

Section 1

Introduction



Community Vision

Cupertino aspires to be a balanced community with accessible hillsides and creeks, quiet, attractive residential neighborhoods, exemplary parks and schools and a vibrant, mixed-use “Heart of the City.” The City will be safe, friendly, connected, walk-able and inclusive for all residents, with ample places and opportunities for people to interact and recreate.



BUILDING COMMUNITY

The underlying purpose of the General Plan is to build a great community that serves the needs of its residents, maximizes the sense of connection between neighborhoods and enhances Cupertino as a great place to live, work and play. The Guiding Principles, goals, policies and implementation strategies are all aimed at achieving this objective.

1. Neighborhoods.

Neighborhoods must be safe and attractive and “full-service,” with convenient access to parks, schools, trails, bicycle paths and nearby shopping facilities. They should have identifiable edges and centers anchored by open space located on park sites or schools.



Credit: Syracuse CulturalWorkers

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

The General Plan is based on twelve guiding principles that will build a complete and integrated community in which to live, work, learn or play. The policy structure of the General Plan elements directly supports and implements these principles:

2. Health and Safety.

Great communities are healthy, safe and secure for people and property. Safety measures include conventional police, fire, paramedic and health services; disaster planning, safe buildings and site design with eyes and ears oriented to the public streets, neighborhood watch programs, protection from natural hazards including earthquakes and landslides and an ample supply of safe, well-designed parks, open space, trails and pathways.



3. Connectivity.

Connecting people and neighborhoods is a major challenge facing cities interested in enhancing the sense of community. Safe trails, paths and sidewalks, and streets with traffic calming measures weave the community together and enhance neighborhood pride and identity.

4. Mobility.

The ability to move about safely and efficiently must include a variety of travel modes to accommodate all of the city's residents, so a child is able to walk or bike safely to school, a senior citizen can access bus lines and a commuter can rely on the regional highway, bikeway and transit system to get to work. Streets, pedestrian paths and bike paths should comprise an integrated system of fully connected and interesting routes to all destinations.



Bus stop at Vallco Fashion Park

5. Balanced Community.

Great communities are multi-dimensional places where people of all income and age groups reside, with a full range of land uses including local shopping, education, employment, entertainment and recreational options. They offer residents a full range of housing

choices to accommodate changing housing needs of a demographically diverse population and include housing, jobs and daily needs that are within easy walking distance.



Outdoor activity in the Crossroads area

6. Vibrant, mixed-use businesses and "Heart of the City."

Great communities have a well-defined edge and a geographical center that the community is drawn into. Commercial districts must be vibrant, attractive, friendly and comfortable with inviting pedestrian spaces and personal services that meet the daily needs of residents with "people-activated" spaces including coffee shops, bookstores, restaurants, movie theaters and personal services such as laundries and hair salons.

7. Attractive Community Design.

Cupertino prides itself on maintaining attractively designed buildings, landscapes, and beautiful streets and parks that enhance and complement the overall community fabric. Buildings should frame the street and landscaping should be designed to offer relaxing, intimate pedestrian spaces.





*Cupertino Village
Shopping Center*

8. Diversity.

Cupertino embraces and celebrates its diversity and seeks to offer a range of programs that meet the needs of the full spectrum of demographic and age diversity in Cupertino. The city will enhance equal opportunities for all of its residents, despite age, cultural or physical differences.

9. Education and Technology.

The educational system in Cupertino has an international reputation for high achievement and excellence. Quality facilities and programs that enhance learning (schools, libraries, book stores, internet infrastructure) are essential to maintaining and enhancing the community fabric and identity. Cupertino seeks to enhance the cultural activities with a new library and community hall.

10. Environment and Sustainability.

Cupertino seeks to enhance or restore creeks and hillsides to their natural state, limit urban uses to existing urban areas, prioritize sustainable concepts encouraging environmental protection, recycling, conserving resources and minimizing waste while preserving the natural terrain, drainage and vegetation.

11. Fiscal Self Reliance.

Cupertino City government will strive to be fiscally self-reliant to ensure the continued ability to deliver essential high-quality municipal facilities and services to its residents.

12. Responsive Government and Regional Leadership.

The city is committed to development of community leadership, local partnerships, an active populace and making government more accessible and visible to residents.

Purpose of the General Plan

The Cupertino General Plan is a roadmap to the future that encompasses the hopes, aspirations, values and dreams of the community. It provides a vision of the City's future by integrating the aspirations of residents, businesses and officials into a comprehensive strategy for guiding future development and managing change. The General Plan describes the long-term goals for the City's future and guides daily decision-making. The time frame of the Plan is 2000-2020. The Plan contains the City's official policies on land use and community design, transportation, housing, environmental resources and public health and safety. It provides guid-



ance about growth, housing, transportation, neighborhood improvement and municipal service delivery.

Conflicts between mutually desirable goals are inevitable. For instance, automobile mobility will conflict with a safe, walkable community. The space and signal time granted to the automobile will expand the street width and reduce the level of service and perception of safety for the pedestrian. The Plan attempts to reconcile these conflicts in the interest of building a cohesive community. In some cases, the conflicting goals must both compromise to provide a reasonable level of service to both competing interests. The City recognizes that the interests of residents of a particular street or neighborhood may need to be balanced with the overall needs and potentially greater goal of building a community. These are conscious choices that the city makes in the interest of building community. The General Plan reconciles these conflicts in the best overall interest of the community.

Organization of the Plan

California state law requires that each city and county adopt a General Plan for the “physical development of the county or city, and any land outside its boundaries which bears relation to its planning.” The role of a community’s General Plan is to act as a “constitution,” a basis for rational decisions regarding a city’s long-term physical development. The General Plan expresses the community’s development goals and embodies public policy relative to the distribution of future land uses, both public and private.

The General Plan is required to be a collection of seven “elements” or subject categories. These elements, and the corresponding Cupertino elements, are:

Cupertino Element	Required Element
Introduction	Optional
Land Use/Community Design	Land Use , Open Space
Housing	Housing
Circulation	Circulation
Environmental Resources/Sustainability	Conservation
Health and Safety	Noise, Safety



Each element is organized by goals, policies and strategies, all of which stem from the Vision and Guiding Principles.

A **goal** is a broad statement of values or aspirations needed to achieve the vision.

A **policy** provides more precise directions and guides the actions of staff, developers and policy makers necessary to achieve the goal.

A **strategy** is a specific task that the City will undertake to implement the policy and work toward achieving the goals.



General Plan Adoption

The General Plan is adopted or modified after an extensive public review process and environmental impact analysis. Public review occurs prior to public hearings through community meetings, study sessions and advisory committee meetings. Public hearings allow the community to express its views prior to City Council approval.

Other sources of community preferences and concerns are considered in adopting or modifying the General Plan. The Godbe Community Survey and the Community Congress are examples of sources used to identify community issues and better understand community sentiment.

State law limits the number of General Plan amendments to four per year. Cupertino ordinances require that the City Council determine if a public hearing should be set to consider a General Plan amendment.

General Plan Implementation

The General Plan is the foundation for planning in Cupertino. All physical development must be consistent with it. State law also requires that zoning be consistent with the General Plan. The General Plan programs are carried out through a myriad of City plans and approval procedures, such as special planning areas, use permits, subdivisions, the capital improvement program and park planning.

The annual General Plan review provides the opportunity to evaluate the City's progress in implementing the plan and to assess if mitigation measures are being followed and if new policy direction should be considered.

