



# 2 ECONOMIC VITALITY

Concord is committed to maintaining a vibrant and healthy economy, providing land for planned development, ensuring the fiscal and financial health of the City, and working with the private sector to ensure an adequate supply of skilled workers and capital needed to attract and maintain business. The goals, principles, and policies in this Element support business growth and development, which will result in increased employment, expansion of office and research and development uses, and a growing mix of retail shopping opportunities. Business attraction and retention programs will reflect the importance of Concord as a regional office and shopping destination, and as a center of innovative businesses that require highly skilled labor. In sum, the Element is intended to:

- Enhance linkages between economic development, land use and zoning;
- Provide further support for Downtown development and retail businesses;
- Affirm existing programs that have a bearing for economic development; and
- Capitalize on the unique economic development opportunities presented by the Concord Reuse Project site.

## 2.1 CONCORD'S ECONOMIC BASE

### The Beginnings

Concord's economic growth was initially spurred by the post-World War II population growth, as schools and retail centers were built to serve the growing population. Following the start of BART service in 1973, Concord and other central Contra Costa County communities experienced substantial development of commercial, office, and industrial park space. Spurred by the formation of the redevelopment area in 1974, downtown Concord's skyline also changed, with completion of The Bank of America Technology Center, Salvio Pacheco Square, One Concord Center, and other



projects. The City's central location, excellent transportation access, an educated and skilled labor force, an attractive and affordable residential community, educational and training resources, Buchanan Field Airport and other regional assets have all helped stimulate business development and economic growth in Concord.

Today, Concord has a strong economic base, including:

- 4.3 million square feet of Class A office space;
- 5.8 million square feet of industrial space;
- 70,000 square feet of space for research and development (R&D) uses;
- More than 900 hotel/motel rooms; and
- 48,000 square feet of exhibit space for meeting and convention activities.



Concord has been a good location for business, and the City has benefited from business growth. Citywide population expansion has helped fuel the growth of businesses, including retail and commercial service uses. By affirming this positive relationship in the General Plan through sound economic and physical planning and supporting infrastructure and services, the City will strengthen its ability to serve future residents and businesses.

### **Job Growth Since 1980 and 2005 Employment**

The number of jobs in Concord increased in the 1980s and 1990s with completion of major office buildings and industrial parks, and the City has continued to capture a significant share of countywide employment increases. According to the Association of Bay Area Governments (ABAG), Concord businesses employed approximately 33,912 people in 1980 (16.8 percent of Countywide employment), and the 2005 employment is estimated to be 66,560 (17.8 percent of countywide employment) – nearly doubling the job base.

Between 1980 and 1990 the City was able to increase its capture of County employment growth to 20 percent of the total, but over the 1990 to 2005 period, the City's "capture rate" declined to 12.8 percent. This was due in part to the growth in retail and service employment elsewhere in the County.

The growth in employment by industry group between 2000 and 2005, shown in Table 2-1, reflects marginally greater strength in the City's capture rate for retail trade and financial and professional services. The overall decline in jobs since 2000 reflects slower

economic growth in the Bay Area and lingering effects of the past “dot-com” bubble.

**Table 2-1: Number of Employees in Concord by Industry Group, 2000 and 2005**

Industry	Concord <sup>1</sup>		Contra Costa County		City's Share of County	
	2000	2005	2000	2005	2000	2005
Retail Trade	8,720	8,050	46,720	42,910	18.7%	18.8%
Financial & Professional Services	18,050	19,600	89,510	96,510	20.2%	20.3%
Health, Education, & Recreation Services	18,150	19,360	115,930	123,240	15.7%	15.7%
Manufacturing and Wholesale Trade	10,650	8,990	56,110	47,680	19.0%	18.9%
Other <sup>2</sup>	10,610	10,560	63,040	62,660	16.8%	16.9%
<b>Total</b>	<b>66,180</b>	<b>66,560</b>	<b>371,310</b>	<b>373,000</b>	<b>17.8%<sup>3</sup></b>	<b>17.8%<sup>3</sup></b>

1 Includes City and unincorporated sphere of influence/ Concord Planning Area

2 Includes Agriculture & Mining

3 Totals represent the percent share for all total industries for 2000 and 2005, the columns are not intended to be summarized to equal 100 percent.

Source: ABAG Projections 2005

## Future Employment

Employment growth in Concord will allow the City's economic base to expand in tandem with its population. Growth accommodated under this General Plan will consist of an employment mix that continues growth in the Central Area, the Monument and Clayton Road corridors, North Concord, and the Concord Reuse Project Area. This growth is expected to accommodate regional businesses and local-serving jobs (in retail, services, and other economic sectors) in existing and planned shopping areas, offices, industrial parks, and mixed use areas. Over 50,000 jobs are projected to be added at buildout, an 84 percent increase over 2006.

Concord is expected to have 167,360 residents at buildout under the General Plan. The City's population growth will help fuel expected employment growth by creating demand for local serving jobs such as those in the retail and service sectors. Employment growth will also be stimulated by growth in the regional economy. This latter growth will occur because of Concord's ability to capture a share of regional growth. This is influenced by the degree to which

Concord's assets, including its central location, good transportation, affordable housing, and skilled labor force, attract business. These twin demands also will spur the growth of other service jobs (business, professional, medical, etc.) and public-sector uses. Diversity in employment will expand job opportunities for local residents and help to further stabilize the local economy.

### **Future Non-residential Land Needs**

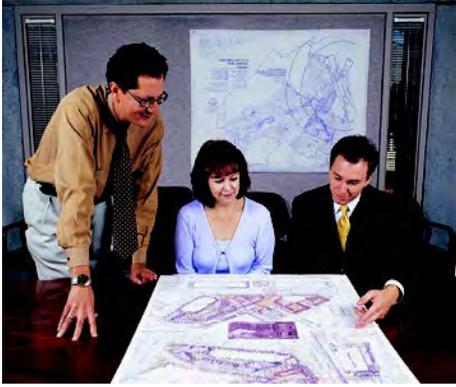
The land use program of the Concord 2030 Urban Area General Plan reflects Concord's historic economic evolution. It adjusts the City's historic economic mix to take into account the types of new jobs the region as a whole attracts, and the type of jobs that gravitate to Concord based on Concord's capture of regional economic growth. It provides for space to accommodate the kinds of employment economically suited to Concord. During the time horizon of the General Plan—assuming continuing strong regional growth—it is reasonable to expect strong absorption of non-residential development.

Even before the Reuse Project Area was added to the city's developable land supply, the General Plan allowed for significant commercial growth in Concord. When the General Plan was adopted in 2007, its Land Use Plan (referred to as the "General Plan Diagram") accommodated the following quantities of additional development:

- Office space, up to 6.1 million square feet;
- Retail space, up to 4.5 million square feet;
- Industrial and "flex" space, up to 2.2 million square feet; and
- Wholesale and distribution space, up to 300,000 square feet.

These increases in built space for employment uses would take place both on lands not currently in urban use as well as on lands previously developed. In the latter case, the existing level of urban activity could be increased through reuse or mixed use development at higher intensities than existing uses.

The addition of the Concord Reuse Project site to the City's land supply substantially increases its capacity for employment growth. The CRP Area is estimated to have the potential for 6.1 million square feet of non-residential floor space, including a mix of office, retail, and office-flex space. The precise of mix of each of these activities is unknown at the time of Area Plan adoption, and will be determined by market demand and future planning activities. Additional square footage could be associated with institutional and



public uses. The CRP Area sites are large and potentially less constrained by adjacent land uses than those in the existing urbanized area of Concord. This supplemental land supply will create unprecedented economic opportunities for the city and could help diversify the employment base in the future.

## 2.2 CITY'S ROLE IN ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

The City of Concord has an important role in encouraging economic development and providing support for businesses. For example, by “streamlining” its design review, permitting, and licensing processes, the City makes the approval process less complicated, costly, and time-consuming for businesses. In addition, through its General Plan, the City determines the amount of space available for new business growth and sets guidelines for land use and development intensity. The City is also responsible for maintaining streets and other infrastructure, and overseeing workforce housing programs and housing development incentives. City actions in these areas can help to create an environment that is attractive for business investment.

One of the most important contributions Concord will make to ensure future economic development is simply to allocate land for employment development, as described in greater detail in the chapter on land use. Beyond that basic commitment, the City’s support for economic development can take a variety of forms, which are described generally in the following section on Goals, Principles, and Policies. The General Plan also includes measures to address potential future growth constraints, and emphasizes and reinforces features of the Concord setting that contribute to the City’s image, preserving the characteristics that make Concord a desirable business location.

### Economic Vitality Strategy

The City of Concord’s Economic Vitality Strategy is a tool for guiding policy considerations that will inform Concord’s future growth. The ability of the City to grow, develop, and provide goods and services to its residents depends, in large measure, on the strength of the local economy. Economic development programs support business growth and development, which will result in increased employment, expansion of office and research and development uses, and a growing mix of retail shopping and dining opportunities. Economic development programs are focused in the areas of business retention, expansion, and attraction. The purpose



of the City's Economic Vitality Strategy is to continue the City's proactive role in attracting and retaining businesses, reflecting the importance of Concord as a regional office center and shopping destination, and as an emerging center for technology enterprise.

The strategy focuses on the provision of effective and efficient local government services, in tandem with efforts to support the local economy's adaptation to changing conditions. Concord's ability to thrive will be measured by the improved prosperity of its residents, businesses, and employees.

Concord's Economic Vitality program has produced both new development and employment growth. The program has also received public recognition for the following accomplishments:

- The facilitation of job development (2,612 new jobs in Concord between 1999-2005) through business expansion, attraction, and retention. Examples include BEI Systron Donner, Cerus Corporation, Seatel Inc., Biznet, El Tegra, Old Navy, IT Corporation, Fry's Electronics, Mimi's, and BMW.
- Redevelopment efforts, such as Bank of America Technology Center, One Concord Center, Legacy Apartments, two downtown parking structures, Fry's Electronics and Home Depot, Brenden Theatre in Downtown Concord, and Downtown and BART streetscape improvement projects.
- Received recognition and a first place award by the Contra Costa Economic Partnership for having the best permit center in Contra Costa County.



### Redevelopment Strategy

Effective February 1, 2012, all 400 redevelopment agencies in the State of California were dissolved by order of the California Supreme Court. The City of Concord has been named the Successor Agency for the purpose of managing the former Concord Redevelopment Agency's non-housing assets and obligations. An oversight board has been formed to address the fiduciary responsibilities of the former Agency and the transfer of its assets and responsibilities.

Prior to its dissolution, the Concord Redevelopment Agency had produced plans that aimed to achieve strategic urban development goals. The guiding strategies of the Concord Redevelopment Plan focused on strengthening the City by using the City's redevelopment powers to redevelop underutilized uses at highly visible and strategic locations, attracting and retaining businesses, and supporting Concord's strong retail base. The City is presently

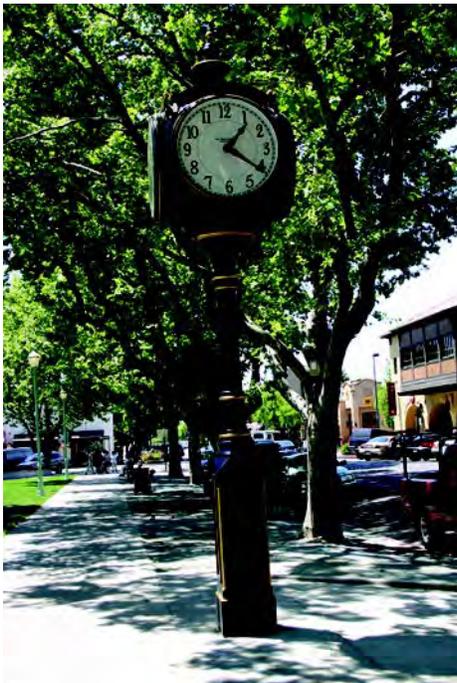


evaluating ways to achieve these objectives without the tools previously available to its Redevelopment Agency.

The City of Concord's Redevelopment Areas include Central Concord, portions of Monument Boulevard and Willow Pass Road Corridor, portions of North Concord, and the Concord Reuse Project Area, comprised of the former Concord Naval Weapons Station Inland Area and the North Concord-Martinez BART station property. The Monument Boulevard, Willow Pass Road, and North Concord areas were added to the Redevelopment Plan in October 2006, as illustrated in Figure 2-1. The Concord Reuse Project was added in 2011. The overall objective in the entire redevelopment area was to alleviate blight and improve adverse conditions and to implement the principals and policies of the City's General Plan. Although the Agency has been dissolved, this remains a valid objective and will continue to guide public policy in these areas.



In the past, redevelopment in Central Concord was guided by the Concord Redevelopment Strategy and Implementation Action Plan (Strategic Plan). This Strategy set forth a vision, with goals and objectives for downtown development. The implementation component of the Plan provided a strategic guide for realizing these approaches, identifying catalyst projects, specifications, and timing for carrying out the strategy recommendations. Without the benefit of a Redevelopment Agency, the City will need to explore new funding sources for implementation in the coming years.



Past Redevelopment Plans recognized Concord's opportunity to be a "premier community to live, work, and do business." The Strategic Plan stated that Concord could provide a setting for "in-town living and state-of-the-art business enterprise as well as services and activities for residents of all ages." The Plan included a specific vision for different districts within the Redevelopment area based on the unique physical characteristics and special assets of each area.

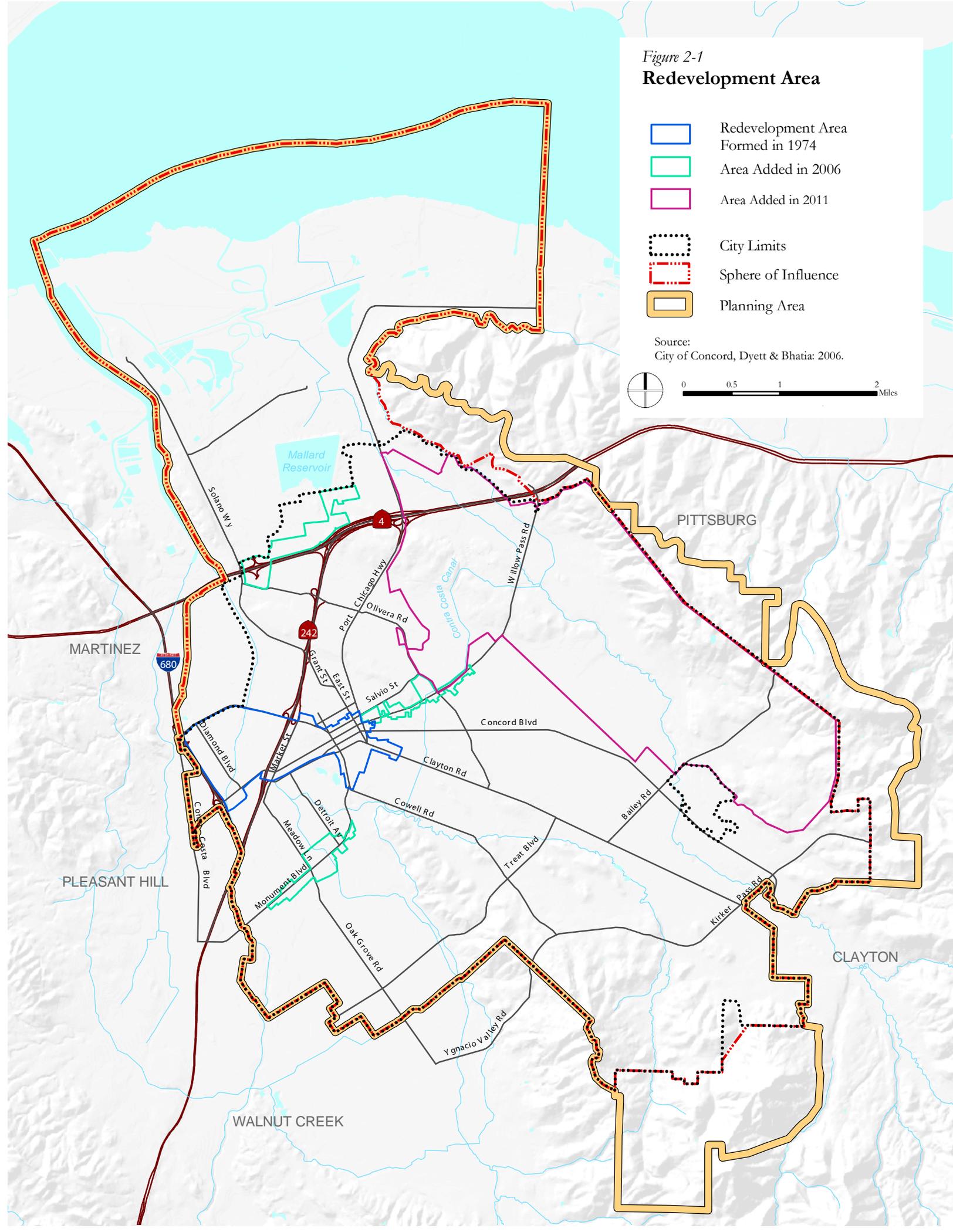
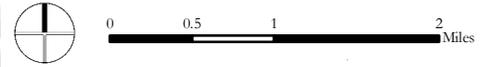
The Goals, Principles, and Policies that follow build on these early initiatives, providing an overall coordinating framework for the General Plan for future implementation actions.

Figure 2-1

### Redevelopment Area

-  Redevelopment Area Formed in 1974
-  Area Added in 2006
-  Area Added in 2011
-  City Limits
-  Sphere of Influence
-  Planning Area

Source:  
City of Concord, Dyett & Bhatia: 2006.





## 2.3 KEY INITIATIVES

Six key initiatives underlie the goals, principles, and policies of this element.



- Promote Concord’s commitment to maintaining a vibrant and growing economy, providing land and infrastructure for planned development and services for residents and business, and ensuring the financial health of the City through sound fiscal management.
- Integrate economic development into land use and transportation planning. Sites for new employment centers are proposed in the General Plan Diagram; the Plan also envisions more mixed use development in Central Concord and around the City’s two BART stations. The City will continue to seek out businesses in growth industries, streamline permit processes, and expedite permit decisions in support of a “business-friendly” climate.
- Improve the quality and mix of uses in Downtown. By encouraging Downtown business growth, development, and investment, Concord can pursue a vision of in-town living in a pedestrian oriented environment and continue to support Downtown as the social, cultural, and entertainment center of the community.
- Eliminate adverse physical and economic conditions throughout the City. Adverse physical and economic conditions have prevented the proper utilization of buildings and land. These conditions include deficient or deteriorated buildings, poor access, lots or buildings of inadequate size or substandard design, incompatible uses, and properties containing hazardous wastes.
- Foster investment in the retail sector by providing appropriately located areas for a broad range of retail businesses, ranging from neighborhood convenience stores on small sites to larger sites for comparison shopping and value-oriented retailing. By emphasizing pedestrian amenities and mixed use, the City can make the retail experience more lively than in the past. A vibrant retail sector will confer a strong sense of place and also strengthen Concord’s community image.
- Develop the Concord Reuse Project as a sustainable, transit-oriented community. This community should include new workplaces, shopping areas, services, visitor facilities, a diverse housing mix that enables affordability, and other activities



which create economic benefits and complement established employment areas elsewhere in the city.

The Goals, Principles, and Policies that follow build on these initiatives, providing an overall coordinating framework for the General Plan for future implementation actions.

## 2.4 GOALS, PRINCIPLES, AND POLICIES

### GOAL E-1: A FISCALLY HEALTHY CITY



#### Principle E-1.1: Make Concord an Ideal, Fiscally Stable Place to Live and Work.

Policy E.1.1.1: Ensure that Concord has adequate fiscal resources to secure the highest quality environment for its residents and businesses.

*The City's current practice of providing long range planning, budgeting and performance accountability enables Concord to manage its resources efficiently and provide cost-effective service. Development under this General Plan will provide additional tax revenues to support governmental operations and investments in infrastructure and community facilities and services.*



### GOAL E-2: A STRONG REGIONAL CENTER



#### Principle E-2.1: Establish Concord as the Major Regional Business and Employment Center of Contra Costa County.

Policy E-2.1.1: Establish land use priorities that foster entrepreneurship, growth, and innovative business development.

*This will be done by promoting commercial development and establishing clear expectations for a streamlined development review process with minimal discretionary review.*

Policy E-2.1.2: Retain and attract business and facilitate businesses' efforts to develop and expand.



Policy E-2.1.3: Strengthen the business climate to ensure the growth, development, and prosperity of Concord’s business community.

*Through implementation of the Economic Vitality Strategy, adoption of the Development Code, streamlined review procedures, and expedited permit decisions, Concord will continue to foster a “business-friendly” climate.*



Policy E-2.1.4: Continue to improve the streamlined permit processes and expedited permit decisions.

Policy E-2.1.5: Attract businesses in growth industries that require highly skilled labor.

Policy E-2.1.6: Partner with the private sector to create and sustain markets that foster economic growth.



Policy E-2.1.7: Support the creation of job and contracting opportunities for Concord residents and businesses through the establishment of local hire preference, apprenticeships, internships, and other programs which support local hiring, training, and skill enhancement. Within the Concord Reuse Project Area, a good faith goal of 40% of project labor—first from Concord, and then from Contra Costa County—will be set on a project by project basis for public and private construction.

*Certified training and apprenticeship programs with proven performance can create stable employment opportunities and create jobs for returning veterans and others in the community. The Concord Reuse Project will create thousands of jobs in the construction sector for an extended period of years, creating unique opportunities for apprenticeships in the building trades.*

Policy E-2.1.8: Support the regional role of the John Muir Health, Concord Campus for attracting medical related business employment for Concord.



Policy E-2.1.9: Recognize Buchanan Field Airport and Concord’s port facilities as regional economic assets.

*The Buchanan Field Airport is a county-owned facility that contributes to the local economy. Similarly, the Concord Naval Weapons Station-Tidal Area (Port Chicago) is designated as a “Port Priority Use” area in the San Francisco Seaport Plan, and non port-related uses generally would not be allowed in order to protect this asset.*



Policy E-2.1.10: Continue to maintain Concord’s infrastructure to support economic development including high quality streets, transportation improvement, and landscape medians.

**GOAL E-3: A VIBRANT CITY CENTER**

**Principle E-3.1: Ensure that Downtown is a Vibrant City Center.**



Policy E-3.1.1: Continue to promote the Downtown as the primary social, cultural, and entertainment center of the community.

*Concord’s historic Downtown plays a vital role in the City’s economy, and provides a niche setting for restaurants, specialty shops, small businesses, theaters, and entertainment venues. The City will sustain this unique role for Downtown as commercial centers are developed in other parts of Concord. Downtown development should capitalize on the area’s historic architecture, public spaces, and established role as a pedestrian shopping district. To the extent possible, other shopping districts in the City should complement Downtown in their mix of uses and activities.*

Policy E-3.1.2: Promote and support an urban, pedestrian-oriented environment that builds upon the proximity of Todos Santos Plaza, and high density residential and street-facing retail uses.



Policy E-3.1.3: Continue to improve the quality and mix of uses in Downtown to ensure patron, visitor, and resident satisfaction.

Policy E-3.1.4: Encourage Downtown business growth, development, and investment.



*New Development Code standards for Downtown coupled with continued investments in streetscape improvements will help support Downtown development.*

Policy E-3.1.5: Promote transit-oriented Downtown development and activities that take advantage of nearby transit services, such as BART, bus services, and Buchanan Field Airport.

Policy E-3.1.6: Ensure an attractive, pleasant, safe, clean, and accessible Downtown.

*Community-oriented policing will help implement this policy.*

Policy E-3.1.7: Provide relocation assistance to businesses and residences facing displacement due to City actions.



Policy E-3.1.8: Work with new development to minimize temporary construction impacts so that patronage of nearby existing businesses is not negatively impacted.

*The City recognizes that new development construction can have unanticipated negative impacts on nearby existing businesses, such as a temporary reduction in available parking or reduced retail visibility. The City will work with all vested interests to ensure Downtown retail “business as usual” conditions are maintained during construction periods.*

Policy E 3.1.9: Promote the vision for Downtown by actively engaging land owners, developers, and the Chamber of Commerce in discussions regarding opportunities for change and revitalization, and the relationship of Downtown to other Concord business districts.

#### GOAL E-4: RETAIL STRENGTH

##### Principle E-4.1: Maintain Retail Vitality.

Policy E-4.1.1: Attract catalyst retail businesses that stimulate economic development and raise the standard of retail enterprise.

*The City's Economic Development Strategy has incentives in place to implement this policy.*

Policy E-4.1.2: Partner with the business community to strengthen the City's retail economy by facilitating revitalization of the City's shopping areas and developing new shopping areas, consistent with the General Plan Diagram.

Policy E-4.1.3: Promote business-to-business transactions.

*One of the most efficient economic development tools is to build on the City's existing businesses and promote "going wholesale" with business-to-business relationships.*

Policy E-4.1.4: Encourage a mix of retail that draws local customers as well as patrons from the greater Bay Area.

*Specialized businesses can attract customers who would not normally shop in Concord. Diversity in the City's retail base also will help fuel growth and maintain the City's position as a regional center.*



**GOAL E-5: A REVITALIZED MONUMENT COMMUNITY**

**Principle E-5.1: Improve the Economy in the Monument Community.**

Policy E-5.1.1: Partner with the Monument Community Partnership and other key stakeholders in the Monument Community to plan and implement economic development programs.

Policy E-5.1.2: Support economic development programs that invest in the Monument community and in the residents who live there.

Policy E-5.1.3: Promote the development and expansion of, and investment in, small business in the Monument Corridor.



**GOAL E-6: THRIVING NEIGHBORHOOD CENTERS AND A HIGH QUALITY RESIDENTIAL ENVIRONMENT FOR THE CLAYTON ROAD CORRIDOR**

**Principle E-6.1: Create Economic Development Opportunities Along Clayton Road.**

Policy E-6.1.1: Work with shopping center owners and other key stakeholders along Clayton Road to plan and implement an action plan for economic development.

*The action plan will be designed to facilitate revitalization of older centers and help create transit-oriented nodes that are compatible with adjacent neighborhoods.*

Policy E-6.1.2: Support economic development programs for the Clayton Road corridor that invest in local businesses and workforce housing and needed support facilities and services.

Policy E-6.1.3: Promote mixed use development at appropriate locations along Clayton Road.

**GOAL E-7: DEVELOPMENT OF THE CONCORD REUSE PROJECT AREA IN A MANNER THAT CREATES JOBS, HAS POSITIVE FISCAL IMPACTS, AND PROVIDES ECONOMIC BENEFITS FOR CONCORD RESIDENTS AND BUSINESSES.**

**Principle E-7.1: Transform the Concord Reuse Project area into a dynamic transit-oriented community and workplace that redefines Concord's role in the Bay Area economy.**

Policy E-7.1.1: Leverage the competitive advantages of the Concord Reuse Project area, including access to BART and Highway 4, large parcel sizes, and a master-planned setting, to attract new businesses, retailers, and jobs to Concord.

Policy E-7.1.2: Develop economic development strategies for the Concord Reuse Project area which complement those for other business districts in Concord.

*To the extent possible, development on the site should avoid channeling demand away from Downtown and other business districts. Economic development strategies should define a target market for the Reuse Project area which is distinct from the Downtown market.*

Policy E-7.1.3: Provide opportunities to enhance the skills of the Concord labor force through job training and vocational facilities on the Concord Reuse Project area.

Policy E-7.1.4: Incorporate principles of sustainable development in the design and operation of workplaces at the Concord Reuse Project area, with an emphasis on green building, low impact development, green jobs, environmentally-friendly business practices, and non-polluting commute modes.

Policy E-7.1.5: Provide a variety of retail environments in the Concord Reuse Project area, including pedestrian-oriented urban shopping streets, neighborhood shopping centers oriented toward

convenience goods and services, and a commercial flex area with large sites that can accommodate comparison shopping and value oriented retailing.

Policy E-7.1.6: Develop the area around the North Concord-Martinez BART Station as a major regional office center, designed for convenient and easy access by public transit.

Policy E-7.1.7: Ensure that plans and development regulations for the Reuse Project Area are flexible enough to respond to changing trends in business and industry, and can accommodate the desired mix of uses and environment envisioned for the site.

*The Concord Reuse Project Area Plan should be consulted for more information on plans for the site.*

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