S. Forest Service and the State Department of Forestry. It is useful for identifying areas with a high risk of wildfire due to flammable vegetation, rugged terrain and other factors.

SF Program 17.2: Continue the City's residential resale inspection program that requires inspection of existing residential property to be performed by a Building Inspector prior to the close of escrow.

SF Program 17.3: Ensure that new traffic signals include a system which allows emergency vehicles to change the signal.

SF Program 17.4: Require adequate access for emergency vehicles, adequate street width and vertical clearance, and parking restrictions for new development. All development that includes private access roads or fire roads shall provide access rights and keys to any gates to the Novato Fire Protection District and shall be deeded accordingly. (Draft EIR, pages 203-204, Impact 4.11A)

Requirements for street width standards are in Section 5-45 of the Municipal Code.

SF Policy 18 Vegetation Management. Continue to implement an effective and environmentally sound vegetation management and weed abatement program.

SF Program 18.1: Continue to require the use of the following methods of weed abatement wherever possible: use of mechanical rather than chemical removal of weeds; reseeding with native bunchgrass varieties in sloping disturbed soils; and limiting weed abatement activities in areas with known endangered plant and animal species. Strongly encourage a zone system of landscaping, as per Fire District standards, for defensible space around buildings in high fire risk areas.

SF Policy 19 State Building Code. Continue to enforce the State Building Code (UBC).

SF Program 19.1: Continue to update and enforce the City's Building Code and Fire Code provisions.

SF Program 19.2: Continue to require a greater degree of fire resistance in roof coverings and exterior building materials for structures within or adjacent to hazardous areas than what is specified in the UFC, as determined by the Chief Building Official upon making of findings specified in Health and Safety Code § 13143.4.

This program requires more stringent fire-retardant roofing materials than currently specified by the Uniform Building Code.

SF Policy 20 Peak Load Water Supply. Work with the North Marin Water District and the Novato Fire Protection District to ensure that there exists sufficient water flow in fire hydrants throughout Novato, based on peak demand.

The standard adopted by the Novato Fire Protection District is a minimum of 1,000 gallons per minute with 20 pounds per square inch residual pressure.

SF Program 20.1: Continue to require that all new developments be provided with sufficient fire flow facilities at the time of permit issuance.

SF Policy 21 Mutual Aid Agreements. Continue to participate in mutual aid agreements with the County and State fire fighting agencies.

SF Policy 22 Fire Hazard on Public Lands. Public lands should be managed to minimize the chances of a wildfire that would affect residences and businesses in Novato.

SF Program 22.1: The City should request that the Marin County Open Space District and other public agencies assess the wildland fire hazard on their holdings within and adjacent to the City. If these assessments indicate a significant hazard to residents of Novato, the City should request that the agency take steps to reduce the fire hazard to an acceptable level. (Draft EIR, page 204, Impact 4.11A)

Police Service

The Police Department provides for public safety through the protection of life and property and preserving the peace. The goal of the Novato Police Department is to foster community-police cooperation in the prevention of crime and delinquency and to meet the public demands for non-crime police services.

Much of today's police services involves responding to social problems including domestic disputes, juvenile delinquency, alcoholism and homelessness. Approximately 85 percent of police calls are requests for service rather than responses to crime. Police officers responding to these calls often provide counseling and crisis intervention and refer people to social service agencies. Novato's quality of life is closely related to the sense of safety of its residents.

The Novato Police Department carries out many crime prevention programs in close cooperation with the community which have proved to be effective. These include:

- The Neighborhood Watch Groups, Park Watch Program, and Business Alert which all involve the community in the day-to-day effort to prevent crime.
- The Drug Abuse Resistance Education (DARE) program informs students of the dangers of drug and alcohol use.
- Novato Youth Services Bureau (YSB) provides counseling to young offenders and acts as a liaison between the Police Department and organizations serving youth.
- School Crossing Guard Program, in cooperation with the Novato Unified School District, provides school crossing guards at 15 locations throughout the City.
- The Crime Prevention Officer (CPO) meets regularly with neighborhood associations and business groups, and conducts home security surveys. In addition, the CPO reviews plans of new development to increase security.
- Review by the Police Department and Building Division of single family construction standards established by the City for doors, windows, and illuminated addressing.

Novato's quality of life is closely related to the sense of safety of its residents.

SF Objective 6 Maintain effective police services.

SF Policy 23 Demand for Police Services. Review development proposals for their demand for police services and implement mitigating measures to maintain adequate police services.

SF Program 23.1: Consider the impacts on level of police services of large development proposals in the environmental review and planning process. Mitigating measures shall be implemented that may include the levying of police impact fees for capital facilities, if warranted.

Responsibility: Community Development and Police Department

SF Policy 24 Civilian Employees and Equipment. Maintain sufficient civilian employees and equipment to support sworn staff.

SF Policy 25 Community Oriented Services. Continue to provide community-oriented services.

Emergency Medical Care

The Emergency Medical Service of the Novato Fire Protection District is responsible for answering all medical aid and ambulance calls including 911 calls in Novato. The Fire Protection District personnel are all qualified Emergency Medical Technicians or Paramedics.

SF Objective 7 Maintain an effective medical emergency response system.

SF Policy 26 Level of Emergency Medical Response. Encourage the Novato Fire Protection District to continue maintaining a high level of emergency medical response.

SF Program 26.1: Periodically review the effectiveness of the emergency medical response system as part of the City's Emergency Preparedness Plan.

Responsibility: Police Department

SF Policy 27 Novato Community Hospital's Emergency Department. Continue to encourage Novato Community Hospital to maintain its emergency department and acute care facilities.

SF Program 27.1: Identify actions the City can carry out to support the Novato Community Hospital Emergency Department.

Responsibility: Police Department

SF Program 27.2: Encourage other providers to maintain emergency and acute care facilities.

Hazardous Materials

The transportation and storage of hazardous materials is clearly a regional issue. A large quantity of hazardous products are transported on highways and railways where the potential for release of this material into the environment represents a potentially significant public health risk. The policies and programs dealing with hazardous materials in this section incorporate and build on the relevant portions of the Safety Element of the Marin Countywide Plan. The County is responsible for:

- Regulating hazardous materials over specified quantities.
- Developing and implementing Area Plans for emergency response of hazardous materials spills.

- Implementing risk management and prevention programs, business plans and inventories of hazardous waste storage and transportation, and implementing procedures for handling of hazardous substances.

Radioactive materials are distinguished from other hazardous materials and specific federal and state regulations address handling and transport of these substances.

The use and storage of radioactive materials in Novato is limited to medical facilities, and the proposed Buck Center for Research in Aging, since no other primary users of radioactive materials, such as research laboratories, nuclear power plants or active military facilities, are located within the Area of Interest. The principal potential danger to Novato residents from these materials is related to the possibility of a truck accident resulting in rupture of containers holding radioactive materials.

Asbestos used as an insulating material in public buildings is a potential health hazard. The Novato Unified School District has determined that its public schools are in compliance with the 1986 Federal and State Building Codes for asbestos insulation. A survey of the Novato City Hall, Fire and Police Buildings revealed no asbestos-related problems.

SF Objective 8 Reduce hazards of transportation, storage and disposal of hazardous wastes and hazardous materials.

SF Policy 28 Measures to Reduce Hazards. Consider measures to protect the public health from the hazards associated with the transportation, storage and disposal of hazardous wastes (TSD Facilities).

SF Program 28.1: Continue to refer land use and transportation decisions and other programs involving hazardous materials regulations to the appropriate agencies.

SF Program 28.2: Support the establishment of a household hazardous waste collection and disposal program.

SF Program 28.3: Consider adoption of a Hazardous Materials and Waste Ordinance that defines hazardous waste and hazardous materials and facilitates implementation of State and County regulations and programs regarding hazardous substances.

SF Program 28.4: Continue to implement the Commercial Occupancy Ordinance requiring notification of all hazardous substances that are transported, stored, treated or could be released accidentally into the environment.

Responsibility: Community Development Department and Police Department

SF Policy 29 CEQA Review of proposed TSD Facilities. Support thorough environmental review for hazardous waste transportation, storage and disposal (TSD) Facilities proposed in the Novato area and throughout Marin County, since the potentially significant, widespread and long-term impacts on public health and safety of these facilities do not respect jurisdictional boundaries.

SF Program 29.1: Request that the Environmental Review of proposed hazardous waste TSD facilities shall, at a minimum, contain the following analysis and information:

- a. A worst case generic description, estimating the number, type, scale, scope, location and operating characteristics of proposed TSD facilities based on the projected

volumes and types of hazardous waste. Data from existing facilities regarding the probability of accidents, spills, and explosions should be documented and included;

- b. An assessment of risk resulting from the accidental release, fire, and/or explosion of hazardous waste. This assessment should take into account all phases of operation including transport, storage, and treatment. The assessment of risk should include the probability of occurrence and magnitude of impact;
- c. Quantitative estimates of air emissions, by applying emissions rates of existing facilities to the future volumes of hazardous waste, and identifying emissions for incinerator facilities under worst case circumstances;
- d. An assessment of non-incineration alternatives for hazardous waste treatment such as chemical dechlorination for the detoxification of PCBs, dioxins, solvents and pesticides; photolysis; and biological treatment; and
- e. Review of the operating characteristics of proposed TSD facilities, taking into account maintenance and operating procedures, emissions monitoring and safety devices to assure the ongoing enforceability of the mitigating measures that are required.

SF Policy 30 Hazardous Materials Storage. Strictly regulate the storage of hazardous materials.

SF Program 30.1: Regulate and enforce the storage of hazardous materials under California Administrative Code Title 19 requirements.

SF Program 30.2: Revise the Zoning Ordinance to require secondary containment facilities and a buffer zone adequate to protect public health and safety on properties with hazardous materials storage and/or processing activities.

This program requires industries and businesses which store or process hazardous materials to provide secondary containment facilities and a buffer zone between the installation and property boundaries sufficient to protect the public health and safety.

SF Policy 31 Truck Routes for Hazardous Materials Transport. Develop, in cooperation with the County and neighboring cities, regulations prohibiting through-transport by truck of hazardous materials on the local street systems and requiring that this activity be limited to State highways.

SF Program 31.1: Consider adopting a Local Hazardous Material Route Plan and install signage and publicize routes for hazardous materials transport in Novato. Adopt an ordinance designating specific routes for transport of hazardous materials.

Electromagnetic Fields

The potential adverse health effects of electromagnetic fields (EMFs) from electric transmission lines, substations and appliances have been considered in various studies². The information regarding EMF affect

² Refer to Electromagnetic Fields and Land Use Controls, Slesin, Louis and Connelly, Mathew, The Planning Advisory Service Report #435, December 1991, Chicago, Illinois.

on health compiled up to the date of the General Plan revision (November 1995) is inconclusive. There is no consensus in the scientific community regarding the degree of risk, if any, presented by EMF.

SF Objective 9 Reduce community exposure to electromagnetic field radiation.

SF Policy 32 Electromagnetic Field (EMF) Radiation in Land Use Decisions. Consider information regarding EMF radiation from new electrical transmission lines and substations in making land use decisions.

SF Program 32.1: Consider adopting EMF regulations consistent with State or Federal guidelines, if they become available.

Several jurisdictions have adopted local regulations to deal with EMF radiation. Recently Irvine, California; Ashland, Oregon; and the State of New York have adopted regulations regarding EMFs produced by electrical transmission facilities.

SF Program 32.2: Obtain updated information on EMF radiation levels of existing and proposed electrical transmission facilities and relate those to the latest standards that are emerging from ongoing research. Refer to SF Map 5: Major Electric Transmission Lines.

SF Policy 33 Siting and Construction of Electrical Transmission Facilities. Consider EMF issues near sensitive areas such as schools, hospitals, playgrounds, and group care facilities in planning for electrical transmission facilities.

SF Program 33.1: Request that PG&E provide information to the City on renovations to existing and construction of new electrical transmission lines, substations, and distribution lines. Request that information on the EMF radiation levels for proposed new facilities be provided.

SF Program 33.2: Request that all new electrical transmission projects have an EMF mitigation plan as an part of the project's environmental review pursuant to CEQA.

SF Program 33.3: Request from PG&E an inventory and full public disclosure of existing electrical transmission lines and of existing and proposed electrical transmission projects with the anticipated EMF levels in Novato.

There are 60 kV, 130 kV and 240 kV transmission lines and substations within the Novato Area of Interest.

SF Policy 34 Siting of Schools. Encourage schools to follow the California Department of Education regulations requiring EMF consideration in the siting of schools.

Aviation Hazards

Gross Field potentially affects land use in Novato in the form of noise and safety impacts. The County owns and operates this general aviation airport and in 1991 completed a Master Plan that reflects the anticipated growth in general aviation activity for the next 20 years. The Master Plan regulates obstacles to aviation activity, reduces exposure of persons on the ground to accident and crash hazards, and limits noise impacts through building height restrictions, land use limitations and building standards to reduce interior noise.

The County Airport Land Use Commission (ALUC) regulates land use in the area surrounding Gness Field. Novato and the County must submit projects within the ALUC's referral area for ALUC review and

determination of consistency with the policies of the Master Plan. In addition, the City's General Plan must be consistent with the policies established by the Master Plan for the referral area. The General Plan map does not contain any land uses within the referral area which would be inconsistent with the Master Plan. The Master Plan does not prohibit agriculture but does strictly regulate residential uses. The height limits for new construction permitted by the Zoning Ordinance are well below the maximum permitted.

SF Objective 10 Reduce aviation hazards.

SF Policy 35 Gnoss Field Airport Hazards. Minimize risk to lives and property due to hazards associated with the operation of Gnoss Field Airport.

SF Program 35.1: Consider the recommendations of the ALUC regarding development or conservation proposals which would create any air navigation hazards in the Gnoss Field Airport Land Use Commission (ALUC) Referral Area.

The Airport Land Use Plan requires wetland restoration and enhancement projects to consider proximity to the airport and the potential for birds to create safety problems.

SF Program 35.2: Refer all General Plan Amendments, Zoning Ordinance Amendments, and specific plans within the Gnoss Field Airport Referral Area to the ALUC.

SF Policy 36 County Airport Planning. Continue to monitor the County's planning efforts for Gnoss Field Airport to ensure that the health and safety of Novato residents are protected.

SF Program 36.1: Request that Marin County inform the City of proposed plans and changes in operations for Gnoss Field Airport.

SF Program 36.2: Request that the Marin County Aviation Commission adopt standards for non-fixed wing aircraft (balloons, helicopters, and ultralights) flyover altitudes and locations.

SF Program 36.3: Continue to oppose aviation uses at Hamilton Field.

Noise

The purpose of the Noise Section is to protect the health and welfare of the community by promoting development which is compatible with established noise standards. This section has been prepared in conformance with Government Code § 65302(f) and the guidelines adopted by the State Office of Noise Control, pursuant to Health and Safety Code § 46050.1. Existing and future noise problems in Novato and its Sphere of Influence are identified. Policies and implementation programs are provided to reduce the community's exposure to excessive noise levels. Accomplishing this task requires an evaluation of the noise from sources such as roads, highways, airports, railroads, and from stationary sources such as industrial uses.

This section analyzes the community noise environment in quantified terms. Noise contours have been prepared for the major noise sources. These noise contours are the basis for evaluating noise and land use compatibility.

Noise Characteristics

Noise is defined as unwanted sound. Airborne sound is a rapid fluctuation of air pressure above and below atmospheric pressure. Sound levels are usually measured and expressed in decibels (dB) with 0 dB corresponding roughly to the threshold of hearing. Decibels and other technical terms are defined in SF Table 1.

Most of the sounds which we hear in the environment do not consist of a single frequency, but rather a broad band of frequencies, with each frequency differing in sound level. The intensities of each frequency add together to generate a sound. The method commonly used to quantify environmental sounds consists of evaluating all of the frequencies of a sound in accordance with a weighting that reflect the fact that human hearing is less sensitive at low frequencies and extreme high frequencies than in the mid-range frequency. This is called “A” weighting, and the decibel level so measured is called the A-weighted sound level (dBA). In practice, the level of a sound source is conveniently measured using a sound level meter that includes an electrical filter corresponding to the A-weighting curve. Typical A-levels measured in the environment and in industry are shown in SF Table 1 for different types of noise.

Although the A-weighted noise level may adequately indicate the level of environmental noise at any instant in time, community noise levels vary continuously. Most environmental noise includes a conglomeration of noise from distant sources which create a relatively steady background noise, often called ambient noise in which no particular source is identifiable. To describe the time-varying character of environmental noise, the statistical noise descriptors, L_{10} , L_{50} , and L_{90} , are commonly used. They are the A-weighted noise levels equaled or exceeded during 10 percent, 50 percent, and 90 percent of a stated time period. A single number descriptor called the L_{eq} is now also widely used. The L_{eq} is the average A-weighted noise level during a stated period of time.

SF Table 1: Definition of Acoustical Terms	
Term	Definition
Decibel (dB)	A unit describing the amplitude of sound, equal to 20 times the logarithm to the base 10 of the ratio of the pressure of the sound measured to the reference pressure, which is 20 micropascals (20 micronewtons per square meter).
Frequency (Hz)	The number of complete pressure fluctuations per second above and below the atmospheric pressure.
A-Weighed Sound Level	The sound pressure level in decibels as measured on a sound level meter using the A-weighting filter network. The A-weighting filter de-emphasizes the very low and very high frequency components of the sound in a manner similar to the frequency response of the human ear and correlates well with subjective reactions to noise.
$L_{01}, L_{10}, L_{50}, L_{90}$	The A-weighted noise levels that are exceeded by 1%, 10%, 50% and 90% of the time during the measurement period.
Equivalent Noise Level (L_{eq})	The average A-weighted noise level during the measurement period.
Community Noise Equivalent Level (L_{dn} , CNEL)	The average A-weighted noise level during a 24-hour day, obtained after addition of 10 decibels to levels measured in the night between 10:00 PM and 7:00 AM.
L_{max}, L_{min}	The maximum and minimum A-weighted noise level during the measurement period.
Ambient Noise Level	The composite of noise from all sources near and far. The normal or existing level of environmental noise at a given location.
Intrusive	That noise which intrudes over and above the existing ambient noise at a given location. The relative intrusiveness of a sound depends upon its amplitude, duration, frequency, and time of occurrence and tonal or informational content as well as the prevailing ambient noise level.

SF Table 2: Typical Noise Levels			
At a Given Distance From Noise Source	A-Weighted Sound Level in Decibels	Noise Environm ents	Subjective Impression
	140		
Civil Defense Siren (100')	130		
Jet Takeoff (200')	120		Pain Threshold
	110	Rock Music Concert	
Pile Driver (50')	100		Very Loud
Ambulance Siren			
	90	Boiler Room	
Freight Cars (50')		Printing Press Plant	
Pneumatic Drill (50')	80	In Kitchen With Garbage Disposal Running	
Freeway (100')			
	70		Moderately Loud
Vacuum Cleaner (10')	60	Data Processing Center	
		Department Store	
Light Traffic (100')	50	Private Business Office	
Large Transformer (200')			
	40		Quiet
Soft Whisper (5')	30	Quiet Bedroom	
	20	Recording Studio	
	10		Threshold of Hearing
	0		
Source: Illingworth & Rodkin, Inc., Acoustical Engineers, 1995			

In determining the daily level of environmental noise, the difference in response of people to daytime and nighttime noises is taken into account. During the nighttime, exterior background noises are generally lower than the daytime levels. However, most household noise also decreases at night and exterior noise becomes very noticeable. Further, most people sleep at night and are very sensitive to noise intrusion. To account for human sensitivity to nighttime noise levels, a descriptor, the L_{dn} (day/night average sound level), was developed. The L_{dn} divides the 24-hour day into the daytime of 7:00 AM to 10:00 PM and the nighttime of

10:00 PM to 7:00 AM. The nighttime noise level is weighted 10 dB higher than the daytime noise level. The Community Noise Equivalent Level (CNEL) is another similar 24 hour average which includes both an evening and nighttime weighting.

Human Response to Noise

The effects of noise on people can be categorized as follows:

- subjective effects of annoyance, nuisance, dissatisfaction;
- interference with activities such as speech, sleep, learning; and
- physiological effects such as fear response, hearing loss.

The levels associated with environmental noise, in almost every case, produce effects only in the first two categories. Workers in industrial plants can experience noise in the last category. Unfortunately, there is as yet no completely satisfactory way to measure the subjective effects of noise, or of the corresponding reactions of annoyance and dissatisfaction. This is primarily because of the wide variation in individual thresholds of annoyance, and habituation to noise over differing individual past experiences with noise. In general, the more a new noise exceeds the previously existing ambient noise level, the less acceptable the new noise will be judged by the hearers.

The following relationships will be helpful in understanding the significance of increases in the A-weighted noise level.

- Except in carefully controlled laboratory experiments, a change of 1 dB cannot be perceived.
- Outside of the laboratory, a 3 dB change is considered a just-perceivable difference.
- A change in level of at least 5 dB is required before any noticeable change in community response would be expected.
- A 10 dB change is subjectively heard as approximately a doubling in loudness, and would almost certainly cause an adverse change in community response.

In any typical noise environment about 10 percent of the population will object to any noise not of their own making and 25 percent will not react or complain at all, regardless of the level of noise being generated. Consequently, noise control measures are most beneficial to the remaining 65 percent of the population who are neither ultrasensitive nor insensitive to noise. Negative reaction to noise generally increases with the increase in difference between background (or ambient) noise and the noise generated from a particular source such as traffic or railroad operations. In most situations, noise control measures need to reduce noise by 5 to 10 dBA in order to effectively reduce complaints.

People generally have the ability to distinguish one sound from a background of sounds, such as a telephone ringing over music. However, certain noise levels can render a sound inaudible. For example, heavy trucks can interfere with a conversation. Face-to-face conversation usually can proceed where the noise level is up to 66 dBA, group conversations up to 50 to 60 dBA, and public meetings, up to 45 or 55 dBA, without interruption.

Sleep interference is more difficult to quantify, although studies have shown that progressively deeper levels of sleep require louder noise levels to cause a disturbance. The California Office of Noise Control (ONC) recommends that individual events within sleeping areas should not exceed 50 dBA in residential areas exposed to noise levels of 60 L_{dn} or greater. Interior noise standards of 45 L_{dn} will protect against sleep interference.

Environmental noise, in almost every case, produces effects which are subjective in nature or involve interference with human activity. However, brief sounds at levels exceeding 70 dBA can produce temporary physiological effects such as constriction of blood vessels, changes in breathing and dilation of the pupils. Steady noises of 90 dBA have been shown to increase muscle tension and adversely affect simple decision making. Long-term exposure to levels exceeding 70 dBA can cause hearing loss.

Noise and Land Use Compatibility Standards

The standards listed in SF Table 3 should be used to evaluate the compatibility between land uses and future noise in Novato. SF Table 3 should be used in combination with SF Map 7 to determine whether a proposed development or land use is located in an area requiring special noise mitigating measures.

SF Table 3: Noise and Land Use Compatibility Standards

LAND USE CATEGORY	EXTERIOR NOISE EXPOSURE L _{dn} OR CNEL, dB					
	55	60	65	70	75	80
Residential, Hotels, and Motels		////////// //////////			XXXXXXXX XXXXXXXX	
Outdoor Sports and Recreation, Neighborhood Parks and Playgrounds			////////// //////////		xxx xxx	
Schools, Libraries, Museums, Hospitals, Personal Care, Meeting Halls, Churches		////////// //////////			XXXXXXXX XXXXXXXX	
Office Buildings, Business Commercial, and Professional				////////// //////////	xxx xxx	
Auditoriums, Concert Halls, Amphitheaters	////////// //////////				XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX	
Industrial, Manufacturing, Utilities, and Agriculture				////////// //////////		



NORMALLY ACCEPTABLE

Specified land use is satisfactory, based upon the assumption that any buildings involved are of normal convention construction, without any special insulation requirements.



CONDITIONALLY ACCEPTABLE

Specified land use may be permitted only after detailed analysis of the noise reduction requirements and needed noise insulation features included in the design.



UNACCEPTABLE

New construction or development should generally not be undertaken because mitigation is usually not feasible to comply with noise element policies.

SOURCE: Illingworth & Rodkin, Inc./Acoustical Engineers

Explanation of SF Table 3: Noise and Land Use Compatibility Standards

A. Noise Source Characteristics

The land use noise compatibility recommendations should be viewed in relation to the specific source of the noise. For example, aircraft and railroad noise is normally made up of higher single noise events than auto traffic but occurs less frequently. Therefore, different sources yielding the same composite noise exposure do not necessarily create the same noise environment. The State Aeronautics Act uses 65 dB L_{dn} as the criterion which airports must eventually meet to protect existing residential communities from unacceptable exposure to aircraft noise. In order to facilitate the purposes of the Act, one of which is to encourage land uses compatible with the 65 dB L_{dn} criterion wherever possible and in order to facilitate the ability of airports to comply with the Act, residential uses located in Community Noise Exposure Areas greater than 65 dB should be discouraged and considered located within normally unacceptable areas.

B. Suitable Interior Environments

One objective of locating residential units relative to a known noise source is to maintain a suitable interior noise environment at no greater than 45 dB L_{dn} or L_{dn} . This requirement, coupled with the measured or calculated noise reduction performance of all types of structures under consideration, should govern the minimal acceptable distance to a noise source.

C. Acceptable Outdoor Environments

Another consideration, which in some communities is an overriding factor, is the desire for an acceptable outdoor noise environment. When this is the case, more restrictive standards for land use compatibility, typically below the maximum considered “normally acceptable” for that land use category may be appropriate.

The Standards listed in SF Table 3 should be used to evaluate the compatibility between land uses and future noise levels in Novato. A proposed development or land use located in an area indicated by SF Map 7 as being within an acceptable level would not require any special noise abatement measures. An office building proposed in an area with an exterior noise level exceeding 70¹ dBA, however, would be required to have a combination of noise mitigating features such as additional noise insulation, building setbacks, noise walls or other measures as indicated by an acoustical study.

The following considerations should be taken into account when using the Noise and Land Use Compatibility Standards:

1. The standard for maximum outdoor noise levels in residential areas is a L_{dn} of 60 dB. This standard is applied where outdoor use is a major consideration, such as backyards in single family housing developments and recreation areas in multifamily developments. This standard should not be applied to outdoor areas such as small decks and balconies typically

¹ Amended 9/9/97 by Resolution No. 127-97.

associated with multifamily residential developments, which can have a higher standard of 65 L_{dn} ;

2. The maximum acceptable interior noise level in new residential development required by the State of California Noise Insulation Standards is an L_{dn} of 45. This standard continues to be applied to all residential development in Novato;¹
3. The Noise and Land Use Compatibility Standards should be reviewed in relation to the specific source of noise. These standards are based on measurement systems which average noise over a 24-hour period and do not take into account single-event noise sources. For example, aircraft noise normally consists of a higher single-noise event than vehicular traffic and has been linked to sleep interference and other significant problems. Different noise sources yielding the same composite noise exposure do not necessarily create the same environment. Additional standards may be applied on a case-by-case basis where supported by acoustical analysis to mitigate the effects of single-event noise sources.

Sensitive receptors are land uses such as hospitals, convalescent homes, schools, and libraries. These uses may require special mitigations. SF Map 6 indicates the principal noise sensitive uses in the City.

Existing Noise Environment

Traffic is the most significant source of noise in Novato. U.S. Highway 101 and State Route 37 are the loudest sources. Aircraft operations at Gness Field also contribute to the noise environment. This chapter has also considered railroad, Gness Field, and stationary noise sources.

Noise measurements were taken at 11 locations along major roadways in Novato and 12 additional measurements were made at locations affected by Highway 101. These measurements were used to project the noise levels at buildout of the General Plan which is summarized in SF Map 7. It can be seen from SF Map 7 that freeway noise levels vary widely, depending upon the terrain immediately adjacent to the freeway. Where hills shield the freeway noise, noise levels are substantially lower than where there is a direct exposure to the freeway noise. The Nave Drive sound wall also substantially reduces noise levels at land uses immediately behind it. This map can be used as a planning tool to determine the compatibility of the future noise levels in the City with proposed development projects.

The noise contours do not take into account shielding due to buildings and other roadside barriers. Along most streets, the presence of a row of buildings relatively close to one another will reduce the noise exposure significantly for subsequent rows of buildings. A row of buildings will generally reduce the noise level by about 5 decibels, significantly reducing the influence of local traffic noise beyond the street itself.

The noise environment around Gness Field is described in the Airport Land Use Plan³. The noise contours, described in terms of Community Noise Equivalent Level (CNEL), are shown in SF Map 8. The CNEL is typically within 1 dB of the L_{dn} noise descriptor used elsewhere in this chapter. CNEL is used to describe aircraft noise in California but can be considered essentially equivalent to L_{dn} for the purposes of noise and land use planning. There are presently no incompatible noise sensitive land uses close to Gness Field that would be affected by the existing and proposed operations at the airport. The Gness Field Airport Land Use

¹ Amended 9/9/97 by Resolution No. 127-97.

³ Airport Land Use Plan Marin County Gness Field, adopted by the Marin County Airport Land Use Commission, June 10, 1991.

Plan recommends that no residential development occur within the 60 dB CNEL contour and that the County obtain noise easements for residential development occurring within the 55 dB CNEL noise contour. Policies of this Chapter are in conformance with these issues.

The only currently operating railroad line within the Novato Area of Interest is the California Northern Railroad which has contracted to provide freight service over the lines formerly operated by the Southern Pacific Railroad. The railroad tracks enter the City from the northeast, parallel to Highway 37, then at the Ignacio “Y” turn north parallel to Highway 101. In 1995, the railroad currently operates a single round trip freight service through Novato six days a week. The service through Novato starts in Napa, passing through Novato around noon, on the way to Petaluma. The return train from Petaluma usually passes through Novato late in the afternoon on the way back to Napa. The limited operations do not constitute a significant source of noise in Novato. Rail traffic responds to market demand and may increase depending on need. The significance of railroad noise in Novato in the future will be directly related not only to the number of operations per day but also to the time of day they occur.

The Southern Pacific Railroad right-of-way has been purchased for potential future transit use. This right-of-way may be used in the future by diesel buses, electric light rail trains, or diesel electric trains. It is not yet possible to predict the noise levels that may be associated with the future use of this right-of-way. The potential noise impacts resulting from the use of this railroad right-of-way as a transit corridor must be considered in eventual environmental review of the proposals.

Other noises which occasionally represent problems in the City include: emergency medical vehicles; public transit vehicles; barking dogs; power tools; and machinery. There are no heavy industrial uses generating excessive noise. The noise generated by most of these sources is most effectively controlled through enforcement of a local noise ordinance.

Future Noise Levels

Future noise levels will be largely attributable to vehicular traffic. The projected noise contours described in SF Map 7 indicate that most of the City’s streets will experience relatively minor increases in noise levels.

Noise levels were calculated for the year 2010 based on buildout figures for the General Plan. The Federal Highway Administration traffic noise prediction model FHWA RD-77-108 was used. California vehicle noise emission levels developed by Caltrans were used in the computer modeling.

Noise contours at Gness Field were also considered and are presented in SF Map 8. These contours are projections for the year 2006, from the 1991 Airport Land Use Plan.

Portions of several streets and highways listed below currently experience or are projected to experience noise to 60 dBA, or above:

- Atherton Avenue from Highway 101 to Highway 37
- Nave Drive
- Olive Avenue from Redwood Boulevard to east of Highway 101
- Redwood Boulevard from San Marin Drive to DeLong Avenue
- DeLong Avenue from Highway 101 to South Novato Boulevard

- Diablo Avenue from South Novato Boulevard to Center Road
- Ignacio Boulevard from Alameda Del Prado to Sunset Parkway
- Novato Boulevard from San Marin Drive to Diablo Avenue
- South Novato Boulevard from Diablo Avenue to Rowland Boulevard
- Rowland Boulevard from Highway 101 to South Novato Boulevard
- San Marin Drive from Highway 101 to Novato Boulevard
- Simmons Lane from San Marin Drive to Novato Boulevard
- Sunset Parkway from South Novato Boulevard to Ignacio Boulevard
- Sutro Avenue from Novato Boulevard to Vineyard Road
- Wilson Avenue from South Novato Boulevard to Vineyard Road
- US 101 in the Novato area.

It is anticipated that residences and areas adjacent to the above streets may be exposed to excessive noise levels, defined as those above 60 dBA. The appropriate response contained in this section is to implement a variety of noise-mitigating measures and, where possible, condition future development to limit future noise exposure.

- Objective 11 Ensure compatibility of new development with existing and future noise levels.
- Objective 12 Prevent land uses which increase the noise level above acceptable standards or require mitigation to reduce noise to acceptable levels.
- Objective 13 Reduce noise to acceptable levels where it now exceeds those standards whenever feasible and practical.

SF Policy 37 Noise and Land Use Compatibility Standards. Encourage the maintenance of the noise and land use compatibility standards indicated in SF Table 3. The normally acceptable standards for outdoor noise are summarized below [noise measurements in L_{dn}]:

Residential Development	up to 60 dB
Transient Lodging: Motel and Hotel	up to 60 dB
School, Library, Church, Hospital and Nursing Home	up to 60 dB
Auditorium, Concert Hall, Amphitheater	up to 70 dB
Sports Arena, Outdoor Spectator Sports	up to 70 dB
Playgrounds, Neighborhood Parks, Open Space	up to 65 dB
Golf Course, Cemetery	up to 70 dB
Office Building, Business, Commercial & Professional	up to 70 dB
Industrial, Manufacturing, Utilities	up to 70 dB

SF Program 37.1: Review all land use and development proposals for compliance with the Noise and Land Use Compatibility Standards.

SF Program 37.2: Use a standard of L_{dn} 45 dB for indoor noise level for all new residential development, including hotels and motels.

SF Program 37.3: Use the standards in SF Table 2 to determine the need for noise studies and require new developments to provide noise attenuation features as a condition of approving new projects.

SF Program 37.4: Require an acoustical study for all new residential projects with a future L_{dn} noise exposure of 60 dB or greater as shown on SF Map 7. The study shall describe how the project will comply with the Noise and Land Use Compatibility Standards.

SF Program 37.5: Consider requiring post-construction testing and sign-off by an acoustical engineer for residential, school, library, church, hospital, and nursing home projects exposed to an L_{dn} in excess of 65 dB to ensure compliance with applicable exterior and interior standards contained in the Noise and Land Use Compatibility Standards.¹

¹ Amended 9/9/97 by Resolution No. 127-97.

SF Program 37.6: Do not permit new residential development within the 60 dB CNEL contour for Gness Field as shown in SF Map 8. An acoustical investigation and noise insulation shall be considered for residential development near to Gness Field within the 55 CNEL contour shown in SF Map 8. For any residential project where outdoor noise exceeds 60 L_{dn} or may increase to above 60 L_{dn} , require a program to inform all residents of the noise information and record a document indicating their awareness and acceptance of the noise level.

SF Program 37.7: Consider developing a comprehensive noise ordinance to address construction noise and other local noise issues.

SF Program 37.8: Consider and carefully evaluate the noise impacts of all streets and other public facilities.

SF Program 37.9: Continue to seek State and Federal funding for noise mitigation.

SF Policy 38 Noise Reduction and Mitigation. Mitigate noise exceeding standards and significant noise impacts to the maximum feasible extent.

SF Program 38.1: Require acoustical studies and mitigation measures for new developments and transportation improvements which affect noise sensitive uses such as schools, hospitals, libraries, group care facilities, and convalescent homes.

SF Program 38.2: Work with Caltrans to ensure that adequate noise studies are prepared and alternative noise mitigation measures are considered in State projects and request that Caltrans obtain City concurrence prior to Initiating any noise mitigation project in Novato.

See Also CI Policy 4 in the Community Identity Element relating to noise mitigation.

SF Program 38.3: Continue to restrict truck traffic to designated routes.

SF Program 38.4: Continue to enforce California Vehicle Code § 23130, 23130.5, 27150, 27151 and 38275. These sections pertain to allowable noise emissions of vehicles operated on public streets.

Responsibility: Police Department

SF Program 38.5: Investigate mitigation measures for projects that would cause a substantial increase in noise (i.e., cause the L_{dn} to increase above 60 dBA or cause an increase of 5 dBA L_{dn} or more in the noise environment) in adjacent residential areas or in residential areas affected by traffic generated by the proposed project. (Draft EIR, pages 166 and 167, Impact 4.7A)

In areas where noise is within standards, some increases are inevitable. This program is to keep those increases to the minimum necessary.=

CHAPTER VI: ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT & FISCAL VITALITY

INTRODUCTION

The Economic Development and Fiscal Vitality Chapter is an optional element of the General Plan. The framework for the City's commitment to foster a vital and sustainable local economy balanced and consistent with the broader social and environmental goals of the community is presented in this chapter in two sections.

Section 1: Economic Development describes the City's objectives, policies and programs to strengthen and diversify the local (Novato) economy. While economic factors and impacts extend well beyond City government, this section is based on the recognition that Novato should promote sustainable economic activities where economic development and environmental protection are interdependent. Sustainable economic activities are those whose profitability, quality of product, and responsiveness and resilience persist through both short- and long-term changes in market forces and business cycles. Sustainable economic activities use, and reuse or recycle, resources to meet current needs while ensuring that adequate resources are available for future generations. These resources include not only traditional natural resources and capital but also community resources such as land, infrastructure, people, environmental quality, public services and community identity. It seeks "a better quality of life for all its residents by limiting waste, preventing pollution, maximizing conservation, promoting efficiency, and developing renewable local resources (i.e., financial, fiscal, environmental and social capital) to drive the local economy."¹ Strategies for sustainable

economic development recognize the interrelationship between land use and land value, transportation, quality of public services and supporting infrastructure and environmental protection. Therefore, this element must be viewed in context with the other elements of the General Plan; in aggregate, they identify policies and their impacts. In addition, because the economic activity in and around Novato is only part of a larger regional economy, coordination between the multitude of planning and service districts throughout the region will be required to achieve sustainability.

Section II: Fiscal Vitality presents objectives, policies and programs relating to the City's financial well-being. The ability of the City to provide services such as police protection, parks, recreation, planning and public works is dependent on costs and revenues. The City of Novato annually adopts a balanced budget – the costs to be incurred each year cannot exceed the amount of revenue the City expects to collect. It is essential to anticipate the costs of implementing the General Plan. This section contains policies and programs to promote Novato's fiscal well-being.

Novato's economic development and fiscal vitality are also inter-dependent. A vital local economy ensures that private investment is taking place in the community while generating needed tax revenues to support public services and facilities. When local government is adequately financed, it can in turn provide the infrastructure, planning and services essential for maintaining a high quality of life and environment where businesses can prosper.

¹ This definition comes from UN's World Commission On Environment and development chaired by Gro Harlen Brunland, Prime Minister of Norway. Their report *Our Common Future* highlighted the interdependence between the environment and economic development. It is similar to the definition of sustainable development adopted by the President's Council on Sustainable Development.

In May 1995, the City Council adopted the following Economic Development Mission Statement prepared by its Economic Advisory Committee. This Committee was established to develop economic policies for Novato and to foster public/private cooperation.

Economic Development Mission Statement. Promote a sustainable, healthy local economy which will foster a balanced community offering residents opportunities to enjoy a high quality of life, including high quality education, employment, housing, transportation, public services, environmental standards, and aesthetics.

The following goals which establish the framework for this Economic and Fiscal Element are based on this Mission Statement.

“To promote a sustainable local economy which results in a balanced community where residents have opportunities to enjoy the components of a high quality of life: employment, housing, transportation, services and physical environment...”

Goal 1. Provide jobs commensurate in pay and skill level for Novato residents and a balance of tax revenues for the City by expanding and maintaining diversity in Novato’s economic base and focusing development efforts on clean, non-polluting businesses.

Goal 2. Assist Novato’s retail activities by strengthening the City’s designated retail areas to serve the needs of local residents and to position Novato as a destination retail center.

Goal 3. Retain existing businesses and attract new businesses within the designated commercially zoned areas by enhancing the City’s potential to be a magnet for targeted businesses through urban design improvements, allocation of sufficient developable land designated for office, commercial, retail and industrial uses, acquisition of 21st century information/communication infrastructure (phone systems, cable TV, wireless and/or satellite linkages, etc.), promotion and regulatory reform.

Goal 4. Enhance the Downtown as a community focus to be the heart of the community; to be Novato’s thriving multi-faceted economic hub, to serve as a social, cultural, historical and transit center; to attract people for commerce and community affairs from Novato and the surrounding region.

Goal 5. Consider creating an Economic Development Master Plan that provides implementation strategies to achieve economic development goals.

Section 1: Economic Development

Novato’s economy evolved from the mid-1800s to early 1900s as an agricultural supply and service center. The largest growth occurred immediately after World War II when Novato became a suburban residential community with neighborhood-based commercial retail and services. The community and local economy went through a period of adjustment following the deactivation and closure of Hamilton Air Force Base in 1974. During the 1980s and 1990s, there has been a significant increase in jobs and a diversification of the City’s economy. Because of Novato’s location at the hub of the four North Bay counties and near San Francisco and East Bay cities, many businesses located here. Industrial parks and corporate campuses with a variety of high technology and information-intensive businesses were also established during this period.

Economic History of Novato	
1839	- Rancho de Novato

1885	- No Malaria, No Fog, No Chill Winds
1892	- Cheese and Dairy
1920	- “Marvelous Marin” Attracts Hamilton
1950s	- Post World War II - Suburbia
1980s	- Economic Diversification
1990s	- Knowledge Driven High Tech and Services

I. Existing Conditions ¹

- A. Office, Retail, and Industrial Activity. Business areas in Novato are in a dispersed pattern. Retail, office, and industrial uses extend from San Marin on the north to Bel Marin Keys and Ignacio on the south, along Redwood Boulevard, South Novato Boulevard, Rowland Boulevard, and in the Downtown/Old Town area.

The Economic Background Report indicated that there was sufficient vacant and underdeveloped land to sustain the current levels of commercial development and to meet the anticipated market for commercial land for several years.

Novato businesses provided a total of 17,514 jobs in 1995. Of this total, the majority of jobs were in services, retail, finance, insurance and real estate as indicated on EC Table 1. Manufacturing, construction, transportation/utilities, wholesale trade, agriculture, and public administration jobs accounted for significantly smaller percentages of total jobs.

¹ More detailed information describing Novato’s economy is contained in the Existing Conditions Report, April 1995, prepared by the City; and the Economic Issues Report, May 1994; and Economic Evaluation and Strategy Report, November 1993, prepared by Mundie and Associates for the General Plan revision.

EC Table 1: Novato Labor Force			
Industry	Novato Employees	Novato Residents	Available Labor Force
Agriculture	467	346	-121
Construction	1,069	1,694	625
Manufacturing	1,676	2,142	466
Transportation, Communications, Utilities	390	1,705	1,315
Wholesale Trade	1,125	1,202	77
Retail Trade	3,295	4,338	1,043
Finance, Insurance, Real Estate	2,600	3,527	927
Services	6,603	8,894	2,291
Public Administration	289	1,290	1,001
Total	17,514	25,138	7,624

Source: EDD/Labor Market Information Division 3/95

Retail Spending and Leakage Patterns for Novato. In order to determine the retail sales leakage for Novato, total propensity to spend within the Novato Market area is compared to total sales captured within the same area; the difference between these two quantities represents sales lost (or leakage) to retail facilities in other geographic locations.

As EC Table 2 indicates, Novato’s taxable sales grew between 1987 and 1992 by \$146 million or 62 percent due to the opening of the Vintage Oaks Shopping Center in 1992. Although recent gains in Novato’s market share of taxable sales have slowed sales tax leakage, EC Table 3 indicates that Novato still experiences significant leakage, mostly in specialty retail outlets. While some of these “leaked” sales are captured by retail facilities in unincorporated areas immediately adjacent to Novato, a great portion of locally generated sales are captured by regional shopping facilities in San Rafael, Corte Madera, and other Bay Area locations.

EC Table 2: Novato Taxable Sales Trend by Category 1987-1992 Source: State Board of Equalization – Sales in \$000				
Type of Outlet	1987 Sales	1987 # Outlets	1992 Sales	1992 # Outlets
Apparel	\$9,495	18	\$13,909	17
Gen. Merchandise	1,072	5	76,154	7
Drug Stores	14,076	8	14,987	6
Food Stores	23,516	25	26,613	25
Package Liquor	3,730	7	4,420	8
Eating & Drinking Places	23,249	79	35,728	101
Home Furn. & Appliances	8,312	31	4,819	27
Building Materials	19,516	17	16,154	13
Auto Dealers/ Supplies	49,089	17	58,685	25
Service Stations	22,023	17	31,240	14
Other Retail Stores	19,379	116	21,324	109
Other Sources	42,622	1,007	78,238	1,278
TOTALS	\$236,079	1,347	\$382,271	1,630

EC Table 3: 1992 Novato Estimated Taxable Sales Leakage by Type of Outlet				
Source: State Board of Equalization, Ronald Brill, Research & Communication This table shows Novato sales leakage to other parts of Marin and does not include leakage to other counties - <u>All sales are in \$000.</u>				
Type of Outlet	1992 Novato Sales	Marin County Sales	*Novato % of Pot. Mkt. Share	*Est. Novato (Leakage) Surplus
Apparel	\$9,495	\$111,701	61%	(\$10,606)
Gen. Merchandise	76,154	284,902	132%	18,319
Drug Stores	14,987	66,706	111%	1,356
Food Stores	26,613	163,020	80%	(6,480)
Package Liquor	4,420	20,039	109%	352
Eating & Drinking Places	35,728	255,073	80%	(9,962)
Home Furn. & Appliances	4,819	120,241	20%	(19,590)
Building/Farm Materials	24,637	147,006	54%	(13,688)
Auto Dealers/ Supplies	58,685	248,569	116%	8,225
Service Stations	31,240	130,107	118%	4,828
Other Retail**	78,238	884,309	44%	(101,277)
TOTALS	\$382,271	\$500,118	76%	(\$117,847)
*Potential market share percentage and (leakage)/surplus is determined by comparing Novato's percentage of total Marin population (20.3%) with Novato's percentage capture of Marin County sales.				
**Specialty stores including gifts, sporting goods, florists, photo equipment, stationery, jewelry and office supplies.				

B. Employment: Novato Workers and Novato Residents. Traditionally, the City of Novato has been a “bedroom community” – a suburb with more residents than jobs. In recent years the City has experienced an increase in the number of jobs relative to the number of residents, and the gap between jobs and residents has been closing.

Despite an increase in local jobs, 70 percent of employed Novato residents still commute to work outside the City. This is due in part to a shortage of high paying employment opportunities in the City and in part to the fact that many of the new jobs in Novato are in the retail and service sectors and are held by people who commute from other communities, in part because they cannot afford to live in the City. One of the conditions created by this situation is higher average commute times for Novato residents commuting elsewhere to work due to Novato’s geographic location. According to the 1990 U.S. Census, mean travel time to work for employed City residents in 1990 was 30 minutes – 7 percent higher than the 28-minute average for all employed Marin County residents and 20 percent higher than the average of 25 minutes for all California workers.

Because increasing the number of local jobs alone will not necessarily provide more jobs for Novato residents, increasing local job opportunities must also include a greater diversity in the types of jobs, and strategies to match developing new job opportunities to the local work force, thereby reducing the amount of commuting for local residents, and strengthening the City's economy.

- C. **Downtown.** Downtown Novato (including Old Town) is located primarily along Grant Avenue between Railroad Avenue and Seventh Street. "Old Town" is the area between Railroad Avenue and Redwood Boulevard, while "Downtown" occupies the area between Redwood Boulevard and Seventh Street. The Downtown/Old Town area encompasses a mix of businesses, including restaurants, clothing stores, boutiques, various other kinds of retail, construction/home improvement-related businesses, financial institutions and services, offices, and the City government.

Retail sales tax revenues from the Downtown declined after the opening of the Vintage Oaks Shopping Center in 1992. Annual retail sales in the Downtown area decreased from approximately \$104.3 million in 1990 to approximately \$90.3 million in 1992. While the shopping center has introduced some types of retail stores that Novato has never had before, thereby allowing the City to "capture" more of local residents' retail spending, it has also brought stiff competition for existing stores. In competing with the shopping center, "Downtown/Old Town" stores are at a disadvantage because this area does not have large "anchor stores" that will draw customers. Downtown stores do not receive the benefits of centralized management provided in shopping centers. Downtown stores typically must sell goods at higher prices, because they are not able to buy in as large a volume as shopping center stores, most of which are national chain operations. Parking and public transportation are perceived to be not as convenient, and store hours are not as long.

A Specific Plan is in preparation to reverse this trend. Recent economic and market analysis indicated that the Downtown could be revitalized with a mixture of entertainment, restaurants, and a clustering of home improvement stores targeted to the homeowner.¹

- D. **Visitor and Tourism Activity.** Tourism contributes to the community by providing revenues for local businesses. Restaurants, hotels, and a wide variety of retail and personal service businesses could increase their revenues through additional tourist and visitor activity in Novato.

Tourist activity could build on Novato's excellent position at the edge of the wine country, within a short drive and proximity to San Francisco and a gateway to Pt. Reyes National Seashore. In addition, because of the conservation and restoration of the North Bay region's wetland areas, opportunities exist for the City and Novato businesses to benefit from ecotourism to these areas. Sponsoring special events, improving the appearance and unique sense of place of the Downtown, and establishing more varied entertainment uses Downtown would increase the number of people visiting Novato.

II. Issues and Concerns Facing the City

¹ Assessment of Near-Term Retail and Entertainment Development Opportunities for the Downtown Novato Specific Plan. Keyser Marston Associates, Inc., November 1994.

The following section discusses the major economic development and employment concerns and issues facing the City. It also identifies the trends that will influence the key decisions that the City must make to provide direction for future economic development.

- A. Land. Land represents a primary resource for economic development. Without this resource, economic development and/or expansion is severely constrained, limiting opportunities for private investment, business and employment. Therefore, land has been identified as a major economic development issue for Novato.

One of the most serious constraints pertaining to future economic development in Novato is the limited amount of vacant, suitable land for expansion or development. While many small vacant parcels can be found in the City, they are often perceived as not suitable for development due to such factors as size, shape and location. As might be expected, the limited supply of land, in conjunction with strong demand, has led to price increases, particularly in the past five years. Land prices have risen so sharply that, in most cases, only commercial development can support these prices. In addition to its cost, the difficulty in assembling land for economic development is further compounded by small parcel sizes and fragmented ownership. In spite of these problems, the demand for land is strong, and its limited supply will ensure its ever increasing price. Higher land prices will essentially dictate commercial development rather than industrial development, since the latter, in general, cannot support current land prices, or anticipated increases in land costs. Nevertheless, retention of existing commercial businesses, as well as facilitating their expansion within Novato, should be a high priority.

The City can and does intervene indirectly in the market place through its regulatory and financing powers. It can determine what kinds of uses can be developed at certain locations. These powers can also be used to promote certain land uses by restricting other competing land uses, e.g., limiting industrial zones to industrial uses only. In this manner, the City can use its regulatory powers to encourage those land uses at those locations where it feels it will help to achieve its economic development objectives. However, regulatory and administrative reform is necessary to make more cost-effective and time-certain the application and permitting process without compromising environmental review and citizen participation.

- B. Social Capital. Another primary resource for economic development is the community's social capital, our citizens, their skills, talent and initiative. Social capital issues include employment, representation of residents in local jobs, opportunities for job training, and the economic development of land for housing vs. jobs.

Educational and Employment Opportunities. Unlike previous generations, today's residents may have as many as 10 different employers over the span of their employment years. To remain employed, education has become a life-long process. The coordination of education and training programs, oriented to continuous, lifetime learning and retraining can provide the labor force with marketable skills which can be used to continue employment in the region and perhaps in the City. There is a significant work force base within the City that represents a substantial number of employment opportunities. However, long term shifts in the types of jobs have occurred which affect the labor force.

This demands that additional education and training are provided to ensure their competitiveness. Still, not all jobs in the service industry require high skills. Many employment opportunities are provided in the retail, eating and health services for those with lower skills. The City should work with other public agencies and organizations to identify and provide educational opportunities.

Sustainable economic development that is consistent with environmental protection and improving the quality of life and community requires providing equal economic and high quality educational opportunities to all. This means bringing new employment tools and skills (i.e., computer literacy and global information access) to all citizens regardless of previous employment or educational attainment. In addition, a community offering high quality educational opportunities can attract businesses which require employees with high quality educational attainment.

Another employment concern is the mismatch between the skill requirements of existing and future jobs and the skill levels of the work force. It may not be possible or desirable to create jobs for existing skill levels. It may be more desirable to raise or instill skill levels to meet the needs of existing and future jobs, since inadequate skills are a major barrier to employment.

Employment opportunities in the City will continue to increase primarily due to the growth of existing businesses and development of new office space. In addition to this direct employment, indirect employment will result from stimulation of the local economy through business purchases of goods and services from other businesses.

Office development not only impacts employment directly but indirectly creates related employment opportunities. There are complementary relationships between office space, restaurants and shopping facilities. Eating and shopping facilities complement office employee needs and desires, which in turn expands employment opportunities for low and semi-skilled workers in non-manufacturing industries.

Improved Representation of Local Labor Force in Local Jobs. There are methods of expanding the percentage of local jobs that are filled with local labor force. These include close monitoring of employment needs and job openings and active promotion of the local labor force. Another positive approach would be for the City to have the capability to offer a prospective employer a pool of potential employees trained to meet his or her needs.

Another approach is to identify housing and quality of life opportunities so that more of the local jobs will be held by people moving into the City.

However, given residential preferences and the general pattern of job mobility, it would be unreasonable to expect a significant increase in the percentage of locally-employed residents without strong General Plan objectives in collaborating with other public and private entities to achieve this goal.

Alternative Opportunities for Job Training. This is, perhaps, the most difficult employment issue to address in today's economic and political climate. With the loss of traditional resources for job training programs in the face of growing needs, the problem of adapting the local labor force to meet the requirements of a changing economy may soon reach crisis proportions. Job skills obsolescence rather than the lack of jobs appears to be the critical employment issue of the day.

With the shrinking resources, local government and educational agencies must look at closer coordination and sharing of resources with private sector participation inasmuch as they have a vested interest in having a skilled workforce trained to meet their needs (e.g., College of Marin/Indian Valley Campus "contract training" for employers) if they are to meet the challenge of training or retraining the labor force for a changing economy. A skills community training center is an example of this coordination, but this concept needs to be expanded to include private sector and non-governmental organization participation.

Also, the private sector can be encouraged to play a more active role in job training. In other parts of the country, it has either undertaken job training programs on its own without government assistance or has contracted with educational institutions, governmental and non-profit agencies to carry out job training programs with a guarantee that graduates would be hired.

Jobs from Economic Development Versus Jobs for Novato Residents. Given the interdependence of cities within the Bay Area, it is not possible nor even desirable that each community become insular and attempt to meet its individual job needs within its borders, one must assume a regional perspective.

While it is true that a great many of the jobs being created by current economic development efforts are going to non-Novato residents, by the same token, other communities are providing jobs for Novato residents, as is pointed out by the 1995 census finding that 70 percent of the local labor force work outside the City. Still, in view of the fact that Novato is "importing" ever greater numbers of employees, it is not unreasonable to seek somewhat improved performance in that regard. A greater percentage of jobs held by resident labor force would result in less traffic congestion and greater sense of community. From the employer's standpoint it could mean less absenteeism and possibly greater employee performance and productivity.

C. Industries and Infrastructure in Transition.

A primary constraint on economic development and productivity is transportation and traffic congestion. The long cherished transportation solutions of expanding roads, bridges and public transit are not, by themselves, going to solve gridlock, air pollution or fuel shortages, even if they could overcome serious financial and political problems. Some new ideas such

as disincentives for solo drivers have had only very limited success. The idea of linking transportation and telecommunications first emerged in the mid-1970s when telecommuting, taking the work to the worker via telecommunications, was first described. In 1991, the California Engineering Foundation held a conference and issued a report titled “Transportation Redefined: Moving People, Goods and Information.” The report urged the use of telecommunications as part of the transportation mix and shifting transportation subsidies and incentives. This evolving concept sees technology and electronic highways as both an alternate transportation mode and a means of maximizing use of traditional transportation systems. Going beyond just “bringing the work to the worker,” this view sees the definition of mobility expanding through telecommunications to bring services to a broad mix of consumers and taxpayers, moving information and services rather than people. Examples include education, health care and government information. New Federal legislation is supportive of this movement. For example, the National 1991 Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act (ISTEA) encourages broader thinking on mobility and provides State, regional, and local governments the flexibility to choose from among a variety of transportation modes, including additional transit, transportation demand management strategies, clean fuel vehicle fleets, telecommunications substitutes for transportation, and other options to improve their transportation systems, reduce congestion, and improve air quality. State and regional groups actively funding development and implementation projects to help local communities relieve the constraints on economic development imposed by traffic congestion through the use of new telecommunications technologies include: Bay Area Air Quality Management District, Bay Area Council, California Air Resources Board, California Energy Commission, California Department of Transportation, and Metropolitan Transportation Commission. For Novato, acquisition of new fiber optic cable systems, two-way satellite and other wireless linkages to global information resources, and increased phone system capabilities present major challenges and issues for the community.

D. City’s Influence on a Sustainable Economy. The City intends to use the powers available to it to promote sustainable economic activity. Sustainable economic activity redefines economic growth. It is not growth for its own sake. The main characteristics of sustainable economic development are:

- It recognizes that ecology and economics are interdependent;
- It makes economic decisions about growth, development, or business activity based on the long-term effects of those decisions, both in the economic benefits to and the environmental effects on the community;
- It encourages a full range of economic activities that incorporate conservation, reuse and recycling of resources and capital, and the prevention of pollution or degradation of resources;
- It builds on the characteristics unique to the locality to create economic diversity and self-sufficiency; and
- It recognizes the City’s interdependence with neighboring communities and other public agencies.

Strategies for sustainable economic development include the provision of incentives to influence private investment decisions. These typically consist of allocating sufficient developable land designated for office, commercial, retail and industrial uses; establishing incentives to attract new businesses and retain existing businesses; and implementing expedited processing of development plans.

It is also necessary to promote Novato as a desirable place to do business. Efforts to create a good business climate in which there exists close public-private sector cooperation will yield positive results.

The City can influence or otherwise affect local and regional economic development in many ways. However, the primary responsibility for achieving a healthy, sustainable economy rests with the private sector, and with national and regional trends that are beyond the City's influence. Cooperation among entities with different mandates, responsibilities and powers is essential to making sustainable economic development effort successful. EC Table 4 summarizes the City's potential influence on economic variables as they relate to the General Plan.

EC Table 4: The City's Influence on Economic Variables					
Variable	Yes	Some-what	No	Indirectly	General Plan
Demand for goods and services					
Local demand					—
Extra-local demand					—
Characteristics of the labor force					
Size of the working age population					
Age composition					
Education/skills					
Labor force participation					
Commute patterns					
Novato's competitive position compared to the Bay Region					
Local natural resources that are economic inputs					
Affordable housing supply					
Affordable land					
Gateway to outdoor recreation					
Tourism					
Quality of life					
Distance to major markets					—
Novato's ability to accommodate regional growth					
Land with proper plan and zoning designations					
Land served by infrastructure					
Land served by adequate access/egress routes					
Regulations governing site development					
Development fees					

EC Table 4: The City's Influence on Economic Variables					
Variable	Yes	Some-what	No	Indirectly	General Plan
Government attitudes toward development					
National conditions					
Supply of natural resources and other industrial inputs					—
Productivity trade-offs between labor and capital					—
Interest rates					—
Availability of construction financing					
Availability of operating capital					

The policies and programs in the next section are intended to coordinate local government efforts in a deliberate and planned manner with the private sector and other public and private organizations to accomplish the goals of this Chapter. It seeks to establish working relationships between business, government and the community.

Other chapters of this plan contribute to sustainable economic development:

- The Land Use Chapter contains policies and programs to encourage additional housing Downtown which would enlarge the market for Downtown businesses and foster increased nighttime use of the center of Novato. The Neighborhood Commercial and Mixed Use land use designations permit mixed residential and commercial uses. This increases local shopping opportunities, reducing the need for travel, and provides a larger local market. The Commercial/Light Industrial Land use designation specifies land uses and densities to facilitate the preservation and enhancement of existing light industrial and home-supply businesses north of “Old Town.”
- The Transportation Chapter seeks to ensure that the City’s transportation system will not become overloaded, because traffic congestion seriously affects local economic activity. Alternatives to the single occupant vehicle are combined with programs for improvements to the roadway system. Ensuring that people and goods can continue to move efficiently throughout Novato is essential to a healthy local economy.
- The Housing Chapter contains programs to ensure that additional affordable housing will be built. Employers typically look for communities that can provide a variety of housing for their work force.
- The Environment Chapter continues the City’s policies of having a generous amount of parks, trails and recreation facilities to serve all sectors of the

community. This chapter also contains policies to ensure that Novato's unique environmentally sensitive areas are preserved. Restored or preserved wetlands in the North Bay region may generate tourism activity for the City.

- The Community Identity Chapter recommends establishing design guidelines to improve the appearance of existing and future development throughout the City; programs to preserve and enhance historical buildings and sites; and programs to strengthen Novato's unique sense of place.

III. Objectives, Policies, and Programs for Economic Development

EC Objective 1: Foster Economic Development

EC Policy 1 Economic Development Commission. Create an Economic Development Commission to replace the current City/Chamber of Commerce Joint Economic Advisory Committee to foster public and private cooperation and to lead in the implementation of the following programs and policies.

EC Program 1.1: Identify means to provide staff support and resources to assist the Economic Development Commission.

Responsibility: Central Administration

EC Program 1.2: Present annual recommendations of the Economic Development Commission to the Planning Commission and City Council.

Responsibility: Central Administration

EC Program 1.3: Consider developing an Economic Development Master Plan.

Responsibility: Central Administration

The purpose of this plan would be to develop economic development strategic plans and means of implementation and to determine the economic, financial and fiscal impacts of alternative development proposals and the effectiveness of the policies and programs of this Chapter.

EC Program 1.4: A study should be conducted of Novato's small businesses to determine the factors that encourage and discourage small businesses from seeking or moving from Novato locations; to profile Novato's existing small business community to identify obstacles to small businesses; and to make recommendations for action the City can take to encourage small businesses.

Responsibility: Central Administration

EC Program 1.5: Propose an annual local report to the City Council on progress in implementing a vital sustainable economy. The report would include information on job creation, business development, the amount of remaining vacant and underdeveloped commercially designated land, and the results of other economic

development strategies and how these are implementing General Plan goals and policies. (A month will be designated for receipt of this annual report.) Statistics on availability of commercially designated land will be included in said report.

Responsibility: Central Administration

EC Objective 2: Maximize the capacity for employment-generating uses in areas designated for non-retail business.

The supply of land suitable for commercial and major office development is limited. To preclude these lands from being used inappropriately or inefficiently, a number of policies and programs will be adopted.

EC Policy 2 Commercial Lands. The City should encourage the development of commercial lands primarily for economic activities that contribute to local employment and income.

EC Program 2.1: In reviewing development plans for commercial and major office development, encourage the use and/or reuse of floor space primarily for production of goods and services.

EC Program 2.2: Allow in commercially designated areas only those uses that provide either business and professional services directly supportive to workplace uses, or convenience goods, restaurants, and other food and beverage and services needed by local workers.

EC Program 2.3: The City shall review, and amend as necessary, the allowed and conditional uses in the appropriate sections of the Zoning Ordinance to ensure that lands zoned for light industry and offices are developed predominantly for workplace uses.

EC Program 2.4: Amend the Zoning Ordinance to specify those retail uses that may be allowed in industrial districts with conditional use permits.

EC Policy 3 Employment Intensity. Consider allowing employment intensity to increase over time to reflect changes in technology and workplace organization.

EC Program 3.1: Through the work of the Economic Development Commission or other body, investigate opportunities to increase employment in the City.

EC Program 3.2: Consider the need for changes in zoning and other development regulations in order to allow future increases in employment intensity.

Any changes which would permit development intensities to exceed the maximums stated in LU Table 2 would require General Plan amendments.

EC Objective 3: Encourage businesses, particularly targeted businesses, that provide a variety of employment opportunities

Novato's commercial lands should be used as efficiently as possible. Average employment intensity should build over time through an increase in the employment intensity of new and alternative workplace uses (both commercial and office) and telecommuting. In particular, the City should seek new jobs that employ Novatans so as to increase the number of people who both live and work in Novato.

EC Policy 4 Regulatory Environment. Create a regulatory/administrative environment that will retain or attract to Novato workplace uses (targeted businesses) that meet criteria set by the Economic Development Master Plan and are commensurate with the pay and skill levels of Novato residents.

EC Program 4.1: Review the design of new commercial development and encourage the potential for future increases in employment intensity, and including methods for realizing Policies 3 and 4.

EC Program 4.2: Create a development review process that will attract rather than discourage nonresidential development.

EC Program 4.3: Identify in the Economic Development Master Plan tools and incentives for nonresidential development such as redevelopment, tax exempt financing and industrial development bonds.

With new development and with intensification of land use, land values will rise in Novato. Commercial sites initially developed at relatively low intensities may be converted to higher intensity uses, if the site and building plans can accommodate the increase in parking brought on by the intensification, or if alternative Transportation Systems Management (TSM) measures are implemented.

EC Policy 5 Economic Growth. Novato shall primarily pursue economic growth through the development of local employment opportunities, particularly in targeted businesses as defined in the Economic Development Master Plan.

Examples of businesses which would be encouraged in Novato include:

- Information/Knowledge based: including CD-ROM, multimedia and software development, telecommunications for entertainment and education;
- Biotechnology, Including biomedical services;
- Green Industries, including products from recycled materials, services/ products for energy conservation, green waste processing, organic and native plant agriculture/farming, and environmental restoration;
- Professional home-based business;
- Small service businesses, including desktop design/publishing/printing;
- Ecotourism and environmentally sensitive recreation.

EC Policy 6 Business Encouragement. The City shall actively encourage new and existing targeted businesses to locate in Novato, increasing employment opportunities for Novatans.

EC Policy 7 Employment Opportunities. Encourage an increase in the number and type of jobs that would enable people to live and work in Novato, consistent with the goals and policies of the General Plan.

EC Program 7.1: Identify programs that could reduce the number of residents working outside of Novato.

EC Program 7.2: Encourage employers to locally advertise new job opportunities.

Responsibility: Central Administration

EC Program 7.3: Support or jointly sponsor local job, trade and business fairs.

Responsibility: Central Administration

EC Program 7.4: Encourage coordination among employers, developers, and training and educational institutions to improve the match between emerging job opportunities and training programs.

Responsibility: Central Administration

EC Policy 8 Workplace Alternatives. Promote the establishment and expansion of workplace alternatives, including home occupations, telecommuting businesses and technology-transfer based businesses.

EC Program 8.1: Review and revise as feasible existing land use regulations to encourage workplace alternatives. Identify incentives encouraging this type of use.

EC Program 8.2: Work with educational institutions to provide employment training, re-training, and vocational education for potential employees of Novato businesses.

Responsibility: Central Administration and Community Development

This program could include facilitating the establishment of an employment training center on the site of the existing Indian Valley Campus and/or another suitable site.

EC Policy 9 Live/Work Uses. Provide additional opportunities for combined residential and work uses.

Live/work units provide several important incentives to sustainable economic development. They enable “incubator” or starter businesses to get established while at the same time providing affordable housing. Live/work units reduce the need to travel and often enliven the neighborhoods where they are located.

EC Program 9.1: Adopt a live/work ordinance with performance standards for noise, dust, odors, traffic, and related potential nuisances; specific standards relating to the proportion of living versus workplace space; and other regulations to ensure that the live/work uses do not displace, but complement and are compatible with, the land use designations where they will be located.

The ordinance should specify which land use designations would be appropriate for live/work units.

EC Objective 4: Retain and Attract Businesses

Studies of job creation have found that small businesses create the majority of new jobs. Small businesses also contribute to economic diversity, which expands job opportunities and provides resilience during economic downturns. Locally-owned businesses provide economic strength to a community because they are more likely to buy local materials and services, help create a sense of place, and provide for more community involvement.

EC Policy 10 Small and Locally Owned Businesses. Encourage the establishment of small and locally-owned businesses, and give this sector of the local economy a high priority.

EC Program 10.1: Target small businesses in promotional economic programs.

Responsibility: Central Administration

EC Policy 11 Retention of Existing Businesses. Retain, upgrade, and increase the vitality of existing Novato businesses.

EC Program 11.1: Consider establishing an administrative program to facilitate the renovation of existing commercial buildings to meet current code.

EC Program 11.2: Develop an economic development strategy for Novato as part of the Economic Development Master Plan. Consider implementing the following as part of the Economic Development Master Plan:

- a. Survey Novato businesses to determine why they located in the City, whether they would do it now, the advantages and disadvantages of their location, and their current and future needs.
- b. Review existing City policies to determine whether changes are needed to respond to concerns identified in the survey. Submit necessary changes to the Planning Commission and City Council, as appropriate.
- c. Assemble and maintain an updated inventory of sites available for commercial and industrial development, noting characteristics that respond to the location-related, decision-making factors identified in the business survey. Publish a brochure for describing these sites.

Responsibility: Central Administration

EC Program 11.3: Make mapping and other land use information available at a reasonable cost to local businesses seeking to relocate in Novato.

EC Program 11.4: Consider fee reductions for processing of lot assembly applications for non-residential uses.

This change would remove one obstacle to creating larger sites suitable for larger and more modern development projects, in the Downtown area and other developed areas of Novato.

EC Policy 12 Attracting New Businesses. Encourage new targeted businesses as defined by the Economic Development Master Plan.

EC Program 12.1: Work with public and private entities to identify, publicize, and promote sites available for targeted businesses.

Responsibility: Central Administration

EC Program 12.2: Assist in publishing and distributing promotional brochures and information about Novato to attract businesses to the City.

Responsibility: Central Administration

EC Program 12.3: Assist in instituting a promotional marketing program and tours for targeted businesses. Provide information to private decision makers (including industrial developers and realtors) on site, services, amenities, housing availability and the City's commitment to providing needed facilities and to reduce project approval time.

Responsibility: Central Administration

EC Program 12.4: Work with the Marin County Economic Commission in its educational, informational, and development activities.

Responsibility: Central Administration

EC Policy 13 Information Infrastructure. The City shall take action to provide the information infrastructure necessary to retain and attract targeted businesses.

EC Program 13.1: Work with telecommunications companies and the PUC to encourage state-of-the-art telecommunications capabilities, including fiber optic, satellite, wireless, cable lines and other new emerging technologies capable of transferring data digitally.

EC Program 13.2: Consider establishing a targeted business program to assist businesses wishing to relocate and/or expand in Novato.

EC Program 13.3: Assist our educational systems, particularly through public/private partnerships, in achieving and maintaining state of the art proficiency with regard to information, computer, and communications technologies and the education, re-training, and infrastructure required to fulfill this objective.

EC Policy 14 Environmental Standards. Continue to require high environmental standards in the development and operations of all businesses. (See Chapter IV: Environment.)

Novato's environmental quality is an essential factor in attracting and retaining businesses and employees.

EC Objective 5: Revitalize the Downtown Area

The City is preparing a Downtown Specific Plan to revitalize Downtown and ensure that it becomes the economic, social and cultural center of Novato.

EC Policy 15 Downtown. Improve the economic vitality of Downtown.

EC Program 15.1: Implement the adopted Downtown Specific Plan.

EC Program 15.2: Support and facilitate special events such as the Farmer's Market, Art & Wine Festival, July 4th Parade, and holiday-related promotions downtown.

Responsibility: Central Administration

EC Program 15.3: Explore various financial programs to encourage existing businesses to renovate/retrofit existing commercial structures to meet market needs and thereby stay in Novato.

Responsibility: Central Administration

Refer to the Community Identity Chapter for policies and programs relating to design guidelines consistent with Downtown Specific Plan Guidelines.

EC Policy 16 Tourism. Encourage the development of tourism in Novato.

EC Program 16.1: Sponsor and/or support public events downtown that draw visitors from outside of Novato.

Responsibility: Central Administration

The policies and programs in the Downtown Specific Plan are intended to create a sense of place and environment which will attract additional visitors and tourists to downtown. Refer to the Community Identity Chapter which contains programs relating to the downtown and to public art.

EC Policy 17 Retail Development Downtown. Encourage additional retail development downtown.

The City is giving a high priority to supporting the economic vitality of downtown businesses, while improving the important linkages among different business areas within the City.

EC Program 17.1: Assist in evaluating the market for desired retail uses. Identify incentives to attract targeted retail uses downtown.

Responsibility: Central Administration

EC Objective 6: Encourage Sustainable Local Economic Activity

EC Policy 18 Sustainability. Encourage businesses which emphasize economic sustainability. Consider analysis of economic impacts before approving major development projects.

EC Program 18.1: Assist in establishing an educational program for Novato businesses on ways to profit from sustainable environmental business practices, including recycling of manufactured goods and other materials; incentives to travel by means other than the single-occupant automobile; eco-efficiency, and water and energy conservation.

Responsibility: Central Administration

EC Program 18.2: Develop a strategy to target sustainable environmental businesses (green industries) in the Economic Development Master Plan.

Responsibility: Central Administration

EC Program 18.3: Review, and revise as needed, the recommendations and proposed programs of the Economic Development Commission to ensure that the goal of developing sustainable economic development is being achieved.

Responsibility: Central Administration and the Community Development Department

EC Policy 19 Administrative Reform. Reform and improve administrative processes as identified in the Economic Development Master Plan relating to business in order to foster the spirit of cooperation, understanding, consensus and partnership between government and business.

EC Program 19.1: Review and recommend, where necessary, changes to all ordinances, regulations and regulatory processes as they relate to a sustainable local economy as identified in the Economic Development Master Plan.

Responsibility: Community Development Department

EC Policy 20 Attracting Shoppers. Attract shoppers to Novato's destination retail center(s) from within Novato and beyond.

EC Policy 21 Compatible Retail and Commercial Uses. Promote compatible retail and commercial combined uses/concentrations to improve business retention and attraction and reduce vacant or underutilized sites.

One of the issues influencing Novato's economic sustainability is its heterogenous land use patterns, which includes incompatible uses, vacant parcels, and underutilized space. As opportunities arise to address these problems, timely consideration of compatibility and concentration of use and their cumulative effects should be made. The City should seek to reduce land use incompatibilities while at the same time improving the mix of uses.

EC Policy 22 Existing Retail Base. Novato's existing retail base, and the existing scale of retail development should be maintained and expanded. Cluster retail and related uses so that they are concentrated rather than dispersed. Take steps to maintain existing and promote new auto dealerships.

EC Program 22.1: The City will prepare an inventory of vacant commercially-zoned parcels fronting on major arterials, and will estimate the annual absorption of such parcels in order to advise the Planning Commission and City Council regarding the adequacy or excess of commercial zoning in those locations.

EC Program 22.2: City agencies will cooperate with the Chamber of Commerce and other public/private organizations in supporting promotional activities that emphasize Novato retailing.

EC Program 22.3: Encourage new retail and commercial uses to locate in appropriately zoned areas, and require applicants for new retail and related commercial uses to find existing zoned sites.

Section 2: Fiscal Vitality

Novato, like other municipalities, faces a challenging financial future. There are opportunities and strategies available to achieve the long term financial health of the City, ensuring the maintenance of City services and facilities and a high quality of life. However, until the State of California deals effectively and comprehensively with State-wide problems including potential changes to the existing tax system, the future of municipal budgets and the vital services they provide are not certain. In the interim, cities are forced to pursue various strategies to fund the maintenance of and increasing demand for programs and services.

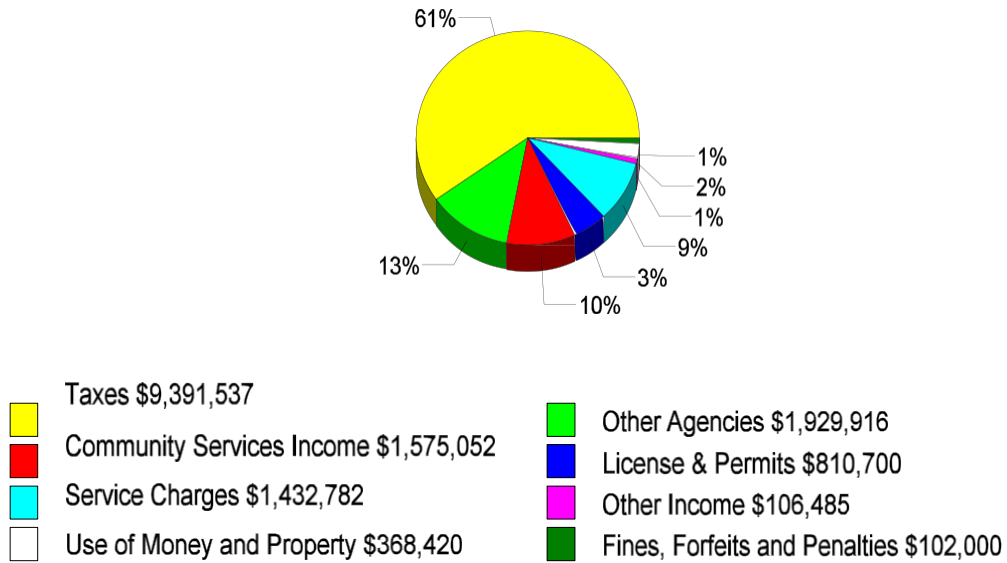
The Fiscal Vitality section highlights the fiscal condition of the City under the General Plan and projects future fiscal conditions under the General Plan over the next 20 years. Overall, the fiscal projections for the General Plan indicate that operating revenues will exceed costs in the earlier years of the 20 year study period, but predicts that for the later part of the period, the City will operate at a deficit. The purpose of the Economic Development and Fiscal Vitality Element, among other reasons, is to present objectives, policies, and programs to minimize or eliminate that deficit.

I. Existing Conditions

A. Fiscal Conditions of City (Current)

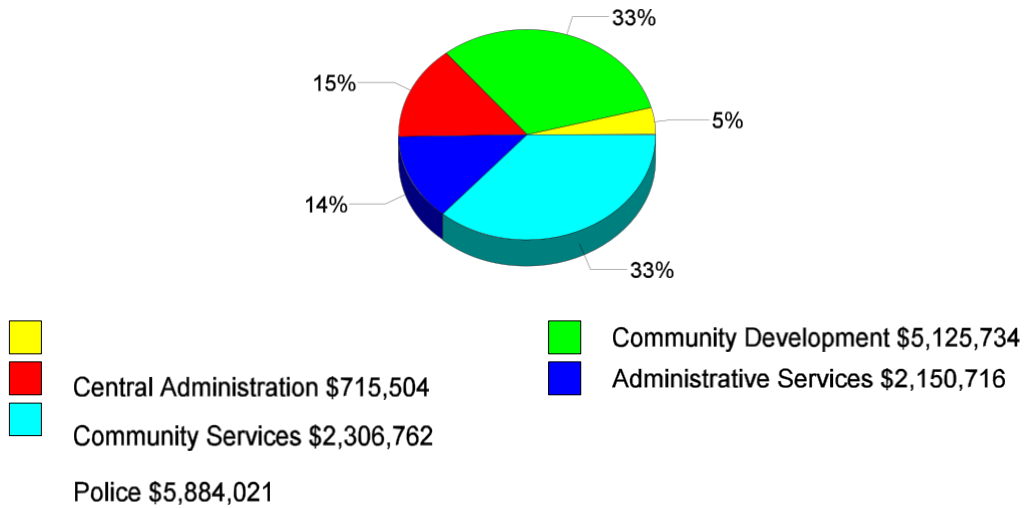
Novato's current fiscal condition is the balance of costs incurred and revenues generated by the City's existing development, population and employment, given the City's ability to generate those revenues and level of service delivery. Although Novato's budget must be balanced, revenues to expenditures, the City remains below average in both revenues and expenditures relative to comparable Bay Area cities.

Revenues, Fiscal Year 1995/96



EC Figure 1: Adopted City Budget 1995/96 - Revenues & Appropriations

Appropriations, Fiscal Year 1995/96



EC Table 5: Municipal Revenues & Costs, Novato and
Other San Francisco Bay Area Cities of Similar Size, Fiscal 1992/93

MUNICIPAL REVENUES AND COSTS, NOVATO AND OTHER S.F. BAY AREA CITIES
OF SIMILAR SIZE, FISCAL 1992/93, EXCLUDING FIRE DEPARTMENTS

(000) Omitted)	Novato	San Rafael	So. S.F.	Pleasanton	Union City	Palo Alto	Milpitas	Petaluma	Average	Novato % of Average
County:	Marin	Marin	San Mateo	Alameda	Alameda	Santa Clara	Santa Clara	Sonoma		
Population, Jan. 1993	48,897	52,122	56,613	54,348	56,753	57,324	56,671	45,709	47,604	102.7%
REVENUES:										
Functional Revenues	19,903	10,049	22,276	25,201	8,192	66,637	19,722	22,626	24,326	81.8%
General Revenues	10,721	14,320	17,986	25,694	10,654	26,156	16,415	12,529	16,809	63.8%
Total	30,624	24,369	40,262	50,895	18,846	92,793	36,137	35,155	41,135	74.4%
EXPENDITURES:										
Operating	16,349	22,043	40,934	39,534	16,414	84,133	35,308	26,576	35,161	46.5%
Expenditures										
Capital Outlays	7,132	3,363	15,207	5,363	1,285	19,675	15,705	971	8,588	83.0%
Total	23,481	25,406	56,141	44,897	17,699	103,808	51,013	27,547	43,749	53.7%
INCOME SOURCES:										
Taxes	9,651	11,821	16,101	23,179	8,401	20,660	10,448	10,903	13,895	69.5%
Special Benefit Assessments	102	1,630	811	-	2,138	-	-	110	599	17.1%
Licenses and Permits	700	663	589	1,041	566	1,420	2,063	1,231	1,034	67.7%
Fines and Forfeitures	114	456	398	128	99	939	209	235	322	35.3%
Revenue from Money and Property	1,020	787	2,650	1,391	768	11,595	5,122	818	3,019	33.8%
Intergovernmental	5,191	3,320	8,597	4,265	4,523	4,471	3,787	2,781	4,617	112.4%
Current Service Charges	3,270	5,302	9,369	19,394	1,670	53,171	14,079	13,537	14,974	21.8%
Other Revenues	576	390	1,727	1,497	681	537	429	2,796	1,079	53.4%
Other Financing Sources	10,000	-	20	-	-	-	-	2,744	1,596	626.7%
Total	30,624	24,369	40,262	50,895	18,846	92,793	36,137	35,155	41,135	74.4%
OPERATING EXPENDITURES										
General Government	2,951	1,859	3,403	2,644	1,732	5,770	3,914	2,340	3,077	95.9%
Public Safety	5,768	9,323	9,050	10,133	8,108	16,247	10,729	7,516	9,609	60.0%
Transportation	2,071	3,440	3,399	2,992	2,483	4,735	1,494	2,988	2,950	70.2%
Community Development	3,011	2,347	4,725	5,122	1,444	7,403	2,378	2,353	3,598	83.7%
Health	-	-	13,094	7,779	137	20,555	6,713	3,796	6,509	0.0%
Culture and Leisure	2,548	5,074	7,263	4,976	2,510	16,499	3,758	2,673	5,663	45.0%
Public Utilities	-	-	-	5,888	-	7,670	6,322	4,890	3,096	0.0%
Other	-	-	-	-	-	5,254	-	20	659	0.0%
Total	16,349	22,043	40,934	39,534	16,414	84,133	35,308	26,576	35,161	46.5%

Source: California State Controller's Office, Financial Transactions Concerning California Cities, Annual Report 1992/93

Novato's general revenues are 63.8% of the average for comparable Bay Area cities and operating expenditures are 46.5% of the average.

EC Table 6: Marin and Sonoma Cities' Comparison – Revenues per Capita

	1992/93 POPULATION	TOTAL GENERAL REVENUES		REVENUES PER CAPITA
SAUSALITO (Resident)	7,430	3,821,604	\$	514.00
SANTA ROSA	123,806	46,830,440	\$	378.00
MILL VALLEY	13,456	6,010,288	\$	447.00
PETALUMA	45,709	12,529,285	\$	274.00
SAN RAFAEL	52,122	14,320,340	\$	275.00
LARKSPUR	11,917	4,154,867	\$	349.00
CORTE MADERA	8,459	6,036,714	\$	714.00
NOVATO	48,897	10,720,566	\$	219.00

Source: California State Controller's Office, Financial Transactions Concerning California Cities, Annual Report 1992/93.

Novato's General Fund revenues per capita are lowest when compared to other cities in the North Bay area. This low revenue per capita condition is an issue of concern which is addressed in the objectives, policies and programs of both the Economic Development section and the Fiscal Vitality section of this Element.

B. Trend/Projected Fiscal Condition of City

EC Table 7: Revenue & Expenditure Trends

CITY OF NOVATO
MAJOR LOCAL REVENUE SOURCES
MILLIONS OF DOLLARS

Major Revenue Sources	1992/93	1993/94	1994/95	Projected 1995/96
Sales & Use Tax	\$ 4.49	\$ 4.71	\$ 4.95	\$ 4.92
Property Tax	\$ 2.81	\$ 2.65	\$ 2.98	\$ 2.49
Motor Vehicle In-Lieu Fees	\$ 1.66	\$ 1.73	\$ 1.80	\$ 1.71
Recreation Services Income	\$ 0.96	\$ 1.07	\$ 1.16	\$ 1.58
Licenses & Permits	\$ 0.70	\$ 0.60	\$ 0.48	\$ 0.81
Franchise Taxes	\$ 0.54	\$ 0.55	\$ 0.55	\$ 0.61
Business License Taxes	\$ 0.31	\$ 0.48	\$ 0.52	\$ 0.52
Transient Occupancy Tax	\$ 0.16	\$ 0.15	\$ 0.20	\$ 0.18
Property Transfer Tax	\$ 0.11	\$ 0.13	\$ 0.12	\$ 0.13
Fines, Forfeits/Penalties	\$ 0.11	\$ 0.10	\$ 0.10	\$ 0.10

EC Table 7: Revenue & Expenditure Trends (Cont'd)

City of Novato General Fund Revenue Trend/Projection		
1990/91	\$ 13.80	
1991/92	\$ 15.50	
1992/93	\$ 14.70	
1993/94	\$ 14.50	
1994/95	\$ 15.20	
1995/96	\$ 15.80	Projected

CITY OF NOVATO
CITY EXPENDITURES TREND BY FUNCTION
MILLIONS OF DOLLARS

Function	1989/90	1990/91	1991/92	1992/93	1993/94	1994/95
Community Services	\$ 1.00	\$ 1.30	\$ 1.60	\$ 1.70	\$ 1.90	\$ 1.90
Central Administration	\$ 1.70	\$ 1.90	\$ 1.70	\$ 1.80	\$ 2.60	\$ 2.80
Community Development	\$ 3.50	\$ 5.10	\$ 6.10	\$ 6.20	\$ 5.20	\$ 5.30
Police Department	\$ 4.00	\$ 5.10	\$ 5.40	\$ 5.20	\$ 5.70	\$ 5.70
Total	\$ 10.20	\$ 13.40	\$ 14.80	\$ 14.90	\$ 15.40	\$ 15.70

EC Table 8: Ten-Year Trend in Novato Net Taxable Assessed Value

TEN-YEAR TREND IN NOVATO NET TAXABLE ASSESSED VALUE

Year	Net Assessed Value	Annual Increase	% Increase
1984-85	\$1,399,969,936	-	-
1985-86	\$1,603,447,728	\$203,477,792	15%
1986-87	1,662,842,014	59,394,286	4%
1987-88	1,827,075,481	164,233,467	10%
1988-89	1,980,338,970	153,263,489	8%
1989-90	2,233,636,697	253,297,727	13%
1990-91	2,502,477,511	268,804,814	12%
1991-92	2,696,946,233	194,468,722	8%
1992-93	2,903,807,432	206,861,199	8%
1993-94	3,050,955,351	147,147,919	5%
1994-95	3,221,408,947	170,453,596	6%
1995-96	3,329,684,500	108,275,553	3%

Source: Marin County Assessor's Office

- Projected Fiscal Conditions of City

The following projected fiscal conditions for this General Plan are drawn directly from the Fiscal Analysis of the Preferred Plan (Revised) November 1995 prepared by Mundie and Associates.

The fiscal model developed for this analysis is based on various land use assumptions and projects revenues and costs for a 20 year period, beginning in 1995/96 and ending in 2014/15, using the historic growth rate and ABAG 94 growth rate scenarios.

The Historic Growth Rate projection assumes that growth will proceed at about the same pace as it did between 1980 and 1990. During that period, Novato's population increased at an average annual rate of 0.35 percent while employment grew at an average annual rate of 1.89 percent. This amount of growth is permitted by this General Plan.

The ABAG 94 Growth Rate Projection for this General Plan assumes that growth will occur at about the same rate as anticipated in ABAG's Projections 94 for the period 1995 through 2010, but the fiscal analysis extends that projection through the year 2015. In this scenario, the City's population will increase at an average annual rate of 1.03 percent per year, or nearly triple the rate experienced between 1980 and 1990.

ABAG projects that employment will grow at an average annual rate of 4.08 percent per year, substantially faster than the historic rate of 1.89 percent per year. The scenario evaluated for this General Plan assumes that all employment-related land uses—that is, commercial, industrial and office—grow at this rate until development capacity available under this General Plan is used up. The land use designations of this General Plan effectively limit the amount of commercial and office (but not industrial) development to less than will occur if the growth rate of 4.08 percent per year is sustained. With limits on commercial and office space equal to full General Plan buildout, employment will increase at an overall average annual rate of 2.47 percent.

EC Table 9 summarizes the amount of development and the changes in population and employment that will occur as provided by either the historic growth projection or the ABAG 94 growth rate projection.

EC Table 9: Future Growth Scenarios Analyzed by the Fiscal Model*

	Existing	This General Plan Projected, 2015	
		Historic Growth	ABAG 94 Growth
		1995	Rate Projection:
Population	54,498	58,410	66,888
Change		3,912	12,390
Percent Change		7.2%	22.7%
Residential Development (Housing Units)			
Single Family	15,943	17,087	19,568
Change		1,144	3,625
Percent Change		7.2%	22.7%
Multi-Family	4,554	4,881	5,589
Change		327	1,035
Percent Change		7.2%	22.7%
Employment	17,360	25,242	28,285
Change		7,882	10,925
Percent Change		45.4%	62.9%
Nonresidential Development (Sq. Ft.)			
Industrial Building Space	241,352	350,934	536,867
Change		109,582	295,515
Percent Change		45.4%	122.4%
Commercial Building Space In Vintage Oaks	590,000	623,000	623,000
Change		33,000	33,000
Percent Change		5.6%	5.6%
Outside Vintage Oaks	5,498,532	8,229,932	8,765,335
Change		2,731,400	3,266,803
Percent Change		49.7%	59.4%
Office Building Space	1,178,076	1,712,962	2,307,638
Change		534,886	1,129,562
Percent Change		45.4%	95.9%

SOURCE: MUNDIE & ASSOCIATES, BASED ON INFORMATION FROM CITY OF NOVATO AND PAS & ASSOCIATES

*Includes sphere of influence.

EC Table 10 compares the amount of land (in acres) that will be developed in the future according to the different growth rates to the extent of current development.

EC Table 10: Developed Acreage in the Future Growth from this General Plan

	Projected, 2015		
	Existing 1995	Historic Growth Rate Projection	ABAG 94 Growth Rate Projection
Residential Development			
Single Family	6,123	7,147	9,367
Multi-Family	421	458	539
Non-Residential Development			
Industrial	17	28	48
Commercial In Vintage Oaks	52	56	56
Outside Vintage Oaks	560	789	834
Office	107	161	220

SOURCE: MUNDIE & ASSOCIATES, BASED ON INFORMATION FROM CITY OF NOVATO AND PAS & ASSOCIATES

Fiscal Projections. The City’s revenue and cost relationships used in the fiscal model are described in the Fiscal Analysis document and have been applied to the General Plan development potential. The incremental revenues and costs associated with new development are combined with the revenues and costs associated with existing development to yield a comprehensive picture of total revenues and costs, and net fiscal balance, in five year increments through the projection period.

Projected Fiscal Condition with this General Plan

Below are excerpts from a fiscal model developed by Mundie and Associates to assist in the identification of the fiscal impacts to the City from the various General Plan alternatives. It is important to understand that the information below should be viewed within the context of the strengths and weaknesses of the model. For example, the ability of this model to accurately predict results becomes less reliable for results modeled further from the present. In addition, the disparity in growth rates has an impact on the model results. The annual historic growth rate is .35 percent, while the ABAG 94 projected annual growth rate is 1.03 percent. The ABAG rate is almost three times the historic rate, which in the world of modeling can be a vast difference. What is important to note from the information presented below is: 1) new development will improve Novato’s fiscal condition for a time, but eventually the increase in costs will outpace the increase in revenues; 2) as the rate of growth increases, beyond a certain point, the fiscal condition of the City becomes worse faster; and 3) this will occur unless some action is taken, but there is time to take action.

The Historic Growth Rate Projection

If new development occurs according to the Historic Growth Rate Scenario, revenues will grow more rapidly than costs, until about 2002-03. In 1995-96, the first year of the projection period, revenues will exceed costs by an estimated \$300,000. By 2001-02, the annual surplus will be more than

\$520,000 (in inflated dollars). After 2002-03, costs would begin to increase more rapidly than revenues and costs will exceed revenues beginning in 2009-10. By 2014-15, the costs will exceed revenues by about \$6.5 million (in inflated dollars).

During the years in which the General Fund experiences more revenues than costs, the City will be able to accumulate a sizable surplus. EC Table 11 summarizes the cumulative balance in inflated and discounted dollars, in five year increments. It shows that the General Fund will have accumulated approximately \$4.2 million (\$3.4 million in discounted dollars by the year 2009-10). The cumulative balance will turn negative in 2009-10 and will increase to \$23.8 million (\$19.5 million in discounted dollars) in 2014-15.

EC Table 11: Projected Cumulative Fiscal Balance,
Historic Growth Rate Projection (\$ Millions)

Year	Inflated Dollars		Discounted Dollars	
	Balance	Cumulative	Balance	Cumulative
	This Year	Balance	This Year	Balance
1995-1996	\$0.24	\$0.24	\$0.23	\$0.23
1999-2000	0.60	2.28	0.49	1.88
2004-2005	0.05	4.17	0.04	3.42
2009-2010	-2.06	-1.15	-1.70	-0.95
2014-2015	-6.55	-23.78	-5.38	-19.54

SOURCE: MUNDIE & ASSOCIATES

The ABAG 94 Growth Rate Projection

If growth in Novato occurs at the more rapid rate anticipated by ABAG’s Projections 94, then the General Fund can expect revenues to exceed costs through the year 2001-02, or about seven years less than with the historic growth rate. In 1995-96, the City will have a positive balance of about \$0.4 million. The annual surplus will peak in 1998-99, at about \$560,000, and then will decline as costs begin to grow more rapidly than revenues. Beginning in 2002-03, the fiscal balance will turn negative as costs exceed revenues for the first time; by 2014-15, the end of the projection period, the annual deficit will top \$14 million.

EC Table 12: Projected Cumulative Fiscal Balance,
ABAG 94 Growth Rate Projection (\$ Millions)

Year	Inflated Dollars		Discounted Dollars	
	Balance	Cumulative	Balance	Cumulative
	This Year	Balance	This Year	Balance
1995-1996	\$0.40	\$0.40	\$0.38	\$0.38
1999-2000	0.51	2.58	0.42	2.12
2004-2005	-1.06	1.29	-0.87	1.06
2009-2010	-5.43	-15.74	-4.46	-12.94
2014-2015	-14.03	-66.63	-11.53	-54.76

SOURCE: MUNDIE & ASSOCIATES

II. Issues and Concerns Facing the City

A. Increasing Demands for City Services/Decrease in City's Revenue

Many factors contribute to increasing demands for city services and declining city revenues. Unfunded mandates imposed on local government from state and federal levels increase the city's ongoing work program but with no corresponding ongoing revenue to fund the additional work. State revenue shift from cities to Education Revenue Augmentation Fund (ERAF) for schools has reduced ongoing city revenue further impacting ongoing funding for city services. As the city approaches buildout the cumulative impacts on existing public services and facilities are not sufficiently funded from new development. Aging infrastructure and deferred maintenance of public facilities has led to an overwhelming unfunded future expense necessitating a serious look at alternative funding options. Maintenance of police response time and impacts on crime prevention continue to be a high community priority. Costs to recruit and retain qualified public employees and remain competitive in the marketplace are increasing. Keeping up with the requirements for information infrastructure capabilities contributes to competition among scarce funding resources.

B. Fiscal Impacts of Development

The fiscal impacts of new development in Novato are determined by the amount of revenue the new development generates for the City, as compared with the costs of providing the development with City services and facilities. The City obtains revenues from property and sales taxes, fees charged for licenses and permits, rent on City-owned facilities, interest on City investments, transfers from federal and state agencies, recreation fees, and other service charges. The City incurs costs by 1) providing ongoing, everyday services (e.g., police protection, parks and recreation, community development, public works, general government) to residents and businesses; and 2) funding capital facilities, including both the construction and acquisition of new facilities such as a police station or community center, and major repair or reconstruction of existing facilities, such as road extensions or rebuilding.

New residential and employment-related development allowed by the General Plan will require the provision of both new capital facilities and new ongoing services, which will, in turn, generate new revenue for the City. New development is considered to be "paying its

own way” if the amount of revenue it delivers to the City of Novato equals or exceeds the City’s cost of delivering services to it. Revenue may be contributed directly by the development (e.g., through property or sales taxes) or by the people who live or work in it (e.g., through sales taxes, business licenses and other fees). Similarly, costs may result from services provided directly to the property (e.g., building inspections or police response to a burglary), or to the people who live or work there (e.g., recreation programs).

Generally, most types of higher cost housing and most types of non-residential development are expected to generate more revenues than costs for City governments. This depends on a number of factors, however, such as the City’s share of property taxes received, the types of City services provided and the level at which they are provided, and the City’s costs in delivering the services it provides.¹

Other uses, such as public facilities and low-, moderate-priced housing generate more costs than revenues. Some of these uses, particularly public facilities such as parks, playgrounds, and community buildings, may provide other benefits for which residents and businesses are collectively willing to pay. The benefits provided by other fiscally non-profitable uses may be less direct. Lower-value housing, for example, provides a place for people employed in the community to live, and thus helps to reduce travel times and traffic congestion. Providing places for workers to live may also attract businesses to the community.

C. Estimated Costs of General Plan Implementation

The Land Use, Transportation, Housing, and other chapters of the General Plan have a significant impact on future City revenues and costs. The General Plan affects the City’s fiscal future by:

- Defining land use. The different types of land uses designated by the General Plan generate different revenues and costs for the City. The General Plan also designates permitted densities for residential development and intensities for non-residential development, both of which affect the balance between City revenues and costs.
- Setting standards for public services delivery. The City allocates funds to public services in order to meet the standards established by the General Plan.
- Identifying required capital improvements. The General Plan identifies improvements to streets and other public facilities that will be necessary to accommodate existing and future land uses. These capital improvements add to the City’s costs.
- The Public Facilities and Services Chapter suggests the City consider establishing development impact fees to pay for major new facilities, and/or the expansion and increased maintenance requirements for current facilities.
- The Transportation Chapter calls for the establishment of a transportation impact fee to pay for needed additional roadway improvements related to new development and

¹ Refer to Analysis of the Preferred Plan (Revised), prepared by Mundie & Associates, November 1995. This is a background report and is not an adopted part of the General Plan.

new transportation systems designed to meet the increasing demands of the residents of the City; and

- The Land Use Chapter contains growth management policies to ensure that new development and City infrastructure are kept in balance.

Although the City has adopted a policy to recover costs associated with development processing and installation of “hard” infrastructure (such as streets, sewer and water system) needed to serve new development, it has not historically charged new projects for other types of facilities and services that are necessary to assure a continued high quality of life. For example, Novato has to date not levied a transportation impact fee for roadway improvements; neither does it require non-residential developers to devote a percentage of their project budgets for facilities. Imposing these types of fees on new development would generate funds for the specified public improvements and facilities.

Levying new fees requires compliance with Government Code § 66000. The following steps must be taken before fees are established: determine the benefit from the public facility; the impact individual projects will have on the public facility; and the proportionate share of the costs attributable to a particular development project, which is frequently termed “nexus.” In most cases, specific studies are required to assess costs and impact in order to establish the actual amount of fee charged to a given development project.

At City Buildout/New Services & Costs/Cumulative Impacts

As the City approaches buildout, the increase in revenue generated by new development relative to the revenue generated by existing development is not sufficient to fund the cumulative burden on all existing services and facilities.

D. Existing/New Sources of Revenue

Among the existing and traditional revenue sources to fund city services and facilities are property tax, sales tax, franchise tax, services charges, user fees, grants, State subventions, licenses, permits, and fines. However, there are serious issues with respect to the viability of these sources. Property tax revenue is constrained by the limitations/cap set by Proposition 13. Other City revenues are being progressively redirected by State government and as a result cities are less able to control their revenue sources. Sales tax revenue is determined by point of sale of establishments; cities have some control and influence (as described earlier in the Economic Development Section) over the location and retention of sales tax generating uses; and, sales tax is susceptible to the economic cycle. Property tax is one of the most stable sources of revenues for the City, and for various reasons its influence of stability has been eroding over the years. During the 1985/86 fiscal year property tax represented 24.48% of City revenues. During 1994/95 property tax was 17.39% of revenues. The City has come under the influence and vagaries of the economic cycle and the influence is increasing. There are several ways to bring part of the stability back. First and most immediately under City control is establishing reserves for the General Funds. These reserves would provide needed financial resources during time of emergencies or when the reason for the reserves occurs, and provide interest income to the General Fund. During low revenue times, if the reserves are adequate, the reserves can be used in place of the revenues that are temporarily absent.

Some City services can be financed through various types of assessment districts. Median island maintenance is a good example. These districts would provide a consistent service level uninterrupted by the economic cycle or a difficult State government.

Also, the financing of capital improvements, both new and replacement improvements, can significantly impact the General Fund; often that impact is unanticipated. A funding mechanism to capture from development its appropriate share of capital improvement costs is integral to any well financed capital improvement program. In addition, using debt financing such as general obligation bonds or revenues bonds is an effective means of financing capital improvements that are not related to any development project. These types of capital financing techniques create stability in General Fund services and create a dependable and efficient service delivery infrastructure.

In recent years, cities have been competing with one another to attract and retain high sales tax generating uses within their jurisdictions. New potential revenue sources need to be developed in order to maintain city services and facilities under increased demand and a high quality of life for all citizens. Potential revenue sources available to local government are in the form of taxes (bond measures, parcel tax, etc.) requiring voter approval, development and impact fees, and redevelopment and other special assessment districts funding. Impact and development fees offer cities an opportunity to assess new development not only for its direct cost impact on the need for new facilities and services but also for a proportionate share of "buy in" into existing facilities and in some cases services based on an appropriate finding of nexus. Redevelopment and other special assessment districts provide locally controlled and locally generated funds for capital improvements/facilities/infrastructure once appropriate findings of need and benefit are made. Under limited conditions, Mello-Roos Community Facilities Districts can be formed to fund certain operating costs as can Landscaping and Lighting Districts.

E. Administrative Reform & Accountability

Benefits can be realized from fostering a working environment within city government that rewards/recognizes creativity and initiative in service to the community. The City's tax payers expect a reasonable return on their "investment" in the community. Periodic public review of how city government delivers services and programs can provide some measure of accountability and cost-effectiveness to the community. Furthermore, citizens and Council can better determine service delivery priorities if a system is established within government that provides information which is understandable and identifies in a measurable manner the cost and productivity of services and work products delivered. All City services should be reviewed.

F. Regional Planning

Many issues facing Novato's residents and businesses often require regional analysis and decision-making. Transportation, employment, and environmental issues are interconnected with neighboring municipalities and jurisdictions. Because of this interconnection, inter jurisdictional planning will be required to provide comprehensive solutions. More efficient governmental organization processes are needed to facilitate effective regional cooperation without loss of critical local control.

G. Public/Private Partnerships/Privatization

Opportunities may exist for privatization of certain city services as well as the joint use and maintenance of public facilities by both public and private entities. In addition public/private partnerships may provide methodologies for implementing regulatory requirements and services or reducing the need for imposing costly regulations.

III. Objectives, Policies, and Programs for Fiscal Vitality

EC Objective 7 Focus future City policy making on the relationship between workplace uses and Novato's fiscal condition.

Novato's economic development should enhance rather than be a burden on local fiscal resources. New economic development should recompense its own capital costs and pay its fair share of operating costs. The policies and programs below ensure that new development pays its fair share of costs.

EC Policy 23 Development Fair Share of Capital Expenses and Existing Facilities. Ensure, although not to the exclusion of the goals and policies of this element and other elements of this General Plan, that new capital facilities and expansion to and operation of existing capital facilities required to accommodate new development are paid for by that development.

Capital facilities and improvements include both the construction and acquisition of new facilities, such as police stations or a community center, and roads. Capital costs are usually one-time costs that may be paid all at once or, alternatively, paid over time. These costs can be paid out of the City's general fund, but also may be covered by special levies rather than property taxes.

EC Program 23.1: Continue to require that development provide necessary infrastructure for the project at their cost.

EC Program 23.2: Establish annexation fees. Ensure that annexation fees are set at a level that would require future annexations to buy into existing facilities intended to serve them and for which they have not paid, such as police headquarters, City administrative buildings and various recreation facilities.

Responsibility: Administrative Services

EC Policy 24 Capital Funding for Other Agencies. Assist other agencies and districts providing services to Novato residents to obtain adequate funding for needed capital facilities to serve new development.

EC Program 24.1: Require as a condition of project approval, as appropriate, that warranted capital improvements are guaranteed prior to issuance of a building permit.

The City should work closely with the Fire Protection District, the Novato Unified School District and other agencies providing services to Novato residents to assure that adequate funding mechanisms are in place that will allow them to provide adequate facilities to serve present and future Novato residents. Please refer to Public Facilities and Services Program 3.7 which relates to ensuring adequate infrastructure.

EC Policy 25 Fiscal Impact Assessment. Evaluate the fiscal impacts of new development proposals on the City's fiscal situation, paying particular attention to the day-to-day ongoing costs of City operations.

EC Program 25.1: Carry out fiscal impact analysis of projects as appropriate.

The Land Use Chapter calls for an analysis of the fiscal impacts of proposed annexations. This Program would extend this to any development proposal that the City determines would have significant fiscal consequences.

Different land uses have different fiscal impacts on the City. It is not necessary that every project generate more revenues than costs. In cases where proposed projects would generate more costs than revenues, the City should not simply deny the project. Instead, the City should work with project developers to investigate strategies and special mechanisms for reducing their negative fiscal impacts on the City's fiscal conditions. A list of funding strategies is included in EC Table 13.

EC Policy 26 Project Fiscal Impact One of Several Factors. Consider fiscal impacts of development proposals one of several factors to be evaluated.

There are projects and types of land uses that do not generate net fiscal benefits. Other factors that are required to be evaluated in assessing development projects, apart from fiscal impact, must include consistency with the entire set of General Plan goals and policies.

EC Policy 27 City Fees. Ensure that City fees accurately reflect the actual costs.

EC Program 27.1: Continue to evaluate City fees to assure they are current and reflect actual costs to the City.

Responsibility: Administrative Services

EC Program 27.2: Investigate additional revenue sources to cover operating costs.

Responsibility: Administrative Services

EC Program 27.3: Consider reevaluating City fees for attracting targeted businesses.

Responsibility: Administrative Services

EC Policy 28 Capital Facilities. Ensure that there are adequate funds for planned capital facilities.

EC Program 28.1: Periodically review the City's funds allocated for planned capital facilities.

Responsibility: Administrative Services

The City currently has the funds for planned capital facilities such as the community center and/or performing arts center. Over time, the purchasing power of those funds may be eroded by inflation or other factors. To assure its ability to pay for facilities when they are to be built, the City should periodically review its funding sources and, if necessary, adopt measures to supplement available

funds. Possible funding sources are indicated in EC Table 13. Refer to the two Background Reports on fiscal issues for detailed information on funding sources.

EC Table 13: Funding Options				
Financing Tools/ Revenue Source	Capital Costs		Operating Costs	
	Citywide Benefit	Area-Specific Benefit	Citywide Benefit	Area- Specific Benefit
General Fund Revenues				
Special Taxes				
Mello-Roos Community Facilities Districts				
Infrastructure Financing Districts				
General Obligation Bonds				
Revenue Bonds				
Leasing Arrangements				
Community Development Block Grants				
Special Assessment				
Tax Increment (Redevelopment) Financing				
Development Impact Fees and Exactions				
Source: Fiscal Issues Report, prepared by Mundie & Associates, June 1993.				

NOVATO GENERAL PLAN Guide to Economic and Fiscal Goals, Objectives, Policies, Programs, and Implementation				
Objective	Policy	Program		Body Responsible for Implementation
Goal 1: Provide Jobs				
2	2	2.1	Encourage use/reuse of commercial/office areas for production of goods and services.	CDD
2	2	2.2	Allow in commercial areas, only commercial uses that directly support workplace uses.	CDD
2	2	2.3	Ensure areas zoned for light industry and offices are developed for workplace uses.	CDD
2	2	2.4	Specify retail uses allowable in industrial districts with conditional use permit.	CDD
2	3	3.1	Investigate opportunities for future increases in employment intensity.	CDD
2	3	3.2	Consider zoning and other development regulation changes to allow for future increases in employment intensity.	CDD
3	4	4.1	Review design of new commercial development and encourage potential for future increases in employment intensity.	CDD
3	4	4.2	Create a development review process to attract non-residential development.	CDD
3	4	4.3	Identify tools/incentives for non-residential development.	CDD
3	7	7.1	Encourage employers to advertise locally new job opportunities.	CA
3	7	7.2	Sponsor local job/trade/business fairs.	CA
3	7	7.3	Encourage coordination to improve match between emerging jobs and training programs.	CA
3	8	8.1	Review/revise land use regulations and identify incentives to encourage workplace alternatives.	CDD
3	8	8.2	Work with educational institutions providing training/retraining/vocational education for potential employees for Novato businesses.	CA & CDD
3	9	9.1	Adopt live/work ordinance.	CDD

NOVATO GENERAL PLAN Guide to Economic and Fiscal Goals, Objectives, Policies, Programs, and Implementation				
Objective	Policy	Program		Body Responsible for Implementation
Goal 2: Strengthen Retail Activities/Areas				
6	22	22.1	Inventory vacant commercially-zoned parcels along major arterials; assess annual absorption; advise on adequacy/excess of commercial zoning.	CDD
6	22	22.2	Cooperate with Chamber of Commerce/other public/private organizations in promotional activities emphasizing Novato retailing.	CA
6	22	22.3	Encourage new retail and commercial uses to find existing zoned sites.	CDD
Goal 3: Retain Existing Businesses/Attract New Business				
4	10	10.1	Target small businesses in promotional economic programs.	CA
4	11	11.1	Consider regulatory administrative program to facilitate renovation to code of commercial buildings.	CDD
4	11	11.2	Develop economic development strategy for Novato as part of Economic Development Master Plan.	CA
4	11	11.3	Provide mapping/land use information at reasonable cost to local businesses for relocation.	CDD
4	11	11.4	Develop process to facilitate permit processing for expansion/relocation of Novato businesses in Novato.	CDD
4	11	11.5	Consider fee reduction for land assembly processing.	CDD
4	12	12.1	Identify/publicize promote sites for targeted businesses.	CA
4	12	12.2	Assist with promotional brochures to attract businesses to Novato.	CA
4	12	12.3	Assist in promotional marketing program/tours for targeted businesses.	CA
4	12	12.4	Work with Marin County Economic Development Commission in educational/informational/development activities.	CA
4	13	13.1	Work with telecommunications companies/PUC to encourage state-of-art telecommunications capabilities.	CA

NOVATO GENERAL PLAN Guide to Economic and Fiscal Goals, Objectives, Policies, Programs, and Implementation				
Objective	Policy	Program		Body Responsible for Implementation
4	13	13.2	Consider targeted business program to assist businesses to relocate/expand in Novato.	CA
4	14	13.3	Assist educational systems in achieving/maintaining state-of-art proficiency in information, computer and communications technologies.	CA
Goal 4: Enhance Downtown				
5	15	15.1	Implement adopted Downtown Specific Plan.	CDD
5	15	15.2	Support special events Downtown.	CA
5	15	15.3	Consider financial programs to encourage businesses to renovate/retrofit commercial structures to meet market needs and stay in Novato.	CA
5	16	16.1	Sponsor/support Downtown events drawing visitors to Novato.	CA
5	17	17.1	Assist in market analysis of desired retail uses and identify incentives to attract targeted retail uses.	CA
Goal 5: Implementation Strategies				
1	1	1.1	Provide staff support/resources to Economic Development Commission.	CA
1	1	1.2	Present annual recommendations to Planning Commission and City Council.	CA
1	1	1.3	Develop Economic Development Master Plan.	CA
1	1	1.4	Conduct study to develop profile of small Novato businesses and identify factors encouraging small businesses to locate in Novato.	CA
1	1	1.5	Prepare annual local report to City Council on progress in implementing a sustainable economy including job creation and economic development activities undertaken.	CA
6	18	18.1	Assist in establishing educational program for Novato businesses on profiting from sustainable environmental business practices.	CA
6	18	18.2	Develop strategy to target sustainable environmental businesses in Economic Development Master Plan.	CA
6	18	18.3	Review/revise programs to ensure progress toward sustainable economic development.	CA & CDD

NOVATO GENERAL PLAN Guide to Economic and Fiscal Goals, Objectives, Policies, Programs, and Implementation				
Objective	Policy	Program		Body Responsible for Implementation
6	19	19.1	Review/revise regulations related to sustainable local economy.	CDD
7	23	23.1	Development pays for necessary project infrastructure.	CDD
7	23	23.2	Establish annexation fees.	AS
7	24	24.1	Condition project approvals to guarantee warranted capital improvements.	CDD
7	25	25.1	Conduct fiscal impact analysis of projects, as appropriate.	CDD
7	27	27.1	Evaluate City fees regularly to reflect actual costs.	AS
7	27	27.2	Investigate other revenue sources for operating costs.	AS
7	27	27.3	Evaluate City fees for attracting targeted businesses.	AS
7	28	28.1	Review City's funds allocated for planned capital facilities.	AS
CDD	Community Development Department			
AS	Administrative Services			
EDC	Economic Development Commission			
CA	Central Administration			
MCEDC	Marin County Economic Development Commission			

CHAPTER VII: HUMAN SERVICES

1. INTRODUCTION

The Human Services Chapter is an optional element of the General Plan. Its purpose is to define ways that the community can better provide and coordinate delivery of services and facilities to those members of the community having special needs. The Human Services Chapter outlines the City's commitment to services such as:

- Care of senior citizens;
- Child care;
- Care of disabled people;
- Home services;
- Youth services;
- Social programs;
- Hospital services; and
- Other County programs.

Under California's government structure, cities are not the responsible agency for health and human services. These services are provided by Federal, State, County, and private agencies. This chapter is intended to identify the primary services provided in Novato. The City is an important member of this service group due to its many community service programs, police services, and its ability to help coordinate many of these programs.

The Human Services Chapter in part supplements the Housing Chapter of the General Plan, which addresses housing for those with special needs, such as the elderly, disabled, and homeless. The Human Services Chapter also correlates with the Transportation Chapter, which discusses transportation access for the elderly and mobility-impaired; the Public Facilities Chapter, which also relates to human services; and the Environment Chapter, which addresses recreation services.

The objectives, policies and programs of the Human Services Chapter are based on the following goal in the Vision and Goals Statement, adopted by the City Council in 1992:

Goal	Provide and maintain greater recreational, educational (including IVC) and cultural opportunities for all segments of the community. Pursue all efforts with community and neighborhood organizations, nonprofit organizations, for profit organizations, and public agencies to provide care and services, including medical, counseling, recreational, educational, cultural, shelter, and housing opportunities to meet the needs of Novato's citizens.
------	--

2. BACKGROUND

Care of Senior Citizens

Nearly 20 percent of Marin County's senior citizen population live in the Novato area. Between 1980 and 1990, the number of older people (60+) living in Northern Marin increased by 56 percent, the fastest rate of growth in the county. By the year 2010, the senior population (age 65 and over) is expected to double. With this aging of the population, the demand for elder care will grow. Often families in the "sandwich generation" are pressed by needs to care for both aging parents and their own children.

The City of Novato, County of Marin and private entities provide services for senior citizens, including housing assistance, health care, food, counseling, transportation, recreation, and social and legal services. The following discussion reviews some of these services.

Direct Housing Assistance

The following Bay Area agencies provide direct housing assistance to seniors in the Novato area:

- Northbay Ecumenical Housing (NEH) provides affordable rental, ownership, or co-op housing opportunities for people with low or moderate incomes. Rental housing complexes co-sponsored by NEH are the Marion Park Apartments and The Meadows.
- Marin Housing Center offers a transitional housing program that provides up to 20 spaces in a residential, structured, six-week setting, with food, shelter, counseling and referral for families, individuals, elderly, and disabled who want to obtain stable housing. The Center also offers an emergency shelter program providing temporary overnight shelter, along with food, support, and referral services for the elderly, disabled, and others, at 56 Harbor Street in San Rafael.
- Marin Housing Authority provides a variety of housing assistance programs to low- and moderate-income residents of Marin County. The Marin Housing Authority owns and manages low-cost rental units and provides direct rental subsidies and low-interest home improvement loans to qualifying households. The Authority owns and manages Casa Nova, 35 Carmel Drive, Novato, a 40-unit housing development with federally-subsidized rents for elderly over the age of 62 and the disabled.
- San Francisco Independent Living Resource Center provides a Reverse Annuity Mortgage (RAM) Program, which enables senior homeowners to derive income from the equity in their homes.
- Ecumenical Association for Housing facilitates creation of low- and moderate-income housing in Marin County for families, disabled, and elderly people. The organization builds housing and assists local planning agencies, public officials, and private agencies in the planning and development of such projects and/or creation of supportive legislation.
- Marin Center for Independent Living is a multi-service organization that provides housing information, counseling and referrals, and independent living skills assistance to the elderly and disabled.

The following privately-owned housing complexes in the Novato area are assisted by the federal Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) or accept Section 8 certificates:

- La Casa Novato, located at 450 Entrada, Ignacio, contains 10 units for the elderly and disabled.
- Nova-Ro I Apartments, located at 1128 Olive Avenue, Novato, contains 30 units for the elderly.
- Nova-Ro II Apartments, located at 1130 Seventh Street, Novato, provides 56 units for the elderly.
- The Meadows, located at 1514 Hart Court, Novato, provides 20 units for the elderly and families.
- Marion Park Apartments, located at 1725 Marion Avenue, Novato, contains 34 units for the elderly, disabled, and families.
- Mackey Terrace, located on Owens Drive in Novato, contains 50 units for low-income seniors.

Community Care Homes

Community care homes are residential facilities that provide protective oversight but are not licensed as nursing homes. They provide room and board, housekeeping, personal hygiene care, and short-term basic bedside care for temporary illness. Some of the facilities may accept individuals with marginal resources, through Social Security and/or any State supplementary payments. Community care homes in Novato include (1) Crestwood, 1705 Center Road; (2) Family Manor, 830 Tamalpais Avenue, (3) Lensvelt Home, 2771 Center Road; (4) Maribel's Villa, 270 Fairway Drive; (5) Marin Pines, 625 Louise Avenue; (6) S. Alexander's Haven, 120 Kaden Drive; and (7) St. James Residence, 1942 Center Road.

Retirement Homes

Retirement homes provide housing and special services for retired people. There are two retirement residences in Novato: Deer Park, located at 646 Canyon Road, and Tamalpais Creek Retirement Community, located at 853 Tamalpais Avenue. Deer Park provides rooms, meals, and housekeeping services but no personal care assistance for seniors who are disabled. Tamalpais Creek does have units where personal care (also known as residential care or board and care) is also provided.

Convalescent Hospitals

Convalescent hospitals provide long-term, 24-hour nursing services or short-term respite care for the elderly, the chronically ill, or convalescing patients. The Marin County Department of Health and Human Services provides assistance and information to those needing help in planning for convalescent care. There is only one convalescent hospital in Novato, the Novato Convalescent Hospital at 1665 Hill Road.

Other Senior Services

The following organizations provide other types of services for seniors in the Novato area:

- Margaret Todd Senior Center, located at 1560 Hill Road, Novato, operated by the City, provides social, recreational, counseling information, and referral activities, a daily nutrition program, and drop-in opportunities for seniors. The center functions as the major coordinating site for senior services offered by other agencies.
- Marin Independent Elders Project (MIEP) marshals available community resources for frail seniors, with special emphasis on low-income minority elders. Projects have included (1) a

transportation reference card describing transit services for seniors in Novato, (2) establishment of a Language Bank, and (3) Neighborhood Outreach to Elders (NOTE), which educates the community about signs that might indicate an elder at risk. MIEP and the Novato Police Department have jointly produced a video on NOTE. In 1995/96, the City of Novato will manage the Marin Independent Elders Project.

- Senior Access – Novato Center operates a day care program for frail and/or disabled adults, including hot lunch; health assessment; nursing and social services, physical, occupational, and speech therapies; exercise, social, and recreational activities; and support and respite for people who care for participants.
- Marin Division of the Commission on Aging is a planning and program development agency that coordinates public and private resources and sets funding priorities. The types of services considered for funding include housing, transportation, health care, education, employment, recreation, and social and legal services.
- Marin Senior Coordinating Council (MSCC), Inc., provides services, programs, activities, and resources in many areas, including counseling, employment services, health screening, senior information and referral, food service (including home-delivered meals, through the Whistlestop Food Services Division), transportation (Whistlestop Wheels), and activities. The MSCC programs in Novato are coordinated through the Margaret Todd Senior Center.
- North Marin Senior Coordinating Council (MSCC), Inc., located at 1535 Grant Avenue, Novato, is a local branch of the MSCC.
- Marin Conservation Corps – Elder Service Project provides home and yard maintenance for seniors who are unable to carry out tasks such as debris, shrubbery, and bush removal, heavy cleaning, and moving assistance.
- Clarke Home Nursing Home Service provides skilled home health care which requires a doctor's order and skilled nursing services.

Child Care

Child care is a pressing need in Novato. Child care services, particularly for infants and for children who are ill, can be difficult to find and are often expensive. Infant care is particularly scarce because infants require more equipment and more time from care givers, and because State regulations require lower adult/child ratios for infants than for older children.

The need for child care in Novato is expected to increase due to three major trends:

- Population Growth. Novato's population is projected to grow at a faster rate than the Countywide average, suggesting that the number of children in Novato will continue to increase while declining in other parts of the county.
- Women in the Work Force. More women will enter the work force, increasing the proportion of children in Novato requiring child care.

- **Employment Growth.** The number of jobs in Novato will increase, thereby increasing the demand for child care from resident and non-resident employees.

The Novato Unified School District policy is to provide by contract before- and after-school child care in each elementary school site. The City of Novato provides an extended child care program as part of the summer school and summer enrichment program and also operates a year-round before- and after-school child care program at Lu Sutton School.

The Marin Child Care Planning Council is a Countywide advisory group that has developed a child care master plan, including a specific action plan and priorities for each city in the county. Privately-operated programs include family day care homes, which provide care, protection, and supervision of 12 or fewer children in the provider’s own home for periods of less than 24 hours per day; and licensed child care centers (subsidized and non-subsidized), which are defined as any child day care facilities other than family day care homes. In addition, other privately-operated recreational and social programs sometimes function as informal child care. The Novato Youth Center also provides child supervision and before- and after-school programs for school-age children; see discussion under “Youth Services” below.

Care of Disabled People

The following organizations are examples of service groups that provide assistance to disabled people (see further discussion under “Senior Care” above):

- Marin Housing Center, a transitional housing program, provides food, shelter, counseling and referral for disabled persons who want to obtain stable housing.
- Marin Housing Authority owns and manages Casa Nova, 40-unit housing development with federally-subsidized rents for elderly over the age of 62 and the disabled.
- Ecumenical Association for Housing facilitates creation of low- and moderate-income housing in Marin County for the disabled, as well as families and elderly people.
- Marin Center for Independent Living provides housing information, counseling and referrals, and independent living skills assistance to the disabled.
- United Cerebral Palsy of the North Bay provides direct all-day programs for young adults. Through 1995/96 they will be located at the Community Room at Hill Recreation Area.

Several privately-owned housing complexes in the Novato area accommodate the disabled through federal Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) assistance or accept Section 8 certificates; see discussion under “Senior Care” above.

The City of Novato has prepared and adopted a Transition Plan and a Self-Evaluation of services in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). The City is implementing various service and capital improvement programs in conformance with the ADA.

Home Services

The following home utilities assistance programs are available in the Novato area:

- Relief for Energy Assistance through Community Help (REACH), Salvation Army, assists low-income county residents in paying utility bills and expenses for propane and wood.
- Home Energy Assistance Program (HEAP) – State Office of Economic Opportunity, provides once-a-year assistance for low-income people in paying utility bills.
- PG&E Customer Assistance Program provides general advice and information to help customers who are having difficulty paying their utility bills.
- Chambers Cable Reduced Rate Program provides discount rate basic cable television service for low-income people.

Youth Services

The City of Novato Community Services Department provides diverse recreational, cultural, athletic, aquatic, and child care programs for children and teens. The Department also helps coordinate scheduling of public recreational facilities (parks, fields, gyms, multi-purpose rooms, etc.) for user groups and works directly with numerous non-profit and private recreational providers to coordinate services.

The Novato Youth Services Bureau, established by the City of Novato Police Department, acts as a liaison between the Police Department and other public and private youth-serving agencies and provides counseling services to clients on a referral basis. In recent years, the Bureau noted a dramatic increase in delinquent behavior by youth at younger ages, along with a growing demand for services for younger juveniles. Working with the Novato Youth Coalition, the Bureau determined that the lack of effective parenting skills is the basis for this problem, and has responded by increasing its counseling to very young juveniles as well as providing parent education classes.

The Novato Police Department also offers Drug Abuse Resistance Education (DARE), a program that assists students in recognizing and resisting pressures to experiment with drugs and alcohol. The program, which began in September of 1988, is a semester course given one day a week to fifth-grade students.

The Police Department maintains a staff of eight officers trained to conduct the program and, as of January 1991, graduated 2,062 students. The program is held at all Novato Unified School District elementary schools and at Our Lady of Loretto School.

The Novato Youth Center provides before- and after-school programs for school-age youth. Teen programs include volunteer opportunities, and recreation and educational activities to develop leadership skills and to provide meaningful alternatives for free time. Programs for all ages include tutoring for youths ages 6 to 18, counseling program with individual, family, and group counseling, and workshops for parents and teens; Playcare, a comprehensive day care program for children 4 years and 9 months to 13 years of age; and other classes and activities.

Social Service Programs

The Novato Human Needs Center, which serves North Marin, has become a major focal point for the delivery of health and human services. Agencies that provide services through the Center include the Community Health Center of Marin, Family Service Agency, Babysitting Co-op, Concerned Parents, Women-Infants and Children Nutritional Programs, Alcoholics Anonymous, and Al-Anon. The Center's programs include crisis

help, employment services, transportation services, Second Center Thrift Shop, counseling, information and referral, emergency services, and outreach programs.

The County of Marin, in conjunction with the City of Novato, has located a homeless program at Hamilton Field during the winter season for the past two years. The Hamilton Army Airfield Reuse Plan, adopted October 1995, provides for a permanent Homeless Service Facility , Jobs Training Center, Transitional and support Housing Services as well as affordable ownership and rental units.

Medical Services

Novato Community Hospital is the only general (full service) hospital in the Novato area. The hospital has 62 beds available and licensing for 75 beds. The hospital, which provides in-patient and out-patient care, offers the services in the categories of surgery; laboratory; radiology, including ultrasound, mobile MRI, nuclear medicine and mammography; obstetrics/nursery; emergency; intensive/coronary; medical surgical; and pharmacy respiratory.

The hospital provides a 24-hour Emergency Department and ancillary services with the support of all board-certified emergency physicians and specially certified registered nurses. The hospital is the base station for the Novato Fire Protection District's paramedics and ambulances. The Emergency Department averages about 1,000 visits per month.

In addition to general hospital care, the Novato Community Hospital offers free telephone information and referral through the Sutter Health Information Center Physician Referral Service and Women's Health Line. Transportation to physician appointments and to the hospital is provided to seniors and the disabled through Health Express, a Novato-based van service offered through a contract with Whistlestop Wheels. The hospital also offers regular health education classes to the community as well as speakers on health topics to clubs and organizations.

The hospital itself does not have convalescent beds. The hospital's Discharge Planning staff regularly refer patients to convalescent facilities, including the 153-bed Pleasant Care Convalescent Hospital.

The hospital's physical plant is considered obsolete is and located far from Highway 101, the main transportation route through Marin County. The hospital has plans to relocate and build a new facility on a more visible and accessible site. The emphasis of the new hospital will be on expanding and improving out-patient services, rather than in-patient capacity, which would remain at 25 to 50 beds.

Other medical facilities in the Novato area include Kaiser Permanente Medical Offices, located at 97 San Marin Drive, and Novato Urgent Care Center, located at 1324 Grant Avenue. Both of these facilities offer out-patient services, only.

The Buck Center for Research in Aging (BCRA) is proposed to be located adjacent to the northern City limits, west of Highway 101. The project consists of a 35,000-square-foot laboratory and research facility and 130 units of housing for research assistants and other BCRA personnel.

Other County Programs

The Marin County Department of Health and Human Services provides social workers designated to assist county residents, regardless of income, in planning and reaching decisions about human service issues such

as use of convalescent care. The Department also provides other services, such as a low-cost dental clinic for low-income Medi-Cal-eligible Marin County residents.

3. OBJECTIVES, POLICIES, AND PROGRAMS

HS Objective 1 Identify and promote human services sufficient to serve Novato's residents with special needs.

HS Policy 1 Service Planning, Coordination, and Advertising. Assist in planning, coordinating, and advertising human service programs.

HS Program 1.1: Continue to participate in the coordination of human services offered by the City, the County of Marin, and private organizations.

Responsibility: Community Services Department

HS Program 1.2: Provide space at City Hall and other key locations for a series of brochures describing human services (e.g., senior care facilities, child care facilities, youth programs, other programs) available in Novato, and distribute the brochure(s) to the public.

Responsibility: Community Services Department

HS Program 1.3: The Housing and Services Commission will advise the City Council on planning, coordinating, advertising, and prioritizing Novato's human services program.

Responsibility: Community Services Department

HS Program 1.4: Encourage development of programs to provide services to non-English speaking residents.

Responsibility: Community Services Department

HS Objective 2 Encourage a wide range of services for senior citizens, the disabled, the chronically ill, and others needing assisted care.

HS Policy 2 Intermediate and In-Home Care. Help facilitate the provision of adequate, affordable intermediate care and in-home services for senior citizens and people with disabilities.

HS Program 2.1: Review the Zoning Ordinance to determine if regulations regarding community care homes, group homes, and other forms of housing appropriate for senior citizens and the disabled are appropriate.

HS Program 2.2: Work with organizations representing senior citizens, the disabled, and other affected groups to identify suitable opportunities for community care homes, group homes, and other facilities for programs and services. Facilitate dissemination of information to organizations and the affected community regarding City processing requirements and foster awareness of organizational activities in the community.

Responsibility: Community Services Department

HS Program 2.3: Assist in developing a permit processing checklist that identifies City, County, and State regulatory and licensing requirements in order to assist persons and organizations interested in establishing community care homes or group homes in Novato.

Refer to Housing Chapter policies and programs that address housing for senior citizens and those with special needs.

HS Policy 3 Ambulatory Care (Day Care). Encourage the development of ambulatory care (day care) services for the chronically ill, mentally disadvantaged, and infirm elderly.

HS Program 3.1: Assist in developing a directory of ambulatory care (day care) services and provide referrals to agencies that provide this type of care.

Responsibility: Community Services Department.

HS Program 3.2: Review the Zoning Ordinance to determine if regulations regarding ambulatory care (day care) facilities are appropriate.

HS Policy 4 Skilled Nursing Homes. Support the provision of skilled nursing homes and affordable assisted living care for those who cannot be served by day care and intermediate care facilities.

HS Program 4.1: Review the Zoning Ordinance to determine if regulations regarding skilled nursing homes and affordable assisted living care are appropriate.

HS Program 4.2: Work with organizations representing senior citizens, the disabled, and other affected groups to identify suitable opportunities for skilled nursing homes and affordable assisted living care facilities.

Responsibility: Community Services Department

HS Program 4.3: Assist in developing a permit processing checklist that identifies City, County, and State regulatory and licensing requirements in order to assist persons and organizations interested in establishing skilled nursing homes and affordable assisted living care in Novato.

HS Program 4.4: Work toward providing affordable assisted living care.

Responsibility: Community Services Department

HS Objective 3 Promote provision of high quality and affordable child care facilities and services in Novato.

HS Policy 5 Child Care. Support appropriate child care for all income levels for families in Novato, and assist in identifying and securing federal, state, and local resources for child care.

HS Program 5.1: Help monitor state and federal child care legislation, and support legislation that promotes affordable child care and funding for child care facilities and programs.

Responsibility: Community Services Department

HS Program 5.2: Assist in identifying and securing public and private resources for affordable child care facilities and programs.

Responsibility: Community Services Department

HS Program 5.3: Determine the impact of commercial, industrial, and residential development on the demand for child care and consider appropriate mitigation measures to meet this demand.

HS Policy 6 Child Care Development Regulations. Ensure that child care facilities are sited and operated in a manner compatible with surrounding land uses. Allow family day care homes as permitted uses in all residential land use designations, and other child care facilities in any land use designation except where not appropriate for health and safety reasons.

HS Program 6.1: Periodically review the Zoning Ordinance and other local regulations affecting child care facilities to ensure that appropriate standards are in place.

HS Program 6.2: For child care facilities serving 13 or more children, review siting through the environmental review and permitting processes.

HS Program 6.3: Investigate ways of “streamlining” the permit process for child care facilities.

HS Policy 7 City Policies and Programs. Maintain and develop the City’s child care programs where feasible and appropriate.

HS Program 7.1: Continue to incorporate child care programs into City-sponsored recreation activities wherever feasible and appropriate.

Responsibility: Community Services Department

HS Program 7.2: Continue to work with the Novato Unified School District to provide child care programs at school sites and to respond to the needs of private providers and the community.

Responsibility: Community Services Department

HS Objective 4 Provide services and programs addressing the recreational, social, cultural, and other similar needs of Novato's youth.

HS Policy 8 Social and Recreational Services. Maintain and expand social services and recreation programs for Novato's youth.

HS Program 8.1: Assist in coordinating and encouraging youth recreation, counseling, and social programs offered by public, private and non-profit organizations.

Responsibility: Community Services Department

HS Program 8.2: Continue to provide services, including juvenile counseling and parent education classes, as appropriate, such as through the Novato Youth Services Bureau. Periodically review the programs with public and private youth-serving agencies to determine areas that should be revised or improved.

Responsibility: Community Services Department and Police Department

HS Program 8.3: Continue to support, assist, and provide substance abuse programs.

Responsibility: Community Services Department and Police Department

HS Objective 5 Support health care services that meet the needs of Novato.

HS Policy 9 Health Services. Consider Novato's needs in the review of proposals for new health care facilities, giving particular attention to those with special needs.

HS Program 9.1: Coordinate with public and private health care agencies to determine Novato's health care needs.

HS Program 9.2: Consider public transit and roadway access as factors in decisions involving the location of new health care facilities.

HS Program 9.3: Encourage the hospital's continued support of the community's emergency plan.

Responsibility: Community Development Department, Community Services Department, and Police Department

HS Policy 10 Community Partnership Program.

HS Program 10.1: Develop and implement a plan for a future program.

HS Program 10.2: Identify funding sources for implementing the plan as part of the plan preparation.

Responsibility: Community Services Department

CHAPTER VIII: PUBLIC FACILITIES AND SERVICES

1. INTRODUCTION

This chapter establishes objectives, policies, and programs for the major public services and facilities needed to support the development called for in the General Plan. Many services are provided by public agencies other than the City of Novato: water supply is provided by the North Marin Water District and Marin Municipal Water District; wastewater collection, treatment and disposal and garbage collection are provided by the Novato Sanitary District; flood control is provided by the Marin County Flood Control District; fire protection is provided by the Novato Fire Protection District; schools are provided by the Novato Unified School District; and college is provided by the Marin Community College District. The City provides Police protection, streets and storm drains, street lighting, recreation facilities and services, development services, and other administrative services.

The Land Use Chapter establishes a Growth Management program for managing infrastructure capacity and service levels and requiring new development to pay its fair share of the costs of the facilities and services needed to support it.

The sections below contain information about existing conditions, policies, and programs for each major type of public facility and service.

One of the 13 goals for the General Plan, adopted by the City Council on September 29, 1992, is

Goal Manage growth by requiring the coordination of development with adequate infrastructure, public facilities, public services and promoting conservation, reuse and recycling strategies while meeting the needs of the community with the limited land available for development.

Objectives, policies and programs related to public facilities and services are also found in other parts of the Plan. In the Land Use Chapter, LU Policy 8 and related programs establish requirements for development fees that will require new development to pay its fair share for public facilities and services. Infrastructure for transportation is discussed in the Transportation Chapter. Parks and open space are discussed in the Environment Chapter.

2. BACKGROUND

This section describes the public facilities and services provided by the City of Novato and other public agencies. The City maintains a high level of communication and cooperation with provider agencies, but each of them retains independent decision-making authority. Because the City cannot compel other agencies to take any specific actions or to comply with City policy, the General Plan does not include standards for public services and facilities provided by other agencies.

Water

The North Marin Water District (NMWD) supplies about 95 percent of Novato with potable water. The Marin Municipal Water District (MMWD) supplies an area including Hamilton Field. NMWD receives most of its water from the Russian River, via the North Marin Aqueduct. NMWD has an agreement with the

Sonoma County Water Agency that provides an annual entitlement of 12,360 acre-feet (4 billion gallons) of Russian River water. NMWD also receives a small amount of its supply from Stafford Lake, a reservoir on Novato Creek west of the City. MMWD receives its water from reservoirs on Lagunitas Creek in central Marin County, two other reservoirs, and from the Russian River.

The water supply is adequate to meet the demand under General Plan buildout. Water distribution facilities are developed on a site-by-site basis, financed by the developer through agreements with the water agency.

Wastewater Treatment and Disposal

The Novato Sanitary District is responsible for garbage disposal and wastewater collection, treatment and disposal in the Novato area. The district is required to meet standards specified in a permit issued by the California Regional Water Quality Control Board in 1992.

All collection is through gravity sewer mains except for three pumping stations at Bel Marin Keys, Bahia, and Hamilton Field. Treatment is at the Ignacio Treatment Plant and the Novato Treatment Plant. The District must expand the Ignacio Treatment Plant to accommodate buildout growth. Most of the land near the plants is vacant, and much of it is flood plain. There are single-family houses north and west of the Novato plant. Treated wastewater from the two plants is pumped in summer to a reclamation area on both sides of Highway 37 and east of Highway 101. The area includes 820 acres of pasture land, 14 acres of dedicated land for digested sludge disposal, a 10-acre wildlife pond, 53 acres of mitigation area, and two effluent storage ponds. In winter, excess effluent is discharged directly into San Pablo Bay, when allowed by the district's permit.

Developers are responsible for the construction of sewer extensions, which are dedicated to the district after completion. Current projections indicate that the capacity of the wastewater treatment and disposal system is more than adequate for buildout under the General Plan.

Flood Control and Storm Drainage

Novato has experienced periodic flooding, especially along Novato Creek. Flood control along major water courses in Novato is the responsibility of the Marin County Flood Control and Water Conservation District. Following the major flood in January 1982, Novato voters approved a program to fund flood control improvements sufficient to prevent flooding during storms up to the 50-year recurrence interval. Construction is nearly complete; improvements to the remaining 4,000 feet of Novato Creek are expected to start in 1997.

The City of Novato is responsible for storm drainage within the City boundaries. The City participates in the Federal Flood Insurance Program, which specifies the 100-year flood as the standard for urban communities. The City's development regulations stipulate the 25-year storm as the design standard for capacity of surface storm water drainage improvements. In 1989 voters approved Measure "F," which included \$4.2 million for storm drains. As of 1995, 13 projects have been completed, and the City's 1995-2000 Capital Improvements Program includes three more. Storm drainage improvements at Hamilton Field are included in the City's 1993 approval of the Hamilton Master Plan.

These improvements have significantly reduced the potential damage from recurrence of a 100-year storm, similar to the one that occurred in January 1982.

Private developers are responsible for construction of storm drainage facilities within their projects. Facilities are dedicated to the City when they are completed and accepted. Developers also pay the City and the Marin County Flood Control and Water Conservation District for storm drainage services.

Schools

In 1995, the Novato Unified School District provided education to 7,775 students at 8 elementary schools, 3 middle schools, 2 high schools, 1 continuation high school, and 1 independent study education school.

The district identifies school capacity and maintenance requirements in its Long-Range Facilities Plan, 1988-1993. This plan was updated in the Draft Facilities Use Report (April, 1995, intended as an appendix to the Long-Range Strategic Plan). District goals and directions are described in the Long-Range Strategic Plan.

The Facilities Use Report states that district schools have capacity for a maximum of 8,446 students. The district's current facility needs relate to the aging of existing schools and the need to provide funding to maintain these facilities. At this time, there is no identified need for new facilities.

The Facilities Use Report describes the status of each campus and includes projected enrollment for each campus. Detailed descriptions of district facilities, enrollment, and goals are in the Existing Conditions Report prepared for the General Plan and the three documents cited above.

Future development consistent with this General Plan could generate as many as 3,601 additional students if this plan were built out to its maximum. District schools have capacity to absorb an additional 661 students. Once existing capacity is filled, the district will have to change schools to a year-round schedule, add relocatable classrooms to existing campuses, place more students in each classroom, construct a new school(s), or some combination of the above.

State law currently authorizes the District to charge \$ 1.76 per assessable square foot of new residential development as developer mitigation fees. The Novato School District charges \$1.44 assessable square foot. The amount generated by these fees in 1995 dollars is sufficient to purchase or lease enough relocatable classrooms to house the students generated by General Plan buildout. However, these additional students would require adding 106 relocatable classrooms to existing campuses. This is not feasible given site and infrastructure constraints on existing campuses.

The developer mitigation fees are not sufficient to cover the costs of constructing new permanent facilities. The district does not have a recent Developer Fee Justification Study, which would typically address this issue. However, a review of Developer Fee Justification Studies prepared within the past two years in other nearby locations indicates that the costs for new school construction for a 600-student elementary school would be \$4,000,000-7,000,000, a 900-student middle school would cost \$9,000,000-12,000,000, and a 1,500-student high school would cost about \$20,000,000-23,000,000. The current developer mitigation fee provides less than 20 percent of the cost of constructing new schools (based on the calculation that a typical unit is 1,500 square feet, which generates a fee of \$2,160 and that the average cost per student of constructing new schools is \$13,000-15,000).

The district has capacity to meet projected enrollment increases until after the year 2000. The addition of relocatable classrooms, changing to a year-round schedule, and/or allowing more students per classroom would extend existing campus capacity for several more years. Eventually one or more new schools will be required. Currently, the District has no long-range plans for determining where or when these new schools would be built. There is no long-term financing plan for the construction of these schools.

It is likely that the District would have to construct new schools to adequately house the students generated by total buildout under the General Plan. The cost of constructing these schools is not met by current developer fees, and there is no other identified means of financing these improvements. (The district only has \$400,000 in the Developer Fee Fund).

It is likely that additional mitigation beyond the developer fees currently collected by the district will be required to house and educate the future student population adequately. Alternatively, the district could seek voter approval of a bond issue to construct new facilities. Voters have previously approved a parcel tax; however, the revenues from this tax can be used only for school operations.

The closing of the Hamilton military base will have a substantial impact on the School District. The District will suffer from declining enrollment and by closure in September of 1996 will have lost approximately 1,000 students. The District will permanently lose a substantial source of Federal revenue in the amount of approximately \$1 million. The District is pursuing special legislation to recapture some funds at the State level.

The Indian Valley Campus of the College of Marin is located on 333 acres at the western terminus of Ignacio Boulevard. The developed area covers about 50 acres.

At present, IVC has 2,200 students in both day and evening programs, 1,200 full-time equivalent students. The campus was built for a projected enrollment of 5,000 students. The campus currently uses 45 percent of the available facilities on the average. Current projections show that at present the College District anticipates that IVC facilities will be underutilized through the late 1990s.

Marin Community College enrollment will continue to be subject to a declining population in the “college-age” group and a corresponding decline in local high school graduating classes. The Marin County population is projected to grow by 2-3 percent between 1995 and 2000, with growth in the minorities and in the age group of 55 and older. The college’s major drawing pool, younger than 35 years old, will decline in the next five years. High school graduates in Marin dropped from 3,000 (1975) to fewer than 1,500 (1995) and will be constant somewhere between 1,500 and 1,700 in the next five years.

In response to these conditions, the MCCD anticipates that the student population will be older and diversified as the County population ages. These changes will continue the need to provide for traditional and non-traditional college-age students along with community people interested in self-enrichment or industries and businesses in need of employee education.

The College of Marin intends to lease several of the vacant buildings at IVC to multimedia technology-based businesses. The intent of the project is to establish a complex consisting of a collaborative of multimedia technology-based businesses and related technology education. A media research and education center, an information center, and a central meeting facility are proposed to be established in the existing campus library. The small businesses are proposed to be interspersed with classrooms in the existing Miwok building cluster. This project is named Digital Village.

Fire Protection and Emergency Medical Services

Structural fire protection and emergency medical response within the City and Sphere of Influence are provided by the Novato Fire Protection District. The District maintains four fire stations staffed by 72 line personnel (firefighters, captains, engineers, and emergency medical personnel). Details regarding District

staffing, equipment, and the history of response to calls for service are described in the Existing Conditions Report as well as the District's Five Year Fire/Life Safety Plan (1994 Edition).

The Five Year Fire/Life Safety Plan (1994 Edition) also contains a complete description of the objectives of the District, including the District's adopted Levels of Service.

The District currently is funded primarily by a portion of property taxes collected in the District and a special tax that allows the District to levy annually up to 4 cents (\$0.04) per square foot on residential occupancies and 6 cents (\$0.06) per square foot on commercial/industrial occupancies. The District has never levied the maximum. The average special tax levy has been 1.9 cents (\$0.019) per square foot on residential development and 3.25 cents (\$0.0325) per square foot on commercial/industrial development.

Other Public Facilities

The City is planning a community center/performing arts facility in the Downtown, for which funds are available. The City is considering establishing development impact fees to fund major new recreation facilities. (See Chapter 4, section on Parks and Recreation.) Funds are available for necessary improvements to existing Civic Center buildings at their present location. No expansions to the new Police Department building are required. There are now no plans to expand the Novato Branch of the County Public Library or the facilities of the Novato Fire District.

PF Policy 1 Management of Public Facilities. Manage public facilities in conjunction with new development through continued planning and budgeting for public facilities and coordination with other agencies for the services which the City does not provide.

PF Program 1.1: Continue to prepare and adopt an annual Capital Improvements Program for the City of Novato reflecting City facilities needed to support development in the General Plan.

PF Program 1.2: Continue to evaluate the operating and maintenance costs of infrastructure improvements needed to support the development allowed in the General Plan.

PF Program 1.3: Provide General Plan information to other service-providing agencies, and request determination of any capacity needed to accommodate development called for in the General Plan. Service-provider determinations regarding capacity will be used in making the determinations required in LU Program 7.2.

PF Program 1.4: Provide information on development applications to other service-providing agencies, to enable them to assess appropriate fair share impact fees. The City will require proof of payment of these fees before issuing a building permit.

PF Program 1.5: Adopt a Novato Storm Drain Facilities Master Plan as a basis for planning and constructing improvements and for establishing fees.

PF Policy 2 Public Buildings. Ensure that the public buildings in Novato are adequate to provide services for Novato residents under the development provided for in the General Plan.

PF Program 2.1: Establish standards for public buildings and facilities, including City administrative offices, corporation yards, community centers and performing arts centers, in relation to population.

Responsibility: Central Administration

PF Program 2.2: Establish impact fees for new development based on City and agency standards for public buildings and facilities.

Responsibility: Central Administration

PF Objective 2 Provide Community Facilities to Improve and Enhance Recreational and Cultural Opportunities.

PF Policy 3 Community Facilities. Continue efforts to provide various community facilities addressing recreational and cultural needs.

PF Program 3.1: Adopt a plan for development of public facilities, including a community center, performing arts facility, gymnastics, gymnasium, and aquatic facilities.

Responsibility: Community Services Department

PF Program 3.2: Coordinate plans for community facilities with policies of the Downtown Specific Plan.

Responsibility: Community Services Department

PF Program 3.3: Accommodate expansion of the City History Museum(s).

Responsibility: Community Services Department

PF Program 3.4: Plan for development of sports facilities and community play fields to meet the needs of youth and adult athletic programs.

Responsibility: Community Services Department

PF Objective 3 Ensure that public-service providers can continue to provide adequate public services given the additional demand from new development.

PF Policy 4 Management of Public Services. Work with public service agencies to ensure that those agencies have the means to provide services required by Novato residents and businesses.

PF Program 4.1: Work with the Novato Fire Protection District to ensure that the District can continue to provide adequate fire protection and emergency response. The Novato Fire Protection District maintains its own Level of Service standards to determine adequate protection and response.

PF Program 4.2: Work with the Novato Sanitary District to ensure that wastewater is adequately collected, treated, and disposed of.

PF Program 4.3: Work with the North Marin Water District to ensure the provisions of adequate potable water to Novato residents and businesses.

PF Program 4.4: Monitor response history and case load history for the Novato Police Department. Consider adding additional personnel as required to maintain an adequate level of police response. Where a nexus can be demonstrated and State law allows, consider requiring a fee to finance a portion of the costs for increasing police staffing.

PF Program 4.5: The City shall work with the School District to address anticipated deficits between the cost of constructing necessary new schools and the revenues generated by developer fees. Where a clear nexus can be shown between the impacts of a development and the need for new school facilities and there are insufficient revenues to construct the new school, the City shall consider the need for additional project mitigation to be provided by the project sponsor, which may include dedication of school sites, provision of infrastructure improvements to a school site, and/or additional impact fees. These additional mitigations shall be required for new development to the degree that State law allows.

PF Program 4.6: Work with the Novato Unified School District to ensure that future school sites that may be required to serve future development are provided for in the plans for development projects.

PF Program 4.7: As stated in LU Program 8.4, the City will support efforts by other agencies to collect equitable fees required to maintain adequate service levels.

PF Program 4.8: Work with solid and liquid wastewater agencies to ensure compatibility of nearby land uses with their facilities.

PF Program 4.9: Consider policies and programs and work with utilities to encourage the development of utilities particularly telecommunication, video, and data utilities, to accommodate the long-term needs and meet the changes in technology and needs of business and industry.

PF Objective 4 Manage the water supply through coordination with providers and water conservation.

PF Policy 5 Potable Water. Ensure adequate water supply for new and existing development.

PF Program 5.1: Ensure water service agreements for new development are in place which establish a Level of Service in accordance with the regulations and ordinances of the North Marin Water District and Marin Municipal Water District.

PF Program 5.2: Require developers to enter into agreements in accordance with the regulations and ordinances of the North Marin Water District and Marin Municipal Water District and pay for the cost of potable water infrastructure required for each project.

PF Policy 6 Water Conservation. Develop and implement water conservation programs for Novato.

PF Program 6.1: Adopt a Water Use Reduction in Landscaping Ordinance. Consider the use of water-saving devices for residential and commercial uses; limits to the amount of turf

area in new developments; the use of drip irrigation systems; and other water conserving measures.

Potable water is becoming a scarce resource throughout California. The Water Conservation Act adopted by the State in 1990 required cities and counties to adopt a water-efficient landscape ordinance. This ordinance reduces water use for landscaping by limiting turf area, encouraging use of native plants and other vegetation with low water-use requirements, and by requiring water-efficient irrigation systems.

PF Program 6.2: Use treated wastewater for irrigation of City facilities and encourage wastewater irrigation at other public and private facilities, where practicable.

Responsibility: Community Development and Community Services Departments

PF Program 6.3: Support and Encourage reclamation of wastewater for reuse wherever possible in accordance with the regulations and ordinances of the North Marin Water District and Marin Municipal Water District.

PF Program 6.4: Consider developing a plan in conjunction with the Sanitary District and Water Districts to promote and maximize to the extent feasible the reuse of treated wastewater and consider enacting an ordinance to have developments provide wastewater distribution facilities in conformance with the Plan.

2. BACKGROUND

Much of the new residential development that will occur in Novato will be infill, the development of land usually on individual lots in already developed areas. Ensuring that infill development fits harmoniously with the surrounding neighborhood is a key function of the objectives, policies, and programs in this chapter.

Many of the infill sites are located where residential and commercial land uses are near one another. Residential areas next to Downtown, such as the Northwest Quadrant, and single-family areas surrounding neighborhood shopping centers such as Nave Center and The Square are examples where using design guidelines ensures that new development fits harmoniously with what exists.

Novato also has a few large, undeveloped sites where additional housing will be developed, such as Hamilton Field. A unique opportunity exists on these larger sites for new housing to create a sense of place by encouraging a traditional pattern of pedestrian-scale neighborhoods. Similar neighborhoods are found in the older residential areas adjacent to Downtown Novato and in other nearby communities, such as San Anselmo and Petaluma.

The Community Identity Element is closely related to the Land Use and Transportation Elements. The design of public and private projects must be consistent with the entire General Plan, however.

3. OBJECTIVES, POLICIES, AND PROGRAMS

CI Objective 1 Build on and strengthen Novato's unique identity and sense of place.

CI Objective 2 Preserve the character of existing residential neighborhoods.

CI Objective 3 Ensure that new residential development demonstrates quality, excellence of design, and sensitivity to the character of the surrounding neighborhood.

CI Objective 4 Encourage compact development that reduces the need for annexations and urban sprawl.

Other chapters of the Plan implement many of these objectives. A more compact city is obtained by emphasizing infill development and promoting mixed use development Downtown and in neighborhood shopping areas, and by discouraging sprawl at suburban densities in outlying areas.

CI Policy 1 Compatibility of Development with Surroundings. Ensure that new development is sensitive to the surrounding architecture, topography, landscaping, and to the character, scale, and ambiance of the surrounding neighborhood. Recognize that neighborhoods include community facilities needed by Novato residents as well as homes, and integrate facilities into neighborhoods.

CI Program 1.1: Establish Design Guidelines to be applied as part of the Design Review process.

The guidelines may address: massing (the relationship between the size and bulk of buildings), use of colors, materials and detailing, landscaping, lot circulation, signage, and privacy, in order to promote attractive development that is compatible with surrounding land uses, emphasizing compatibility of uses and buildings in residential neighborhoods.

Compatibility does not require that residential densities and building types be identical on adjoining properties.

Novato is primarily a residential community. The character and livability of its neighborhoods define, to a large extent, Novato's sense of place. New residential development must fit in harmoniously with its surroundings, support and enhance the City's identity, without necessarily conforming to any given architectural style or motif.

CI Program 1.2: Continue the Design Review process.

The Design Review process recognizes the interdependence of land values and aesthetics and provides a method to promote good site planning, building design, and sound land use development.

CI Program 1.3: Adopt specific design guidelines for the Downtown, the North West Quadrant, and for mixed use development.

CI Program 1.4: Continue to recognize the rural character of some of Novato's residential areas and to implement the City's rural residential street standards.

CI Policy 1A Gates on Private Streets and Gated Communities. Preserve Novato's small town character and integrated sense of community by prohibiting the creation of gated communities and the placement of gates on private streets serving two (2) or more independent single-family dwelling units.¹

CI Policy 2 Explore the use of traditional site design and architectural principles in areas with established patterns or sufficiently large development areas to use those principles successfully. Elements of traditional site design and architecture include:

- a. grid street systems
- b. sidewalks with curbs, gutters, and a planting strip between the sidewalk and the roadway
- c. traditional home designs with porches and verandas
- d. trees planted adjacent to arterial streets and highways
- e. narrower traffic lanes on local streets, with limited on-street parking
- f. rounded street corners with "bulb outs" at key intersections
- g. absence of large radius intersection corners
- h. garages in the rear or sides of properties

¹Amended 12/10/02 by Resolution No. 185-02.

In many newer single family subdivisions front yards are rarely used. The streets are wide and dominated by driveways and garage doors. There are few porches or verandahs which reduce human presence. Traditional residential design is found in communities built before the 1940s and the principles used then may be appropriate in some Novato locations. These residential neighborhoods promoted activity in front yards and established a stronger connection between the house and the street, and increased opportunity for interaction among neighbors. This contributes to neighborhood safety and sense of place. A return to the more traditional residential neighborhood design is occurring in cities across the United States. The Hamilton Design Guidelines incorporate some of these principles.

CI Policy 3 Variety in Design. Discourage sameness and repetitive designs.

CI Program 3.1: Consider revising the Zoning Ordinance to include the following guidelines:

- a. discourage new residential construction with identical or similar facades on opposing or adjacent lots;
- b. encourage varied roof styles, reversed building footprints, and changes in elevation for the same unit floor plan.

Revising the Zoning and Subdivision Ordinances to reflect the intent of CI Policy 3 will result in increased choice and variety in the design of development. In most subdivisions one builder constructs all of the homes in the project using only a few different house plans. This can result in a monotonous and sterile residential environment. Through a variety of measures, it is possible to create more interesting neighborhoods without significantly adding to costs.

CI Policy 4 Noise Mitigation. The preferred method of noise mitigation is buffering through distance. Other methods, in order of preference, are wooden walls and masonry walls.

CI Program 4.1: The City shall request that Caltrans perform a visual analysis for all new, proposed sound walls in Novato. The analysis shall show existing and future views at critical points along the route. This data will be used to determine whether the sound walls should be constructed.

CI Policy 5 Property Maintenance and Nuisance Abatement. Encourage property maintenance and abate nuisances.

CI Program 5.1: Revise the nuisance abatement ordinance to strengthen its property maintenance provisions.

This ordinance could regulate the storage of recreational vehicles, boats, and automotive repair in residential areas. The ordinance permits the levying of fines for repeat offenders.

CI Policy 6 Mixed Use Developments. Ensure that mixed use developments are well-designed aesthetically and functionally.

CI Program 6.1: Amend the Zoning Ordinance to address:

- a. shared parking, trash and recycling facilities;

- b. required ground floor retail or personal service uses wherever appropriate; and
- c. site and building design which are compatible with and enhance the adjacent and surrounding residential neighborhood in terms of scale, building design, color, exterior materials, roof styles, lighting, landscaping and signage.

Many of the mixed use areas are located adjacent or near to residential neighborhoods. It is essential that mixed use developments be developed in a manner which contributes to and preserves the residential character of these neighborhoods.

CI Policy 7 Landscaping. Encourage attractive native and drought-tolerant, low-maintenance landscaping responsive to fire hazards.

CI Program 7.1: Maintain and periodically update minimum landscape standards.

CI Program 7.2: Maintain a list of drought-tolerant plants for public distribution.

The Public Facilities Chapter contains water conservation policies limiting turf areas and requiring drought-tolerant landscaping.

CI Policy 8 Pedestrian-Oriented Land Uses. Encourage pedestrian-oriented, rather than auto-dependent uses in areas such as Downtown, Ignacio, and other activity centers where mixed uses, shared parking (on- and off-street), transit service, and other conditions facilitate pedestrian circulation.

CI Policy 9 Undergrounding Utilities. Continue to require undergrounding of utilities.

CI Policy 10 Provide for the proper placement, removal and replacement of above-ground utilities.

CI Program 10.1: Work with utility companies to remove inactive or abandoned above ground utility lines and facilities.

CI Program 10.2: Explore funding programs to facilitate the undergrounding of utilities in addition to current methods.

CI Program 10.3: Consider amending the zoning ordinance to incorporate guidelines or regulations, to the extent feasible, regarding the aesthetics, proliferation and location of above ground utilities, appurtenance and antennas.

CI Policy 11 Entryways. Encourage the development of entryways to the City through use of distinctive signs, street lighting, landscaping and street trees.

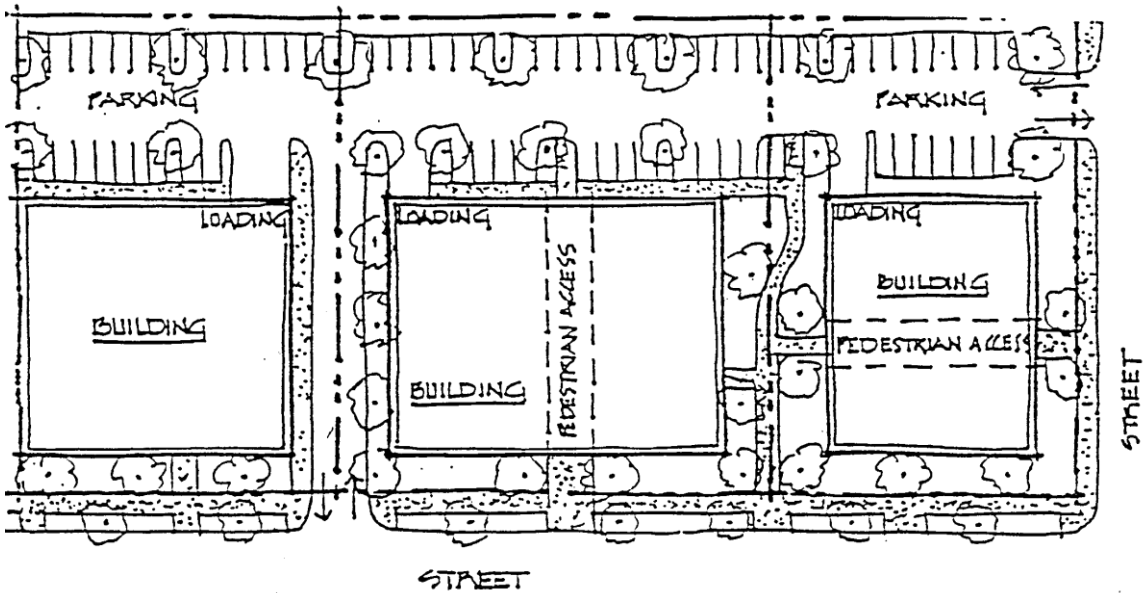
CI Objective 5 Improve the appearance and effectiveness of parking facilities.

Off-street parking facilities occupy a significant portion of the City's lands. Design guidelines should improve their effectiveness, attractiveness and safety, while removing conflicts between motorists and pedestrians.

CI Policy 12 Parking Standards. Reduce the visibility of parking facilities and the amount of land necessary for them to the maximum extent feasible.

CI Program 12.1: Consider the following revisions to the Zoning Ordinance for parking facilities:

- a. use continuous (except for wheelchair ramps) curbs around the perimeter of parking areas;
- b. require motorcycle parking in all new parking facilities with more than five spaces;
- c. encourage shared access to parking areas to reduce curb cuts and save space;
- d. ensure that the glare from vehicular headlights in the parking lot does not have an adverse impact on adjacent land uses;
- e. improve pedestrian movement and safety, by such means as signals, bollards, and other features;
- f. require that parking facilities be located behind buildings wherever possible;
- g. allow shared parking and driveways for commercial uses having day/night activity patterns.
- h. review and evaluate the off-street parking requirements for commercial and multi-family areas to reduce on street parking.



Flexible parking standards are needed most in the Downtown where there are mixed uses.

Lighting

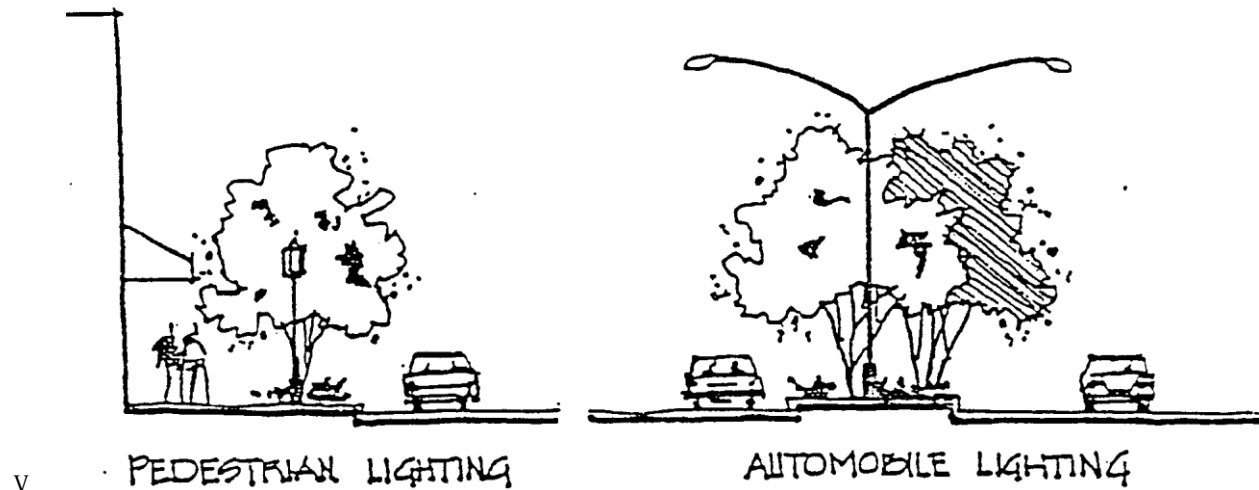
Lighting should serve functional, safety, and aesthetic purposes. Light can be used to identify important civic and historic buildings, giving cohesion to the physical structure of the community and increasing the use of public places at night.

Exterior lighting for pedestrian areas, building facades, and landscape should be complementary in style, color, and intensity with public street and pedestrian lighting. Fixtures proposed for building exteriors should work effectively with street lighting.

The following guidelines for architectural lighting are intended to improve the lighting of public and private development throughout the City.

CI Objective 6 Improve the appearance and effectiveness of outdoor lighting and reduce conflicts related to lighting.

CI Policy 13 Lighting Design Guidelines. Amend the Zoning Ordinance to incorporate design guidelines for exterior lighting addressing issues such as security, appearance, and intensity. The guidelines shall provide the types of lights and lighting to be used in various types of development so that new projects mitigate impacts on open space or other valuable City views to the extent feasible.



ehicles and pedestrians require different lighting.

Open Areas and Landscaping

CI Policy 14 Open Areas and Landscaping. Require provision of adequate landscaped, open areas in project design.

CI Program 14.1: Consider revisions to development regulations to provide for adequate landscaped and open areas.

Pedestrian Circulation

Convenient and safe pedestrian access to and from commercial, recreational and residential areas of the City is essential to the well-being of the community. The Transportation Chapter contains policies and programs for additional pedestrian walkways and related facilities. This section addresses the design of pedestrian paths and walkways in Novato.

CI Policy 15 Pedestrian Paths. Provide for maximum feasible pedestrian circulation.

Pedestrian paths and walkways should connect residential areas, parking facilities, schools and commercial areas.

CI Program 15.1: Consider adopting the following design guidelines for pedestrian facilities:

- a. provide physical separation of vehicular and pedestrian movement wherever possible and plant street trees to create a safer and more pleasant environment for walkers;
- b. provide pedestrian-oriented lighting to improve security and the sense of safety;
- c. require convenient, secure pedestrian access from parking lots and entrances to commercial uses;
- d. encourage commercial developments to include pedestrian walkways and street furniture at street level adjacent to buildings, public transit and parking facilities; and
- e. encourage clustering of commercial buildings to create pedestrian zones and avoid wide expanses of parking between building entrances.
- f. Encourage landscaped open areas and outdoor furniture in areas to be provided as gathering places for employees and customers in commercial office and industrial areas .

Downtown

The City is preparing a specific plan to revitalize Downtown and to help ensure that it becomes again the economic, social and cultural center of Novato. It is the result of an extensive grass-roots effort started in 1994. The desire for a Downtown Specific Plan grew out of many public workshops and hearings. A storefront “Downtown Gallery” containing examples of how the Downtown could be improved drew over 2,500 responses from the public. Planning the future of Downtown Novato clearly touched the heart of the community.

Specific plans are tools to implement the General Plan for selected areas of the City. They are more detailed than the general plan and direct all phases of future development – the distribution of land uses; the location and sizing of supporting infrastructure; and methods of financing public improvements.

This section presents overall goals, objectives, policies which provide the legal framework for the Downtown Specific Plan. Other chapters of the General Plan also support the Downtown Specific Plan:

- The Downtown Core land use designation in the Land Use Chapter was established to facilitate Downtown revitalization with mixed uses and a higher FAR. It is contiguous with the boundary of the Downtown Specific Plan.
- The Economic Development/Fiscal Vitality Chapter contains policies and programs to support and encourage Downtown businesses.

- The Transportation Chapter contains policies and programs to provide additional off-street parking Downtown and public transit facilities connecting the Downtown to Vintage Oaks and other parts of Novato.
- The Housing Chapter encourages mixed use and smaller single-family housing Downtown, and the preservation of the character of residential neighborhoods adjacent to Downtown.

Historically Downtown Novato was the center of a thriving small community. It had a railway station, theaters, bars, and many stores. After Highway 101 was constructed around Novato, the visibility and importance of the Downtown decreased significantly. The suburban, low-density residential development built during the 1960s and 1970s, combined with the establishment of large shopping centers readily accessible from the freeway in San Rafael and other nearby communities further reduced the commercial vitality of the Downtown. Most recently, the Vintage Oaks Shopping Center added retail space equivalent to the entire Downtown.

Community sentiment has changed. There now is a desire for the sense of place created by the traditional, small-town main street, providing a safe, pedestrian-friendly atmosphere where people can gather, shop, and be entertained.

The Downtown Specific Plan will implement this vision by building upon the unique assets that exist: the large number of historic and attractive older buildings; the proximity to the railway and Highway 101; the diverse building supply and related light industrial businesses located north of Grant Avenue; the Community House and City Hall campus; and the hillside views surrounding Downtown.

CI Objective 7 Establish the Downtown as the primary center for community and cultural activities.

CI Objective 8 Establish the Downtown as a commercial and business center for the community.

CI Objective 9 Provide a variety of housing Downtown.

CI Objective 10 Improve the appearance and attractiveness of the Downtown.

CI Policy 16 Downtown Specific Plan. Adopt and maintain a Downtown Specific Plan.

CI Program 16.1: Develop an education/information program for the Downtown Specific Plan.

Responsibility: Redevelopment Agency.

CI Program 16.2: Coordinate development Downtown with the updated Downtown Specific Plan. Refer to CI Map: Downtown Specific Plan.

Responsibility: Community Development Department and the Redevelopment Agency.

CI Policy 17 Downtown Diversity. Maintain and support the diversity of businesses and services Downtown.

CI Program 17.1: Consider establishing a Business Improvement District (BID) specifically for the area within the Downtown Specific Plan area.

Responsibility: Redevelopment Agency.

CI Policy 18 Tourism. Refer to the Economics/Fiscal Chapter.

CI Policy 19 Farmers Market. Continue to support the Farmers Market.

CI Policy 20 City Hall. Maintain the City Hall campus and appropriate community facilities Downtown.

CI Program 20.1: Identify possible Downtown locations for additional community facilities.

Responsibility: Community Services and Community Development Department.

CI Policy 21 Ground Floor Retail. Encourage the establishment of ground floor retail uses wherever feasible.

Stores, restaurants, cafes, theaters, and similar businesses facilitate a pedestrian-friendly Downtown which remains a bustling activity center after business hours.

CI Policy 22 Town Square/Plaza. Consider the establishment of a “Town Square/Plaza” Downtown.

CI Policy 23 Automobile-Intensive Uses. Discourage the location of new automobile-intensive uses such as gas stations, oil changers, car washes, fast foods and mini-marts Downtown.

CI Policy 24 Additional Parking. Facilitate the provision of adequate parking, emphasizing a combination of public and private parking facilities.

CI Program 24.1: Encourage shared parking, trash and recycling agreements wherever feasible. Utilize, as appropriate, development agreements, conditions of approval, and other means to encourage shared parking, trash and recycling arrangements.

CI Program 24.2: Consider revising parking requirements for mixed use developments in the Zoning Ordinance to account for alternate use times.

CI Policy 25 Architectural and Landscape Design. Require attractive architectural and landscape design for all new developments as well as for expansion to existing uses, consistent with Downtown Specific Plan guidelines.

CI Policy 26 Pedestrian Movement. Encourage a pedestrian-friendly Downtown with outdoor seating.

CI Policy 27 Public/Private Partnerships. Encourage cooperation and collaboration between the City and Downtown property and business owners to implement the Downtown Specific Plan.

CI Program 27.1: Consider implementing a Main Street type program.

Responsibility: Community Development and Central Administration.

CI Program 27.2: Consider various funding vehicles to encourage existing businesses to renovate and stay Downtown.

Responsibility: Administrative Services.

CI Policy 28 Additional Housing. Accommodate additional housing on upper floors over commercial and office uses where appropriate.

The Land Use Chapter establishes a Mixed Use designation for the Downtown which permits residential development.

CI Policy 29 Neighborhoods Adjacent to Downtown.

Several residential neighborhoods, such as the North West Quadrant Area, are located adjacent to Downtown. Policies and programs will be considered to preserve and enhance these neighborhoods and ensure that they will not be adversely affected by future development Downtown.

Historic Resources and Public Art

Conservation of Architectural and Historic Resources

Novato's archaeological and historic resources should be preserved. They provide a link to the past and strengthen the City's sense of place and community identity. Members of the community take a strong interest in the preservation of historic buildings and sites. The Novato Historical Museum and Archives – a volunteer organization exhibiting many artifacts and documents relating to Novato's past has identified a total of 80 historic buildings and sites in the Novato area.



CI Objective 11 Preserve archaeological and historic resources.

The California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) requires evaluation of any archaeological resource on the site of a development project. Unique resources, as defined by State law, should be protected, either by physical measures or by locating development away from the site.



Novato Train Station 1920s

CI Policy 30 Archaeological Resources Protection: Continue to protect archaeological resources.

CI Program 30.1: Require that areas found to contain significant historic or prehistoric artifacts be examined by a qualified consulting archaeologist.

CI Program 30.2: Require development applicants to research records for sites identified as having a potential for archaeological resources, to determine if a survey has been made and if resources have been identified. If there has been no survey, the City may require that the applicant conduct one.

CI Program 30.3: Halt all work if archaeological resources are uncovered during construction, and require an evaluation by a qualified archaeologist prior to recommencing construction.

CI Program 30.4: Locate and/or design development to avoid impacts on sites with identified archaeological resources by placing building to avoid the site, incorporating the site into a permanent open space area, covering the site with a layer of soil, deeding the site as a permanent conservation easement, or taking other actions recommended by the archaeologist, as approved by the City.

CI Program 30.5: If site has potential for archeological considerations, institute measures to protect these resources.

CI Policy 31 Historic Buildings, Sites and Districts. Identify, recognize and protect sites, buildings, structures and districts with significant cultural, aesthetic and social characteristics which are part of Novato's heritage.

CI Program 31.1: Adopt a Cultural Resources Management Ordinance to define, identify, evaluate, protect and preserve sites, buildings, structures, districts and objects that reflect significant elements of Novato's cultural, social, economic, political, aesthetic and architectural heritage use the Novato History Museum documents identifying 80 historic buildings and sites in Novato as a resource in developing the ordinance as well as the information regarding the existing historical districts.

A Cultural and Historic Resources Management Ordinance would supplement the present design review requirements for the Downtown Historic District. Boundaries of the District are shown on CI Map 1.



Novato History Museum

CI Program 31.2: Publish and distribute historic information about Novato.

CI Program 31.3: Consider establishing incentives for preservation and restoration of historic buildings and sites.

Public Art

Art located in public spaces such as parks, thoroughfares, Downtown, and around public and private buildings provides beauty, a sense of place and a human quality to urban areas. Public art can often become a landmark treasured by the community. Public art does not have to be large or monumental in size. Murals, fountains, sculptures and other forms have been used successfully to soften and beautify urban spaces. Many communities throughout California and the nation have implemented highly successful art-in-public-places programs.

Novato is located in an area with a large population of artists. The annual Marin County Open Studios lists many artist studios in Novato. The City's sense of place and its attractiveness would be enhanced through public art. Art has the ability to reflect the cultural life of the community.

Public art can be achieved through programs like the Percent-for-Art Program and through the support of private donors. Development can be encouraged and required to include artwork with new buildings and expansions.

CI Objective 12 Support public art and sculpture.

CI Policy 32 Public Art. Promote public art that enhances the cultural life of the community.

CI Program 32.1: Consider adopting an Arts-in-Public Places program voluntary art in public places and Percent- for-Art program with encouragement for selection of local artists.

Responsibility: Community Services Department

CI Program 32.2: Consider supporting a Novato-based art organization(s) in developing and establishing art programs and work towards Novato becoming a center for the artists in the North Bay.

These programs would require a percentage of the cost of new public and commercial building to be spent for public art, and/or require new development to contribute to the cost of art in public places.

Appendix A: Novato Neighborhoods

Introduction

This Appendix summarizes General Plan policies that have a particular effect on the City's neighborhoods. This Appendix is not an adopted part of the General Plan. It is intended to summarize how the Plan will affect the City's neighborhoods. No policies or programs are presented in this Appendix which are not in the General Plan.

The seven districts are those used in the 1992 report Target 2000, taking Novato's Park and Recreation Facilities into the 21st Century, prepared by the Parks and Recreation Commission. This Appendix contains information from that document, as well as from the General Plan and background reports.

General Plan policies, in addition to those described in this Appendix, apply to the entire City, including each district, whether or not this Appendix refers to all plan policies. These district descriptions are not as detailed as a neighborhood plan or specific plan, but simply focus on policies and programs affecting that district.

The following sections describe the location, population, and housing characteristics (including areas both inside and outside the City limits), environmental resources and hazards, major transportation facilities and other public facilities in each district. It then summarizes land use policies that will guide development of major vacant or underdeveloped areas in the district.

1. Northwest

This neighborhood extends from Highway 101 west to the City limits, from the slopes of Mount Burdell south to Novato Boulevard and San Marin Drive. It includes the San Marin, Partridge Knolls, San Ramon, and Miwok/Simmons neighborhoods.

The area consists primarily of single-family homes. Much of it developed under the 1961 San Marin Master Plan. The 1990 population was about 7,100 with approximately 2,400 housing units,

The Mount Burdell County Open Space area is a major scenic resource. The Olompali State Historical Park, outside the City limits, is adjacent to the Mount Burdell Open Space area to the north. Various hiking and equestrian trails extend through these areas, and it will be important to preserve existing access easements.

Novato Creek and Simmons Creek are subject to the Plan's streamside protection policies, including setbacks to protect riparian habitat. Novato Creek is adjacent to various parks in the City, including Miwok and Pioneer Parks, and portions of its banks could be enhanced as a connecting greenway for walking and viewing.

Novato Boulevard and San Marin Drive are the area's main roadways; there is regular bus service along both roads. There is peak hour congestion along San Marin Drive near Highway 101.

The district contains San Marin High School and San Ramon Elementary School. Pioneer Memorial and Miwok are the two developed parks in the neighborhood. There are numerous private mini-parks within residential subdivisions, recreation facilities at the two schools, and the private Rolling Hills Country Club. The development of the City's 100-acre O'Hair Park, south of Novato Boulevard, will provide additional recreational facilities for residents of this district.

General Plan Land Use Policies Relative to Northwest

The 180 Buck Center for Research on Aging site is on the northern edge of the City. The Plan designates the site Research/Education-Institutional, which allows the research facility and associated housing in the development approved by the County.

Much of the undeveloped land in the district consists of steep slopes and unstable soils. The General Plan specifies requirements to assure structural safety, preserve environmental values, and protect views.

The 63-acre vacant San Marin Business Park, northwest of San Marin Drive and Redwood Highway, is designated Business and Professional Office. This would allow offices hospitals and administrative uses along with ancillary commercial and service establishments. Development would be clustered to avoid unstable soils and protect views.

The two surplus school sites, San Carlos and San Andreas, are designated Medium Density Detached Residential (4 to 7 units per acre), and is intended to be compatible with surrounding neighborhood.

The plan designates the San Marin Plaza neighborhood shopping center as Neighborhood Commercial, which would allow both retail and housing.

2. West

West Novato extends from McClay Road west to the City limits and from Novato Boulevard south to Big Rock Ridge. Much of the area to the west is managed by the Marin County Open Space District. The 1990 population of the district was 9,630, and it contained about 3,000 housing units, mostly single-family. The Pleasant Valley neighborhood is partly in this district, and the Wild Horse Valley, and Indian Valley neighborhoods, outside the City limits, are adjacent.

Environmental resources include the Big Rock Ridge open space area, with its connecting hiking and equestrian trails and trailheads. Novato, Wilson, and Warner Creeks extend through the district.

Much of the remaining vacant land in the district is on steep slopes with unstable soils. Plan policies require special measures to assure structural stability, preserve environmental resources, and protect views.

Novato Boulevard, on which there is regular bus service, is the main east-west travel route.

Sinaloa Middle School and Pleasant Valley Elementary School are in the neighborhood. The County's Stafford Lake Park, to the west, connects with Miwok Park via a bike path. The district also contains the Marin Highlands City park, recreation facilities at the two schools, private equestrian facilities, the Novato Youth Center, and the Indian Valley golf course, open to the public.

General Plan Land Use Policies Relative to West:

The 220-acre Doe Hill site, immediately west of the City limits and south of Novato Boulevard has been purchased by the County Open Space District. This site contains steep wooded hillsides and grazing land. It provides a visual backdrop for the western entrance to Novato.

Plan policies require setbacks and other measures along creeks to enhance the riparian environment and minimize flood hazards. Areas alongside creeks could be improved as greenways connecting parks and activity centers.

The Novato Square neighborhood shopping center at Novato Boulevard and Wilson is designated Neighborhood Commercial, which would permit a combination of retail and housing.

3. Southwest

This area extends generally southwest to the City limits from the interchange of South Novato Boulevard and Highway 101. It contains the Marin Golf and Country Club, Ignacio, Rafael Village, Domingo Canyon, and Pacheco Valle neighborhoods. Loma Verde is an unincorporated pocket in the district.

1990 population was 9,810. About half of the 3,840 housing units are single-family and the balance are apartments and condominiums. It includes including Rafael Village, which is surplus military housing along Ignacio Boulevard. Pacheco Valle, the southernmost part of the district, has attached condominium units and single-family homes.

The topography of the district consists of three parallel spurs of Big Rock Ridge and narrow intervening valleys. Environmental resources include the Pacheco Valle open space area and the dedicated open space areas near Loma Verde, managed by the Marin County Open Space District, and the Marin Golf and Country Club. The General Plan designates Big Rock Ridge as a scenic ridgeline, and development standards require protection of views of the ridge. Arroyo San Jose and Ignacio Creek, where streamside protection policies apply, extend through the district. Some areas alongside these creeks would be appropriate for public access.

Much of the remaining vacant land is on steep slopes with unstable soils, and special development measures to assure structural safety, preservation of environmental resources, and view protection, apply.

Ignacio Boulevard and Alameda del Prado, which contain regular bus service, are the main travel routes through the district. Sunset Parkway provides a connection between South Novato Boulevard and Ignacio Boulevard. Sunset is often used as a freeway diversion route when Highway 101 is congested.

Major public facilities in the district include the College of Marin Indian Valley Campus, the Enfrente Road Fire Station and the Loma Verde Elementary School. The City has recently completed development of the 10-acre Josef Hoog Neighborhood Park in the Domingo Canyon area. Two park sites and the Pacheco Valle community facility site may be dedicated to the City but are now undeveloped. The area includes the private, 18-hole Marin Golf and Country Club.

General Plan Land Use Policies Relative to Southwest:

The 60 undeveloped acres remaining in the upper portion of the Anderson-Rowe project site are designated for a combination of low-density residential and medium density multi-family residential uses. Plan policies require locating these units to avoid unstable soils, preserve environmental resources, and protect views.

Rafael Village, the area of surplus military housing along Ignacio Boulevard would develop in accordance with the Hamilton Reuse Plan now being prepared by the Hamilton Reuse Planning Authority. The Pacheco Ranch winery, which is under an agricultural preserve contract, would continue in agricultural use. The adjacent 17-acre vacant parcel, which contains steep hillsides, is designated for Low Density Residential, at 1 - 5 units per acre.

The northerly portion of the Independent Journal facility, adjacent to Highway 101, is designated as Business and Professional Office plus Neighborhood Commercial to serve the Pacheco Valley area.

Two neighborhood shopping centers, Pacheco Plaza at Entrada and Enfrente and Ignacio Center at Ignacio Boulevard and Alameda del Prado, are designated Neighborhood Commercial, which would permit a combination of retail and housing.

4. Central

District Four includes Downtown Novato and other surrounding predominantly residential areas bounded by San Marin Drive on the north, Highway 101 on the east, Arroyo Avichi Creek and the City limits on the south, and McClay Road and Simmons Lane on the west.

The 1990 population of 7,500 includes a high proportion of senior citizens. The 2,800 housing units in the district include a wide variety of types and densities. About half are single-family detached, including Novato Heights and the adjacent area north to Center Road. The Northwest Quadrant, near the Downtown, contains a mix of older, small single-family homes and apartment buildings. The area around Diablo and Center Road contains apartments and condominium units. The neighborhoods around Seventh Street and Carmel Drive and around Lamont and Reichert Avenues have predominantly single-family detached homes with some multi-family homes and commercial at their peripheries. The area also contains a mobilehome park and a RV park along Redwood Boulevard. North of Olive Avenue is Redwood Mobilehome Park, with Dean's RV Park north of Redwood Boulevard.

Various hills provide a scenic backdrop for the urban development east of Downtown, and in the northwest and southwest parts of the district. Plan policies require that views be protected in any development project. The Old Town area along Grant Avenue east of Redwood Highway was previously designated as Historic District.

Novato Creek and Warner Creek extend through the center of the district. Streamside policies in the General Plan require setbacks and other measures to protect from flood damage and preserve environmental resources. Areas alongside the creeks could be enhanced to provide needed open space and connect activity centers.

Traffic congestion is an issue in Central Novato, on Highway 101 and on Novato Boulevard between Grant and Diablo. South Novato Boulevard will be widened to four lanes with a median from Diablo to Rowland. The General Plan proposes extending the High Occupancy Vehicle Lane north from Highway 37 to Atherton Avenue and retaining the Northwestern Pacific Railroad Right-of-Way for public transit use.

There is regular bus service along Redwood Boulevard, Novato and South Novato Boulevards, and Highway 101.

The City's major public facilities are in this district, including the City Hall campus and the Community House, the San Ramon Way Fire Station; and Lu Sutton Elementary School. The Hill Recreation Area includes the Margaret Todd Senior Center and extensive recreation facilities. Developed parks include Lee Gerner, Marion, and Stafford Grove.

The Downtown Specific Plan Committee is considering inclusion of a new community center/performing arts facility downtown and a multi-modal transit center.

General Plan Land Use Policies Relative to Central:

The General Plan calls for retention and improvement of the area north of Downtown for Commercial/Industrial uses, rather than replacing existing home improvement and light industrial businesses with retail as contemplated in the 1981 Plan.

The 47-acre Pinheiro Ranch site, north of Downtown, is designated for Low-Density Residential and Mixed Use. The flat part of the property could be developed with housing and commercial space along Redwood Boulevard.

The land on the southeast corner of Redwood and DeLong is also designated for Mixed Use.

Farther south, the Novato Creek Landing site, next to the freeway and south of the “windmill house,” is designated for Business and Professional Office. The Diablo Triangle site, near the intersection of Diablo and South Novato Boulevard, is designated for Medium Density Multiple Family Residential.

Two undeveloped areas, the hillside west of Seventh Street and the hillside south of Center Road, are designated for Very Low-Density Residential, ranging between two acres per unit to one acre per unit, with development clustered to avoid areas of unstable soils.

Three neighborhood shopping centers are designated Neighborhood Commercial, which permits both retail and housing: Novato Downtown Center at Seventh and Grant, Novato Fair at Diablo/Redwood/South Novato Boulevard, and Nave Center at Center and South Novato Boulevard.

The City adopted the Northwest Quadrant Plan for the area northwest of the intersection of Redwood Boulevard and Grant Avenue in 1977. Policies of the Plan were incorporated into the 1981 General Plan. The objective of this plan was to maintain a mixed residential area near Downtown, with a high population concentration to support Downtown activities, while preserving the existing small, single-family homes. Single-family and multiple-family units are currently allowed throughout the area.

The Northwest Quadrant Plan includes a sliding scale of maximum densities: two units on lots less than 7,500 square feet, one unit per 2,000 square feet for lots 7,500 to 15,000 square feet, and one unit per 1,875 square feet for lots 15,000 square feet and larger.

Residents have expressed concerns that under present regulations, sound single-family homes have continued to be displaced by multi-family units. The General Plan calls for preparing a Specific Plan for the Northwest Quadrant.

5. Midwest

This area is bounded generally by Arroyo Avichi Creek on the north, Highway 101 on the east, the Anderson Rowe property on the south, and the City limits on the west, including College of Marin Indian Valley Campus. Its neighborhoods include Rancho Village, Woodland Heights, Sunset/Lynwood, Crossroads/Cheda Knolls, and Pacheco Ranch Estates.

The 1990 population of the area, 8,500 was approximately 16 percent of the planning area total. Most of the housing is single-family detached, but there are condominiums, townhouses, and apartments in the Crossroad/Cheda Knolls and Redwood Boulevard/Rowland Boulevard area. There are large estate-type homes in the hills above College of Marin Indian Valley Campus.

Environmental resources include the publicly owned Scottsdale marsh and adjacent wetlands areas, the College of Marin Indian Valley Campus and the surrounding public open space, and Arroyo Avichi Creek. Development in any of these areas is subject to General Plan policies encouraging preservation of environmental resources. Much of the remaining vacant land contains unstable soils on steep slopes, and would be subject to appropriate development standards.

South Novato Boulevard is the main travel route through the area. It will be widened to four lanes with a median from Diablo to Rowland. Golden Gate Transit provides regularly scheduled bus service on South Novato Boulevard.

The district contains a concentration of public school facilities, Novato High School, San Jose Middle School, and Lynwood and Rancho Elementary Schools, all of which provide extensive recreation facilities. Arroyo Avichi Park and the Redwood Boulevard Fire Station are also in the district.

General Plan Land Use Policies Relative to Midwest:

The General Plan designates the 34-acre hillside area west of Sunset Parkway Very Low Density Residential. Development would be clustered outside areas with environmental constraints.

The plan designates the College of Marin Indian Valley Campus as Community Facilities, Public Utilities and Civic Uses which would allow development of a Digital Village in conjunction with the College of Marin facility.

6. Northeast

This district includes the entire area north of Highway 37 and east of Highway 101 to the Petaluma River and northern City limits. Neighborhoods include Bahia and residential areas near the Olive School, Poplar Terrace, Davidson Street, and Atherton Avenue. The unincorporated Black Point community is adjacent. The new Vintage Oaks regional shopping center is southeast of the Highway 101/Rowland Boulevard interchange. There are some scattered industrial uses in the Bay plain, including the sewage treatment plant.

The 1990 population of the area was 4,380. More than 90 percent of the area's 1,610 housing units are single-family detached, some on large semi-rural lots. There are a mobile home park and a 15-unit apartment complex adjacent to Highway 101. The Bahia development includes some moderate-density attached water-oriented units. Nearby on Bugeia Lane is the Valley Memorial Park. The County has recently approved a development of residential estate-size lots on Pinheiro Ridge.

Much of the area consists of bay plains which have been diked and filled for agriculture. Under General Plan policies, agricultural lands would be encouraged to remain in agricultural use. The parts of the area below mean sea level are subject to flooding. The Marin County Flood Control District has purchased acreage adjacent to Novato Creek for ponding. General Plan policies would require careful review of development in flood plains.

Other environmental resources that will be protected under General Plan policies are Atherton Ridge, Olive Ridge, Reservoir Hill at Hamilton Field, and Deer Island. Streamside protection policies apply to Novato Creek.

Major travel routes in the area are Atherton Avenue, Bugeia Lane, and Olive Avenue, as well as the adjacent Highway 101 and Highway 37. There is regular bus service along Atherton and Olive. Marin County has programmed improvements to Atherton Avenue, including left turn lanes and shoulder improvements. The General Plan recommends that Caltrans extend the High Occupancy Vehicle Lane in Highway 101 from Highway 37 north to Atherton Avenue.

The Rush Creek Open Space area, outside the City limits, and Deer Island are owned by the Marin County Open Space District. Public facilities in the area include Olive Elementary School and adjacent park, the

Atherton Avenue Fire Station, Slade Park, various mini parks, and the County's Petaluma River Boat Ramp. Private facilities include the Olive Ridge Tennis Club and Bahia Boat Ramp.

General Plan Land Use Policies Relative to North east:

The General Plan recommends that the 100-acre unincorporated area west of Gness Field be designated Light Industrial/Office, in conformance with industrial development as shown in the Marin Countywide Plan and 1981 Novato General Plan.

The approximately 1,000 undeveloped acres of the Bahia property are designated for a combination of Low Density Residential (1.1 to 5 units per acre) and Conservation (1 unit per 10-60 acres).

Undeveloped portions of Black Point outside the City Limits are designated Very Low Density Residential (up to 1 unit per acre). The Novato General Plan recommends continued implementation of the policies of the County's Black Point Community Plan excluding those areas in the Urban Services Area (USA) as defined by LAFCO, which specifies residential densities from 1 unit per acre to 1 unit per five acres.

Other undeveloped hillside areas are designated for Very Low Density Residential, up to 1 unit per acre.

The area north of Novato Creek and adjacent to Highway 101, where a new hospital is proposed, is designated Community Facilities, Public Utilities and Civic Uses.

The undeveloped area south of the Vintage Oaks Shopping Center is designated Business and Professional Office.

7. Southeast

The southeast quadrant of the City extends south of Highway 37 and east of Highway 101. It contains Hamilton Field, the unincorporated Bel Marin Keys area, and the southern portion of the unincorporated Black Point community. The Bel Marin Keys Industrial Park is near the intersection of Highway 101 and Bel Marin Keys Boulevard.

The 1990 population was 6,290. There were about 2,150 housing units, in addition to the 950 units of former military housing at Hamilton. This included single-family detached units at Bel Marin Keys, the private Lanham housing development at Hamilton and two mobile home parks.

The City has approved a plan for development of 450 acres of Hamilton Field with 708 housing units, up to 845,000 square feet of commercial space, and 200 acres of parks and open space. The Hamilton Reuse Plan, prepared by the Hamilton Reuse Planning Authority, designates uses for the remaining 1,200 acres of the surplus military property. The County is processing a proposal for expansion of the Bel Marin Keys development.

With the exception of Black Point Ridge and the low hills southwest of Hamilton Field, the entire district is a historic Bay plain formerly subject to tidal action. Most of the area is below mean sea level and is subject to flooding. Novato Creek extends through the area and enters the Bay near the mouth of the Petaluma River. Some lands now used for agriculture would have greater economic potential for agricultural use if they were irrigated. The General Plan establishes controls over development in the environmentally constrained portions of this district, to protect environmental resources and minimize risks from flooding and earthquakes.

Bel Marin Keys Boulevard is the main travel route in the area, in addition to the adjacent Highway 101 and Highway 37. There is severe congestion during morning and evening commute hours near Bel Marin Keys Industrial Park. There is regular bus service to the Industrial Park, but not to the rest of the area. The General Plan recommends a new road extending on the east side of the freeway to improve access between Bel Marin Keys Industrial Park and Highway 37.

Public facilities include Hamilton Elementary School, with adjacent playing fields, and facilities provided by the Bel Marin Keys Community Services District, which is outside the City. Hamilton Field contains extensive recreation facilities once used by military personnel. The regional Bay Area Ridge Trail is proposed to extend through the area.

General Plan Land Use Policies Relative to Southeast:

The 164-acre Leveroni site, southeast of the 101/37 highway interchange, which is outside the City limits and used for agricultural purposes, is designated as Conservation (1 unit per 10-60 acres), and Light Industrial/Office on the westerly 14 acres adjoining Hamilton Drive. Its constraints include wetlands, flooding hazards, and soil instability.

The 238-acre Black Point Golf Links site is designated for a combination of Rural Residential on the upland, wooded portion and Conservation (1 unit per 10-60 acres) on diked historic Bay lands which are now used partially for agriculture.

The General Plan recommends restoration of wetlands on the runway at Hamilton Field.

The Plan recommends designation of the portion of the St. Vincent's property, which adjoins Hamilton Field but is outside the City Limits, for Conservation (1 unit per 10-60 acres). The land has wetlands, flooding, and soil instability constraints and is now used for agriculture.

Appendix B: Reference Materials

Hamilton Reuse Plan Map*
Northwest Quad Specific Plan*
Inundation Map of Novato Creek Dam Map

* The complete documents are available at the front counter of the Community Development Department, 901 Sherman Avenue, Novato.

Novato General Plan Glossary

The Novato General Plan Glossary replaces the California General Plan Glossary which was appended to the July 1995 Draft General Plan. The California General Plan Glossary was prepared by the California Planning Roundtable, edited by Naphtali H. Knox and Charles Knox, Palo Alto, California, 1990. The Novato General Plan Glossary uses the California General Plan Glossary as the basis for definitions of abbreviations and terms that are used in the Novato General Plan and that are consistent with the intent of the General Plan.

List of Abbreviations

ABAG:	Association of Bay Area Governments
ADT:	Average daily trips made by vehicles or persons in a 24-hour period
ALUC:	Airport Land Use Commission
BAAQMD:	Bay Area Air Quality Management District
BMR:	Below-market-rate dwelling unit
CEQA:	California Environmental Quality Act
CIP:	Capital Improvements Program
CMA:	Marin Congestion Management Agency
CMP:	Marin Congestion Management Plan
CNEL:	Community Noise Equivalent Level
dB:	Decibel
dBA:	“A-weighted” decibel
EIR:	Environmental Impact Report (State)
EIS:	Environmental Impact Statement (Federal)
EMF:	Electromagnetic Fields
FAA:	Federal Aviation Authority
FAR:	Floor Area Ratio
FEMA:	Federal Emergency Management Agency
FIRM:	Flood Insurance Rate Map
FmHA:	Farmers Home Administration
HCD:	Housing and Community Development Department of the State of California
HUD:	U.S. Dept. of Housing and Urban Development
JPA:	Joint Powers Authority
LAFCo:	Local Agency Formation Commission
L_{dn} :	Day and Night Average Sound Level
L_{eq} :	Sound Energy Equivalent Level
LOS:	Level of Service
MTC:	Metropolitan Transportation Commission
OPR:	Office of Planning and Research, State of California
PUD:	Planned Unit Development
UHC:	Uniform Housing Code
VMT:	Vehicle Miles Traveled

List of Terms

Acres, Gross

The entire acreage of a site.

Adverse Impact

A negative consequence for the physical, social, or economic environment resulting from an action or project.

Affordable Housing

Housing capable of being purchased or rented by a household with very low, low, or moderate income, based on a household's ability to make monthly payments necessary to obtain housing. Housing is considered affordable when a household pays less than 30 percent of its gross monthly income (GMI) for housing including utilities.

Buildout; Build-out

Development of land to its full potential as permitted under General Plan and zoning designations.

Clear Zone

That section of an approach zone of an airport where the plane defining the glide path is 50 feet or less above the center line of the runway. The clear zone ends where the height of the glide path above ground level is above 50 feet. Land use under the clear zone is restricted.

Clustered Development

Development in which a number of dwelling units are placed in closer proximity than usual, or are attached, with the purpose of retaining an open space area.

Cumulative Impact

As used in CEQA, the total impact resulting from the accumulated impacts of individual projects or programs over time.

Dedication

The conveying by an owner or developer of private land for public use, and the acceptance of land for such use by the governmental agency having jurisdiction over the public function for which it will be used. Dedications for roads, parks, school sites, or other public uses often are made conditions of approval of a development.

Density, Employment

A measure of the number of employed persons per specific area (for example, employees/acre).

Density, Residential

The number of permanent residential dwelling units per acre of land. Densities specified in the General Plan are expressed in units per gross acre.

Destination Retail

Retail businesses that generate a special purpose trip and which do not necessarily benefit from a high-volume pedestrian location.

Detention Dam/Basin/Pond

Detention dams are constructed to retard flood runoff and minimize the effect of sudden floods. Detention dams fall into two main types. In one type, the water is temporarily stored, and released through an outlet structure at a rate which will not exceed the carrying capacity of the channel downstream. Often, the basins are planted with grass and used for open space or recreation in periods of dry weather. In the other type, most often called a Retention Pond, the water is held as long as possible and may or may not allow for the controlled release of water.

Easement

Usually the right to use property owned by another for specific purposes or to gain access to another property. For example, utility companies often have easements on the private property of individuals to be able to install and maintain utility facilities.

Easement, Conservation

A tool for acquiring open space with less than full-fee purchase, whereby an agency or organization buys only certain specific rights from the land owner. These may be positive rights (providing the public with the opportunity to hunt, fish, hike, or ride over the land), or they may be restrictive rights (limiting the uses to which the land owner may devote the land in the future.)

Ecology

The interrelationship of living things to one another and their environment; the study of such interrelationships.

Erosion

(1) The loosening and transportation of rock and soil debris by wind, rain, or running water. (2) The gradual wearing away of the upper layers of earth.

Exaction

A contribution or payment required as an authorized precondition for receiving a development permit; usually refers to mandatory dedication (or fee in lieu of dedication) requirements found in many subdivision regulations.

Expansive Soils

Soils which swell when they absorb water and shrink as they dry.

Fault

A fracture in the earth's crust forming a boundary between rock masses that have shifted.

Floor Area Ratio (FAR)

Defines building intensity for nonresidential uses as the ratio between the amount of gross floor area and the gross site area, excluding covered parking areas or garages.

General Aviation

General aviation includes flight schools, small charter operations, aircraft maintenance, small utility aircraft used for pleasure, pleasure/business and corporate/business, helicopter schools and charter operations and similar type and size operations. It does not include air carriers (commuter, regional, and major airlines) and military operations.

Habitat

The physical location or type of environment in which an organism or biological population lives or occurs.

Hazardous Material

Any substance that, because of its quantity, concentration, or physical or chemical characteristics, poses a significant present or potential hazard to human health and safety or to the environment if released into the workplace or the environment. The term includes, but is not limited to, hazardous substances and hazardous wastes.

Impact Fee

A fee, also called a development fee, levied on the developer of a project by a City, County, or other public agency as compensation for otherwise-unmitigated impacts the project will produce. California Government Code Section 66000 et seq specifies that development fees shall not exceed the estimated reasonable cost of providing the service for which the fee is charged. To lawfully impose a development fee, the public agency must verify its method of calculation and document proper restrictions on use of the fund.

Impervious Surface

Surface through which water cannot penetrate, such as roof, road, sidewalk, and paved parking lot. The amount of impervious surface increases with development and establishes the need for drainage facilities to carry the increased runoff.

Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCo)

A five-member commission for Marin County that reviews and evaluates all proposals for formation of special districts, incorporation of cities, annexation to special districts or cities, consolidation of districts, and merger of districts with cities. Under State law, the LAFCo for each County is empowered to approve, disapprove, or conditionally approve such proposals.

Overlay

A land use designation on the Land Use Map, or a zoning designation on a zoning map, which modifies the basic underlying designation in some specific manner.

Parcel

A lot, or contiguous group of lots, in single ownership or under single control, usually considered a unit for purposes of development.

Peak Hour/Peak Period

For any given roadway, a daily period during which traffic volume is highest, usually occurring in the morning and evening commute periods. Where “F” Levels of Service are encountered, the “peak hour” may stretch into a “peak period” of several hours duration.

Rare or Endangered Species

A species of animal or plant listed in: Sections 670.2 or 670.5, Title 14, California Administrative Code; or Title 50, Code of Federal Regulations, Section 17.11 or Section 17.2, pursuant to the Federal Endangered Species Act designating species as rare, threatened, or endangered.

Ridgeline

A line connecting the highest points along a ridge and separating drainage basins or small-scale drainage systems from one another.

Riparian Habitat

Habitat comprised of the vegetative and wildlife areas adjacent to perennial and intermittent streams. Riparian areas are delineated by the existence of plant species normally found near freshwater.

Significant Effect

A beneficial or detrimental impact on the environment. May include, but is not limited to, significant changes in an area's air, water, and land resources.

Site

A parcel of land used or intended for one use or a group of uses and having frontage on a public or an approved private street. A lot. (See "Lot.")

Slope

Land gradient described as the vertical rise divided by the horizontal run, and expressed in percent.

Sphere of Influence

The probable ultimate physical boundaries and service area of the City, formally approved by the Marin County Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCo).

Use Permit

Documentation of City approval of an activity, function or operation on a site or in a building or facility following discretionary review.

Watercourse

Natural or once natural flowing (perennially or intermittently) water including rivers, streams, and creeks. Includes natural waterways that have been channelized, but does not include manmade channels, ditches, and underground drainage and sewage systems.

Bibliography

A number of technical and background reports were prepared to provide the data necessary for the Novato General Plan. All these reports are on file in the City of Novato Community Development Department. They include:

1. Issues Report for the General Plan Revision (Marjorie Macris/PAS & Associates, June 1993)
2. Fiscal Issues Report – Novato General Plan Update (Mundie & Associates, June 1993)
3. Economic Issues Background Report – Novato General Plan Update (Mundie & Associates, June 1993)
4. Economic Evaluation and Strategy Report – Novato General Plan Update (Mundie & Associates, June 1993)
5. Evaluation of General Plan Alternatives: Circulation Issues – Novato General Plan (DKS Associates, December 1993)
6. Plan Alternatives Report for the General Plan Revision (Marjorie Macris/PAS & Associates, January 1994)
7. Existing Conditions Report, City of Novato General Plan Revision (The Planning Center and revised by City staff in April 1995)
8. General Plan Revision – Transportation Background Report #3: Evaluation of the Preferred Plan and Alternatives (Whitlock & Weinberger Transportation Inc., June 1995)
9. Draft Environmental Impact Report for the Novato General Plan (Leonard Charles & Associates, July 1995)
10. Final Environmental Impact Report – Novato General Plan revision (Leonard Charles & Associates, November 1995 and January 1996)