

# Chapter III. General Plan Principles

## Introduction

These General Plan Principles establish the foundation for the entire Plan. They apply across all topical areas and describe the future envisioned by the community. The goals, policies, measures, and actions in Chapters 4 through 10 support these Principles.

## Principle 1: Balanced and Smart Growth

The Burlingame community recognizes the need to grow in a manner that supports inclusivity and access while protecting established neighborhoods and community assets. General Plan policies guide future development and investments in a manner that is thoughtful, sustainable, and reflective of local values. The following are the tenets of this Plan Principle.

- Allow residential growth to occur in targeted areas near transit, which is by and large not near existing neighborhoods, while not adding density or changing uses within the existing single family neighborhoods.
- Focus commercial growth in the Bayside area east of Highway 101, and as smaller-scale infill in the Downtown area.
- Encourage growth of businesses where supportive physical and community infrastructure are available or can readily be provided, and where such growth contributes to the positive qualities and characteristics that define Burlingame.
- Maintain a balance of ownership and rental housing, with opportunities for people of all income ranges to live in Burlingame.
- Base land use decisions on the ability of the multimodal transportation network to support growth.

- Be mindful of the need to balance the growth of jobs locally with the ability of the City to provide sufficient capacity for housing that meets the needs of all income levels

## Principle 2: Community Character/Urban Forest

Burlingame's physical character is defined by its cherished tree groves and urban forest, distinct neighborhoods and business districts, and historic structures and resources. The City should ensure that these features are respected and enhanced, with streetscape and architectural styles sensitive to long-established forms and features.

- Ensure that trees continue to be an integral character-defining feature of our streetscapes, neighborhoods, and business districts.
- Recognize the distinct qualities of Burlingame's many and varied neighborhoods and business districts, and require that new development respond to and respect the desired character-defining features of these places.
- Protect the character and quality of Burlingame's historical buildings, neighborhoods, districts, and landscapes.
- Be receptive to modern design approaches that complement the Burlingame aesthetic and are harmonious with their surroundings.
- Protect and expand the City's urban forest and tree groves as aesthetic, historical, and environmental resources.
- Maintain the Floor Area Ratio and design guidelines for single family homes as a balance between home expansion and neighborhood character, while being mindful that changing parking and Accessory Dwelling Unit requirements may necessitate some modifications in the future.

### Principle 3: Connectivity

For Burlingame residents and visitors to access the full range of services and amenities the City offers, meaningful connections must be provided that can be safely navigated by all modes of travel. The mobility concepts, goals and policies in this General Plan seek to improve connectivity and access by realizing the following:

- Ensure provision of a well-defined multimodal transportation network that accommodates a range of travel choices and connects Burlingame to the region.
- Provide safe, convenient, and comfortable vehicular and pedestrian connections across Highway 101, linking the Bayfront with the rest of the City.
- Develop and maintain safe and easy-to-use, protected bicycle and pedestrian travelways citywide, with an emphasis on providing connections from neighborhoods to local schools, parks, shopping, and entertainment.
- Ensure the provision of “first-mile” and “last-mile” connections to and from transit stations, providing safe and effective access between transit and destinations.

### Principle 4: Economic Diversity and Vitality

The City of Burlingame recognizes the importance of a diverse economic base to providing sustainable, reliable revenue to the City and access to economic opportunity for residents. A combination of small, local “mom-and-pop” businesses should co-exist alongside larger regional and national enterprises. The goals and policies of the General Plan ensure the City accommodates and supports a mix of commercial activity while providing the flexibility to adapt to a dynamic economic environment.

- Support and encourage the operations of local, independent businesses equally to businesses that are regionally and nationally owned.

- Accommodate a mix of businesses that collectively works to maintain a stable tax base and revenue stream for the City.
- Pay attention to the evolving nature of how people work and shop, and help ensure that Burlingame’s commercial and auto row districts can adapt and be resilient.
- Remain able to respond to demands for high-quality and adaptable office space to enhance Burlingame’s attraction to high-quality professional providers.

## Principle 5: Healthy People, Healthy Places

The health and safety of the City’s residents and its natural environment are fundamental to the many goals of this General Plan. Burlingame continues to plan for community resilience and physical and social health of the community through all policies, guided by the following Plan Principles.

- Provide unique recreation experiences in parks, open spaces, and public plazas citywide.
- Promote development approaches that emphasize nonmotorized and pedestrian access.
- Incorporate high-quality, energy-efficient, and sustainable design into all new development.
- Preserve and enhance open spaces, natural resources, and environmentally sensitive areas, including the Bay and the local creek system.
- Maintain and enhance public safety through community and environmental designs that promote secure, active, and safe streets and neighborhoods.
- Celebrate and accommodate arts, culture, and diversity.

## Principle 6: Great Schools and Life-long Learning

Residents value Burlingame for the opportunities it offers, including access to outstanding education for all ages. Burlingame is committed to fostering educational opportunity for all residents, while promoting high-quality education for K-12 students in both public and private schools.

- Promote productive partnerships with local schools and other educational institutions.
- Recognize that high-quality education contributes to overall community success and health.
- Support programs that provide enrichment and life-long learning.

## Principle 7: Civic Engagement

*Envision Burlingame* is built on the foundation of community engagement, and the City is committed to building on this legacy to implement the General Plan and foster healthy civic dialogue for all issues of public interest. The following statement illustrates this Principle.

- Maintain an environment that always welcomes and encourages productive public discourse on issues shaping Burlingame's future.

