

Piedmont General Plan Update
Planning Commission Work Session #3

May 31, 2007
6:30-8:00 PM

AGENDA

1. Welcome and Introductions (5 minutes)
2. Public Forum (5 minutes)
3. Project Status Report (5 minutes)
Traffic, Land Use, and Noise Data Collection
Resident Survey
June 25 Workshop
4. Transportation Planning Policy Discussion (30 minutes)
Review of Existing (1996) General Plan policies
Policy gaps and ideas for new policies *Attachment 1*
5. Public Utilities and Facilities Policy Discussion (30 minutes)
Review of Existing (1996) General Plan policies
Policy gaps and ideas for new policies *Attachment 2*
6. Public Comment on Items 4 and 5 (10 minutes)
7. Next Steps (5 minutes)
Future Meetings and Topics

PIEDMONT GENERAL PLAN WORK SESSION

REVIEW OF EXISTING TRANSPORTATION GOALS, POLICIES, AND ACTIONS

A main focus of our work session on May 31 will be Piedmont's transportation policies and actions. Accordingly, this memo excerpts goals, policies, and actions from the existing Piedmont General Plan for discussion. The statements below are from Circulation Element of the 1996 General Plan.

Following each set of policies/actions are discussion questions. We will be going over these questions at the meeting, seeking feedback from Commissioners.

Goals, Policies, and Actions from the 1996 General Plan Circulation Element**GOAL A: Ensure safe and efficient circulation patterns and develop a circulation system that serves and complements the land use pattern.**Policies:

1. Continue to evaluate the street functional classification system based on criteria and design standards adopted by the City Council.
2. Improve circulation and safety and attempt to maintain traffic on arterials.

Actions:

1. The City may conduct a study to redirect traffic to avoid the increases in average daily traffic volumes that occurred from 1984 to 1994.
2. The City will continue to study streets and propose improvements or reclassification of individual streets as necessary.
3. The City may update subdivision ordinances and other regulations as necessary to ensure consistency with the street classification system.
4. The City may continue to review the street classification system and may consider the following factors: function of street, street design, roadway width, traffic volume, pedestrian safety, neighborhood impact, surrounding land use, other unique circumstances.
5. The City may conduct traffic counts on a periodic basis to monitor changes in traffic flow patterns and determine significant increases.
6. The City may identify traffic volumes and improve traffic controls for circulation and safety. Special attention may be given to: (a) traffic signal at Highland and Moraga; (b) five-way intersection of Grand/ Rose/ Ronada/ Parkside/ Arroyo; (c) intersections of Fairview/Grand and Wildwood/Grand.
7. The City will establish criteria for implementation of traffic controls on arterials.

Questions/ Issues:

- a. *The first policy is an “action”—policy should express what is to be achieved by having a classification system for Piedmont’s streets; i.e., to manage through-traffic, avoid cut-through traffic, limit volumes on local streets, link transportation to land use, etc.*
- b. *The intent of the second policy is unclear (is it to keep through-traffic on the arterials?)*
- c. *Should changes to the designation of arterials (Moraga, Oakland Av [below Highland], Highland [west of Oakland], and Grand) be considered?*
- d. *Some of the Actions are vague and their intent is unclear*
- e. *Is Action 6 still valid?*
- f. *Are there additional policies and actions (addressing other circulation issues) that should be considered? (example: controlling drop-off/pick-up traffic at schools)*
- g. *Should Piedmont have “level of service” standards for its streets?*
- h. *What about policies requiring traffic studies for new development?*
- i. *Policies requiring that new development mitigate its traffic impacts?*
- j. *Policies to manage construction-related traffic?*
- k. *Policies on truck movement and deliveries?*

GOAL B: Mitigate deficiencies and reduce safety hazards in the existing circulation pattern.

Policies:

1. Provide adequate and efficient maintenance of streets.
2. Continue remedial action with regard to traffic hazards identified in analysis of police reports or by the public.

Action:

1. The City may continue (the) Pavement Management System.
2. The City will establish ongoing, coordinated maintenance of streets and sidewalks.
3. The City will evaluate, on a warrant basis consistent with the Traffic Engineering Practice Manual or a modification thereof, proposed changes in the circulation pattern and installation of traffic control devices.
4. The City will coordinate with the City of Oakland as appropriate in the implementation of measures to mitigate or eliminate hazards.
5. The City will monitor potential hazards to sightlines such as vegetation in or near the right-of-way.
6. The City will give priority to public safety over parking in residential areas where concerns are identified.

Questions/ Issues:

- a. *Goal is primarily about safety, yet policies focus on maintenance.*
- b. *What does "remedial action with regard to traffic hazards" mean?*
- c. *Policies and actions are not clearly distinguished from each other*
- d. *Note distinction in language: "The City may..." vs "The City will..."*
- e. *Are there other safety issues that could be addressed through policies and actions? Examples: enforcement of traffic laws, speeding, hazardous intersections, one-way streets, etc—what about "traffic calming"? (diverters, speed bumps, etc.)*
- f. *Why is the action calling for coordination with Oakland (#4) in this section (are there other issues besides safety?) What about coordination with Caltrans?*

GOAL C: Provide an optimum level of transit service to meet the needs of residents.

Policies:

1. Maintain, as a minimum, existing levels of regular and commuter service and recommend improvements as appropriate.
2. Coordinate with AC Transit in resolving problems associated with existing bus routes
3. Review any proposed route changes to ensure that local streets are capable of carrying bus traffic.

Actions:

1. The City will support the District's efforts to reduce bus-generated noise.
2. The City may study parking problems around bus stops in residential areas and park and ride sites.

Questions/ Issues:

- a. Policy 2 refers to transit "problems"—what specific problems should be addressed?*
- b. Policy 3 could be worded to be more pro-active, i.e., specifying that bus routes should follow arterials and collectors and not local streets*
- c. Missing topics—use of smaller buses on Piedmont streets? Feeder service to BART? Paratransit (on-demand service) for Seniors? Bus shelters? Signage and transit information?*
- d. Are noise along bus routes and parking demand around bus stops still issues?*
- e. What about shuttle buses?*
- f. What service or facility changes could make bus use more appealing to Piedmonters?*

GOAL D: Provide for the needs of bicyclists in Piedmont.

Policies:

1. Piedmont will support routes serving schools and other local activity centers.
2. Bikeways may be considered where safety can be reasonably assured.

Actions:

1. The City may consider developing a Bike Route Plan with priority on local-serving routes.
2. The City will consider seeking funding for proposed routes and facilities in the Bike Route Plan.

Questions/ Issues:

- a. Policies and actions seem very tentative. Should the City be more pro-active about encouraging cycling? (right now, the Plan contains no basic statement to encourage bicycling)*
- b. What about bicycle facilities at public places (i.e., bike racks in the Civic Center area)?*

GOAL E: Provide for the safety and convenience of pedestrian circulation.

Policy:

1. Promote safety of pedestrian traffic through pathways.
2. Minimize adverse impacts on property owners adjacent to pathways.
3. Maintain sidewalks in proper repair to promote health, safety, and welfare.

Actions:

1. The City will provide for adequate maintenance of pathways.
2. The City may consider night lighting and determine the need for the provision of additional lighting as needed for safety.
3. The City may update the rating system of the pedestrian walkways.
4. The City will review problems associated with specific pathways as appropriate.
5. The City may conduct a study to determine and assess options for future sidewalk maintenance.

Questions/ Issues:

- a. The focus is on pedestrian paths, rather than broader issues related to sidewalks, crosswalks, and pedestrian movement in the City. Could consider additional policies on "walkability", safe routes to school, countdown crosswalks, etc.*
- b. Any guidance needed on adding sidewalks where they don't currently exist?*
- c. Any modifications to sidewalk repair and maintenance policies?*
- d. What about curb cuts and ADA compliance issues?*

GOAL F: Provide adequate parking for residents, businesses, and civic activities in Piedmont.

Policy:

1. The City may evaluate alternative solutions and/or programs to relieve existing parking congestion.

Actions:

1. The City will continue to consider expansion and parking control measures in residential areas.
2. The City will continue to enforce parking requirements for residential and commercial areas.
3. The City will evaluate alternative solutions to the parking needs in the Civic Center area, which may include: (a) alternative transportation; (b) trip reduction programs; (c) carpooling.
4. The City will work with the School District to implement equitable solutions to the parking needs in the Civic Center area.
5. The City will address the carpooling practice taking place in and around the City and will consider a parking program in the areas affected by this practice.
6. The City may evaluate the relationship between auto theft and on-street parking and urge that off-street parking be utilized as a means of mitigating crime and increasing public safety.

Questions/ Issues:

- a. This is one of the most important issues in the City, yet there is only one policy addressing it. What additional policy direction on parking management might be provided? (residential permit parking, measures to reduce demand, control of students driving to school, encouraging shared parking for schools and civic center, etc.)*
- b. Should policies on parking requirements for development be included?*
- c. Does the action on casual carpool parking impacts need to be updated?*
- d. What are the implications of General Plan parking policies on the debate about building a garage in the Civic Center area (would a garage induce demand?)*
- e. Is Action 6 (linking street parking to auto-theft) legitimate?*
- f. What about steps to reduce parking demand (by allowing more City business transactions to be done on line, more coordinated scheduling of events, etc.)?*

REVIEW OF EXISTING INFRASTRUCTURE GOALS, POLICIES, AND ACTIONS

A second focus of our work session on May 31 will be Piedmont's infrastructure policies and actions. Accordingly, this memo excerpts goals, policies, and actions from the existing Piedmont General Plan for discussion. The statements below are from Public Utilities and Facilities Element of the 1996 General Plan.

Following each set of policies/actions are discussion questions. We will be going over these questions at the meeting, seeking feedback from Commissioners.

Goals, Policies, and Actions from the 1996 General Plan Public Utilities and Facilities Element

GOAL A: Provide for a reliable water supply and distribution system.

Policies:

1. Support East Bay Municipal Utility District in efforts to maintain long-term sources of water.
2. Support measures to maintain present water quality.
3. Maintain current fire insurance rating for water distribution system.
4. Maintain ongoing, coordinated maintenance of the City's infrastructure.

Action:

1. The City will coordinate replacement of water lines with street resurfacing projects.
2. The City will encourage preventive maintenance.
3. The City will encourage a cyclic replacement program of facilities within the distribution system.
4. The City, in coordination with East Bay Municipal Utilities District, may identify those areas in the City with substandard water flow and may undertake a program for updating water delivery lines and systems.
5. The City may consider creating assessment districts for the purpose of upgrading and expediting water system improvements.

Questions/ Issues:

- a. *Most of the actions are actually policies.*
- b. *Action 4 sounds very tentative, yet refers to an essential activity*
- c. *Topics missing: adequate water pressure to ensure fire-fighting capacity; water conservation practices; coordination between City and EBMUD; development fees*
- d. *Are assessment districts (Action 5) viable?*

GOAL B: Ensure (an) adequate and reliable sewage collection and treatment system.

Policies:

1. Implement the recommendations of the Inflow and Infiltration Study.
2. Maintain funding for system rehabilitation and long-range planning.
3. Maintain ongoing, coordinated maintenance of the City's infrastructure.

Actions:

1. The City will restore the sewage collection system to adequate capacity through repair of faulty pipes.
2. The City will continue to require disconnection of storm drain systems from the sewage collection system per recommendations of the Inflow and Infiltration Study.
3. The City will continue the sewer service tax and connection fees to pay for major maintenance.
4. The City will continue the funding plan for replacement of system and an ongoing long-range plan for work.
5. The City will review and implement recommendations on the Inflow/ Infiltration Study as appropriate.

Questions/ Issues:

- a. Policy 1 is actually an action, and it is repeated as Action 5.*
- b. Policy 2 is essentially repeated as Action 4.*
- c. Policy 3 applies to more than just sewers.*
- d. Nothing about coordinating with EBMUD, coordinating with Oakland, reducing wastewater flows, or improving effluent quality.*
- e. More policy guidance on maintenance needs and funding would be helpful.*

GOAL C: Ensure adequate drainage and storm sewer capacity.

Policy:

1. Maintain total separation of storm sewer and sanitary sewer systems.
2. Protect natural drainage courses which function as part of the storm sewer system.
3. Maintain ongoing, coordinated maintenance of the City's infrastructure.

Action:

1. The City will review development proposals in or near natural drainage courses and require installation of storm sewer facilities as necessary.

Questions/Issues:

- a. Discussion of water quality and urban runoff control is missing.*
- b. Policy 3 applies to more than just storm drainage.*
- c. Are there specific drainage problems that should be acknowledged and addressed more proactively? (Dracena Park, etc.)*
- d. What about storm drain maintenance (cleaning catch basins, avoiding and penalizing illegal dumping, street sweeping, etc.)?*

GOAL D: Ensure distribution of electrical and other utilities in a safe, efficient, and aesthetically pleasing manner.

Policies:

1. Review problems encountered in delivery of services on a regular basis with the service provider.
2. Encourage and support undergrounding of utilities and distribution lines.
3. Encourage ongoing, coordinated maintenance of the City's infrastructure.

Action:

1. The City will review ordinances and regulations as necessary to encourage the undergrounding of utilities.
2. The City will provide information to citizens on the costs and legal process of undergrounding utilities.
3. The City will establish priorities on the use of Rule 20 funding for assisting in the undergrounding of utilities (Rule 20, as established by the CPUC, provides a mechanism to assist cities and counties in the cost of undergrounding existing overhead lines. The funding for the program is provided through allocations from PG&E.)

Questions/ Issues:

- a. Emphasis is on undergrounding rather than service reliability.*
- b. Maintenance policy (#3) repeated four times in this element.*
- c. Nothing on energy conservation or efficiency, or alternative energy sources.*
- d. Intent of the action items (review ordinances, provide information, etc.) is unclear.*
- e. Should the City make a more pro-active statement about undergrounding?*
- f. Need to add policies on telecommunications infrastructure—fiber optics, communication towers, cable, etc.*

GOAL E: Provide proper lighting for public safety.

Policies:

1. Maintain at least current levels of illumination.
2. Ensure timely maintenance of street lights.

Action:

1. The City will evaluate purchasing street lights and City or contract maintenance to improve maintenance and decrease cost of street lights
2. The City will solicit input from residents on the adequacy of street lighting.

Questions/ Issues:

1. *Are there statements still applicable and relevant?*
2. *What about policies on possible adverse impacts, such as light pollution or loss of privacy? (should have policies to discourage excessive levels of lighting, use energy efficient lighting, etc.)*
3. *What about the design of street light fixtures?*
4. *What are the implications of the City purchasing street lights (Action 1) from PG&E?*

Note: There are no goals, policies, or actions on solid waste collection and recycling, although this topic is covered by the Plan narrative in this Element. There are also no policies on fees or the mitigation of construction and development impacts. It is helpful to have such statements in the General Plan to provide a legal foundation for City fees and mitigation requirements.