

# 2005 PLEASANTON PLAN 2025

## 14. SUBREGIONAL PLANNING ELEMENT



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## 14. SUBREGIONAL PLANNING ELEMENT

### PURPOSE

The purpose of the Subregional Planning Element is to facilitate Pleasanton's involvement in the cooperative planning of the Tri-Valley area. The key to successful subregional planning will be active inter-jurisdictional participation, citizen support, and a strong sense of responsibility to the subregion. Pleasanton is committed to planning and acting cooperatively to enhance the future of the Tri-Valley.



View from Moller subdivision looking east across the Tri-Valley

### PLANNING CONTEXT

Pleasanton is part of the nine-county San Francisco Bay Area region (Figure 14-1), and the seven-jurisdiction – Pleasanton, Livermore, Dublin, Danville, San Ramon, and Alameda and Contra Costa counties – Tri-Valley subregion (Figure 14-2). As such, the City of Pleasanton plays an integral part in the functioning of both the

region and the subregion. Changes in the physical environment, economy, and infrastructure of the region and subregion affect Pleasanton, and vice-versa.

Local control of development has historically been highly important to the Tri-Valley jurisdictions. The advantages of local control are that the decision makers are close to home, knowledgeable of the area they serve, and directly accountable to their constituents. Unfortunately, because local planning in the Tri-Valley has sometimes occurred without a thorough consideration of the regional and subregional context, some problems have occurred. For example, the supply of housing affordable to Tri-Valley workers has not kept pace with the expansion of jobs. The freeway and street systems have become overburdened and air quality reduced because of long commutes which extend beyond the Tri-Valley area.

The City first adopted the Subregional Planning Element as part of its General Plan in 1996. At that time, the Element was drafted as part of a Subregional Planning Strategy, a cooperative effort among the seven Tri-Valley jurisdictions that the Association of Bay Area Governments funded by a grant. The seven jurisdictions making up the Tri-Valley Council were to consider the objectives and policies of the strategy in future amendments to their general plans. At the date of this writing (2006) Pleasanton is the only Tri-Valley jurisdiction that has adopted the Subregional Planning Strategy as part of its General Plan.

### THE SAN FRANCISCO BAY AREA REGION

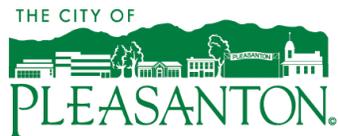
The San Francisco Bay Area region (Figure 14-1) consists of the nine counties which adjoin the Bay, including San Francisco, Marin, Sonoma, Napa, Solano, Contra Costa, Alameda, Santa Clara, and

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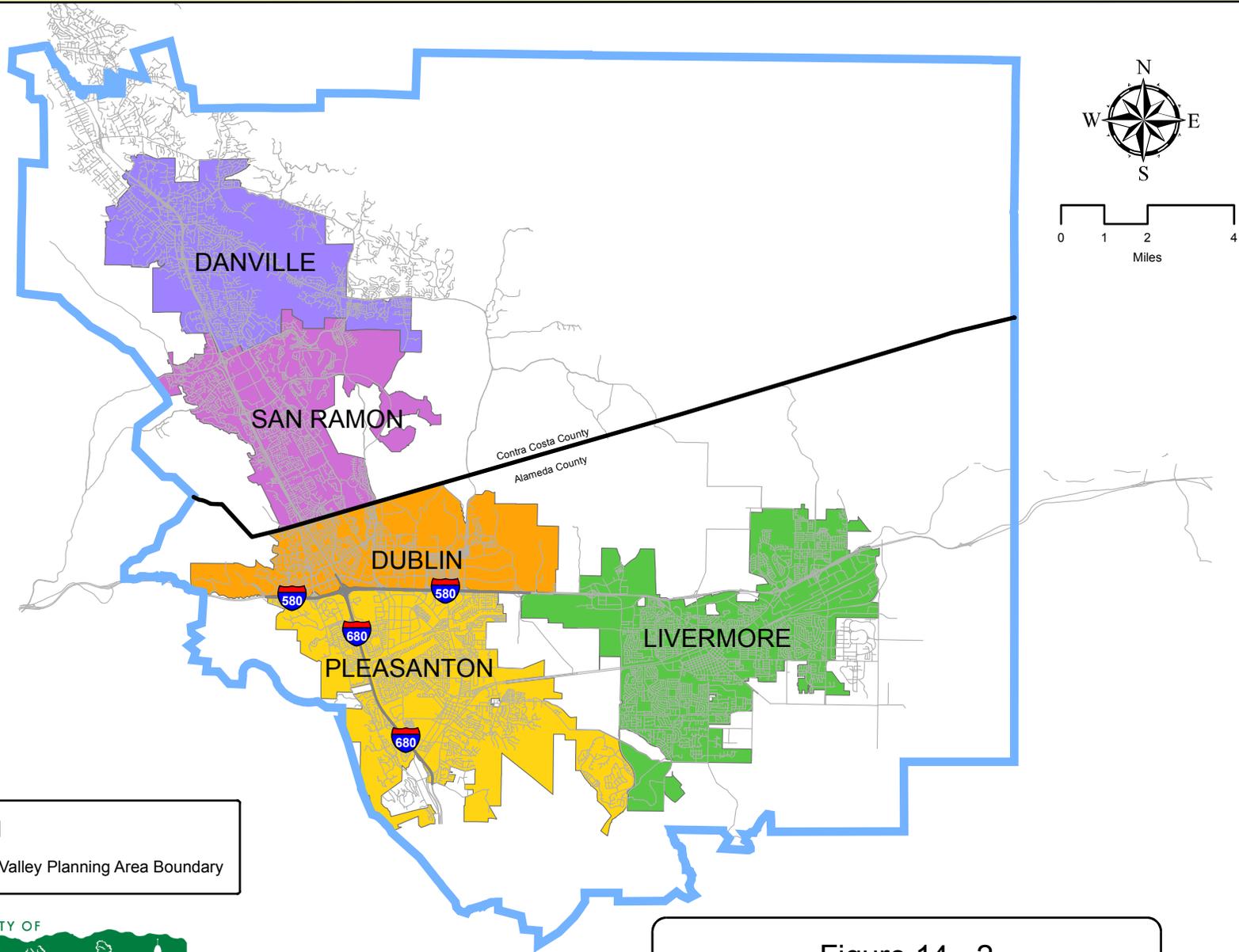


Figure 14 - 1  
Bay Area Counties

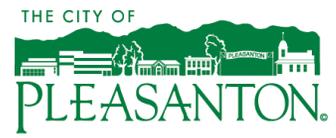
Source: City of Pleasanton, 2008



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**Legend**  
Tri-Valley Planning Area Boundary



Source: Tri-Valley Planning Committee  
Tri-Valley Subregional Planning Strategy, 1995.

Figure 14 - 2  
Tri-Valley Planning Area Boundary

San Mateo counties. The region includes 4.4 million acres, of which approximately 16 percent (700,000 acres) was developed as of 2000.<sup>1</sup>

With a mild climate, immediate proximity to the Pacific Ocean and the San Francisco Bay, and attractive natural setting, the Bay Area is one of the most attractive places in the country to visit and live. The area’s natural beauty as well as its built environment attracts residents, businesses, and tourists from all over the world.



Alameda County Fair Association

Visitors at the Alameda County Fair

The Bay Area’s 2005 population of about 7,091,700 is projected to increase by 19 percent, to about 8.4 million, by the year 2025. Jobs are expected to increase by about 36 percent over this same period, from about 3.5 million to about 4.8 million. More jobs will be added to the health and education services sector than to any other sector. The high technology manufacturing share of total employment

should remain constant, rather than increasing as it has over the past 20 years.<sup>2</sup>

Major planning issues faced by the Bay Area include a high cost of housing, traffic congestion, overburdened public transportation systems, quality of education, and air and water quality. Many of these are also issues in the Tri-Valley although the quality of public education in the Tri-Valley remains high.

Various agencies address regional issues in the Bay Area. The Association of Bay Area Governments (ABAG) is a voluntary organization of local governments representing the nine Bay Area counties. Established in 1961, ABAG promotes cooperation on area-wide issues and coordinates with areas outside the region. Other regional agencies include the Metropolitan Transportation Commission, which is responsible for planning regional transportation and transit in the Bay Area; the Bay Area Air Quality Management District which implements an air quality management plan to address attainment of federal and State air quality standards; and the San Francisco Regional Water Quality Control Board which issues permits for discharges into navigable waterways and protects water quality under the federal *Clean Water Act*.

Pleasanton has been active in regional planning efforts and most recently has participated in the Focusing Our Vision (FOCUS) program which is a multi-agency collaborative planning effort led by the Association of Bay Area Governments (ABAG) and the Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC), and supported by the Bay Area Air Quality Management District (BAAQMD). The plan will build upon the previous Smart Growth / Regional Livability Footprint Project and will define regional criteria for Priority Development Areas (PDAs) and Priority Conservation Areas (PCAs).

<sup>1</sup> Association of Bay Area Governments (ABAG), *ABAG Projections 2005*.

<sup>2</sup> *ABAG Projections 2005*.

The purpose of FOCUS is to plan for expected population and job growth for the next 20 years and grow in a way that improves the quality of life for all Bay Area residents, protects and preserves the environment, and is fiscally sound. Principles to advance this vision include:

- Strengthen and support unique existing communities
- Encourage new development that creates compact, complete, well-designed communities
- Increase the housing supply and choices
- Improve housing affordability
- Increase transportation choices and efficiency
- Protect and steward natural habitat, open space, and agricultural land
- Improve social and economic equity
- Promote efficiency and fiscal health
- Conserve resources, promote sustainability, and improve environmental quality
- Protect public health and safety

Below are some strategies that could be used to achieve goals related to focused growth and development in the Focusing our Vision Program:

- Encourage infill and the efficient use of land capacity within existing communities
- Provide for compact, complete, resource-efficient communities near existing or planned transit and other infrastructure
- Provide opportunities for people to live near their jobs and work near their homes

- Encourage a mix of land uses with jobs, housing, retail, schools, parks, recreation, and services in proximity
- Locate development in areas served and likely to be served by frequent passenger rail, bus, and/or ferry service
- Support community revitalization without displacing current residents
- Ensure that all socio-economic groups benefit from regional change
- Use existing infrastructure capacity and maximize return on new infrastructure investments
- Reduce the number and length of auto trips and facilitate walking and biking
- Maintain goods movement corridors and retain land uses that support related distribution and industrial uses
- Direct development so as to promote and protect public health and safety, avoid hazards, and/or mitigate development impacts
- Reserve land to accommodate future growth at appropriate densities

Strategies to achieve goals related to resource protection and conservation include:

- Maintain the productive function of lands for agriculture and other resource needs
- Protect and restore wildlife corridors and habitat
- Preserve the natural flow and recharge of water and support ecosystem processes
- Protect and enhance significant open space and recreation areas and networks
- Protect scenic, historic, and cultural resources that contribute to the region's identity

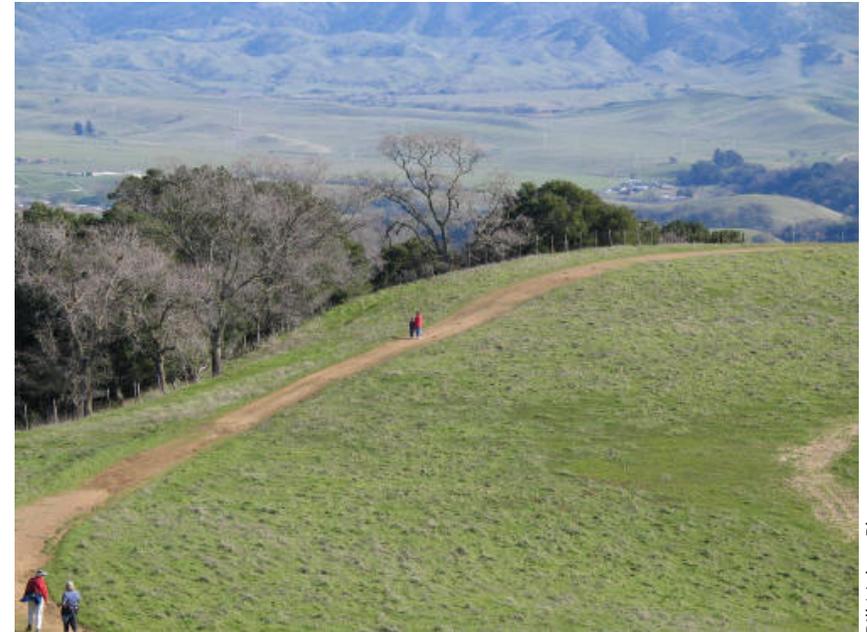
**TRI-VALLEY SUBREGION**

**Subregion Description**

The Tri-Valley subregion (Figure 14-2, above) encompasses 363 square miles of land generally located in the San Ramon, Livermore, and Amador valleys. It includes Danville, Dublin, Livermore, Pleasanton, San Ramon, and the adjacent unincorporated areas of Alameda and Contra Costa Counties. Major service providers to the area include the East Bay Municipal Utility District, Zone 7 of the Alameda County Flood Control and Water Conservation District, Dublin-San Ramon Services District, Central Contra Costa Sanitary District, the East Bay Regional Park District, and the Livermore Area Recreation and Park District. The Tri-Valley planning area is bounded generally by the East Bay hills to the west, an east-west line extending through Mount Diablo State Park to the north, Altamont Pass and other features of the Diablo Range to the east, and the watershed lands of the San Francisco Water District and the southern extent of the Livermore Valley to the south. The area consists of expansive grass-covered grazing lands, steep and rolling hills, prominent ridges, oak woodlands, broad valleys, farmlands, and urban communities. Primary natural resources include sand-and-gravel deposits and wind energy generation.

Until the 1950s, agricultural and related businesses comprised the primary land uses in the Tri-Valley area. The cities of Pleasanton and Livermore incorporated in the late 19th century and provided services for the local agricultural economy. The establishment of the Lawrence Livermore Laboratory and other major research facilities in the 1950s began to change the character of the area. The completion of the freeway system in the 1960s and early 1970s opened the Tri-Valley to extensive single-family residential development in both the incorporated and unincorporated areas. The Town of Danville and the City of San Ramon in Contra Costa County, and the City of Dublin in Alameda County, incorporated in the early 1980s and included land within their

borders which had previously developed under County jurisdiction. During the 1980s, the Tri-Valley area became a major employment center for the region, with the development of the Bishop Ranch Business Park in San Ramon and the Hacienda Business Park in Pleasanton.



Bill Nale, ePleasanton.com

Hikers on trail in Ridgeland Park

Growth in the Tri-Valley is projected to be substantial in the coming years. Between 2005 and 2025, the number of households is expected to increase by 38 percent, from about 102,490 to 141,180. The number of jobs is expected to increase by about 48 percent, from approximately 183,600 to 271,340.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>3</sup> *ABAG Projections 2005*; California Department of Finance, Demographic Research Unit, Population and Housing Estimates (Table 2: E-5), Jan 1, 2006.

In November 2000, the voters of Alameda County approved an Urban Growth Boundary (*Measure D*) which is co-terminus with the city's Urban Growth Boundary in Pleasanton and also includes the cities of Livermore and Dublin. Figure 14-3 shows the *Measure D* Urban Growth Boundary.

## Housing

The majority of housing in the Tri-Valley is single-family units (generally between 65 and 79 percent in the various communities). By comparison, 62 percent of the entire San Francisco Bay Area housing supply is single-family units. Vacancy rates in 2006 ranged from 1.83 percent in Livermore to 3.67 percent in Dublin, compared to 3.4 percent in the Bay Area as a whole.<sup>4</sup>

The Tri-Valley area, like the San Francisco Bay Area in general, is experiencing a shortage of housing. This is evidenced by the relatively low vacancy rates and by the fact that many Tri-Valley employees commute from outside the area. This housing shortfall reflects the rapid growth of employment in the 1980s and 1990s and the fiscal disincentive created by State legislation to local governments to plan for new housing. The shortfall is qualitative, as well as quantitative, in that the market has not produced housing affordable to Tri-Valley workers. A consequence of the imbalance between income and the affordability of housing is the increasing number of Tri-Valley workers who live in east Contra Costa County and in San Joaquin County resulting in long commutes to work via the congested freeway system.

It is important to ensure an adequate supply of housing for people who work in the Tri-Valley area. When people live close to their place of employment, they commute shorter distances, thereby reducing traffic congestion and air pollution. People who spend less time

commuting have more time to spend with their families and to become involved in the communities where they live. To this end, the City of Pleasanton has collaborated with regional entities on issues related to housing.

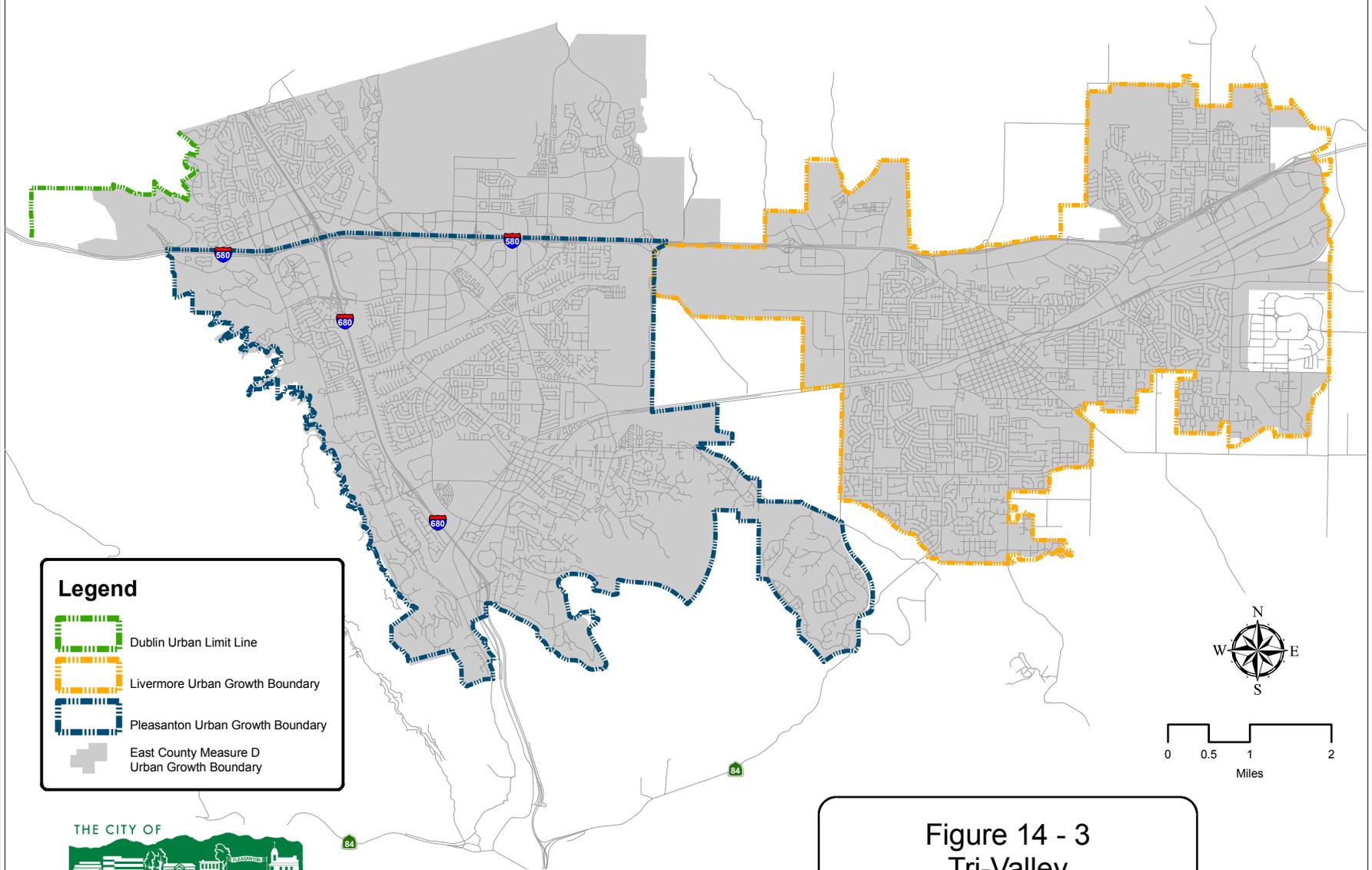
One of these collaborative efforts is the Tri-Valley Affordable Housing Committee (TVAHC) comprised of elected officials and staff from the cities of Dublin, Livermore, Pleasanton, and San Ramon, along with the Town of Danville and Alameda and Contra-Costa counties. This Committee was formed in 1992 to collaborate and expand regional affordable housing opportunities. A recent initiative of the TVAHC in 2005 was to create the Tri-Valley Housing Opportunity Center which offers a comprehensive counseling and education program that will expand mortgage credit opportunities and increase home ownership in the Tri-Valley region. The City of Pleasanton made a substantial monetary and staff contribution to help start this center.

Another collaborative effort included cooperation of the cities of Pleasanton, Livermore, and Dublin, along with Alameda County, in acquiring and rehabilitating a homeless shelter located in the City of Livermore. The partnership secured a Section 108 loan from HUD to cover the majority of the costs, and Pleasanton is repaying its share of the loan with a portion of its annual Community Development Block Grant allocation. The shelter was renamed Sojourner House and re-opened in October 2002.

The City of Pleasanton also contributes to East Bay Housing Organizations (EBHO), a non-profit membership organization dedicated to working with communities in Alameda and Contra Costa counties to preserve, protect, and expand affordable housing opportunities through education and advocacy. Pleasanton works with this organization to promote Affordable Housing Week

<sup>4</sup> California Department of Finance, January 1, 2006.

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**Legend**

- Dublin Urban Limit Line
- Livermore Urban Growth Boundary
- Pleasanton Urban Growth Boundary
- East County Measure D Urban Growth Boundary



Source: Alameda County Community Development Agency  
City of Dublin; City of Livermore

**Figure 14 - 3**  
**Tri-Valley**  
**Urban Growth Boundaries**

(annually in May) by helping coordinate affordable housing events in the Tri-Valley.

Pleasanton has endorsed Alameda County's Every1Home Plan, although it has not committed funding. The purpose of the plan is to end chronic homelessness and reduce housing crises for extremely low-income people with HIV/AIDS and chronic mental health problems. It includes a 10-year plan to end chronic homelessness within a broader 15-year housing plan that includes families. The plan recognizes that homelessness is a regional problem that requires regional solutions and coordination.

## Transportation

### Traffic and Roadways

Two interstate freeways and one State route serve the Tri-Valley. Interstate 580 (I-580) is an eight-lane freeway which runs east-west from the Altamont pass through Livermore, between the cities of Pleasanton and Dublin, and through the western ridge of the Tri-Valley. Interstate 680 (I-680) runs north-south just east of the western Tri-Valley area through Pleasanton, Dublin, San Ramon, and Danville. State Route 84 runs north-south near the eastern edge of the Pleasanton Planning area west of the Chain of Lakes and then east-west through Pleasanton's southeast hills until it crosses I-680 and continues west through Niles Canyon. Seven of Pleasanton's 21 arterials provide freeway access to the subregion and beyond.

A 2006 Metropolitan Transportation Commission study of the Bay Area found that I-580 ranks as the second most congested route in the morning peak hour and as the most congested route in the evening. In the future, traffic volumes along I-580 and I-680 will increase substantially from a combination of development within the Tri-Valley and an increase in traffic from outlying areas. Due to freeway congestion, motorists search for faster bypass route, and thus regional

traffic system congestion results in circulation impacts of local roadways in the Tri-Valley.



Wheels bus on Peters Avenue

Year 2030 projections by the Metropolitan Transportation Commission indicate traffic will be near to exceeding capacity conditions along both the I-580 and I-680 freeways even with implementation of major planned improvements. To address future traffic volumes, the regional system must implement congestion-management tools and make capacity enhancements not currently identified. Additional lanes such as High Occupancy Vehicle Lanes or High Occupancy Toll Lanes and auxiliary lanes will be required to meet the increase in demand. The region must also continue the gateway constraint approach to limit through-traffic entering the Tri-Valley. The Altamont Pass currently serves as a constrained gateway limiting the number of vehicles that may enter the Tri-Valley

from the San Joaquin Valley. Without this constraint, increased congestion and more bottlenecks will form along the I-580 corridor in the Tri-Valley.

The Cities of Pleasanton, Dublin, and Livermore along with Alameda County recently completed the “Tri Valley Triangle Study,” which investigated several new regional improvements for future construction. The Triangle Study focused on benefits to the Tri-Valley area and creating a priority list of projects which would provide the greatest benefit for the least cost.

In 1998, the City of Pleasanton along with seven jurisdictions in the Tri-Valley area developed a Tri-Valley Transportation Development Fee to help defray the cost of needed regional improvements, and initially funded 11 regional projects. Of these, several have been completed or are under construction, while others are being considered for addition to the list. The intent of the fee is not to fully pay for these projects, but to fund the local share.

County voters reauthorized a one-half cent sales tax in November 2000 for essential transportation improvements and services in Alameda County.

### Transit

Existing public transit service in the Tri-Valley includes BART; ACE trains; BART express bus service (including The County Connection in Contra Costa County between the Walnut Creek BART Station and the Pleasanton/Dublin BART station); San Joaquin Regional Transit District (RTD) bus service from the San Joaquin Valley to the Hacienda Business Park with separate service to the BART station; Modesto Area Express (MAX) bus service between Modesto and the Pleasanton/Dublin BART station as well as between Modesto and the Lathrop/Manteca ACE train station; and buses from the Livermore Amador Valley Transit Authority (LAVTA), better known as

“Wheels.” BART trains, ACE trains, County Connection buses, San Joaquin RTD buses, MAX buses, and private company shuttles generally provide regional transit service options while Wheels generally provides local bus service in the Tri-Valley.

In July 2000, BART and the cities of Pleasanton and Dublin entered into a Memorandum of Understanding to help finance the West Pleasanton / Dublin BART station. The BART long-range plan includes extension of fixed-rail service to Livermore.



BART train at the Pleasanton/Dublin station

### Airport

The Livermore Municipal Airport, owned and operated by the City of Livermore, is the only airport in the Tri-Valley. It is located south of I-580 near the Airport Boulevard interchange. As of 2005, there were approximately 650 aircraft based there and over 200,000 annual aircraft take offs and landings. Current plans for the Airport include

improvements to support facilities, but no additional runways or extensions. Flight patterns and future airport expansions are major concerns in the southern Tri-Valley area which should be subject to multi-jurisdictional cooperative planning. The Livermore Airport Advisory Commission – comprised of five Livermore residents, three who must be certified pilots – advises its City Council about the airport master plan for growth and airport development. Pleasanton supports the formation of a Tri-Valley Airport Advisory Committee to provide input into the operations and expansions of the Airport for the benefit of the entire Tri-Valley. Livermore and Pleasanton are currently negotiating a system to periodically monitor airport noise.

**Water Supply**

Zone 7 of the Alameda County Flood Control and Water Conservation District (Zone 7) supplies water as wholesaler to four Tri-Valley retail agencies: Dublin-San Ramon Services District,

California Water Service Company, and the cities of Pleasanton and Livermore. Some Tri-Valley residents, living within unincorporated Alameda County and the City of Pleasanton, obtain water supplies from the City and County of San Francisco. (See the Water Element for additional discussion of these regional water-supply, storage, and transport issues.)

Zone 7 stores water from both the South Bay Aqueduct and local runoff in the Del Valle Reservoir, and then uses this water to replenish groundwater supplies through release into the Arroyo del Valle and Arroyo Mocho. To enhance the reliability of water supply during drought periods, Zone 7 has purchased additional groundwater storage. Zone 7 plans to fund from water connection fees additional water supply, treatment, conveyance, storage, and groundwater recharge and extraction facilities. In addition, over the next 20 years, Zone 7 plans to replace or improve its existing system.

Providing adequate, sustainable water for planned growth is a major subregional issue that requires continuing planning coordination, growth management, and cooperative efforts to obtain additional supplies that will meet future agricultural, urban, and environmental needs.

**Wastewater Treatment and Disposal**

The Dublin San Ramon Services District and the City of Livermore provide wastewater treatment and disposal in the Tri-Valley area. The Livermore-Amador Valley Water Management Agency (LAVWMA) exports treated wastewater by way of its pipeline from the Tri-Valley area to San Francisco Bay. A LAVWMA expansion project has now been completed. Pleasanton, the Dublin-San Ramon Services District, and Livermore plan to share the allocated expansion increment among them, which should accommodate their wet-weather flows for many future years. See the Wastewater section of the Water Element for additional discussion of regional wastewater issues.



Zone 7 Water Agency

Water Valve Wheel at the Chain of Lakes

## Hydrology and Water Quality

The Tri-Valley area lies within the greater Alameda Creek watershed mainly within the Zone 7 service area. Three major east-west arroyos – Arroyo las Positas, Arroyo Mocho (which includes water from Tassajara Creek), and Arroyo del Valle – encompass the general drainage pattern of the watershed. These arroyos join Arroyo de la Laguna in Pleasanton which then drains the Tri-Valley in a southerly direction to San Francisco Bay via Niles Canyon and Alameda Creek. The Tri-Valley area does not contain any natural lakes: both the Del Valle and San Antonio reservoirs are human made as are the former sand-and-gravel pits comprising Shadow Cliffs and the Chain of Lakes.



Lake H – Chain of Lakes

Alameda County developed the “Chain of Lakes” concept in the 1970s. Zone 7 plans to establish the Chain of Lakes for flood control, sediment diversion, and recreation. The Chain of Lakes are located

between the cities of Livermore and Pleasanton and, when complete, will consist of a series of abandoned sand-and-gravel quarry pits converted into nine lakes, linked in a series, plus Cope Lake. Thus far Zone 7 has established four of these lakes, which all contribute to groundwater recharge, plus Cope Lake, which does not contribute. The remainder of these lakes will be available in the next 10 to 30 years after they have been mined and reclaimed. For additional discussion of the Chain of Lakes, see Stormwater and Water Resources in the Water Element and see Sand and Gravel, Water Management and Recreation, and Soil Resources in the Conservation and Open Space Element.

With implementation of its *Stream Management Master Plan*, Zone 7 would mitigate subregional flooding with the Chain of Lakes, and would reduce streambed siltation and erosion with projects on several areas of local arroyos.

## Solid Waste

The solid waste management system in Alameda County includes the collecting, processing, and disposing of solid waste materials. Alameda County adopted the *Alameda County Integrated Waste Management Plan*,<sup>5</sup> with a goal to reduce solid waste throughout the county, including within the Tri-Valley area. Programs to reduce the supply of waste and to recycle materials are increasingly important to reduce the need to expand landfills. See the Solid Waste discussion in the Public Facilities and Community Programs Element.

## Open Space, Recreation, and Trails

Non-urbanized land uses in the Tri-Valley include agriculture (mostly grazing, with some irrigated cultivation), publicly-owned regional parks

<sup>5</sup> Alameda County Waste Management Authority, *Alameda County Integrated Waste Management Plan*, Adopted February 26, 2003.

and watershed lands, and special natural resource land uses such as sand-and-gravel quarries and windfarms. Other open-space areas of subregional importance include environmentally sensitive lands, such as critical habitat and scenic viewsheds, and lands constrained by potentially hazardous conditions such as steep topography, landslides, and flooding and earthquake fault zones.



Windmills at the Altamont Pass

The East Bay Regional Parks District (EBRPD) owns and/or manages 34,886 acres in the Tri-Valley area, including the Ohlone and Sunol wilderness areas, Pleasanton Ridge Regional Park, and Shadow Cliffs Recreation Area. The San Francisco Water Department owns additional watershed land, some of which overlaps with the Ohlone and Sunol wilderness areas south of Pleasanton. A regional trail system currently connects some of the Tri-Valley park and open space areas. The East Bay Regional Park District *Master Plan* 1997 and the 2001 City of Livermore *Bikeways and Trail Master Plan*, the 2006 Zone 7 *Stream Management Master Plan*,<sup>6</sup> and City of Pleasanton *Community Trails*

<sup>6</sup> Zone 7, *Stream Management Master Plan*, Draft, March 2006. This plans a number of trail-gap connections, by-pass trails, and trail crossings.

*Master Plan*, updated in 2002, propose additional connecting trails to complete the Tri-Valley trail system.

The Iron Horse trail, a former railroad right-of-way extending north/south through the area is an important subregional bicycle and pedestrian trail. Local policy provides that the trail through the San Ramon Valley is to be used for non-motorized transit. In 2007, the City Council approved a temporary trail alignment for the remaining undeveloped portion of the Iron Horse Trail. This alignment extends from Santa Rita Road and West Las Positas Boulevard northwest to the Pleasanton/Dublin BART Station; the East Bay Regional Parks District must now review this proposed alignment.

A planned regional project will close an existing trail gap under I-580 to connect the Alamo Canal Trail (a bicycle and pedestrian path) between the cities of Pleasanton and Dublin. East Bay Regional Park District, on behalf of the project partners, is leading the design effort, which is currently underway. The project is being funded by the three project partners, with additional grant funding from the Alameda County Transportation Improvement Authority (ACTIA). The project is also being coordinated with Zone 7 Water Agency, CalTrans, BART and appropriate regulatory agencies.

As part of a settlement of litigation over the expansion of the Altamont Landfill, the parties to the litigation (Alameda County, Waste Management of Alameda County, and the cities of Pleasanton and Livermore, and various environmental groups) agreed that the County would charge Waste Management of Alameda County fees totaling \$1.25 per ton of waste disposed at the landfill. Of that \$0.75 must be spent on acquisition of open space either by purchasing land or a permanent easement. Twenty percent of that total money is to be spent in the Dublin-Pleasanton area, and the other eighty percent

must be used to acquire property in eastern Alameda County within the Tri-Valley. Under the terms of the agreement, the Altamont Landfill and Resource Recovery Open Space Advisory Committee (Committee) makes decisions about the expenditure of these funds, with ratification by the involved city. The City of Pleasanton has one voting member on this Committee. Since the Committee started accepting grant applications in 2004 it has funded the acquisition of two large parcels on the Pleasanton Ridge, to be incorporated into the East Bay Regional Park District's Pleasanton Ridge Park. Under the terms of the settlement, first priority for land acquisition should go to land having significant value for preservation of native biological diversity and/or wildlife habitat; and second priority of land acquisition should go to properties having significant value for visual character and/or non-motorized recreation.

### Agricultural Lands

Major agricultural products in the Tri-Valley area include cattle grazing, hay production, and wine grapes. Urban development has replaced much of the area's productive croplands, which are relatively flat and possess the best agricultural soils. Considerable land remains in large-lot agricultural use, under *Williamson Act* preserves. Historically, owners of some parcels near existing urbanized areas have filed notices of non-renewal for their *Williamson Act* contracts.

In early 2003, the South Livermore Valley Agricultural Land Trust initiated a strategic planning process and its board recognized the need to have a greater conservation presence in the region. The Trust became the Tri-Valley Conservancy with an expanded geographic area covering the cities of Livermore, Pleasanton, Dublin, and San Ramon along with a portion of Sunol. Working with willing landowners, the Conservancy acquires property development rights through the legal arrangement of a conservation easement that protects the property from future development.

Within the Tri-Valley area, the Alameda County Resource Conservation District is an independent, non-regulatory special district in California that works directly with local landowners and managers to implement conservation practices and to help enhance local watersheds. This District enables the US Department of Agriculture (USDA) Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) to provide Farm Bill cost-share programs and other technical assistance for local landowners and users. While the District administers conservation programs for agriculture and natural resources, the NRCS provides its technical expertise.



Vineyard at Mitchell Katz Winery

In 2005 the Tri-Valley area contained about 5,000 acres of irrigated farmland, most of it in grape production for wine. These lands provide a scenic and valuable buffer to areawide urban development. The Tri-Valley Business Council Working Landscape Plan identifies

three areas for possible irrigated agricultural expansion: South Livermore, Greenville, and North Livermore. Implementation of the *Working Landscape Plan* would result in about 12,000 to 17,000 total acres of irrigated agricultural land in the Tri-Valley area.<sup>7</sup>

### Visual Resources

The Tri-Valley contains visual resources representative of California's northern coast range and inland valley landscapes. These resources include expansive grass-covered grazing lands, steep and rolling hills, broad valleys, meandering tree-lined creeks, oak woodlands, pasturelands, dryland farmlands, orchards, row croplands, and vineyards. Peaks and ridgelines of the Diablo Range and the Las Trampas/Pleasanton/Sunol Range are visually prominent landforms. The aesthetic quality of the area is based largely on its rural, pastoral character and its topographic diversity.

I-580 and I-680 provide panoramic views of outlying areas. I-680 is an officially designated State Scenic Highway, which requires special measures by local governments to protect views along the travel corridor.

### Air Quality

The combination of light winds, high terrain, and frequent temperature inversions continues to give the Tri-Valley air basin a higher potential for air pollution than most other locations in the Bay Area. During the summer, conditions are conducive to the creation of ozone, and during the winter, accumulations of pollutants such as carbon monoxide and particulate matter. Consequently, the Tri-Valley area has more days when State air quality standards are not met than most other parts of the Bay Area.

<sup>7</sup> Tri-Valley Business Council, Agricultural Water Task Force, *Working Landscape Plan*, January 2005 Working Draft.

In order to protect public health, the Bay Area Air Quality Management District issues Spare the Air advisories on days when unhealthy air quality is forecast due to high ozone levels. The Air District advises people who are especially sensitive to pollution to limit their time outdoors, particularly in the afternoon hours. On Spare the Air Days, the District asks Bay Area residents to make clean-air choices including driving less, taking public transportation, trip-linking, walking, biking, choosing non-gasoline-powered lawn and garden equipment, avoiding polluting household products, and in the winter, curtailing burning of wood. The Air District and Metropolitan Transportation Commission partner with numerous Bay Area transit operators to offer a few free commute days each year.

The Tri-Valley area is located generally downwind with respect to the rest of the Bay Area, so that pollutants released upwind contaminate the air stream into the Tri-Valley. In turn, winds transport pollutants



Sand and gravel harvesting area

generated within the Tri-Valley easterly through the Altamont Pass into the San Joaquin Valley. Since 1995, ozone levels in the Tri-Valley have generally decreased. During this time, the number of days violating State standards averaged about seven (over the last three years) compared to an average of about 15 during the mid-1990s. In addition to criteria pollutants, the Tri-Valley contains numerous stationary sources of air pollutants that emit toxic air contaminants. (See the Local and Regional Meteorological Influences, the Recent Air Quality Conditions, and the Hazardous Pollutant sections of the Air Quality Element for further discussion of these issues.)

The *Clean Air Plan for the Tri-Valley Area*,<sup>8</sup> completed by Alameda County in 2004 and developed specifically for the Tri-Valley area, is a collection of voluntary measures including (1) technology measures that rely on technical devices or cleaner fuels to reduce air emissions, (2) transportation control measures that reduce vehicle emissions, (3) land-use measures that modify land-use policies to reduce vehicle trips, and (4) public education measures that educate the public about reducing air emissions. The Air Quality Element of this General Plan includes a number of its voluntary measures as air quality programs for Pleasanton.

In addition to air pollution, several types of land use frequently result in odor-causing operations, dust or other nuisances. Within the Tri-Valley, these operations generally include: sand-and-gravel harvesting areas – including asphalt plants – along Stanley Boulevard, sewage treatment plants and solid waste transfer stations in both Livermore and Pleasanton, as well as some agricultural operations in the Tri-Valley.

### Economic Development

In the San Francisco Bay Area since the early 1980s, there has been a rapid decentralization of employment away from traditional job

centers to outlying locations, including the Tri-Valley. This shift in growth has occurred in other metropolitan areas as well, with an emerging new urban form in which suburban edge cities have replaced the suburban bedroom communities which formerly surrounded the traditional central core.

The Tri-Valley area changed from a bedroom community in the 1970s to a regional employment center during the rapid employment growth of the 1980s and 1990s. Between 1980 and 1990, the area gained more than 19,000 jobs alone from the construction of the Bishop Ranch and Hacienda Business Parks. The rate of job growth for the Tri-Valley area for 2005-2015 is expected to be about the same as the 1990s at four percent annually; it will still be higher than that projected for the Bay Area as a whole (1.6 percent annually).<sup>9</sup>



The Shaklee Building at Hacienda

<sup>8</sup> To view *Clean Air Plan*, visit [http://www.acgov.org/board/district1/clean\\_air.htm](http://www.acgov.org/board/district1/clean_air.htm).

<sup>9</sup> Association of Bay Area Governments (ABAG), *ABAG Projections 2005*

ABAG projects an increase in Tri-Valley area jobs of about 48 percent between 2005 and 2025, from 183,600 to 271,340.<sup>10</sup> A recent report sponsored by the Tri-Valley Business Council that looked at the Tri-Valley's economy concluded that the region has evolved into a high-quality, innovative economy, which requires access to highly-educated talent, a constant flow of ideas and resources for business creation and innovation, and a superb quality of life.<sup>11</sup> The report makes the case that sustaining this economy in the future is beyond the scope of any individual organization, jurisdiction or sector:

“A new level of responsibility does not equate to a higher level of local government funding of more programs during a time of fiscal distress; rather it means a new level of regional collaboration among existing government leaders (including local economic development directors), private sector leaders (including the Tri-Valley Business Council) and other community leaders (including education) – with all parties focused on the talent, entrepreneurial business support, and quality of life necessary to sustain the region's innovation-based economy.”

The report further concludes:

“To succeed as a region whose comparative advantage is entrepreneurship and innovation rather than primarily strategic location or low costs, Tri-Valley must have a strong innovation ‘habitat’ – a combination of talented people, a strong pipeline of ideas and funding, and supportive place-based attributes such as housing, transportation and quality of life.”

To continue this economic success, the Tri-Valley area must ensure an adequate supply of affordable housing within a reasonable commuting

<sup>10</sup> *ABAG Projections 2005*

<sup>11</sup> *Wellspring for Entrepreneurship and Innovation: The Changing Economic Role and Responsibilities of the Tri-Valley Region*; prepared by Collaborative Economics for the Tri-Valley Business Council, July 2005, for the Preserving Prosperity Project.

distance of Tri-Valley jobs. One of the strategies recommended in the Tri-Valley Business Council's report is to reduce the impediments to retaining innovative talent in the Tri-Valley by improving housing affordability.

### Fiscal Revenues

In recent years it has become increasingly difficult for local governments to collect adequate revenues to cover the costs of providing services to residents and businesses. The amount of revenues available, especially from property taxes, has been substantially reduced, while the cost of providing services has continued to increase. As a result, local governments have come to rely more heavily on other sources of revenue, thus altering their approach to land-use planning and development.

Some local governments are now tending to place a greater emphasis on the fiscal impacts of land-use decisions and a reduced emphasis on creating balanced communities. Many have encouraged commercial development in order to increase sales tax revenues, or have sought industrial or high-end residential development which tends to bring in greater property tax revenue. The push for revenue-generating development has encouraged rapid urban expansion, and has created competition among jurisdictions for projects. Among the consequences are a lack of affordable housing, and traffic congestion because of the long commutes between housing and jobs.

### SUBREGIONAL GOALS, POLICIES, AND PROGRAMS

The following goals, policies, and programs, in addition to those contained in other Elements, constitute an action program to implement the objectives described in this Element.

## GOALS, POLICIES, AND PROGRAMS

### *Location and Intensity of Urban Development*

**Goal 1: Achieve a coordinated, efficient, and environmentally sensitive pattern of development in the Tri-Valley area.**

**Policy 1:** Ensure that new development occurs in a compact community-centered pattern which supports existing communities, improves mobility, minimizes public infrastructure costs, protects natural resources, and supports economic activity.

Program 1.1: Promote growth management in subregional jurisdictions.

Program 1.2: Support implementation of the Urban Growth Boundary concept in all Tri-Valley cities and counties.

Program 1.3: Encourage all urban development within the Tri-Valley area to take place within cities. If the counties choose to process applications for urban development in unincorporated areas, then urban-level services should be provided, development should not adversely affect existing developed areas, and development standards should be consistent with those of the nearest city or cities.

Program 1.4: Pursue an agreement with Alameda County and relevant special districts to establish a process for reviewing applications for development outside the city limits. The agreement should include a commitment to: (1) review development standards to assure that they are consistent and subject to the same interpretation; (2) include representatives of all affected jurisdictions in pre-application conferences with developers; (3) establish procedures regarding if and when annexation should take place; and (4) establish standards for tax-sharing agreements.

Program 1.5: Encourage the Local Agency Formation Commissions of Alameda and Contra Costa counties to consider spheres-of-influence as a 20-year commitment, subject to periodic review coincident with comprehensive general plan updates.

Program 1.6: Encourage periodic review of general plan planning areas between the Tri-Valley jurisdictions.

Program 1.7: Provide notice and referral of projects of subregional significance to potentially affected jurisdictions.

**Policy 2:** Maximize the efficiency of existing and future public services and facilities.

Program 2.1: Encourage efforts to improve efficiency and quality in the provision of public services and facilities on a subregional basis.

- Program 2.2: Identify needed public facilities of subregional significance, and require that new development approvals are conditioned to assure that they contribute their fair share of the cost of such facilities.
- Program 2.3: Coordinate development policies and capital improvement programs affecting multiple jurisdictions at the subregional level, to assure that services and facilities are provided in a timely and cost-effective manner.
- Program 2.4: Work with special districts and other service providers to assure that necessary services are provided in advance of or concurrently with development.
- Program 2.5: Consider subregional impacts and mitigation measures in the environmental review of all new major public facilities and expansions of existing facilities.
- Program 2.6: Continue to cooperate with neighboring jurisdictions in evaluating the needs, costs, and benefits of a full range of options for sewage treatment and export capacity expansion.

*Housing*

**Goal 2: Attain an adequate amount and distribution of affordable and special needs housing throughout the Tri-Valley.**

**Goal 3: Enhance housing choice in the Tri-Valley for Tri-Valley workers.**

**Policy 3: On a subregional level, work towards a jobs/housing balance.**

**Policy 4: Strengthen inter-jurisdictional efforts to ensure a fair, equitable, and rational distribution of affordable and special needs housing throughout the Tri-Valley consistent with land-use policies, transportation services, and employment locations.**

- Program 4.1: Support the efforts of the Tri-Valley Affordable Housing Committee to promote housing for very low-, low-, and moderate-income households and for people with special needs, including the elderly.
- Program 4.2: Seek public/private cooperation to ensure a mutual understanding of subregional housing needs, common housing development practices, finance marketing, and ways to lower housing costs.
- Program 4.3: Establish a cooperative program to designate specific sites for the provision of homeless shelters and related services, and investigate public and private sources of funding for these facilities and services.
- Program 4.4: Continue to look for opportunities to provide shelter and emergency housing in the Tri-Valley, based on the Sojourner House model.

- Program 4.5: Continue to encourage the efforts of sub-regional housing organizations and initiatives such as East Bay Housing Organizations (EBHO), Alameda County’s Every1Home Plan, and the Tri-Valley Housing Opportunity Center.
- Program 4.6: Evaluate the sub-regional need for affordable and transitional housing for various populations, including families with children, seniors, singles, and small families.

See also the Housing Element for policies and programs on inclusionary housing in Pleasanton. Also implement programs from the Housing Element to provide housing opportunities for Pleasanton workers of all socioeconomic levels so as to shorten the distance of worker commutes and help improve the Tri-Valley’s jobs and housing balance.

*Transportation*

**Goal 4: Achieve a coordinated, efficient, safe, and environmentally sensitive system of transportation and circulation in the Tri-Valley.**

**Policy 5: Encourage the expansion and increased use of transit and other alternative modes of transportation.**

- Program 5.1: Provide more streamlined transit service by continuing coordination of the network consisting of all transportation agencies that serve the Tri-Valley.
- Program 5.2: Continue to coordinate service among transit providers to improve access to and the reliability, availability, and timeliness of service.
- Program 5.3: Preserve existing major public rights-of-way for potential future transportation corridors.
- Program 5.4: Work with regional agencies such as East Bay Regional Park District, and Livermore Area Recreation and Park District and support the continued development of a subregional network of trails for bicycles, pedestrians, and equestrians.
- Program 5.5: Work with transit agencies to meet subregional transit needs based on development and commute patterns.

See also Goal 4 and its associated policies and programs in the Circulation Element that relate to alternative modes of travel.

**Policy 6: Continue coordinating subregional land use planning with the Tri-Valley Transportation Council.**

**Policy 7:** Continue to cooperate with Tri-Valley jurisdictions and agencies to plan and coordinate subregional transportation improvement projects.

- Program 7.1: Continue to cooperate with neighboring jurisdictions to develop a parallel arterial street system to I-580 and I-680 to facilitate subregional trips.
- Program 7.2: Coordinate the design and construction of El Charro Road and El Charro Road / I-580 interchange improvements with Livermore, Dublin, and Alameda County.
- Program 7.3: Actively encourage and support State and subregional efforts to improve State Route 84 as a four-lane facility.
- Program 7.4: Actively participate with the Alameda County Congestion Management Agency, the Metropolitan Transportation Commission, and the Tri-Valley Transportation Council to develop and implement regional transportation plans and systems which benefit the Tri-Valley.
- Program 7.5: Cooperate with State and regional transportation agencies on I-580, I-680, and State Route 84 studies, and with Tri-Valley cities and counties in implementing the Tri-Valley Transportation Plan/Action Plan.
- Program 7.6: Use the Alameda County Congestion Management Plan as a guide in making transportation planning decisions.
- Program 7.7: Support State and subregional efforts to implement the Tri-Valley Triangle Study projects.
- Program 7.8: Continue to support implementation of the Tri-Valley Transportation Action Plan.
- Program 7.9: Continue to collect the Tri-Valley Transportation Development fee to fund the local share of subregional transportation improvements.

See also Circulation Element Policy 9 and its associated programs.

**Policy 8:** Maximize the efficiency and minimize the negative subregional impacts of the Livermore Municipal Airport.

- Program 8.1: Continue involvement on the Tri-Valley airport advisory committee. This committee provides subregional input into decisions relating to the operation and potential expansion of the Livermore Municipal Airport.

Natural Resources

**Goal 4: Preserve valuable natural resources in the Tri-Valley.**

**Policy 9:** Protect surface and ground water quality in the Tri-Valley in order to help ensure high standards and a sufficient and sustainable quantity of potable water.

Program 9.1: Work with Zone 7 to develop water sustainable conservation plans and strategies for the long term.

Program 9.2: Continue to work with Zone 7 to ensure that use of the groundwater basin by Zone 7 and other Tri-Valley water users does not result in deterioration of water quality.

Program 9.3: Work with Zone 7 and other Tri-Valley water agencies to develop contingency plans for supplemental water sources independent of the State Water Project.

Program 9.4: Support Zone 7 in implementing its *Stream Management Master Plan* so as to protect and enhance the water quality of streams and groundwater.

Program 9.5: Work with Zone 7 and other water, wastewater, business, and planning agencies to support cost-effective, sustainable, and environmentally sensitive approaches to Tri-Valley wastewater reuse.

Also implement the program in the Circulation Element to work with Zone 7 in completing its Stream Management Master Plan.

**Policy 10:** Encourage the handling of wastewater so as to result in no detrimental environmental effects in the Tri-Valley.

Program 10.1: Incorporate conditions of approval developed by the Alameda County-wide Clean Water Program, as appropriate, for new development and discretionary permits.

**Policy 11:** Preserve and enhance natural wildlife habitats and wildlife corridors.

Program 11.1: Share information about important ecological resources and promote a cooperative program for preserving them at the subregional level.

Program 11.2: Promote the preparation of comprehensive guidelines and strategies to protect and enhance the significant natural communities of the Tri-Valley.

Program 11.3: Promote a subregional approach to protecting valuable habitat areas, through mitigation banking, conservation and open space easements, and other means.

**Policy 12:** Encourage the continuation of agricultural uses in the Tri-Valley.

Program 12.1: Actively support and participate in the Tri-Valley Conservancy.

Program 12.2: Support agri-tourism, land preservation, and agricultural-enterprise enhancement programs.

Program 12.3: Support the policies of Alameda County and the City of Livermore which promote preservation of agriculture in the region. Require that developers of new projects provide a buffer between proposed projects and areas designated for agricultural use.

**Policy 13:** Enhance community identity through the protection of community separators, scenic hillsides, and ridgelines.

Program 13.1: Encourage the preservation of a contiguous Tri-Valley open-space system through land-use policies, and land dedication/acquisition and conservation easements, using the Tri-Valley Conservancy and other entities.

Program 13.2: Plan for the incorporation of scenic hillsides and ridgelines into a contiguous open space system connecting parts of the Tri-Valley.

Program 13.3: Continue to participate in the Altamont Landfill and Resource Recovery Facility Open Space Advisory Committee and support the acquisition of key open-space parcels with these funds.

Program 13.4: Acquire land or open-space easements to create community separators between developed areas of the Tri-Valley.

**Policy 14:** Implement a strong pro-active approach to air-quality planning with other local, regional, and State agencies.

Program 14.1: Continue to cooperate with the BAAQMD in monitoring and controlling air pollutants in the Tri-Valley area, and in enforcing State and federal air quality regulations.

Program 14.2: Notify local and regional jurisdictions of proposed projects which may affect air quality, as required by the *California Environmental Quality Act*.

Program 14.3: Review City and subregional development plans for air quality impacts, and cooperate with other subregional agencies to reduce the impacts of development on air quality.

To reduce vehicle miles traveled with commensurate reductions in air pollution, implement Transportation System Management (TSM) programs from the Circulation Element, including the addition of local and regional bicycle lanes that connect Tri-Valley cities. Implement programs from the Housing Element to provide housing opportunities for Pleasanton workers of all socioeconomic levels so as to shorten the distance of worker commutes and thus reduce air emissions. Also implement programs from the Conservation and Open Space Element that provide hiking and bicycle trails between parks and open spaces as well as along open-space corridors.

*Public Safety*

**Goal 5: Protect public safety in the Tri-Valley.**

Policy 15: Reduce the risk of damage from natural hazards in the Tri-Valley. Establish appropriate subregional approaches to reduce damage from natural hazards, such as wildfires, flooding, and earthquakes.

Program 15.1: As a subregional solution to stormwater mitigation, support Zone 7's efforts to improve the drainage system in conformance with its *Stream Management Master Plan*. This entails completing planned, regional storm drainage improvements, including the Chain of Lakes, for flood control, sediment diversion, and recreation.

Policy 16: Prepare for an effective response to regional disasters.

Program 16.1: Continue to build coordination between the emergency services of the Tri-Valley.

Program 16.2: Coordinate Tri-Valley emergency services in the event of Del Valle dam-failure flood risks

*Economic Development*

**Goal 6: Achieve a sustainable subregional economy at buildout of all Tri-Valley jurisdiction's General Plans.**

Policy 17: Pursue a cooperative approach among local jurisdictions and the private sector to strengthen the subregional economy.

Program 17.1: Work with our regional partners to implement programs to sustain the Tri-Valley's innovation economy.

Program 17.2: Facilitate retention and expansion or, if necessary, relocation of existing businesses within the Tri-Valley.

**Policy 18:** Facilitate the provision of job training and vocational education for Tri-Valley residents and employees.

Program 18.1: Encourage Tri-Valley employers to identify the existing and future educational requirements of the jobs they provide.

Program 18.2: Encourage cooperative efforts among school districts, community colleges, and employers to offer appropriate classes and internships.

Program 18.3: Encourage universities and community colleges to provide lifetime learning and job retraining programs.

Program 18.4: Participate in the Tri-Valley Business Council process.

**Policy 19:** Support the development of public facilities which encourage regional tourism and serve as an attraction for businesses to remain or relocate to Pleasanton.

Program 19.1: Explore opportunities to identify and support subregional public facilities which would increase tourism, such as the Valley Children's Museum.