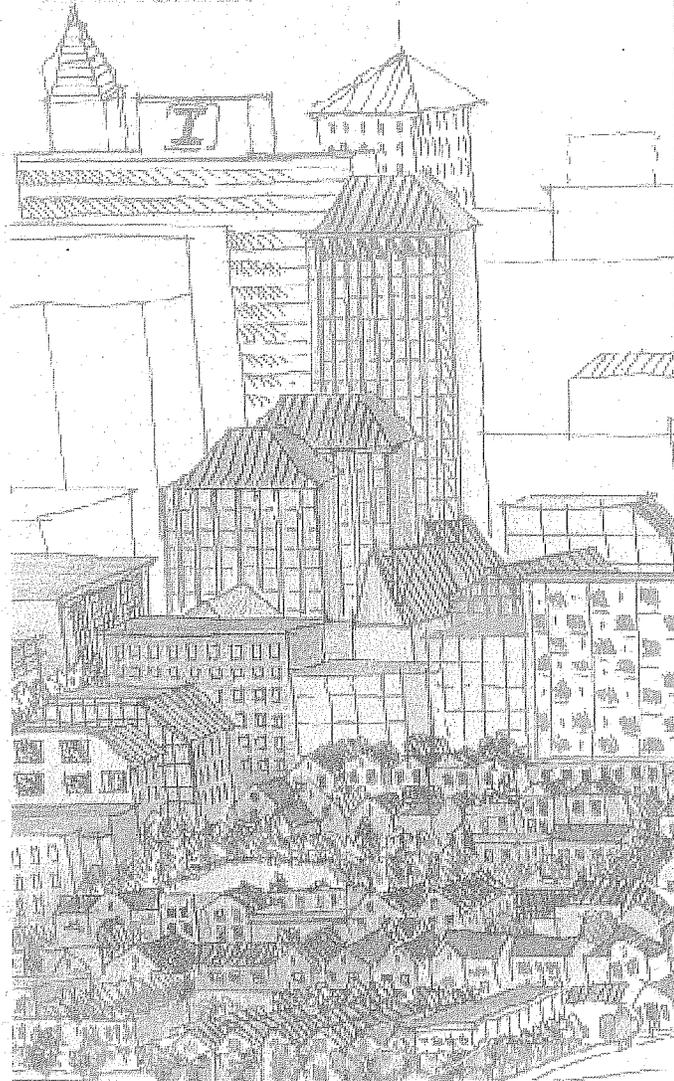


# Telegraph - Northgate Neighborhood Plan

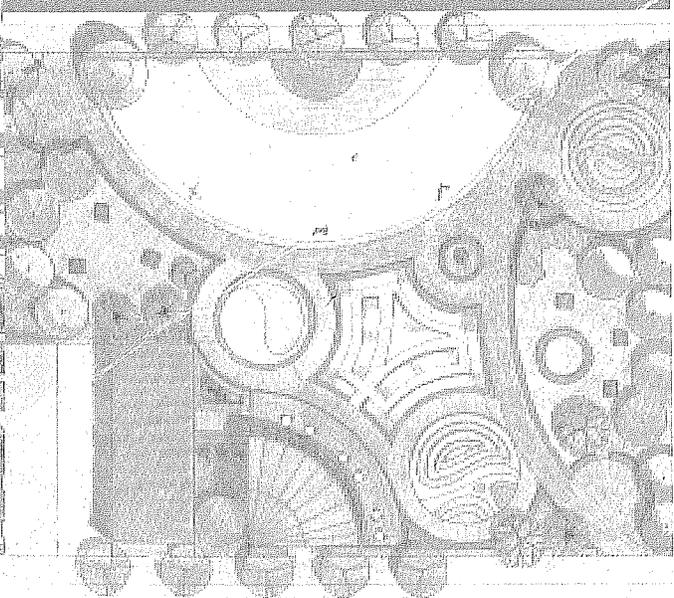


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Neighborhood Association**

**City of Oakland  
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Summer 2000





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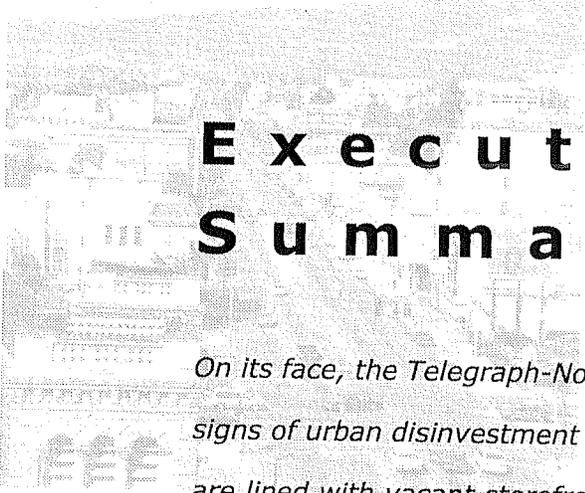
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# Executive Summary

*On its face, the Telegraph-Northgate neighborhood is rife with familiar signs of urban disinvestment and decline. The major retail corridors are lined with vacant storefronts. The older houses are crumbling, and the mostly concrete parks are filled with graffiti and shards of glass. But if you spend an hour strolling down Telegraph Avenue, you will come across Leroy's 25-year-old bicycle shop, a destination for East Bay bicyclists. If you stop by Quality Market and manage to make Ahmed chuckle, you may be rewarded with a free soda. You may also meet Sister Carole Anne, who runs a drop-in center for homeless women, financed by the mystery novels she writes on the side, which feature nuns as victims and detectives. These people and institutions are part of the less visible fabric of a remarkably cohesive community—a community that since June 1998 has taken encouraging steps to redefine itself and its future.*

During the summer of 1998, the newly formed Telegraph-Northgate Neighborhood Association launched a grassroots initiative to create a more livable and safe neighborhood. The merchants, residents, and service care providers of the Telegraph-Northgate Neighborhood Association, which defined neighborhood boundaries as Telegraph and San Pablo Avenues from 20<sup>th</sup> to 27<sup>th</sup> Streets, enlisted help from Urban Ecology and the City of Oakland to create a neighborhood plan. The first meetings were far from harmonious. In a neighborhood distressed by poverty, but already experiencing the economic change coursing through downtown Oakland, it would not prove easy to make decisions about the path of community development. Homeless service providers disagreed with business owners who saw the homeless presence as a detriment to the neighborhood's image. Low-income housing managers saw their tenants being squeezed out by market-rate development, but longtime community residents voiced their desire for households with more disposable income.

After three community workshops, three focus groups, two years of association meetings, and hours of collective urban planning and design analysis, the Telegraph-Northgate Neighborhood Plan has emerged. Most simply, it is a vision for the Telegraph-Northgate neighborhood put forth by the members of the community. Yet the plan also reflects Telegraph-

Northgate's complexity: it is a conversation among property owners and renters; recent immigrants and deep-rooted households; artists and entrepreneurs; bus riders and bicyclists; small businesses and consumers; people living with disabilities and their social workers. It is a conversation that has taken place in English and Korean. It involved planning professionals and individuals who had never before discussed zoning, development or urban form. It seeks to balance social needs, the natural environment, and the local economy.

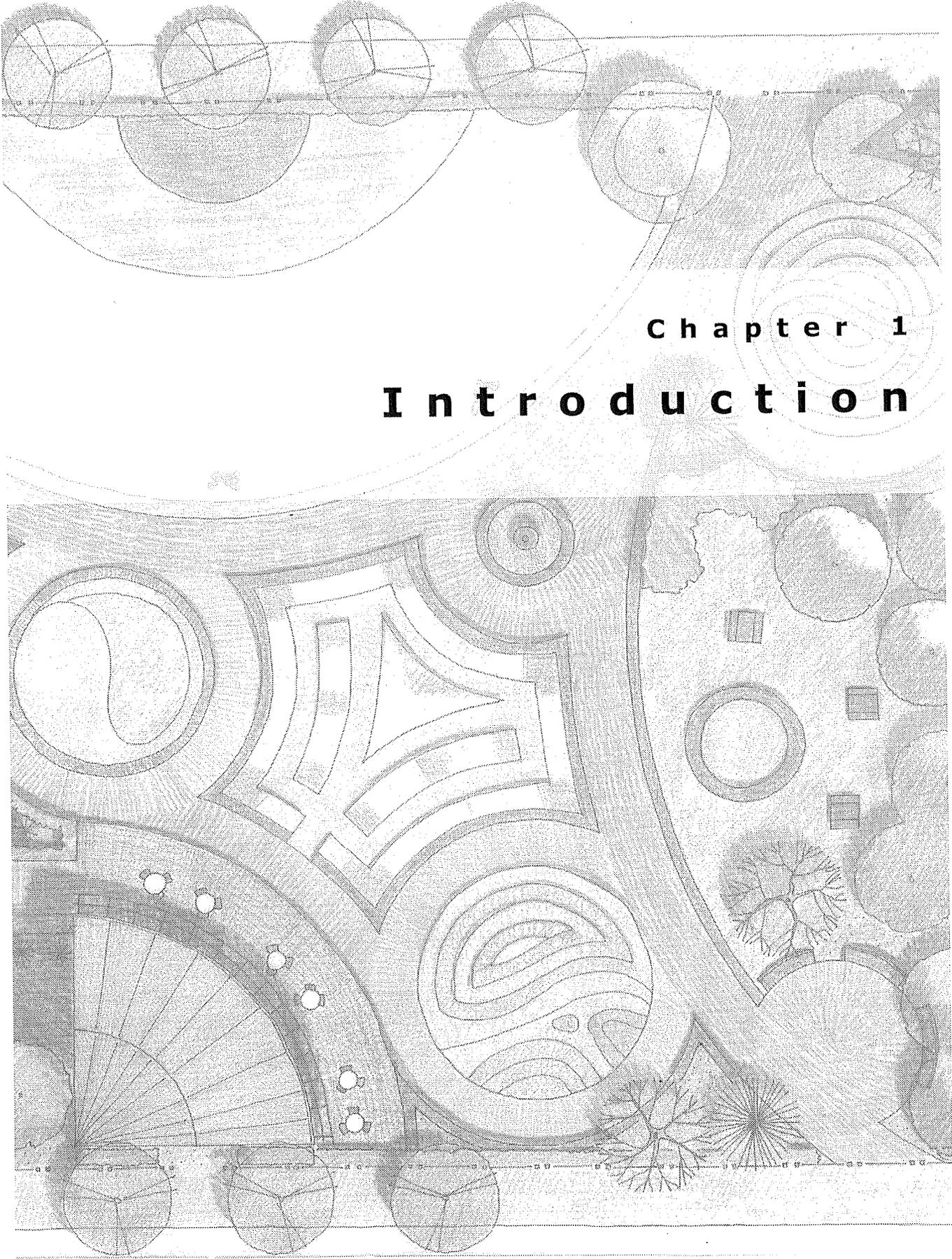
The Telegraph-Northgate Neighborhood Association elected to examine and redefine land use as the primary mechanism for changing their community. Thus, this land use plan is a basic framework for revitalizing the Telegraph-Northgate neighborhood. It includes specific proposals for attracting retail that fulfills the community's day-to-day needs. It has traffic calming strategies for community members who expressed the need to calm and divert automobile traffic so that pedestrians and bicyclists are favored on neighborhood streets. It proposes a community center with a library for merchants and residents who want to participate in an active civic life. It presents a basic park design for community members who want to restore nature into their neighborhoods by lining the streets with trees and transforming parking lots into parks.

Perhaps the most important aspect of this vision is that Telegraph-Northgate community members believe in it. The ideas proposed here are neither radical nor farfetched. At this writing, public resources in Oakland have not yet benefited from the economic boom, and so low-income communities are creating ways of leveraging funds and volunteers to improve their neighborhoods. This plan records the participatory planning process, recommends policies and urban design solutions to address the neighborhood's challenges, and outlines private and public funding sources to realize the plan. Everyone who contributed to the Telegraph-Northgate Neighborhood Plan hopes that it will serve as a tool for community members to successfully advocate for their vision.



**"We first started by cleaning up trash on the streets, and now we're turning this place into paradise!"**

-Gwen "Hollywood" Patton,  
resident of Providence House



**Chapter 1**

**Introduction**

## CHAPTER 1

*Bounded by 21<sup>st</sup> and 27<sup>th</sup> Streets, Telegraph and San Pablo Avenues, the Telegraph-Northgate neighborhood is characterized by vacant storefronts, dilapidated housing, and unrepaired earthquake-damaged buildings. Once a thriving retail corridor, Telegraph Avenue has been depressed since Sears left its historic building at 27<sup>th</sup> Street and Telegraph Avenue for downtown Oakland in 1993. Both Telegraph and San Pablo Avenues are too wide for pedestrians to cross safely; Telegraph Avenue is mostly used as a through-way for commuters who park along it and catch BART to San Francisco. The City of Oakland cites Telegraph Avenue as one of its most dangerous streets for pedestrians and bicyclists because of its fast-moving traffic.*

The neighborhood also suffers from crime associated with drug use and dealing. While it is home to several supported housing providers, many of the private-market apartment buildings in the neighborhood are in poor condition, and drug-related problems are frequently reported there. Highway I-980 slices through the neighborhood, adding to a sense of isolation and creating unused public space that is open to crime.

AC Transit's 1995 and 1996 budget cuts left much of Oakland with greatly reduced bus service after 7 p.m. on weekdays and all day on weekends. Many residents of the supported housing units do not own cars. The small businesses in the neighborhood include bicycle shops, small restaurants, and bars; however, there is no full-service grocery store in the area, nor are there banks, drug stores, clothing stores, or other retail stores. Several emergency aid agencies are located in the neighborhood, as well as a few public benefit offices. The neighborhood lacks healthy public spaces, particularly community gardens and play areas.

At the same time, the neighborhood is beginning to witness signs of a renaissance: several artists have moved into the area and have opened galleries and studios. Telegraph Avenue has several shops that cater to a regional Korean market. After six years of vacancy, the

Sears building has been purchased by Oakland developer John Protopappas, who plans to convert it into 52 live/work units with ground floor retail. The project's second phase may include the construction of 400 additional live/work units.

Telegraph-Northgate's location is highly desirable: it is adjacent to downtown Oakland and Lake Merritt; the 19<sup>th</sup> Street BART station lies within a quarter-mile, and several AC Transit lines run along Broadway, Telegraph and San Pablo. The neighborhood is aesthetically appealing; it is home to numerous historic buildings and small storefronts along Telegraph Avenue.

*Highway I-980 slices through the Telegraph-Northgate Neighborhood*



The past year has seen the neighborhood's real estate market heat up as the region's housing supply has been stretched to its limit. Lauren Locey, who owns several rental buildings in the area, is starting to see a change in his renters. "I have U.C. Berkeley students now wanting to live in my apartment building," he said at a recent neighborhood association meeting. Real estate agents have reported that a few years ago speculators had no interest in the area, but now they are buzzing around buildings for sale.

Oakland and the Telegraph-Northgate neighborhood face a unique moment. Mayor Jerry Brown's plan to bring 10,000 residents to downtown Oakland presents an opportunity to create mixed-income, mixed-use and pedestrian-friendly neighborhoods. For Telegraph-Northgate, this means that a window exists to alleviate the concentration of poverty by creating amenities like the parks, fresh food sources and libraries that wealthier neighborhoods take for granted.

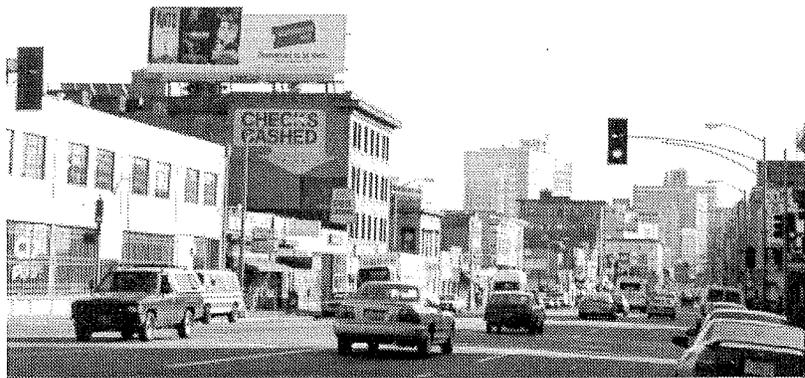
For the past two years, community members have met with private developers and government agencies to shape development along Telegraph Avenue. They continue to seek ways in which the private market can contribute to the livability of the area. Despite this knowledgeable and consistent involvement, the Telegraph-Northgate neighborhood finds itself facing a challenge familiar to many older, low-income neighborhoods in the Bay Area and across California. How can the neighborhood be kept stable and affordable, avoiding the rapidly escalating real estate prices that have displaced people from so many other neighborhoods? At the same time, how can the neighborhood take advantage of the private and public investment that will arrive in the next few years?

## PROJECT HISTORY

Since the early 1990s, community members of the Telegraph-Northgate neighborhood have organized to create a more livable and safe neighborhood. In 1991, merchants contributed to a Northgate Patrol fund to hire private security officers to walk the streets. These actions resulted in more police attention from the City of Oakland. In 1997, a group of service care providers, calling themselves the Telegraph Corridor Anti-Crime Project, applied for a HUD Safe Neighborhoods grant with the goal of increasing community policing in the area. Although the project was not funded, the group continued to organize and undertake neighborhood clean-ups and smaller projects.

After successfully recruiting a broader base of participation that included merchants and residents, the group renamed itself the Telegraph-Northgate Neighborhood Association in 1998. When the City of Oakland offered funding for street banners and trash cans to address some of the neighborhood's challenges, the Telegraph-Northgate Neighborhood Association declined the offer, noting that these strategies were an inadequate solution to the neighborhood's problems. They decided instead to embark on a neighborhood planning process.

Familiar with Urban Ecology's work in low-income neighborhoods throughout the Bay Area, the association requested Urban Ecology's assistance in developing a vision for the neighborhood. In the summer of 1998, the Telegraph-Northgate Neighborhood Association, Urban Ecology and the City of Oakland's Community and Economic Development Agency formed a partnership with the goal of creating a neighborhood plan.



*Everyday activity on Telegraph Avenue*

## COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION IN LAND USE PLANNING

Land use defines the context in which a community lives. Particularly in low-income areas, community members have been excluded from land use decisions. These communities are either bypassed by planning and investment, or they are chosen as sites for environmentally harmful land uses unwanted in wealthier neighborhoods.

Community planning and design gives voice to community members in local land use planning decisions. With planning and design tools, community members make land use decisions that affect housing needs, transportation investments, natural habitat, local economy, and public infrastructure. Community planning and design fosters a shared vision that reflects the unique needs of a community. "When participation is successful, the resulting physical environment integrates and expresses the unique social goals of the residents."<sup>1</sup>

## PROJECT PARTNERS

*Telegraph-Northgate Neighborhood Association (TNNA)*, formerly the Telegraph-Corridor Anti-Crime Project, includes merchants, residents and service care providers in its membership. The group was originally formed to address crime and safety in the area and is now at the forefront of efforts to create a pleasant, clean, pedestrian-oriented commercial and neighborhood area. At this writing, the Association's membership totals 40. During the planning process, the Association was responsible for conducting all community outreach efforts.

*Urban Ecology* is a non-profit membership organization dedicated to improving the San Francisco Bay Area's built and natural environments and quality of life. Urban Ecology's neighborhood work helps grassroots neighborhood organizations plan for physical change by providing in-depth community outreach, planning and design services. Where residents and community-based organizations bring awareness of a neighborhood's strengths and weaknesses, Urban Ecology's planning professionals bring skills that help residents think concretely about land use and design to craft high-quality, environmentally and culturally sensitive neighborhood plans. During the Telegraph-Northgate planning process, Urban Ecology was responsible for providing technical planning and design services.

*City of Oakland, Community and Economic Development Agency (CEDA)*, offers a variety of programs and services to transform older neighborhood commercial areas into viable and vital shopping districts. The Neighborhood Commercial Revitalization program focuses on creating partnerships with small businesses, property owners and community organizations to improve the physical and economic conditions of the area. During the planning process, CEDA acted as a resource for the Telegraph-Northgate Neighborhood Association and Urban Ecology by providing information about neighborhood conditions and proposed development projects.

Councilmember Nancy Nadel approved the use of discretionary funds to support this planning effort. She followed the planning process closely and has publicly advocated for the neighborhood vision.

## COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION

From February 1999 to April 2000, Urban Ecology and the Telegraph-Northgate Neighborhood Association organized the following events to obtain community input. (See Appendix A for a list of community participants and Appendix B for workshop flyers.)

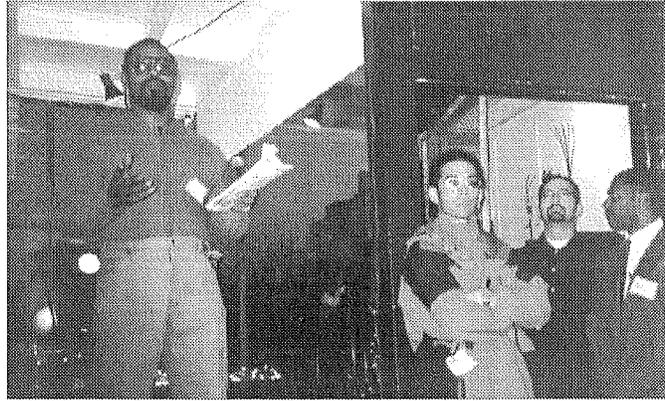
### Kick-Off

On February 24, 1999, Urban Ecology and the Telegraph-Northgate Neighborhood Association organized a kick-off to build a broad base of participation and support for the planning process. In a local gallery, merchants, residents, city staff and officials—

<sup>1</sup> Randolph T. Hester Jr., *Community Design Primer* (Mendocino: The Ridge Times Press, 1990).

Councilmember Nancy Nadel and Mayor Jerry Brown—established connections and talked about their hopes for the neighborhood. The event announced the parameters of the plan: a framework for development that ensures economic growth that is environmentally sound and socially just. In his speech, Leroy Dubose, owner of A Round World Bicycle Shop, said: “I have had a business in this neighborhood for 20 years. I would like to walk down the street and see a promenade with fewer cars and more businesses that serve the needs of residents in the community. It is going to take effort on the part of businesses owners and residents to see that this happens.”

*Leroy Dobose, owner of A Round World Bicycle Shop, speaking at the kick-off event*



### **First Community Workshop**

On March 20, 1999, Urban Ecology and the Telegraph-Northgate Neighborhood Association sponsored the first of three community workshops. The purpose of the workshop was to allow community members to discuss their experience of living in the neighborhood and list places and amenities that they valued and wanted to preserve. Thirty community members identified areas of their neighborhood that were blighted and in need of improvement. They discussed parks, crime, transit, retail and open space development, which Urban Ecology developed into a goals framework. (Refer to Chapter Two for neighborhood goals and strategies.)



*Community members gather for the kick-off in Gallery 23Ten*

### **Focus Groups**

Based on Urban Ecology’s experience in other low-income neighborhoods in the Bay Area, there are certain groups that will not participate in workshops. The reasons for lack of participation vary: senior citizens are not as mobile; it is difficult for merchants to leave their shops unattended; attending a workshop is not a priority for homeless. In order to ensure an inclusive process, Urban Ecology set up three focus groups from March through June 1999, meeting separately with groups of seniors, youth, and the homeless.

Focus group participants expressed concerns similar to those aired at the workshop. They agreed that the neighborhood lacks retail, especially a grocery store. They echoed sentiments that the Telegraph-Northgate neighborhood lacks infrastructure and amenities that support an active civic life, such as public parks and plazas.

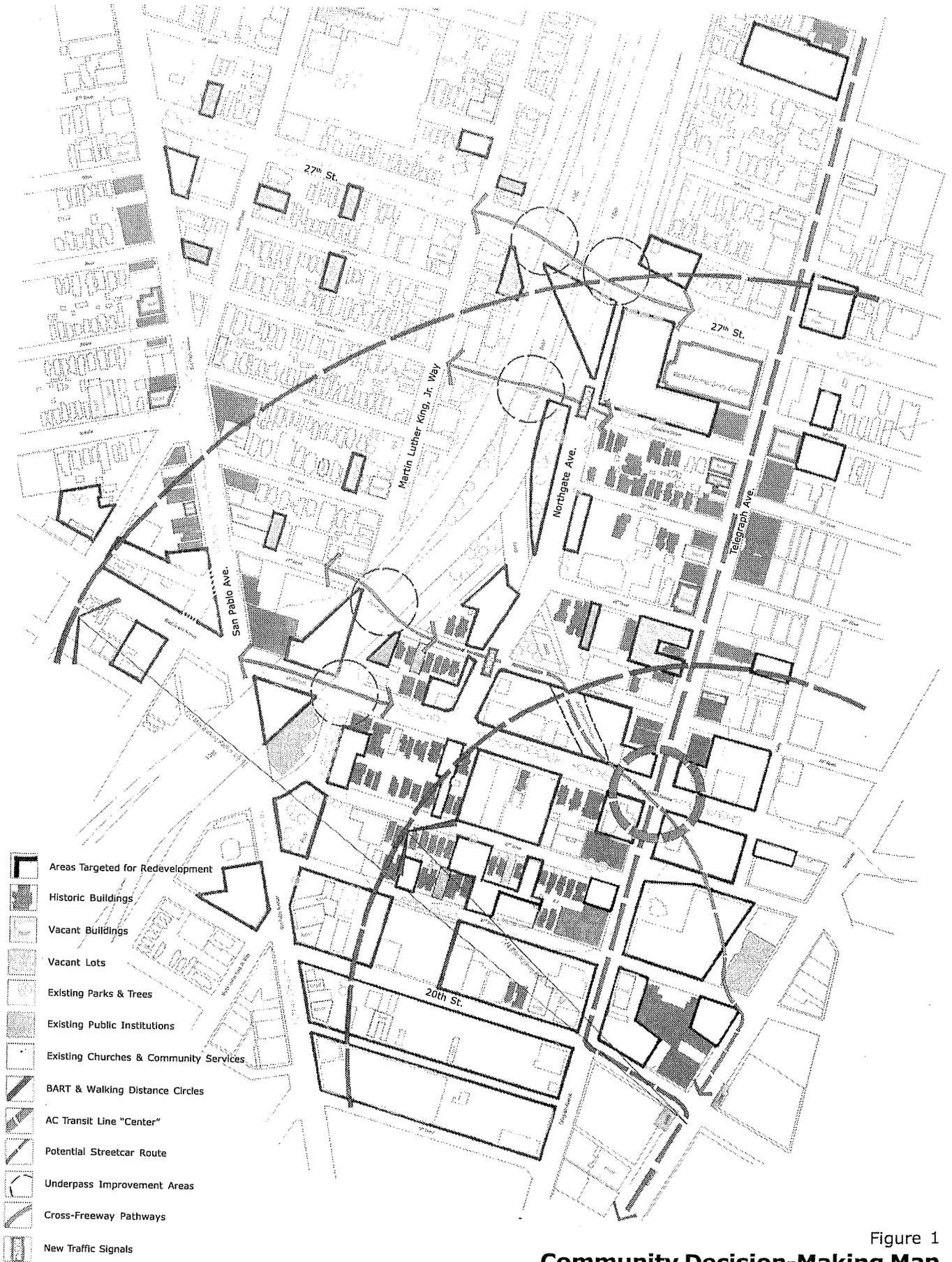
### **Merchant Survey**

Since the workshops took place on Saturday mornings on March 20<sup>th</sup> and June 5<sup>th</sup>—peak business hours for several merchants—Urban Ecology also conducted a survey of the businesses located on Telegraph Avenue. The response rate was 60 percent, and merchants were most interested in improving the physical conditions of Telegraph Avenue and attracting more retail. (Refer to Appendix C for survey questions and results.)

### **Second Community Workshop**

At the second workshop on June 5, 1999, Urban Ecology presented a set of analysis maps that assessed the existing conditions of the neighborhood: current land uses, retail and housing stock, transportation routes, and crime patterns and impacts. With the aid of icons representing

INTRODUCTION



- Areas Targeted for Redevelopment
- Historic Buildings
- Vacant Buildings
- Vacant Lots
- Existing Parks & Trees
- Existing Public Institutions
- Existing Churches & Community Services
- BART & Walking Distance Circles
- AC Transit Line "Center"
- Potential Streetcar Route
- Underpass Improvement Areas
- Cross-Freeway Pathways
- New Traffic Signals

Figure 1  
**Community Decision-Making Map**

parks, plazas, retail and housing, community members designed their neighborhood on a map that highlighted areas with development potential. (Refer to Figure 1: Community Decision-Making Map.)

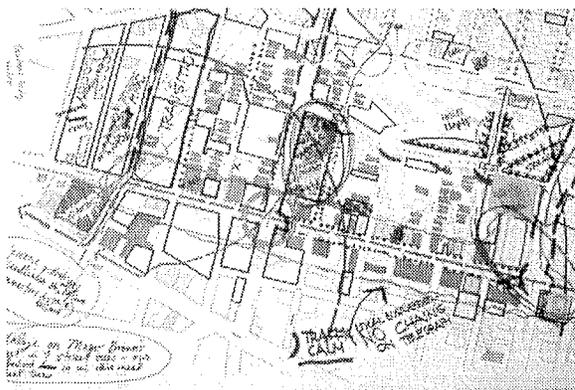
From these collective designs, four areas emerged that now form the main components of the neighborhood plan. Community members asked Urban Ecology to:

- ▶ Identify sites for open space and create conceptual designs for future parks and plazas.
- ▶ Design traffic calming methods on neighborhood streets that are subject to commuter traffic.
- ▶ Define a transition between the neighborhood and downtown.
- ▶ Devise methods to strengthen Telegraph Avenue into a strong retail spine.

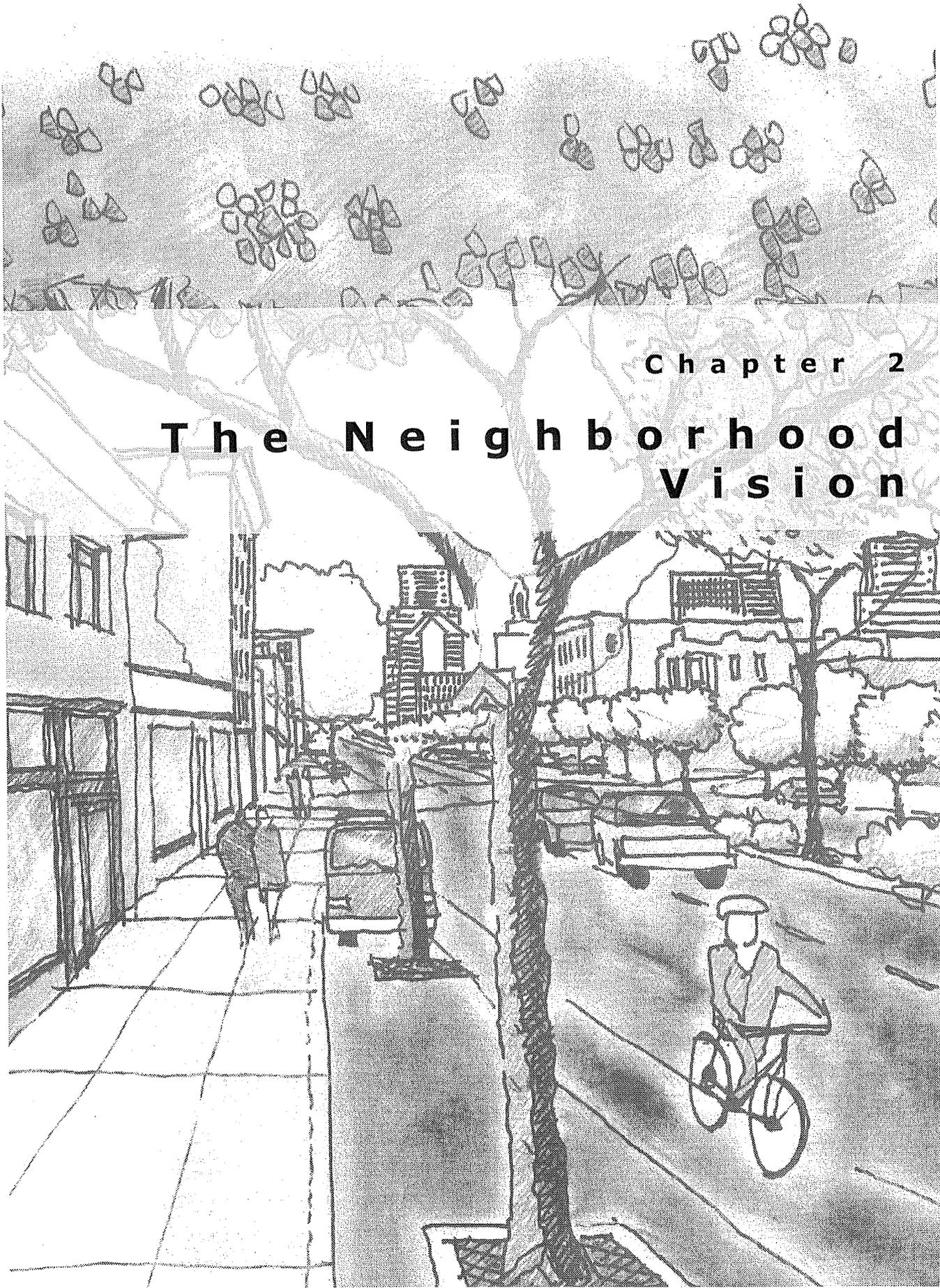
### Third Community Workshop

On April 5, 2000, 30 residents, merchants, and social-service providers attended the last community workshop at Gallery 23Ten. Three stations were set up: open space and traffic calming, Telegraph Avenue streetscape and development, and the transition area from downtown to the neighborhood. Each station had analysis maps and proposed conceptual designs. Workshop participants commented on the proposals, which were used to further hone the designs and policy recommendations.

*Workshop participants discuss the neighborhood's future*



*Community Decision-Making Map with one workshop group's ideas*



Chapter 2

**The Neighborhood  
Vision**

## CHAPTER 2

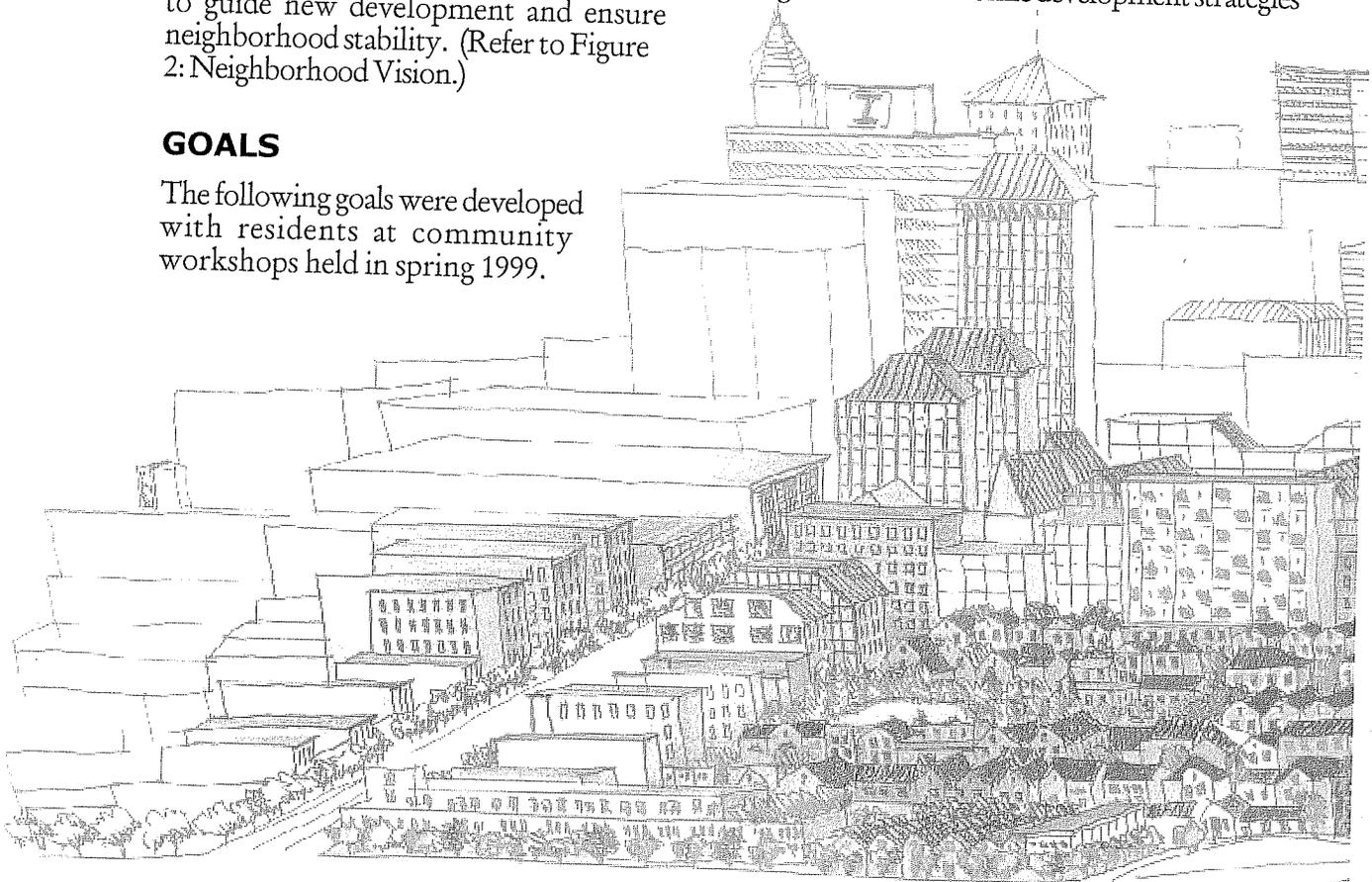
*The Telegraph-Northgate Neighborhood Plan is a vision for a thriving urban neighborhood that is predominantly residential, with local neighborhood stores and businesses lining the major commercial streets. The residents see their neighborhood as a place that values cultural diversity, existing community connections and small businesses. As new development brings opportunities for improvements, the neighborhood wants to keep its assets intact. At the same time, they seek to increase retail and social services, create usable public spaces and improve public safety.*

In order to achieve this vision, the Telegraph-Northgate neighborhood will need to accommodate new housing development and foster a local neighborhood commercial district on Telegraph Avenue. By accommodating more people and attracting more businesses that stay open into the evening, the neighborhood can create enough street life to help deter public nuisances and increase safety.

The residents are also aware of the downsides new investment might bring to their neighborhood. This Plan sets out innovative land use policies and neighborhood economic development strategies to guide new development and ensure neighborhood stability. (Refer to Figure 2: Neighborhood Vision.)

### GOALS

The following goals were developed with residents at community workshops held in spring 1999.



**Historic Character:** Future developments in the neighborhood should emphasize and retain the historic character, culturally diverse residents, and unique sense of place that already exist in the neighborhood.

**Neighborhood-Commercial Retail:** Mixed-use developments on the major streets should be emphasized, providing ground-floor retail and walk-up offices for local businesses and apartment units.

**Housing:** The neighborhood should offer diverse housing options, including market-rate and affordable housing, home ownership and rental dwellings, and varied housing stock to accommodate families and individuals.

**Circulation:** Neighborhood streets should emphasize walking, cycling and connections to transit. There should be stronger connections between the parts of the neighborhood divided by the freeway and BART.

**Public Open Space:** The neighborhood should have more parks, recreational areas, and other public open spaces.

**Art Resources:** The neighborhood should support public art projects, attract new gallery spaces, and create programs for local artists and youth.

**Public Safety:** The neighborhood should continue to improve public safety and environmental health, and work with community leaders, police and other municipal services on safety and health issues.

**Resource-Efficient Buildings:** Every new development should emphasize resource conservation, appropriate building technologies, and natural building systems.



Figure 2  
**Neighborhood Vision**

## OBJECTIVES

To meet these goals, community members developed a more specific set of objectives. With Urban Ecology, the community focused on land use as the mechanism for achieving their vision. The following objectives form the basis of the neighborhood's land use and urban design recommendations in Chapter Four.

### Land Use, Urban Design & Housing

- ▶ Maintain a transition buffer area between the high-rise buildings of downtown Oakland and the historic residences in the Telegraph-Northgate neighborhood.
- ▶ Maintain the affordability of housing in the neighborhood.
- ▶ Encourage development that matches or enhances the historic context of the neighborhood, particularly in terms of aesthetics and size.
- ▶ Provide a range of housing types for future residents.
- ▶ Develop neighborhood markers such as gateways, public art, public spaces, and street improvements that establish identity and place.

### Circulation

- ▶ Enhance the pedestrian environment of the public sidewalks and permit the safe movement of pedestrians and bicyclists.
- ▶ Enhance the pedestrian connection to the 19<sup>th</sup> Street BART station.
- ▶ Implement a bicycle lane along Telegraph Avenue to downtown Oakland.
- ▶ Re-connect the parts of the neighborhood divided by the freeway and BART tracks.
- ▶ Protect the quiet residential neighborhood blocks by limiting through-traffic on residential streets.
- ▶ Maintain short term street parking on the neighborhood commercial streets and deter commuter parking in the neighborhood.

### Open Space & Parks

- ▶ Create a new public park in the neighborhood.
- ▶ Plant and maintain street trees along neighborhood streets.
- ▶ Create a community garden in the neighborhood.

### Neighborhood Economic Development

- ▶ Retain current residents and small businesses.
- ▶ Encourage more local businesses within a neighborhood commercial district along Telegraph Avenue.
- ▶ Retain and restore architecturally significant buildings and maintain the older buildings along Telegraph Avenue.
- ▶ Establish a community center which acts as a focal point for city services, neighborhood activism, programs and classes.
- ▶ Provide resources for public art that involve local artists and youth; attract and protect new gallery spaces.
- ▶ Support the city's efforts to restore the Fox Theater and expand programs at the Paramount Theater.
- ▶ Improve the physical condition of the neighborhood retail buildings.
- ▶ Attract new retail businesses that support the neighborhood and are open into the evening, including a grocery store, pharmacy, restaurants and cafes.

An aerial, black and white photograph of a city street. The street is wide and has multiple lanes with visible lane markings. Several cars are driving on the road. On either side of the street are multi-story buildings with various architectural styles, including some with classical facades. The overall scene is a busy urban environment.

Chapter 3

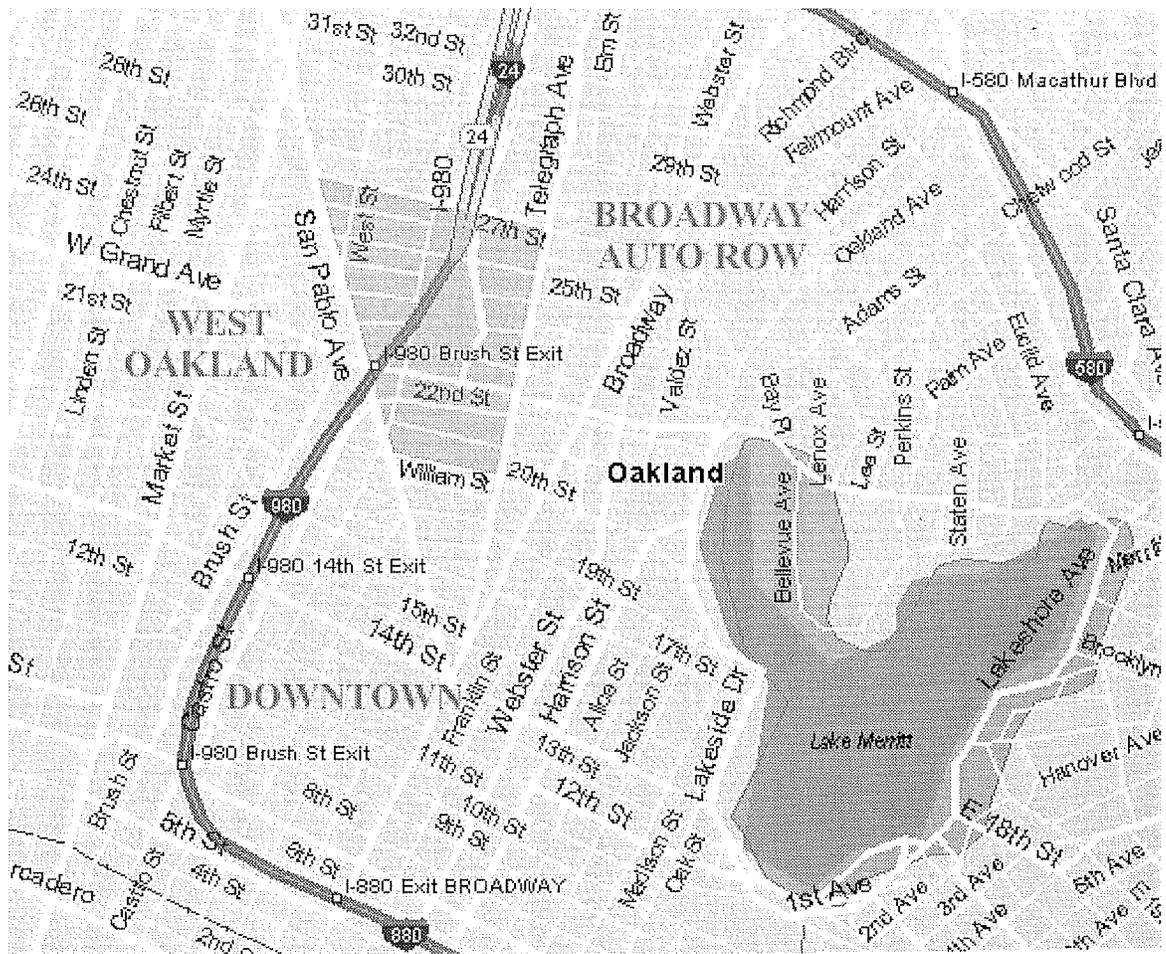
**N e i g h b o r h o o d  
B a c k g r o u n d**

### CHAPTER 3

*The Telegraph-Northgate neighborhood lies north of downtown Oakland. The eastern section of the neighborhood falls within a half-mile radius of the 19<sup>th</sup> Street BART station, and directly west lies the predominately residential section of West Oakland. North of the neighborhood is another mixed-use area, Temescal, and to the east lies Broadway Auto Row. (Refer to Figure 3: Vicinity Map.)*

At first glance, the specific neighborhood boundaries of 20<sup>th</sup> to 27<sup>th</sup> Streets and Telegraph to San Pablo Avenues may seem randomly selected. I-980 splits the neighborhood in half, and the uses, structure and aesthetics of San Pablo Avenue differ significantly from those of Telegraph Avenue. West Grand Avenue might seem like a more appropriate southern boundary due to its street width and mixed-use character. Yet, despite being split by the freeway, the residents, social service providers, and merchants of Telegraph-Northgate have built a social fabric over several years. The boundaries used to define the neighborhood in this Plan reflect this social network.

Figure 3  
Vicinity  
Map



NEIGHBORHOOD BACKGROUND



A checkerboard pattern of land uses and building typologies in the neighborhood reflect several waves of investment and change. Commercial, residential, office, civic and religious uses are all visibly present. There are clusters of well-maintained Victorians dating back to the turn of the century. Several contemporary midrise residential buildings are scattered throughout the neighborhood. The neighborhood has businesses with small footprints and larger footprints—most notably the historic Sears building on 27<sup>th</sup> Street and Telegraph Avenue. The businesses that line Telegraph Avenue include shops that have been around since the first half of the twentieth century: Henry Henzel’s auto repair shop was founded by his grandfather in 1918 and has been located in the neighborhood since 1946. Telegraph Avenue is also lined with newer businesses such as Korean specialty stores and artist galleries. Telegraph-Northgate’s aesthetic hodgepodge aside, it possesses a distinct neighborhood structure: Telegraph Avenue, Martin Luther King Jr. Way and San Pablo Avenue serve as the mixed-use retail corridors for the neighborhood, and residential clusters are situated between these main streets. (Refer to Figure 4: Contemporary Community Character.)

The design and policy recommendations that emerged from the neighborhood planning process evolved from understanding the history and current conditions of the neighborhood. This chapter briefly examines the history of Oakland and the Telegraph-Northgate neighborhood, as well as the neighborhood’s current demographics, housing stock and residential densities, crime patterns, and transit patterns.

## HISTORY OF OAKLAND AND TELEGRAPH-NORTHGATE

### The Ohlone

The first inhabitants of the Bay Area were the Ohlone people, a coastal tribe that sustained itself through fishing and hunting. As California was settled by the Spanish, missions were established and the Ohlone were forced to abandon their traditional lifestyle and resettle around the missions. Due largely to diseases from the Spanish settlers, the Ohlone’s population diminished and only a few of the original inhabitants survived.<sup>1</sup>

### Oakland’s Roots

The land that now makes up Oakland was first deeded by the Spanish government to Luis Maria Peralta in 1822. Soon after Mexico won independence from Spain, American settlers from the east began settling on the west coast. The Peralta family slowly lost control of their land after the arrival of the redwood-hungry settlers. By 1860, nearly all of the redwoods in Oakland and the hills were logged.<sup>2</sup>

By 1846, California was under American control. While gold was never discovered in Oakland’s hills, the city’s roots took hold during the gold rush. In May of 1850, three men—Horace W. Carpentier, Edson Adams and Andrew J. Moon—began laying the groundwork for the town of Oakland. They leased land from the Peraltas and began selling smaller pieces to new settlers (an illegal act because the United States had recognized Peralta’s claims to the land). Edson, Adams, and Moon hired Julius Kellersterger to design Oakland’s street grid. Using the existing stagecoach roads—today San Pablo and Telegraph Avenues—Kellersterger designed a street grid typical of nineteenth-century cities. On May 4, 1852, the City of Oakland was incorporated.<sup>3</sup>

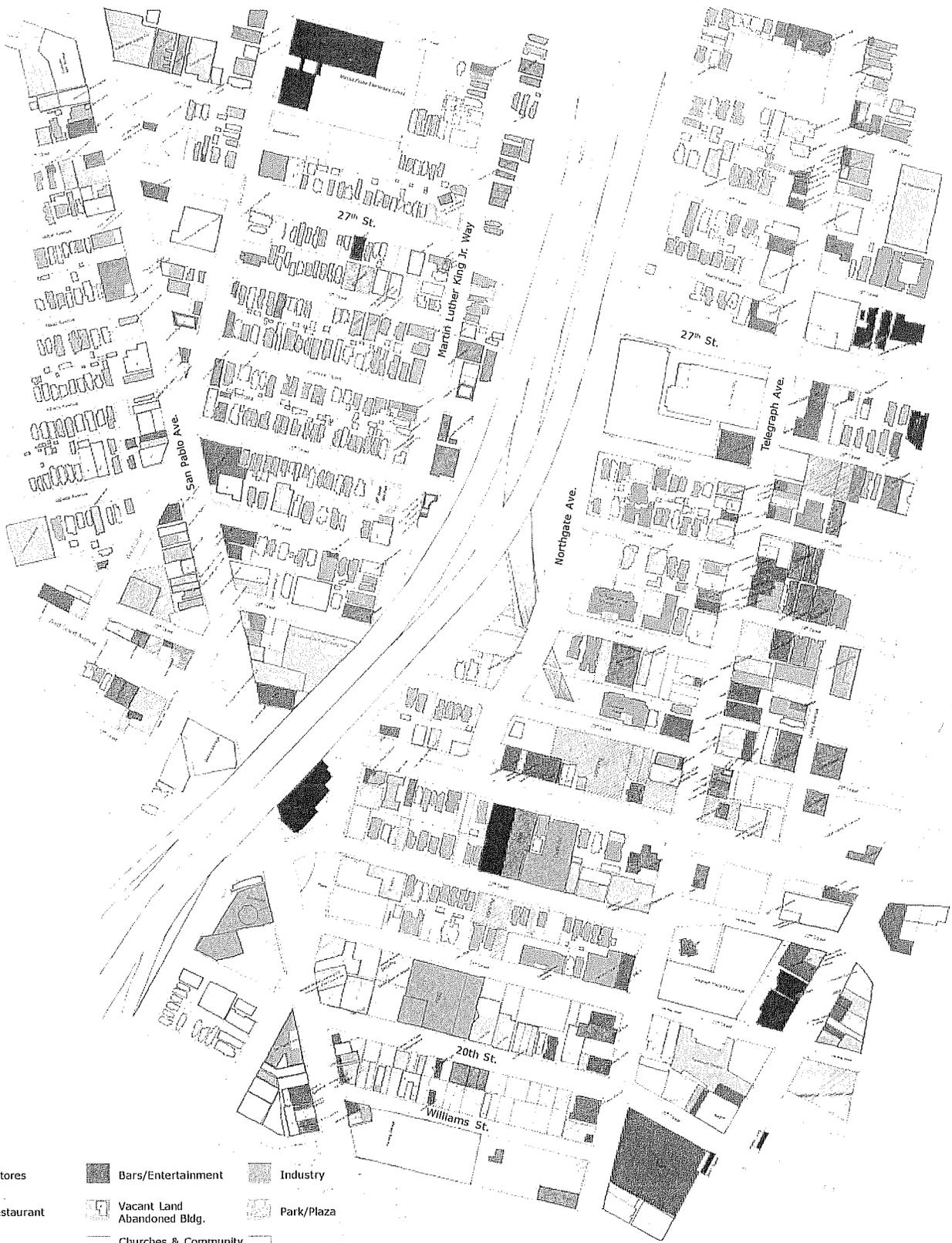
In juxtaposition to the wild city of San Francisco, Oakland grew to be more “civilized”: churches, orderly schools and homes were built along the street grid. The city’s population mushroomed in the 1850s and 1860s as San Franciscans sought refuge from the hectic city across the bay.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Beth Bagwell, *Oakland, the Story of a City* (Oakland: Oakland Heritage Alliance, 1982), 5.

<sup>2</sup> Bagwell, 8.

<sup>3</sup> Bagwell, 15.

<sup>4</sup> Bagwell, 40.



- |                               |  |  |
|-------------------------------|--|--|
| Retail Stores                 | Bars/Entertainment                         | Industry   |
| Food/Restaurant               | Vacant Land Abandoned Bldg.                | Park/Plaza   |
| Commercial Office             | Churches & Community Service Organizations | Parking Lot  |
| Public Agencies/Institutional | Neighborhood Barbers & Laundromats         | Parking Structure  |
| Single Family Residential     | Hotel                                      | Example of Mixed-Use: Retail below with Multi-Family above |
| Multi-Family Res. 2-10 units  | Auto-related                               |  |
| Multi-Family Res. 11 units+   | Utilities                                  |  |

Figure 4  
**Contemporary Community Character**

## The Impact of the Railroad

Oakland's next transformation was brought by the building of the transcontinental railroad. With a population of approximately 10,500, Oakland was the railroad's terminus. On November 8, 1869, the first transcontinental train roared to a stop at 7<sup>th</sup> Street and Broadway.

Trade and heavy industry flourished on the railroad's infrastructure and the power of steam engines. Cotton, lumber and wheat were all processed in Oakland's factories. Other industries developed, including carriages, eucalyptus products and breweries. Agriculture began to replace the dominance of mining and cattle ranching, spurring new canneries and cotton mills. With the influx of people brought by the railroad, Oakland was transformed from a picturesque town into a bustling city.<sup>5</sup>

By 1870, Oakland was the second largest city in California. It boasted stately residences with expansive lawns, views of the bay, and a Mediterranean climate. During this time, the Telegraph-Northgate neighborhood was filled with elaborate houses. A few of these remain today, including the Kelsey House (now part of the Elmwood Apartments) on 24<sup>th</sup> Street.

From 1870 to 1890 the city built its water, sewer, parks and electrical systems. In 1891, Oakland installed its first electric streetcar system, which grew into one of the most extensive streetcar systems in the United States. Broadway, Telegraph and San Pablo Avenues were the first three major streets served by streetcars. Commerce thrived along these major corridors as residents from all over Oakland came to shop. A strong downtown emerged, as all of the transit lines terminated at 14<sup>th</sup> Street and Broadway. Between the main streets, land was developed for residences.<sup>6</sup>

## 1906 Earthquake

San Franciscans fled to Oakland after the devastating earthquake and fire of 1906. Oakland's population was 67,000 in 1900, and by 1910 it had more than doubled, rising to 150,000. As the population rose, Mayor Frank K. Mott created a vision of the city that is still apparent in Oakland today. Under his administration, the port was transferred to public hands, a park system was developed, museums and libraries were built, and streetlights were installed. Oakland annexed eastern and northern neighborhoods, including Claremont and Rockridge. In the Telegraph-Northgate neighborhood, Sears opened in 1929, and would serve as an anchor for the next 50 years. Sears' customer base included all of Oakland and neighboring cities.

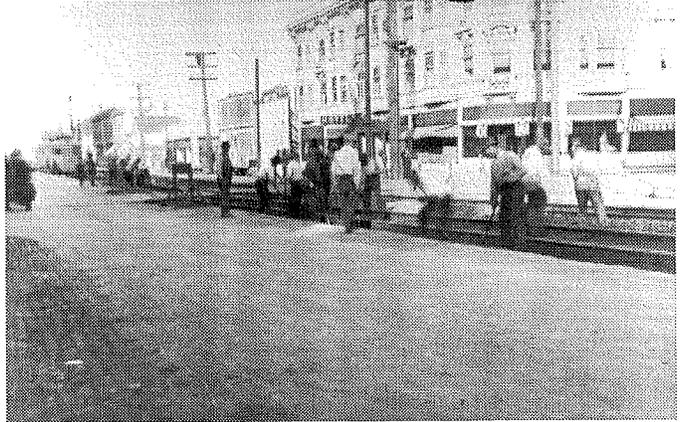
## Depression

Like every major city in the United States, Oakland was hit hard by the depression. Next to Detroit, Oakland was the second largest automobile manufacturer in the country. Workers lost their jobs at staggering rates, although the construction of the Bay Bridge provided some employment relief with the creation of several hundred jobs.

<sup>5</sup> Bagwell, 82.

<sup>6</sup> Bagwell, 160.

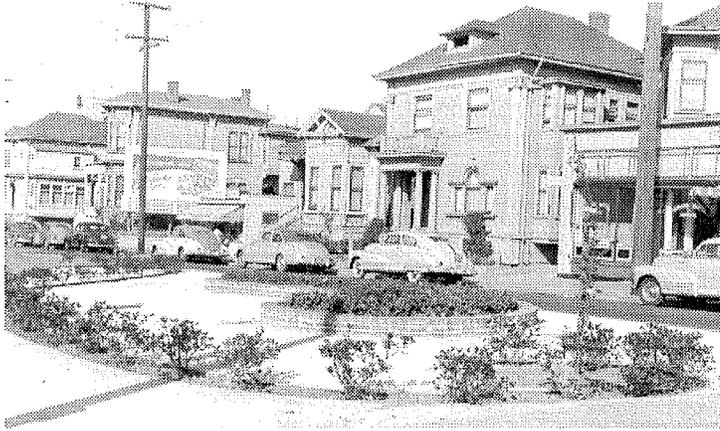
*Workers making improvements on the Grove Street rail, 1918 (now Martin Luther King Jr. Way)*



*Kelsey House, 1896*

## World War II

Oakland's industrial base proved to be the city's economic salvation during World War II. Shipbuilding surged: in 1943, the shipyards were active 24-hours a day. Thirty-five percent of all ships built on the Pacific came from Oakland shipyards. Food packing also emerged as a major wartime industry. Oakland's population grew once again as workers from around the country, still recovering from the Depression, made their way to the West Coast. Oakland's population jumped from 302,163 in 1940 to 400,395 in 1945. The promise of jobs drew a diverse workforce of African Americans, Midwesterners, and women. Wartime prosperity brought new stores, restaurants and nightclubs. Some of the best jazz clubs on the West Coast were located in downtown Oakland.



*San Pablo Avenue and 21<sup>st</sup> Street, 1948*

## Postwar

In the 1950s, Oakland began to experience problems familiar to many American cities. Freeway expansion—which particularly impacted West Oakland and the Telegraph-Northgate neighborhood—ripped through many older Oakland neighborhoods. The streetcar system was dismantled by the automobile industry, and the car allowed the middle class to flee to the suburbs, aided by segregationist housing policies. Oakland was left with a declining tax base and fewer customers for downtown businesses. The city's aging infrastructure was in need of repair, and racial tensions were on the rise. As conditions

worsened through the 1960s, 1970s and 1980s, banks, businesses, and residents left Oakland for the more prosperous suburbs. The Loma Prieta earthquake in 1989 was the final blow for many businesses in downtown Oakland and the Telegraph-Northgate neighborhood. Buildings damaged in the earthquake were abandoned, and have sat vacant for the past decade.

## Oakland Today

Today, Oakland is seeking to cope with decades of disinvestment with a myriad of revitalization programs. Downtown has won large federal government buildings, a city center with offices and retail, and the recently completed City Hall plaza. In its older neighborhoods, Oakland has focused on revitalizing the main streets where commerce used to thrive.

## Telegraph-Northgate Neighborhood

The departure of Sears from 27<sup>th</sup> Street and Telegraph Avenue in 1993 was a blow to the retail corridor. Dependent on Sears as an anchor, smaller businesses folded, and the neighborhood sank deeper into poverty. In the past few years, however, the vacancy rate is slowly dropping. Storefronts are filling up with small businesses, many catering to a Korean clientele, as well as small art galleries. Since the 1950s, the neighborhood has also seen considerable residential housing development for low-income populations, now constituting an important part of the neighborhood fabric.

## NEIGHBORHOOD DEMOGRAPHICS

The US Department of Census divides the area of Telegraph-Northgate into three tracts; however, only portions of these tracts are located in the neighborhood. Thus, the demographic information listed below uses data from specific census block groups. The Telegraph-Northgate neighborhood includes block groups 3 and 4 of Tract 4013, block group 3 of Tract 4014 and block group 1 of Tract 4028. Although the 1990 census information used here is dated, it does provide guidelines to the ethnic and economic makeup of the neighborhood.

Telegraph-Northgate's population totals 3,249 in 1,570 households. The neighborhood reflects the diversity of Oakland: 52 percent of the neighborhood's population is black; 22 percent white; 18 percent Asian; one percent Native American; and other seven percent. Twelve percent of the residents also identify as persons of Hispanic origin and another race or ethnicity.

The Telegraph-Northgate neighborhood is categorized as a low-to very low-income neighborhood. The poverty rate is 22 percent (compared to 13 percent for the United States as a whole). The median household income is \$12,303, far below Oakland's median of \$27,095, Alameda County's of \$37,544 and California's of \$35,748. Twenty-three percent of the households are dependent on public assistance; 34 percent on Social Security. Eighty-one percent of households in the area are one or two person households. (Refer to Table 1: Population and Households.)

Table 1

**Population and Households**

	<b>Telegraph-Northgate Neighborhood</b>	<b>City of Oakland</b>
<b>Population and Household Comparison</b>		
Population	3,249	372,242
Households	1,570	144,521
Average Household Size	2.06	2.52
<b>Population by Ethnicity</b>		
Black	52%	43%
White	22%	28%
Asian/Pacific Islander	18%	14%
Hispanic/Of Hispanic Origin	*	14%
Other	7%	less than 1%
<b>Household Income Distribution</b>		
Less than \$25,000	77%	46%
\$25,000-\$74,999	22%	43%
\$75,000 and above	less than 1%	11%
Median Household Income	\$12,303	\$27,095
Households on Public Assistance	23%	18%
Households on Social Security	34%	23%
Persons with Poverty Status	22%	19%
<b>Persons in Household</b>		
1	60%	
2	21%	
3+	18%	
<i>Information compiled from the 1990 census.</i>		
<i>* 12% of Telegraph-Northgate residents also identify as persons of Hispanic origin and another race or ethnicity.</i>		

NEIGHBORHOOD BACKGROUND

Table 2 **Neighborhood Housing**

Units in Structure	Number of Structures	
1 and duplex	330	19%
3-9	37	22%
10-49	442	26%
50+	518	30%
Other	66	4%
Total units	1,735*	

*\* The 1990 census records a total of 1,743 units of housing. This table accounts for 1,735 units of housing, and the remaining 8 are not accounted.*

Years Structures Built	Number of Units	
1939 or earlier	760	44%
1940-1959	331	19%
1960-1979	287	34%
1980-1990	50	3%
Total	1,428*	

*\* The 1990 census records a total of 1,743 units of housing. This table accounts for 1,428 units of housing, and the remaining 315 are not accounted.*

**RESIDENTIAL LAND-USE PATTERNS**

The Telegraph-Northgate neighborhood provides a wide range of housing options, which is apparent in the neighborhood's landscape. Between Telegraph Avenue and the freeway, there are single family homes, homes that have been converted into multiple residential units, and apartment buildings that range from two to 12 stories. The larger apartment buildings—Satellite Senior Homes, Northgate Terrace, Hamilton Apartments—are located in the eastern section of the neighborhood. From the freeway to San Pablo Avenue, most of the housing stock is single family homes and homes that have been divided into smaller units. Along the San Pablo corridor, the densities increase: the corridor is lined with private single-room occupancy hotels as well as non-profit housing for seniors and homeless women.

The neighborhood's housing structures were constructed in three main time periods: 44 percent were built before 1939; 19 percent were built from 1940 to 1959; 34 percent were built from 1960 to 1979. Only 50 structures

Table 3 **Social Service and Housing Providers**

	Year Built	Units	New/Rehab	Stories	HUD	Section 8	Fixed Rent*	Clients
<b>Friendly Manor</b>	1996	26	Rehab	3	yes		yes	transitional housing for women
<b>Hamilton Apartments</b>	1997	92	Rehab	6	yes			formerly homeless
<b>Northgate Terrace</b>	1970	200	New	12		yes		low-income seniors
<b>Providence House</b>	1991	41	New	4	yes			physically disabled/ living with HIV
<b>Rosa Parks</b>	1999	16	Rehab	3				mentally and physically disabled
<b>St. Vincent de Paul</b>	1999	8	New	2			yes	low-income families
<b>San Pablo Hotel</b>	1995	144	Rehab	5	yes		yes	low-income seniors
<b>Satellite Senior Homes</b>	1971	150	New	10	yes			low-income seniors

*\* Private or multiple funding sources.*

*Information compiled from the 1990 census and phone survey conducted in July 2000. Several of the buildings were rehabilitated or constructed after 1990, therefore these units are not accounted for in previous tables.*



## Should Telegraph-Northgate Start a HOMEOWNERSHIP CAMPAIGN?

One of the strategies often used to provide stability for a neighborhood's existing residents is to increase the local rate of homeownership. Telegraph-Northgate, however, finds itself in a unique set of circumstances: 23 percent of the households are on public assistance and 34 percent depend on Social Security; most of the housing stock is multiple-unit structures and over 600 housing units are already run by non-profits that provide secure housing and supportive services to their residents.

Given the number of households that are low- to very low-income, ownership would require heavy subsidies for down payments and assistance with monthly mortgage payments. Ownership is a possibility for those residents who are renting in the private market and who do not receive public assistance. In multiple unit structures, making homeownership a possibility for renters requires approaching the

owner to convert the apartments to condominiums or cooperatives, which is common in cities like New York and Chicago.

If a homeownership drive emerges as a priority for community members, an assessment is needed to determine what buildings should be targeted for ownership and which community members can afford to buy their own units. Any homeownership program would need to outline funding and assistance from federal, state and city sources. Oakland provides loans of up to \$30,000 for low- and moderate-income first-time homebuyers. In Chicago, the Location Efficient Mortgage program works with participating lenders to evaluate applicants who are located near transit facilities and do not own a car. These potential home-buyers qualify for homes that are typically out of their financial range, and the down payments are reduced.

were built between 1980 and 1990. Since 1990, the major housing developments include Providence House, Hamilton Apartments and the San Pablo Senior Hotel. As a result, the architecture is a mix of historic and modern, and the densities vary. Only 19 percent of the housing stock is single family homes or duplexes; the rest is comprised of structures with three or more units. Thirty percent of the housing stock is located in buildings with more than 50 units. (Refer to Table 2: Neighborhood Housing.)

The neighborhood has a high renter to owner ratio: renters occupy 94 percent of all units compared to six percent owner-occupied units. The majority of residents pay less than 30 percent of their income in housing costs, and 40 percent of residents spend more than a third of their income on housing. While no single landlord owns a majority of the property in the Telegraph-Northgate neighborhood, a few landlords own multiple properties. Social service providers own and maintain a significant portion of the housing—677 units. In addition to safe, stable housing, many of these organizations also provide social and medical services to seniors, disabled individuals, or formerly homeless people. (Refer to Table 3: Social Service and Housing Providers.)

### CRIME IMPACTS

Crime and the sense that it cannot be controlled have a deep impact on neighborhood and community attitudes. According to the Police Districts and Crime Patterns Map (refer to Figure 5), Telegraph-Northgate is heavily impacted by criminal activity. A total of 239 crimes were reported in the neighborhood in 1998.

The neighborhood is split by two police districts and further divided by four community policing districts: 4x, 6x, 7x and 8x. Each district is assigned separate neighborhood services coordinators and community policing officers. The majority of the crime is directed towards

NEIGHBORHOOD BACKGROUND

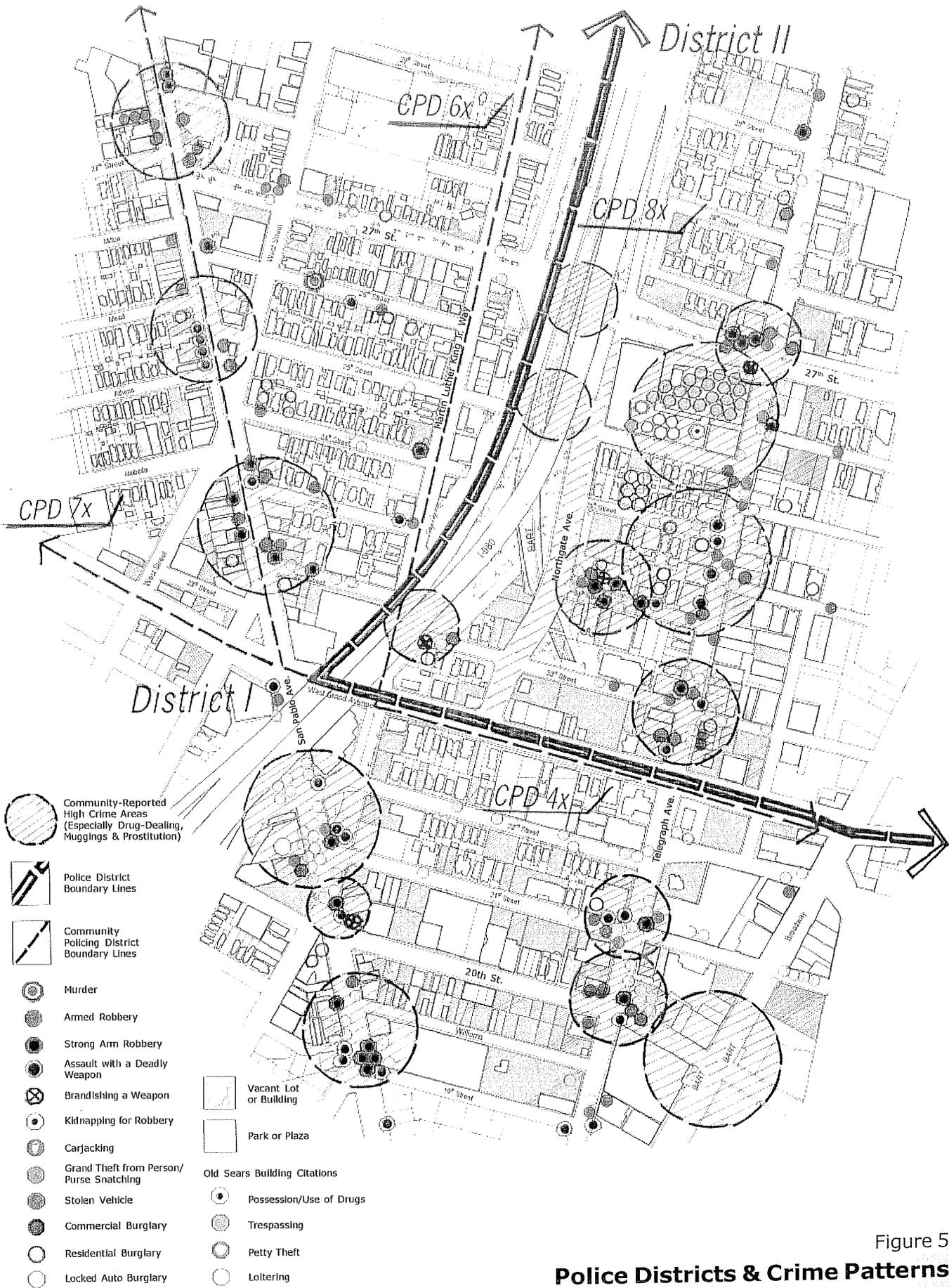


Figure 5  
**Police Districts & Crime Patterns**

automobiles. Locked auto burglaries totaled 115 in 1998, making up 39 percent of all crimes that took place in the neighborhood. Twenty-one vehicles were reported stolen. There were also 50 robberies, 25 drug possessions and 24 trespassing or loitering acts reported.

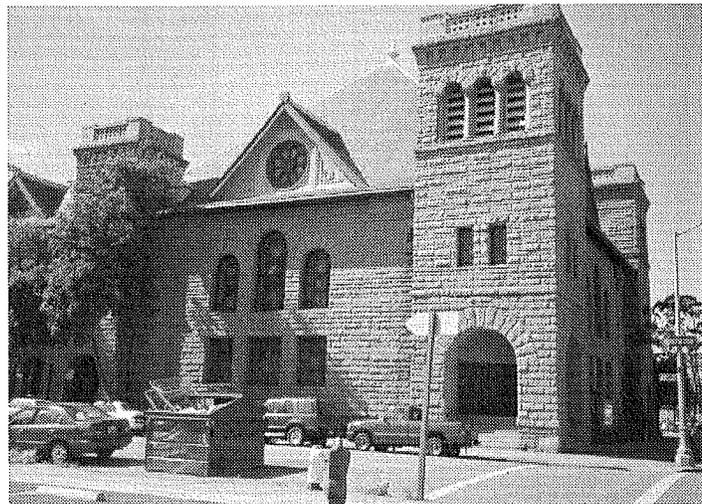
Most of the crime takes place in or around vacant buildings, empty lots, and parking lots. Criminal activity is heightened in poorly maintained areas, on streets empty of people or in front of abandoned buildings.

## HISTORIC COMMERCIAL AREAS AND BUILDINGS

The Telegraph-Northgate neighborhood is filled with historic buildings. Forty-four percent of the structures in the neighborhood were built before 1939. Many residents consider these buildings an asset and want them to be rehabilitated to retain the neighborhood's unique identity. Hamilton Apartments and the San Pablo Hotel are excellent examples of rehabilitated historical buildings that have been recently converted into affordable housing.

The following map categorizes neighborhood buildings by historic significance according to national historic standards. Several buildings fall into the category of major historical importance (rated A and B). The rest of the buildings identified on the map are of locally historic importance (rated C). The buildings rated as C do not appear eligible for the National Register because their historic importance is not deemed significant enough to preserve. The final designation on the map is for buildings that would increase in historical significance if restored. This category includes the former Sears building.

The outlined districts are areas of secondary importance: areas of historical, visual or architectural value that contain a high number of properties with C ratings. These districts, identified by the community, generally include buildings that are superior or visually important examples of a particular style, type or convention. Most of these buildings were constructed prior to 1906. (Refer to Figure 6: Historic Commercial Areas & Buildings in the Uptown Area.)



*First Baptist Church on 22<sup>nd</sup> Street and Telegraph Avenue*

## TRANSIT SERVICE AND FACILITIES

The neighborhood lies close to downtown Oakland, making it accessible on foot or by public transit to both local and regional destinations. Twelve AC Transit bus lines, the 19th Street BART station and the Greyhound bus station serve the neighborhood. With its proximity to downtown, the neighborhood has access to a dozen additional AC Transit lines, ferry service and Amtrak.

Community members of the neighborhood rely heavily on public transit. Many of the residents are seniors and/or physically disabled. Forty-eight percent of the residents use public transit, walk or bicycle as their means to get to work. (Refer to Table 4: Transportation to Work.)

Despite AC Transit budget cuts in 1995, all of the bus lines that pass through Telegraph-Northgate still have weekend and night service, with the exception of one line. All of the bus lines run on the major corridors. (Refer to Table 5: AC Transit Service.)

Overall, community members are satisfied with the level of transit service, but they want improved transit facilities such as bus bulbs, shelters, and more trash cans. Oakland removed its bus shelters several years ago in an effort to prevent crime and graffiti. Acknowledging its



Figure 6  
**Historic Commercial Areas & Buildings in the Uptown District**



NEIGHBORHOOD BACKGROUND

**Parking Land Use Coverage Notes**

- Study Area I: I-980 to Valley/Mid-Block of Telegraph 38%  
West Grand Avenue to 27th Street
- Study Area II: San Pablo to Broadway 54%  
Williams to West Grand Avenue

Figure 7  
**Surface & Structure Parking  
Land-Use Patterns**

Table 4 **Transportation to Work**

**Travel to work from Telegraph-Northgate**

Drove private vehicle alone	52.2%
Public Bus, Streetcar, Trolley	18.8%
Bicycle, Walk	9.1%
BART	6.4%
Worked at home and other means	5.7%
Carpooled	5.5%
Taxi, Motorcycle	1.5%
Railroad, Ferry	.9%

*Information compiled from the 1990 census.*

mistake and the importance of shelters for transit riders, the City Council recently released a request for proposals for a citywide bus shelter installation and maintenance contract. In the next year and a half, Oakland will determine locations around the city for bus bulbs that provide seating, lighting and trash cans. The neighborhood association will work with the Department of Public Works to locate bus shelters along San Pablo Avenue, Martin Luther King Jr. Way, and Telegraph Avenue.

**SURFACE AND PARKING STRUCTURES**

It is important to note the large amount of parking in the Telegraph-Northgate neighborhood. Surface and structured parking use 54 percent of the land from San Pablo Avenue to Broadway and from Williams Street to West Grand Avenue, and 38 percent of the land from I-980 to Telegraph Avenue and West Grand Avenue to 27<sup>th</sup> Street. (Refer to Figure 7: Surface and Structure Parking and Land Use Patterns.)

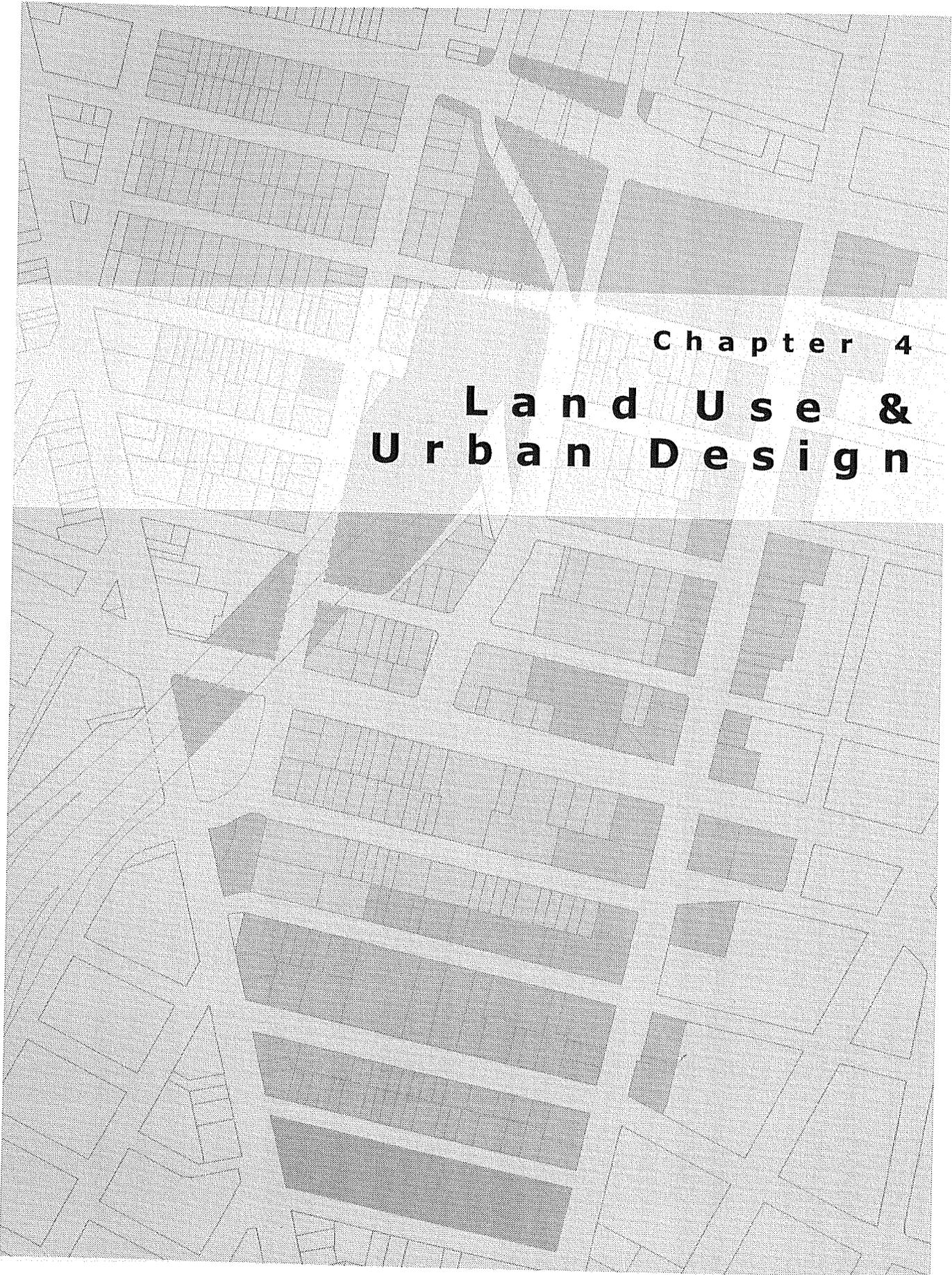
Parking affects the neighborhood in a number of ways. It acts as an incentive for drivers, who park in the neighborhood and commute by BART to San Francisco and other destinations. It underutilizes valuable land. The lots that are empty at night create opportunities for crime and preserve land for cars that could instead be used for housing, retail space or parks.

Table 5 **AC Transit Service**

Bus Line	Street
40,40L, 43	Telegraph Avenue
12, 14, 15	Martin Luther King Jr. Way
72, 72L, 73	San Pablo Avenue
12	West Grand Avenue
B, K	Routes that run during commute hours

*Information compiled from AC Transit bus service maps.*

NEIGHBORHOOD BACKGROUND



Chapter 4

**L a n d U s e &  
U r b a n D e s i g n**

## CHAPTER 4

*This chapter explains the existing land-use policies that apply to the neighborhood, followed by a set of proposed new land-uses and urban design standards, developed by Urban Ecology with extensive community input. Urban design guidelines for new development are outlined at the end of this chapter.*

### EXISTING GENERAL PLAN ZONING AND URBAN DESIGN

The City of Oakland approved an updated Transportation and Land Use Element of the General Plan in 1998. In that Element, Telegraph-Northgate is split between the Central/Chinatown “Downtown” and the West Oakland planning area boundaries. The Element describes three major land use designations within the Telegraph-Northgate neighborhood:

#### *Central Business District*

This classification is intended to encourage and enhance the downtown area as a high density, mixed-use urban center of regional importance and a primary hub for business, communications, office, government, high technology, retail, entertainment, and transportation. Maximum non-residential floor-area ratio (FAR) is 20.0 and maximum residential density is 300 dwelling units per acre.

#### *Urban Residential*

This classification is intended to maintain and enhance multi-unit, mid-rise or highrise residential development with ground floor commercial and public facilities. Where detached housing occurs, zoning should be structured to create transition areas, with maximum allowable density of 125 dwelling units per acre.

#### *Mixed Housing Type Residential*

This classification is intended to maintain and enhance residential development with live/work, small commercial enterprises, schools and other small-scale compatible civic uses.

The language of these designations suggests a diverse cityscape. However, we submit that in practice, the designations will prove too vague to ensure community stability or a well-designed downtown. The fact that the Telegraph-Northgate neighborhood straddles two planning areas in the General Plan reflects a common perception that the historic residential neighborhoods surrounding downtown Oakland lack cohesion and identity. These neighborhoods are thus given a subordinate planning status in relationship to downtown. There also appears to be greater emphasis on attracting new developments along the historic commercial corridors of downtown and less on revitalizing the historic residential neighborhoods. In the General Plan, the main strategies for the neighborhood are maintaining Grand Avenue “as the northern edge of downtown large-scale office development”, and revitalizing the Telegraph corridor “to accommodate both regional and local-serving uses while controlling the impacts of the corridor’s uses on adjoining housing areas”.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> City of Oakland, *City of Oakland General Plan* (Oakland: Community and Economic Development Agency, 1998), 184-5.

The city is currently updating its zoning code to correspond to the 1998 Transportation and Land Use Element. The zoning update is scheduled to be completed by 2001. Until new regulations are adopted, the old zoning ordinances apply. Within Telegraph-Northgate, the following zoning regulations apply:

*Central Business Service Commercial Zone (C-51 & C-55)*

This area is considered part of the “Central Business District” with a land-use mix of retail, commercial, offices and high-density residences (290 dwelling units/gross acre). The maximum non-residential FAR is 7.0, and may be exceeded by 10 percent on corner lots. There is no height limit except at boundaries with other zones. This designation is found in the area south of the northern lots facing West Grand Avenue.

*Community Shopping Zone (C-45 & C-40)*

This area is considered “Community or Regional Commercial” with a land-use mix of retail, commercial, office, and high-density residences (145 dwelling units per gross acre). The maximum non-residential FAR is 3.0, and may be exceeded by 10 percent on corner lots. There is no height limit except at boundaries with other zones. This designation is found in the area north of West Grand Avenue and east of the freeway.

*District Shopping Zone (C-30 & C-35)*

This area is considered “Community Commercial” with a land-use mix of retail, commercial, office, and high density residences (145 dwelling units per gross acre). The maximum non-residential FAR is 3.0, and may be exceeded by 10 percent on corner lots. There is no height limit except at boundaries with other zones. This designation is found in the area north of West Grand Avenue and east of the freeway.

*Small Lot Residential (R-36)*

This area is considered “Mixed-Housing Residential” with a variable residential density based on lot size with 26 dwelling units per gross acre. The height limit is three-stories or 30 feet.

These zoning ordinances do not match the 1998 General Plan. They are the only standards in place that guide the design of new development. In general, urban design guides how buildings will interact with each other and with the streets and sidewalks of downtown Oakland. Urban design also determines the bulk of buildings, their facades, and accessibility on the ground floor. In the larger cityscape, urban design guides the placement of buildings on the street grid, and can ensure that Oakland’s pedestrian-oriented environment is maintained.

Unfortunately, the city has not prepared a downtown plan or updated urban design standards for new development in downtown that is compatible with the General Plan. No design guidelines exist to suggest the development intent of the General Plan. Without a downtown plan, design standards, or development guidelines, it will be difficult for the city, developers, and the neighborhood to achieve a mutually satisfying agreement regarding the urban design of new projects in downtown or the Telegraph-Northgate neighborhood. Based on the current state of the zoning regulations, it appears that urban design decisions will be made on a project-by-project basis, as developers negotiate with the Redevelopment Agency. This is a cause for concern, as discussed further below.

## **CENTRAL DISTRICT URBAN RENEWAL PLAN**

Adopted in 1969, the Central District Urban Renewal Plan (CDURP) generally outlines the project boundaries as I-980, Lake Merritt, 27<sup>th</sup> Street and the Embarcadero. Nearly half of the Telegraph-Northgate neighborhood—east of the I-980 freeway and south of 27<sup>th</sup> Street—falls in the project boundaries. Made up of approximately 250 blocks, CDURP is divided into four main activity areas: City Center, Chinatown, Victorian Row/Old Oakland and Uptown.

The stated objectives of the Renewal Plan are to “eliminate urban blight within the project area” by:

- ▶ Strengthening the project area’s existing role as an important office center for administrative, financial, business service, and governmental activities.
- ▶ Revitalizing and strengthening the Oakland Central District’s historic role as the major regional retail center for the Metropolitan Oakland Area.
- ▶ Establishing the project area as an important cultural entertainment center.
- ▶ Re-establishing the residential areas for all economic levels within specific portions of the project area.
- ▶ Providing for employment and other economic benefits to disadvantaged persons living within or near the project area.
- ▶ Restoring the historically significant structures within the project area.
- ▶ Improving the environmental design within the project area, including creation of a definite sense of place, clear gateways, emphatic focal points, and physical design which expresses and respects the special nature of each sub-area.<sup>2</sup>

The Uptown Retail Area was adopted in 1990 as a supplement to the Renewal Plan. The approximate boundaries for the Uptown Area include 14<sup>th</sup> Street to West Grand Avenue, and San Pablo to Franklin Avenues. The southern edge of the Telegraph-Northgate neighborhood is located within the Uptown Area. The Uptown Area is designated as a mix of retail, office and entertainment activities along Telegraph Avenue. The goal is to create a pedestrian-oriented area that takes advantage of the historic character and buildings. “The design and development of projects within the Activity Area shall encourage and promote the establishment of 24-hour activity within the area, incorporating an appropriate mix of retail, entertainment, office and residential activities to accomplish this objective.”<sup>3</sup> While the Uptown Retail Area is designated as mixed-use, the main objective is to create an entertainment center that acts as a regional draw. Most recently, the city has been considering a shift in emphasis in Uptown from exclusively entertainment/retail to a residential/office/retail mix.

The Renewal Plan does not address the needs of today’s residents and merchants of the Telegraph-Northgate neighborhood. As they noted throughout the planning process, Telegraph-Northgate community members prefer an incremental development pattern in order to build a thriving neighborhood with small-scale retail businesses that serve their everyday needs. The goal of creating a large regional-serving retail district with highrise hotel and office buildings around the Paramount and Fox Theaters runs counter to this. Again, without urban design guidelines or a downtown plan, the form projects will take is highly unpredictable and could result in a hodgepodge of highrises and lowrises, excessive parking, and buildings that ignore the street. Urban Ecology and the Telegraph-Northgate community strongly support a transition area between the small-scale residences within the neighborhood and the new Uptown Retail Area.

<sup>2</sup> City of Oakland, *Central District Urban Renewal Plan* (Oakland: City of Oakland, 1969), 3.

<sup>3</sup> City of Oakland, *The Retail Center and Rehabilitation Area Project, A Supplement to the Central District Renewal Plan of 1990* (Oakland: City of Oakland, 1997), 8.

## What is REDEVELOPMENT?

Many California cities are familiar with past blunders of urban renewal projects, more recently termed "redevelopment". In the worst cases, entire low-income communities were uprooted, such as the African-American and Japanese-American communities in the Fillmore District and the working-class apartment district in San Francisco's Yerba Buena Center. While redevelopment has a checkered past, it also represents a set of tools and a source of funds that can assist low-income neighborhoods in revitalization efforts that they control.

Approximately 400 cities and counties throughout California have adopted over 700 redevelopment plans. A redevelopment plan

provides a legal framework for planning and implementing revitalization activities in an area by establishing tax increment financing. Revitalization efforts include fostering businesses, creating jobs, stimulating private investment, rehabilitating and financing housing, and financing capital improvement projects. The main objective of these efforts is to alleviate blight.

Every city's Redevelopment Agency is able to accomplish these tasks because it is granted certain powers: improving dilapidated facilities, constructing public infrastructure, buying and selling land through eminent domain, mitigating environmental impacts and using tax increment financing.<sup>4</sup>

## What is TAX INCREMENT FINANCING?

When a local government adopts a Redevelopment Plan, the total assessed value of property within the project area is established as the "frozen base". For up to 45 years, most of the property tax revenues generated from increases in the assessed value above the frozen base will be allocated to the Redevelopment Agency. These revenues are called tax increment and can be used to finance anything from small-scale projects like façade improvements to larger projects like developing affordable housing and shopping centers.<sup>5</sup>

Oakland's Central District Renewal Plan was adopted in 1969 before legislation requiring citizen participation was enacted. In 1976, redevelopment law was revised to require Project Area Committees, made up of local residents and business owners, that review and recommend redevelopment plans. Oakland's

Redevelopment Agency can decide the extent of community participation in projects in the downtown and the Telegraph-Northgate neighborhood. In the recent past, the agency has involved the public solely on a project-by-project basis.

In 1980, redevelopment law was again revised to require an affordable housing set-aside. The Oakland Redevelopment Agency's approved 1999-2001 Budget for the project area totals \$119.9 million: \$49.7 million in capital projects, \$2.3 million in programs, \$58.5 million in debt service and other general activities, and \$9.4 million for the Low and Moderate Income Housing Fund. The total estimated budget for 2001-2004 is \$104.6 million and the total 5-year budget is \$224.5 million. Infrastructure improvements in the Telegraph-Northgate neighborhood qualify for these funds.<sup>6</sup>

<sup>4</sup> Seifel Associates, *Understanding Redevelopment Project Adoption and Implementation*. UC Berkeley Extension, 1999.

<sup>5</sup> Seifel Associates.

<sup>6</sup> City of Oakland, *Central District Redevelopment Project, Five Year Implementation Plan 1999-2004* (Oakland: City of Oakland, 1999), 1.

## PROPOSED NEIGHBORHOOD LAND-USE PLAN

Similar to other older residential neighborhoods that surround downtown Oakland, the Telegraph-Northgate neighborhood has a distinct history that should be reflected in the city's General Plan, zoning regulations and redevelopment plans. In part because of this neighborhood planning process, but also predating it, the neighborhood has a cohesive social identity that warrants bolstering through land-use designations and urban design guidelines.

The General Plan, Central District Urban Renewal Plan and current zoning regulations fail to recognize the Telegraph-Northgate neighborhood as a cohesive neighborhood. The General Plan includes the southern portion of the Telegraph-Northgate neighborhood to West Grand Avenue within the Central Business District, where the emphasis is on regional retail and highrise office development. The Renewal Plan, along with the General Plan, seeks to extend the Central Business District all the way up to 27<sup>th</sup> Street.

The following proposed land-use designations recognize the cohesive social identity of the Telegraph-Northgate neighborhood by further defining the neighborhood from downtown Oakland, strengthening Telegraph Avenue as the neighborhood's spine and preserving the residential cluster of houses and apartments located between Telegraph Avenue and the I-980 freeway. They seek to create a graceful transition from downtown to the neighborhood while balancing the need for more housing and commercial development with the needs of the neighborhood. The three proposed land-use designations are:

1. Downtown Transition
2. Telegraph Avenue Neighborhood-Commercial
3. Small Lot Residential

We propose that the City of Oakland adopt these designations for inclusion in the General Plan, the zoning code and the Renewal Plan. (Refer to Figure 8: Proposed Land-Use Designations.)

These land-use designations arose from a set of building typologies developed by Urban Ecology during the planning process. We chose this approach because the scale of buildings is a visual, easily understood way to define the character of the neighborhood. During community workshops, residents and merchants discussed the future of their neighborhood in terms of land use and scale: Where are future parks located? What type of retail do we need? What type of buildings do we want to see on Telegraph Avenue? How can we define the southern portion of the neighborhood? From their input, we defined buildings as courtyard residential, midrise residential towers, and highrise residential towers. These building typologies form the basis of the proposed land-use designations and urban design guidelines discussed below.

### 1. Downtown Transition Land-Use Designation

The intent of this designation is to create a high-density urban residential area with ground-floor retail for the part of the neighborhood that lies closest to downtown Oakland and the 19<sup>th</sup> Street BART Station. This area includes the north side of Williams Street (southern boundary), the east side of San Pablo Avenue (western boundary), the north side of 21<sup>st</sup> Street (northern boundary), and the west side of Telegraph Avenue (eastern boundary). The area south of Williams Street will remain part of the Central Business District. Specifically, the intent of these land-use designations is to define the edge of downtown and the boundary of the neighborhood at Williams Street.

The Downtown Transition land-use designation is intended to be an extension of downtown Oakland but at a slightly lower intensity of development. Public access is important, which means maintaining the existing street grid. The historical diversity of building design on individual lots is also important.



LAND USE & URBAN DESIGN

-  Central Business District
-  Transition
-  Telegraph Ave. Neighborhood-Commercial
-  Small Lot Residential
-  Parks & Plazas
-  Highway Arts & Landscape

Figure 8  
**Proposed Land-Use Designations**

## COMMUNITY MEMBERS' ATTITUDES TOWARD DEVELOPMENT AND MAYOR BROWN'S 10K EFFORT

Community members are acutely aware of the impacts of Mayor Jerry Brown's campaign to build housing for 10,000 new residents in downtown Oakland. New residents in the neighborhood mean an enhanced tax base and consumer base, and political leverage to secure needed retail and public resources. It means an opportunity to create a vibrant neighborhood in the heart of a world-class, 24-hour city.



For the past year and half, the Telegraph-Northgate Neighborhood Association has worked with developers to further shape new housing and retail along Telegraph Avenue. John Protopappas's Sears project, Phil Porter's dance studio and galleries along 23<sup>rd</sup> Street have been discussed and approved by the Association—demonstrating that community members are aware of the assets that development can bring. However, the community is seeking development on their terms—development that does not swallow the identity of the neighborhood or threaten the affordability of housing and business storefronts by sparking an escalation of real estate prices.

This phenomenon is occurring in nearly every city in the Bay Area. The region's unprecedented economic boom is

bringing investment to cities like Oakland, Richmond, and East Palo Alto, bypassed since the Loma Prieta earthquake by retailers and housing developers. Ironically, after years of tax incentives and land giveaways to entice investment, cities now find themselves barely in control of the development rush. In San Francisco, Oakland, Fremont, San Jose, and cities across the region, the use of land is being driven by market forces.

In this atmosphere, drawing development away from the edge and toward our urban centers has an accompanying complication: how to bring much-needed residential and commercial investment and yet avoid displacing residents of the neighborhoods that have experienced long-term poverty and disinvestment. This is the exact dilemma facing downtown Oakland and Telegraph-Northgate.

Throughout this process, the Telegraph-Northgate Neighborhood Association and Urban Ecology have worked to find ways to accommodate both large-scale downtown development and smaller-scale neighborhood development. Fortunately, the physical dimensions of the area allow both to take place. The fact that the neighborhood is distanced from downtown by a few blocks creates a rare opportunity to accommodate both through urban design and the scale of new development. In the transition zone discussed in this chapter, development gradually steps down from the high-rises of downtown to the mid-rise scale of the neighborhood. If the City of Oakland holds new development projects to these guidelines, it can accomplish something unique in the Bay Area: a world-class city with true socioeconomic diversity.

There are approximately 72 privately owned properties in this area, including a large property owned by PG&E. The aggregate lot area is 403,862 square feet (9.27 acres). Currently, this area is under-utilized. Daytime parking for downtown office workers is its primary use during the week. Besides the Paramount Theater, there is little nighttime activity in this part of downtown, unlike the Old Oakland and Jack London Square districts. It is one of the few areas in Oakland where the need for new housing could be met with high-density development.

**Building Typologies in the Downtown Transition**

Community members have been able to differentiate the needs of downtown Oakland from those of the neighborhood. They are aware of the tension that exists between the city’s priorities and neighborhood needs—which emerges most clearly in the Transition area. At the June 1999 workshop, community members discussed ideal physical and visual aspects of the Transition area. They supported a higher-density residential use on the southern border of the area as long as the new developments do not completely block the historic views of downtown. Since that workshop, Urban Ecology has explored three building types that would provide a mix of dwelling types with the majority of units designed for families.

**Midrise Residential Towers**

Because community members supported the midrise residential towers concept, Urban Ecology created a conceptual design of a 108-foot tower with 48 units on a nine story concrete frame structure over a ground floor retail concrete frame podium. A limited number of parking spaces were proposed in the ground floor and/or underground. This size and scale is similar to several buildings located in the neighborhood. The design was discussed with several developers, including John Protopappas of Madison Park Real Estate Investment Trust and Doug Shoemaker of Mission Housing Development Corporation. Based on their opinions, it appears that a tower would need to be closer to 80 units and 16 stories in order to gain an economy of scale that would make sense on today’s development spreadsheets. High land costs and the high cost of building in the Bay Area rendered the midrise residential tower infeasible.

**Highrise Residential Towers**

Urban Ecology then created a compromise proposal: a combination of four highrise residential towers (maximum 16 story/concrete frame) blended with smaller courtyard buildings. We found that this allowance for highrise towers can act as a basis for a graceful transition between downtown Oakland and the northern historic residential neighborhoods, including Telegraph-Northgate. At the same time, this designation still allows for the development of 870 units on 9.27 acres, a density of 94 dwelling units per acre, if the transition area was built out exclusively for residential development. This design proposal allows the city to build as many units as possible to meet downtown priorities *and* retain the identity of the neighborhood. (Refer to Figure 9: Proposed Telegraph-Northgate Transition Area and Downtown Oakland and Table 6: Building Typologies and Design Standards in Downtown Transition Area.)

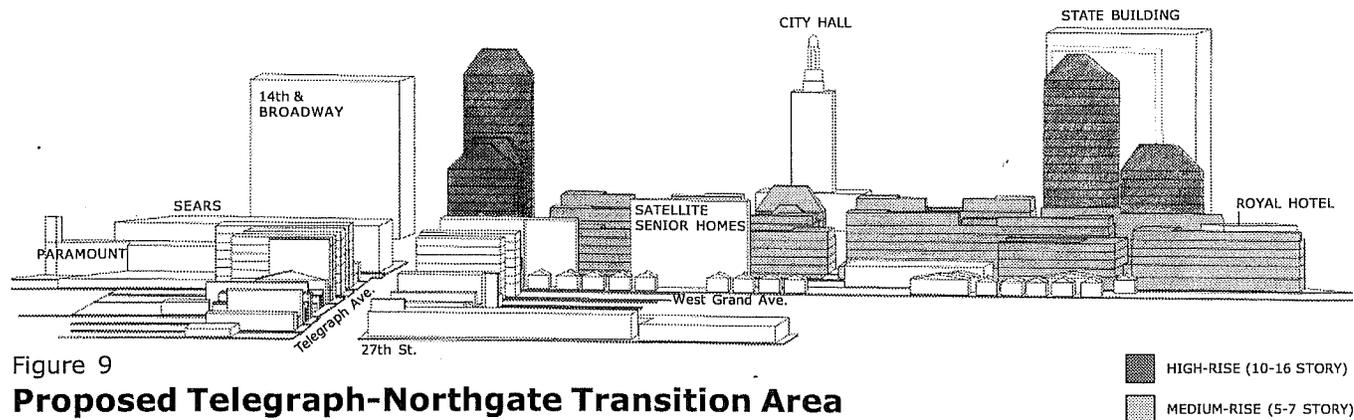


Figure 9  
**Proposed Telegraph-Northgate Transition Area & Downtown Oakland**

LAND USE & URBAN DESIGN

Table 6

**Building Typologies & Design Standards  
Downtown Transition Area**

Element	Design Guidelines Description
<b>Courtyard Residential Block Height</b>	<b>55'</b> Rooftop community recreation & mechanical equipment are exempt for purposes of measuring base height when under 25% of total roof area.
Percent of developable area at base height	90% (363,475 square feet=8.34 acres)
<b>Highrise Residential Building Tower Height</b>	<b>160'</b> Rooftop community recreation and mechanical equipment are exempt for purposes of measuring tower height when under 25% of total roof area.
Percent of developable area at tower height	510% (40,390 square feet=0.93 acres)
Maximum number of towers at maximum bulk & height	Four
Location of Towers	All towers shall face along Telegraph or San Pablo Avenues
Bulk of Towers	Maximum residential floor plan length 80' Maximum residential floor plan diagonal 109' Maximum residential floor plate 6,000 square feet
<b>Lot Coverage</b>	100% lot coverage to 55' height. 60% lot coverage above 55' height.
<b>Streetwall</b>	Minimum 70% block frontage required on Telegraph & San Pablo Avenues. All corners shall have streetwalls for a minimum distance of 50' in each direction.
<b>Open Space (Private)</b>	<b>70 square feet per dwelling unit</b> Private open space shall be individual patios, terraces or balconies adjacent to unit or common open space such as ground-level gardens, courtyards and pedestrian walkways, podium rooftop gardens and courtyards, and rooftop outdoor recreational area.
<b>Parking</b>	No off-street parking is required within the Downtown Transition and parking is limited to a maximum of one space for every three dwelling units.

**Courtyard Residential Development**

Courtyard residential development is designed to be three to four floors of wood-frame construction over a ground floor concrete podium. This type of construction is less expensive to build than midrise or highrise construction and poses less risk to developers. Recent developments of this design can achieve between 50-90 dwelling units per acre with 0.85-1.0 parking space for each unit. If built out at 70 dwelling units per acre, there could be 650 dwelling units in the Transition area based on a 100 percent courtyard development scenario, a difference of 106 dwelling units when compared to midrise residential towers. The difference in total dwellings is slight, while the urban design is much improved. These results suggest that the mix of courtyard and highrise development is the best choice for the neighborhood and downtown. This type of courtyard residential development is similar to projects being designed for Mission Bay in San Francisco. Nonprofit housing developments that are similar in construction include the 92-unit Hismen Hin-nu Terrace in Oakland, developed by East Bay Asian Local Development Corporation and designed by Pyatok Associates; the 119-unit Frank G. Mar Community Housing, developed by EBALDC/BRIDGE and designed by MacDonald Architects; and the 25-unit Del Carlo Court in San Francisco, developed by Mission Housing Development Corporation and designed by Soloman Architecture & Urban Design. (Refer to Table 6: Building Typologies & Design Standards in Downtown Transition Area.)

**2. Telegraph Avenue Neighborhood-Commercial Land-Use Designations**

The intent of this designation is to create a medium-density mixed-use district with commercial opportunities to serve the immediate surrounding residential neighborhoods and downtown office workers. This designation also intends to create ground-floor commercial spaces that allow small businesses to gain viability in the neighborhood with affordable rents. It preserves the variable small building footprint along Telegraph Avenue. All ground-floor lots facing Telegraph Avenue from 21<sup>st</sup> to 27<sup>th</sup> Streets shall be targeted for specialty retail goods and services, art galleries, restaurants, cafes, neighborhood-serving offices, and grocery stores. The goal is to retain the existing Korean merchants on Telegraph Avenue as well as to expand the choice of multicultural cuisine. The close proximity of daytime office workers offers an excellent customer base for restaurants and supporting businesses during lunch and dinner hours.

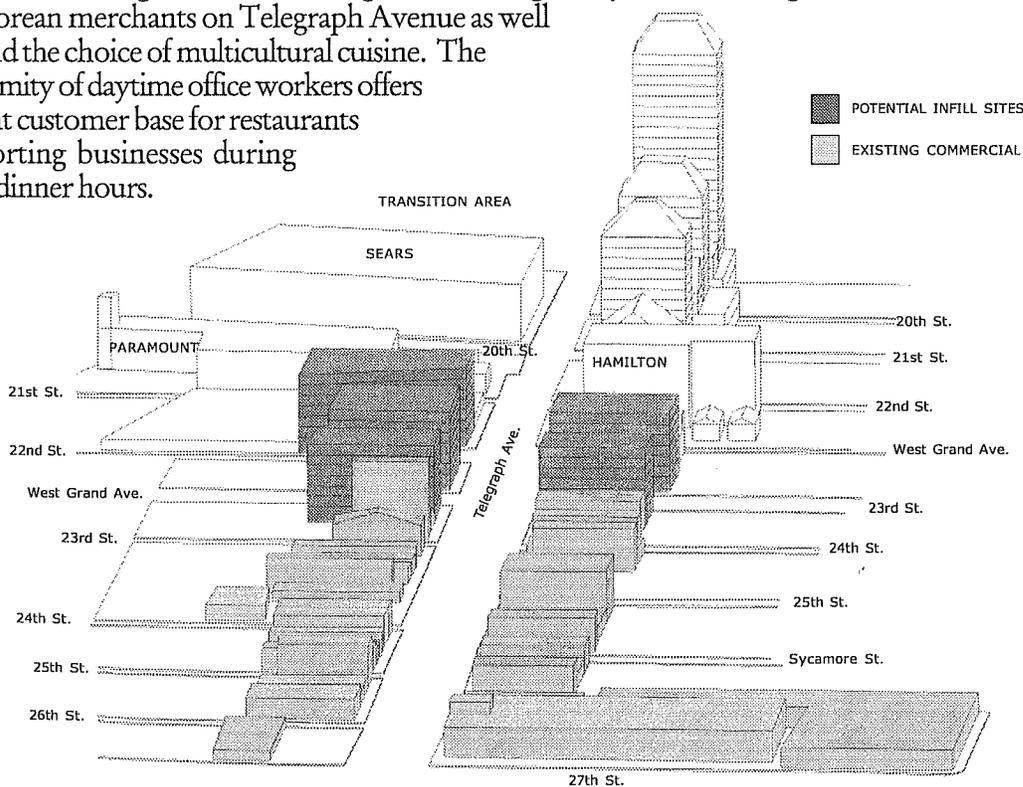


Figure 10  
**Potential for Infill Development Using  
 Proposed Neighborhood-Commercial Guidelines**

Table 7

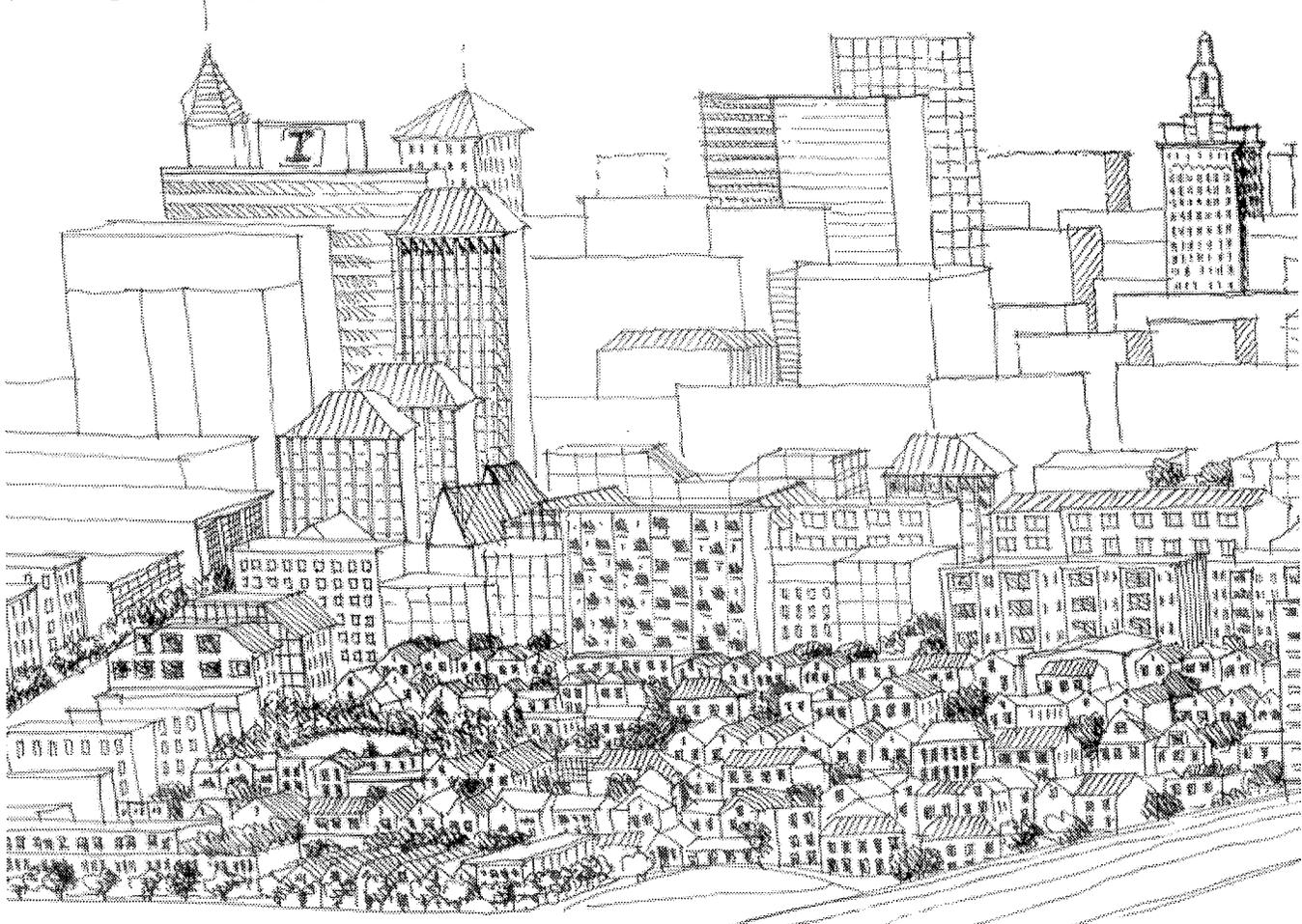
**Building Typologies & Design Standards**  
**Neighborhood-Commercial**

Element	Design Guidelines Description
<b>Courtyard Residential Block Height</b>	<b>Minimum 30', maximum 40'</b> Rooftop community recreation and mechanical equipment are exempt for purposes of measuring base height when under 25% of total roof area.
Percent of developable area at base height	70% (350,620 square feet=8.05 acres)
<b>Midrise Tower Residential Building Height</b>	<b>75'</b> Rooftop community recreation and mechanical equipment are exempt for purposes of measuring tower height when under 25% of total roof area.
Percent of developable area at tower height	30% (150,265 square feet=3.45 acres)
Maximum number of midrise buildings at maximum bulk and height	Seven
Location	All midrise buildings shall be located on corners along Telegraph Avenue.
Midrise Bulk	Maximum residential floor plan length 100' Maximum residential floor plan diagonal 112' Maximum residential floor plate 5,100 square feet
<b>Lot Coverage</b>	100% lot coverage to 40' height. 75% lot coverage above 40' height.
<b>Streetwall</b>	100% of block frontage required on Telegraph Avenue.
<b>Open Space (Private)</b>	<b>35 square feet per dwelling unit</b> Private open space shall be individual patios, terraces or balconies adjacent to unit or common open space such as ground level gardens, courtyards and pedestrian walkways, podium rooftop gardens and courtyards, and rooftop outdoor recreational area.
<b>Parking</b>	No off-street parking is required.
<b>Rear Yard</b>	25' minimum required above ground level

The bulk and scale of buildings within the Neighborhood-Commercial designation shall be compatible with the existing character of Telegraph Avenue. The designation includes a mixture of midrise tower residential buildings and buildings up to four stories with commercial use limited to the ground floor. However, commercial uses and features which could negatively impact residential livability are prohibited, such as auto related uses, financial services larger than 3,000 square feet, general advertising signs, drive-up facilities, highrise hotels and large-scale night clubs. Drinking-only establishments are restricted, depending upon the intensity of such uses already existing within the designation. Affordable residential dwellings are encouraged above the ground floor. Existing residential units are protected by prohibitions of upper-story conversions and limitations on demolitions. There is also an allowance for seven midrise-residential towers facing onto Telegraph Avenue on vacant and under-utilized lots, especially at the corners of West Grand Avenue and near the Downtown Transition land-use designation. (Refer to Figure 10: Potential for Infill Development Using Proposed Neighborhood-Commercial Guidelines and Table 7: Building Typologies and Design Standards in Neighborhood-Commercial.)

### 3. Small Lot Residential Land-Use Designation

The intent is for this land-use designation to remain the same as the current zoning regulations. A variable residential density based on lot size with 26 dwelling units/gross acre should be maintained and second units encouraged. The height limit should remain three stories, or 30 feet. Other neighborhood improvements are proposed for this residential area, including traffic calming (see Chapter Five-Circulation) and street trees (see Chapter Six-Open Space and Parks).



*Telegraph-Northgate Vision*

## URBAN DESIGN GUIDELINES

The urban design guidelines contained in this Plan are recommendations for both private and public development within the Telegraph-Northgate neighborhood. These guidelines are primarily focused on the prominent urban corridors of Telegraph and San Pablo Avenues and the Downtown Transition area.

There are several key urban design concepts that are important to the neighborhood. First is the maintenance of the existing historic street grid, which enhances the flow of pedestrians in a lively urban residential neighborhood. Second is the location of prominent urban-scale buildings on various corners along Telegraph and San Pablo Avenues. Third is to establish strong building edges along these two important urban corridors. By following these design guidelines, the goal is to establish a strong overall pattern of urban buildings, streets and open space that will contribute to the revitalization of the Telegraph-Northgate neighborhood as an important urban residential neighborhood adjacent to downtown Oakland.

### *Maintenance of Historic Public Street Grid*

Street closures are strongly discouraged in order to maintain the historic street grid and provide maximum public access to all buildings.

**“During the workshops, the idea of an urban village emerged: Telegraph-Northgate could be packed with mom and pop shops, trees and live music.”**

- Tim Zaricznyj, Chair of the Telegraph-Northgate Neighborhood Association

### *Street Level Retail Storefronts*

Activity facing public sidewalks is encouraged through ground floor retail spaces. Outdoor seating and well-designed storefronts with clear plate glass, display windows, and signage are encouraged.<sup>7</sup>

### *Frequent Building Entries*

Wherever possible, entrances to the residential lobbies should be located facing the public street or mid-block pedestrian walkways. For larger buildings, prominent entry lobbies and courtyards are strongly encouraged to create visual drama and a sense of place. Entrances to individual walk-up apartments and ground-level townhouses should also be encouraged to face neighborhood streets and walkways.

### *Street Corners*

Special design treatment and architectural detailing should be made to mark the important urban intersections along Telegraph and San Pablo Avenues, and to enhance the pedestrian environment of sidewalk corners. Urban design elements for street corners include street lighting, outdoor seating, trash cans, and planter boxes for flowers and shrubbery. Sidewalks should be widened, where feasible, to slow down turning traffic, enhance pedestrian activity, and shorten crosswalk distance. Ground-floor retail should be open and face the corners to generate pedestrian activity.

### *Mid-block Pedestrian Walkways*

Along with new courtyard developments, there should be public pedestrian access bisecting the long urban blocks between 20<sup>th</sup>, 21<sup>st</sup>, and 22<sup>nd</sup> Streets and West Grand Avenue. These walkways should complement the primary street system. Although used primarily for pedestrians, they may also be used for deliveries and emergency vehicles. Ground-floor retail and residential lobby entries should front the walkways, where feasible, in order to create a lively street life.

### *Urban Building Street Façades*

Street façades should be located on the property lines on Telegraph Avenue and in the Downtown Transition, except for occasional variations for building entrances, arcades, sidewalk cafes, outdoor seating, walk-up retail windows, and, where necessary, vehicular

<sup>7</sup> City of Oakland, *Neighborhood Commercial Façade Improvement Manual*. Oakland: City of Oakland, 1998.

access points. Curb cuts for parking are discouraged along Telegraph and San Pablo Avenues. Street façades should be composed with numerous window openings and made of durable exterior materials. Bays, balconies, terraces, arcades, and porches are encouraged. Blank walls and continuous series of garage doors are discouraged.

#### *Skyline Character*

The placement of taller buildings along Telegraph Avenue and in the Downtown Transition area is an important urban design consideration. These taller buildings should line up along the historic urban corridors of Telegraph and San Pablo Avenues to reinforce their prominent alignment to downtown Oakland. Also, the variety of highrise, midrise and courtyard massing should reflect the transition from the downtown, with its cluster of highrise skyscrapers, to the historic residential neighborhoods that surround downtown.

#### *Residential Private Open Space*

Where feasible, residential open space (balconies, terraces or patios adjacent to dwellings) should maximize sunlight, natural ventilation, and enhance the public pedestrian environment with greenery.

#### *Outdoor Building Lighting*

Lighting should be designed to enhance pedestrian and vehicular safety, minimizing dark areas without clear sightlines. Lighting of street façades should add visual drama to the urban environment.

#### *Parking Reductions*

In order to reduce the impact of parking garages on the ground level and the development cost of parking, there should be incentives to create alternative parking arrangements that reduce the need for a one-to-one ratio of parking spaces to dwelling units. Alternative parking arrangements include car sharing programs, transit passes or rent reductions for tenants without cars, location-efficient mortgages, and leasing parking spaces in nearby parking garages for tenants and homeowners.

#### *Location of On-site Parking*

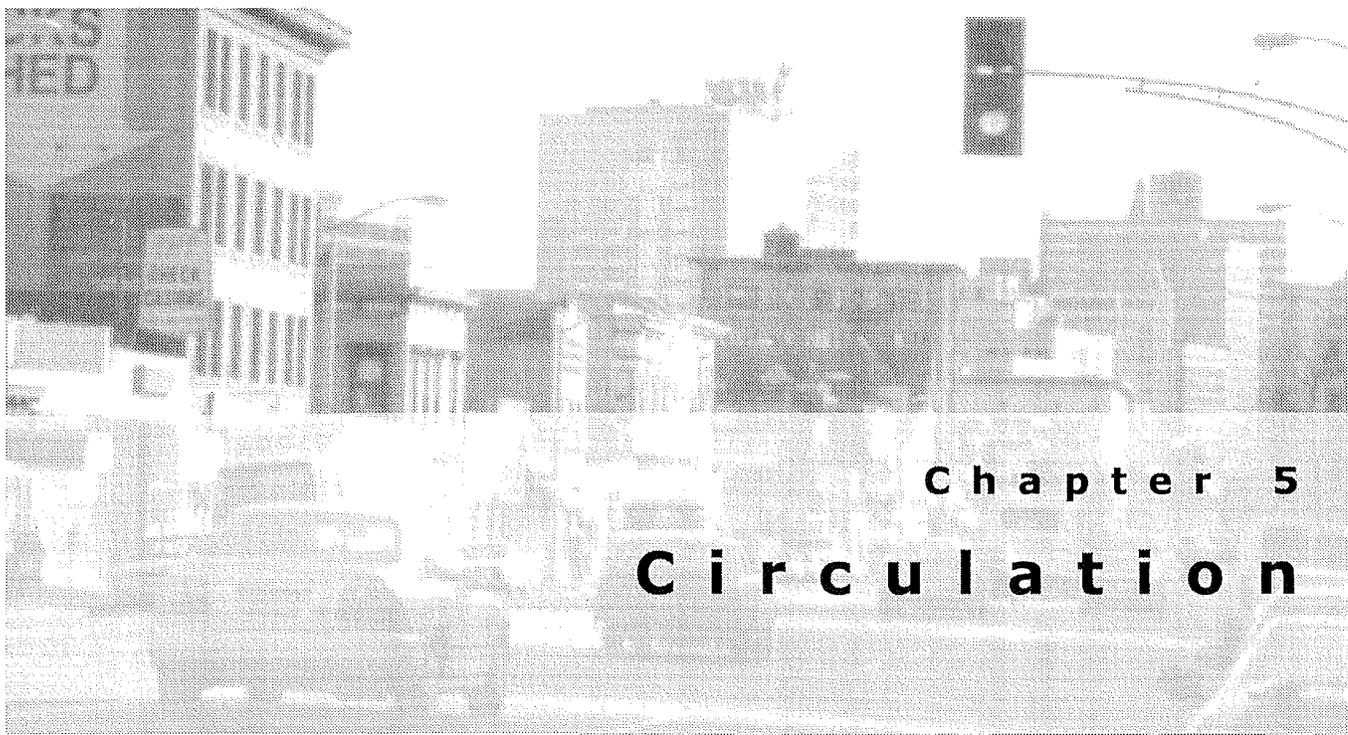
Parking for residential development should be located in the interior of the site and buffered from the street with dwelling units with street access, building entrance lobbies, exit stairs, common areas, community facilities, retail spaces, or landscaping. Garage openings for natural ventilation are encouraged but should be located above or below eye level and covered with visually attractive screening and landscaping. The number of vehicular access points and curb cuts should be minimized. Direct access from parking garages to building lobbies should be avoided; instead, access from garages should promote use of public sidewalks.

#### *Street Trees*

Street trees should be spaced regularly along the sidewalk, 20 to 30 feet apart. A limited number of similar native species should be planted in series to give each street its own character. Tree species should be selected so that, at maturity, they become a prominent feature of the streetscape. Planting pockets should have sufficient depth for tree root ball (twice the size of the root ball), good quality soil and under-drainage. Location of underground utility infrastructure should be coordinated to avoid interference with street tree roots.

#### *Street Furniture*

Street furniture should have an integrated design and include newsracks, trash cans, benches, light standards, utility covers, tree grates, public transit bus shelters, bollards and benches. Electrical transformer vaults should be placed underground.



Chapter 5  
**Circulation**



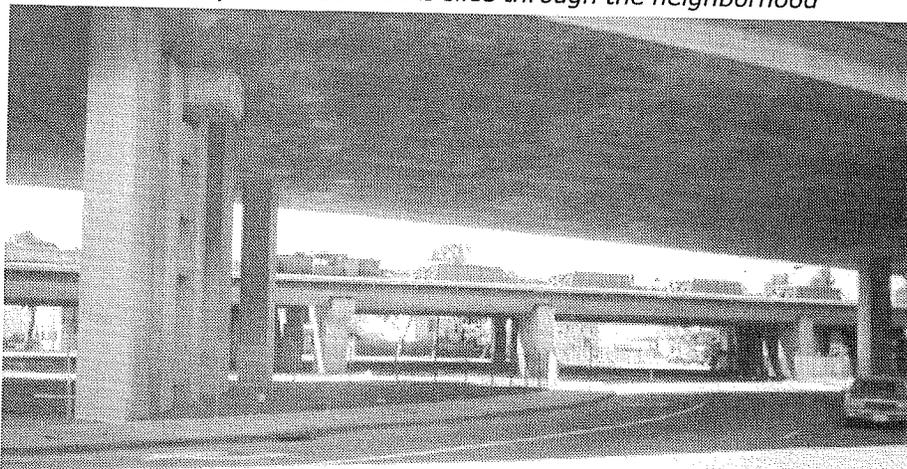
## CHAPTER 5

*The Telegraph-Northgate neighborhood is a major access point, thoroughfare and parking district for office workers employed in the Lake Merritt Office District of downtown Oakland. The existing traffic and parking patterns correspond to recent city policy for providing the best access between downtown Oakland and the regional freeway system—in this case, the east/west movement to access I-980.<sup>1</sup> This chapter will examine the existing traffic patterns, discuss the traffic calming strategy for the neighborhood, and the parking pattern.*

### EXISTING TRAFFIC PATTERNS

The existing traffic pattern for the Telegraph-Northgate neighborhood is dominated by the regional freeway system. In fact, the desire to provide easy freeway access to downtown Oakland is one of the main reasons for the decline of the neighborhood because the I-980 freeway cuts through the heart of the historic residential neighborhood street pattern. The three regional freeways that access downtown Oakland are the John B. Williams Freeway (I-980), the MacArthur Freeway (I-580), and the Nimitz Freeway (I-880). I-980 at the I-580 junction carries 90,000 vehicles per day, less than half the total of vehicles travelling along nearby stretches of I-580 (225,000 vehicles per day) and I-880 (210,000 vehicles per day).<sup>2</sup>

*The I-980 freeway and BART tracks slice through the neighborhood*



The main access point in the Telegraph-Northgate neighborhood for downtown Oakland is the I-980/27<sup>th</sup> Street interchange. During weekday mornings, commuters from the East Bay and Contra Costa County exit this interchange and drive along 27<sup>th</sup> Street, Northgate, Telegraph and Grand Avenues toward the Lake Merritt Office District. In the evening, the pattern is reversed as commuters criss-cross through the neighborhood on their way to the I-980/27<sup>th</sup> Street inter-

<sup>1</sup> City of Oakland, *Oakland Central District Development Program, Summary Report* (Oakland: City of Oakland, 1986), 25.

<sup>2</sup> Linda Peirce Associates, *Labor Temple Site, Administrative Draft Environmental Impact Report* (Oakland: City of Oakland, 1992), 38.

change. Based on previous traffic studies, it appears that the commute volumes are slightly higher during the evening commute.

The four main routes within the neighborhood connecting I-980 to downtown Oakland are:

*27<sup>th</sup> Street* is a four-lane major arterial that runs east-west between I-980 and the Lake Merritt Office District. In 1991, it served an average of 11,100 vehicles per day.<sup>3</sup> No AC Transit buses travel along 27<sup>th</sup> Street.

*Northgate Avenue* is a four-lane divided major arterial that runs north-south, parallel to I-980 between West Grand Avenue and the I-980/27<sup>th</sup> Street interchange. It was built to carry a high volume of traffic from I-980 into downtown for the Lake Merritt Office District and a proposed Uptown shopping mall located between the 19<sup>th</sup> Street BART Station and the Fox Theater. Northgate Avenue carries between 10,000 and 15,000 vehicles per day.<sup>4</sup> No AC Transit buses travel along Northgate Avenue.

*Telegraph Avenue* is a four-lane minor arterial that runs northeast-southwest, connecting Oakland to Berkeley and the University of California. Historically, it is one of the three major boulevards, along with Broadway and San Pablo Avenue, which terminate at the center of downtown Oakland. It still acts as a significant transportation and retail corridor. In 1991, Telegraph Avenue carried 9,400 vehicles per day.<sup>5</sup> Several AC Transit bus lines travel along Telegraph Avenue (Routes 40, 40L, and 43).

*West Grand Avenue* is a six-lane major arterial that is a main vehicular route between the Bay Bridge, downtown and I-580. Between I-980 and Broadway, West Grand Avenue carries 12,800 vehicles per day.<sup>6</sup> Several AC Transit bus lines travel on West Grand Avenue, connecting the northeastern Oakland neighborhoods with downtown (Routes 1, 12, B, 39X, 58, & 58X).

Existing Levels of Service (LOS) at key intersections within the neighborhood appear to have minimal delays (LOS B—5-15 second average stopped delay).<sup>7</sup> During a 1986 traffic study, peak hour traffic at the signaled intersection of Northgate Avenue and West Grand Avenue experienced LOS C.<sup>8</sup> In 1991, the signaled intersections of Northgate Avenue at West Grand Avenue and at 27<sup>th</sup> Street were observed to be LOS B. The worst projected delays due to office expansion in the Lake Merritt Office District were LOS D at Telegraph and West Grand Avenues during the peak evening commute hour and LOS F at Broadway and West Grand Avenue during the peak morning commute hour.<sup>9</sup> These are eight-year-old projections, and significant office expansion has taken place at Lake Merritt. Anecdotally, the level of service at those major intersections has not fallen below B.

The most recent traffic study covering the neighborhood appears to be for a new office building in the Lake Merritt Office District.<sup>10</sup> There is no current traffic data. Future traffic impacts due to the current downtown expansion cycle along with Mayor Brown's efforts to increase housing in downtown are unknown. One assumption is that more residents in downtown will generate more evening and weekend traffic and parking demand, which may only have a slight impact on the weekday parking supply.

<sup>3</sup> Linda Peirce Associates, 42.

<sup>4</sup> City of Oakland, *Oakland Central District Development Program, Technical Report, Transportation Plan* (Oakland: City of Oakland, 1986), 9.

<sup>5</sup> Linda Peirce Associates, 42.

<sup>6</sup> Linda Peirce Associates, 42.

<sup>7</sup> Linda Peirce Associates, 47.

<sup>8</sup> City of Oakland, *Oakland Central District Development Program, Technical Report, Transportation Plan*, 10.

<sup>9</sup> Peirce Associates, 62-3.

<sup>10</sup> Peirce Associates.

**THE BENEFITS  
OF BICYCLE LANES**

One of the ways to design streets for a variety of users—pedestrians, bicyclists and motorists—is to accommodate a bicycle lane. Among other benefits, bicycle lanes:

- ▶ Improve safety for bicyclists and pedestrians.
- ▶ Add to the street’s capacity and vibrancy. More people on the street means a larger customer base for businesses.
- ▶ Encourage community members to use bicycles instead of cars, because conditions for bicyclists are safer.

In San Francisco, we can point to the success of the Valencia Street bicycle lane, which was striped in January 1999. According to San Francisco’s Department of Parking and Traffic, the bicycle lane has seen a 117 percent increase in use. The number of collisions (including pedestrians, bicyclists and motorists) has *decreased* by 27 percent making it safer for pedestrians, bicyclists and motorists.

**TELEGRAPH AVENUE STREET DESIGN**

In response to the community’s desire to make the neighborhood more pedestrian-friendly, Urban Ecology developed two street designs for Telegraph Avenue. The street designs are in accordance with the guidelines defined by Telegraph Avenue Neighborhood-Commercial land-use designation (refer to Chapter Four-Land Use and Urban Design) and economic development strategies for Telegraph Avenue (refer to Chapter Seven-Economic Development). The designs also concur with the City of Oakland’s Bicycle Master Plan, which calls for bicycle lanes along Telegraph Avenue from the Berkeley border to downtown Oakland.

The street designs accommodate vehicular, pedestrian and bicycle traffic. Both designs remove the dedicated left turn lane to accommodate a bicycle lane. By reducing the width of sidewalks, a median can be accommodated. (Refer to Figure 12: Telegraph Avenue Street Design with Bicycle Lanes, Street Trees and Median Landscaping.) Maintaining the width of the sidewalk, only additional trees and a bicycle lane can be accommodated. (Refer to Figure 11: Telegraph Avenue Street Design with Bicycle Lanes and Street Trees.) During the second community workshop, participants chose the streetscape with trees and a bicycle lane (Figure 11) as the preferred alternative.

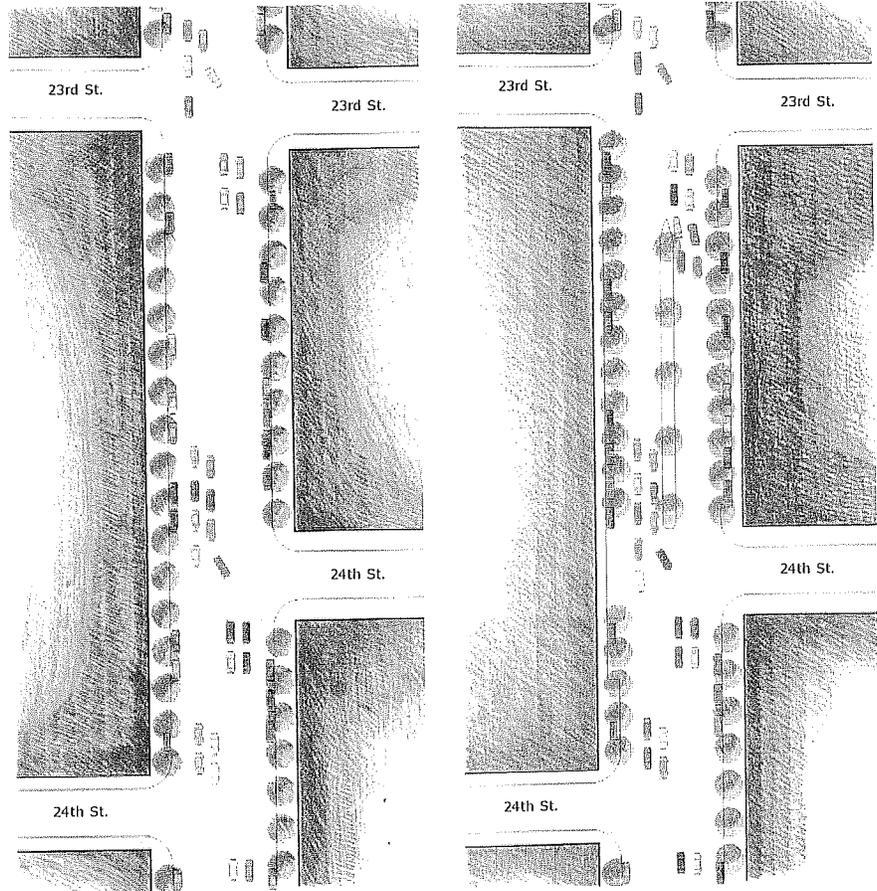


Figure 11  
**Telegraph Avenue  
Street Design  
With Bicycle Lanes  
and Street Trees**

Figure 12  
**Telegraph Avenue  
Street Design  
With Bicycle Lanes, Street Trees  
and Median Landscaping**

C I R C U L A T I O N

**TRAFFIC CALMING PLAN**

Residents at the second community workshop expressed concern about commuter traffic cutting through the neighborhood on their way to and from downtown Oakland. The neighborhood has two major corridors that can accommodate large volumes of commuter traffic: Telegraph and San Pablo Avenues. The main goal established by the residents is to limit the commuter traffic by cutting through smaller residential streets. This can be accomplished by traffic calming at several key unsignaled intersections. (Refer to Figure 14: Proposed Traffic Calming.) These ten intersections are:

- ▶ Sycamore Street at Northgate Avenue (west and east sides)
- ▶ Sycamore Street at Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard (east side only)
- ▶ Sycamore Street at Telegraph Avenue (west side only)
- ▶ 25<sup>th</sup> Street at Northgate Avenue (east side only)
- ▶ 25<sup>th</sup> Street at Telegraph Avenue (west side only)
- ▶ 24<sup>th</sup> Street at Northgate Avenue (east side only)
- ▶ 24<sup>th</sup> Street at Telegraph Avenue (west side only)
- ▶ 23<sup>rd</sup> Street at Northgate Avenue (west and east sides)
- ▶ 23<sup>rd</sup> Street at Telegraph Avenue (west side only)
- ▶ 23<sup>rd</sup> Street at Martin Luther King Jr. Way (east side only)

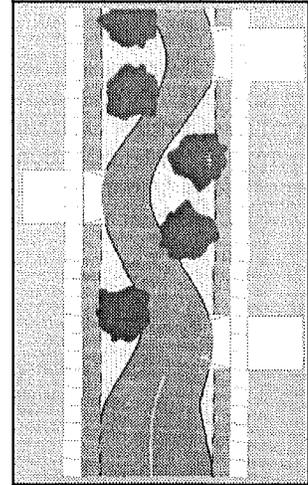
The purpose of traffic calming at these intersections is to slow down and ultimately deter commuter traffic. Across the country, communities that are heavily impacted by through-traffic are seeking ways to make their neighborhood more pedestrian-oriented by implementing traffic calming measures. These measures include landscaping, increasing the widths of the sidewalks and special paving. In the case of Telegraph-Northgate, the main tools to accomplish traffic calming would be narrowing the width of the street at these intersections by widening the sidewalks at each corner, and adding landscaping and trees. Along with the curb extensions, adding a pattern of alternative paving materials at crosswalks would improve the pedestrian environment. These design changes to the streetscape reduce the visual appearance of the residential streets as a speedy short-cut for commuters to traverse quickly. (Refer to Figure 13: Traffic Calming Methods.)

**EXISTING PARKING CHARACTERISTICS**

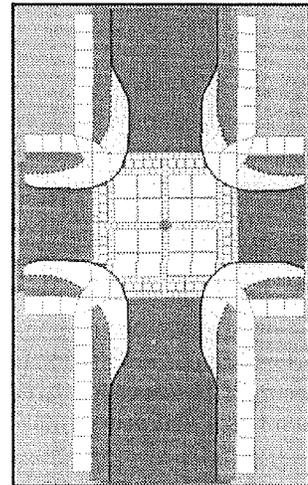
The Telegraph-Northgate Neighborhood has a significant inventory of both off-street and on-street parking. In January 1983, the existing parking spaces were surveyed for the area north of West Grand Avenue between I-980 and Harrison Street. In that survey, there were 2,465 off-street parking spaces with a 72 percent daily occupancy rate. In the same survey, there were 326 metered on-street parking spaces with a 69 percent occupancy rate. These spaces comprise approximately 10 percent of the total off-street parking (25,010 spaces) and on-street metered parking (3,480 spaces) in downtown Oakland.<sup>11</sup>

Projections of parking demand are a concern for Telegraph-Northgate because of the neighborhood's close proximity to the Lake Merritt Office District, where there is the largest projected parking shortfall of any area within downtown

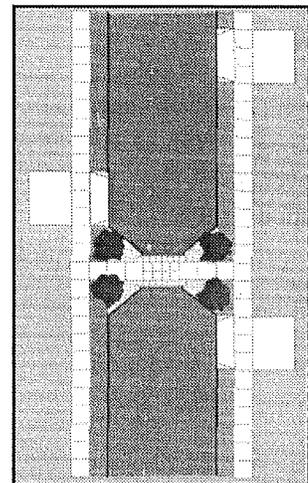
Figure 13  
**Traffic Calming Methods**



Chicane



Narrowed Intersection

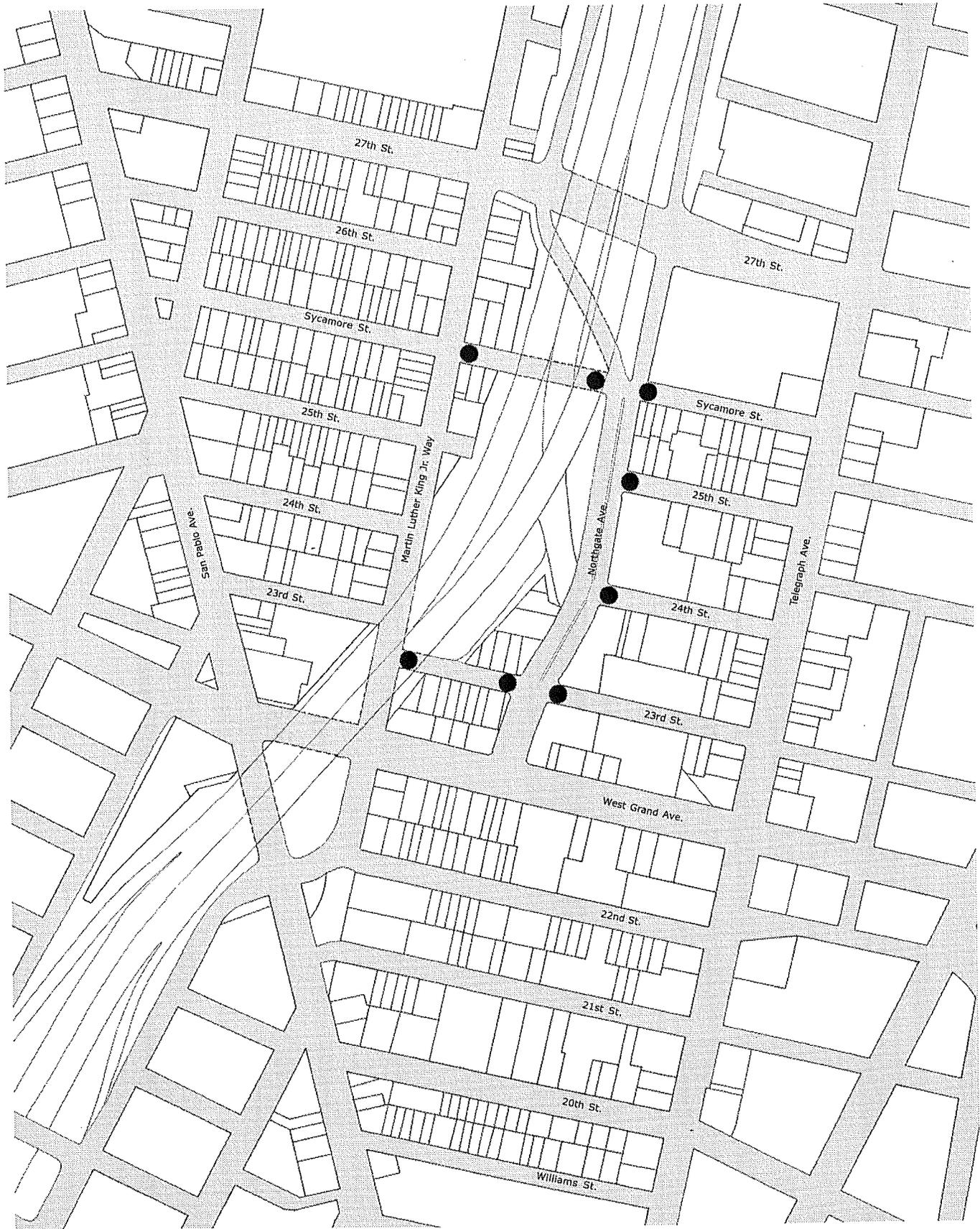


Mid-Block Choker

Traffic calming drawing provided by Fehr & Peers Associates

C I R C U L A T I O N

<sup>11</sup> City of Oakland, *Oakland Central District Development Program, Technical Report, Transportation Plan*, 6.



- CONSTRICTED INTERSECTION
- EXISTING STREETS

Figure 14  
**Proposed Traffic Calming**

Oakland. In the 1986 Oakland Central District Development Program, parking demand for the Lake Merritt Office District was projected at 9,601 spaces. The district has approximately 6,000 spaces, leaving a shortfall of 3,600. If the existing parking in the area north of West Grand Avenue is added in, there is still a shortfall of approximately 2,900 spaces.<sup>12</sup> Unfortunately, current information is not available to determine current parking demand and shortfall. Therefore, this Neighborhood Plan assumes that there is a significant parking demand in the Telegraph-Northgate Neighborhood due to demand from the Lake Merritt Office District.

## **PARKING RECOMMENDATIONS**

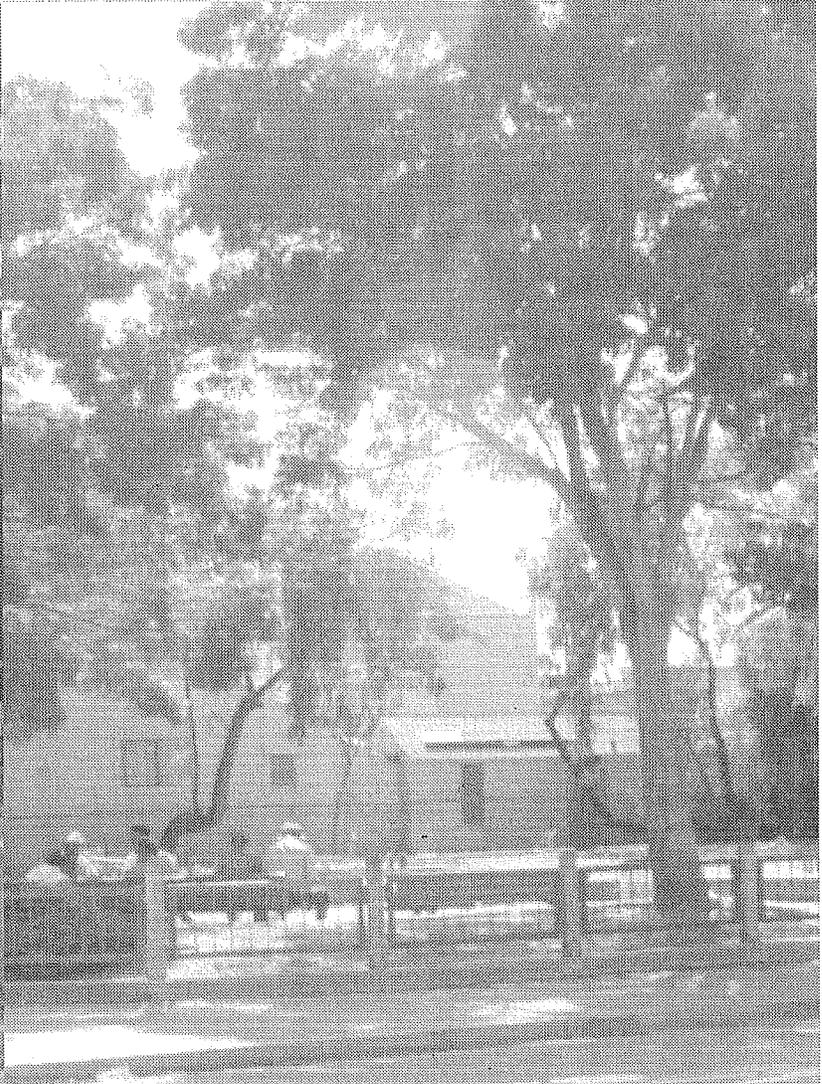
The following recommended parking actions would improve on-street parking for local residents in the Telegraph-Northgate neighborhood without sacrificing the pedestrian environment.

- ▶ Implement a residential permit parking program in the neighborhood. Such a program would allow residents and local business owners to park on neighborhood streets at any time but limit non-residents to two-hour parking. This should discourage commuters from parking within the neighborhood.
- ▶ Remove existing on-street parking meters in the neighborhood except on West Grand and Telegraph Avenues. This is to expand the supply of on-street parking for residents and maintain the arterials for short-term parking with frequent turnovers.
- ▶ Exempt on-site parking for new and existing buildings on the historic small lots along the Telegraph Avenue Neighborhood-Commercial District. This parking exemption is to enhance the streetscape and pedestrian environment along Telegraph Avenue. This exemption would not apply to new development projects on lots over 5,000 square feet.
- ▶ New parking garages are not a proposed land use in this Neighborhood Plan, as the goal is to enhance the residential and commercial neighborhood character and the pedestrian environment. An additional goal is to minimize the role of the neighborhood as a parking area for downtown Oakland.

<sup>12</sup> City of Oakland, *Oakland Central District Development Program, Technical Report, Transportation Plan*, 7.



Chapter 6  
**O p e n S p a c e  
a n d P a r k s**



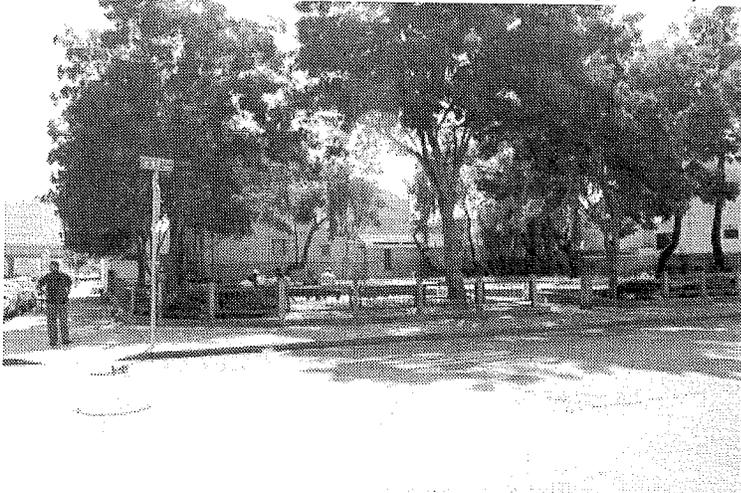
## CHAPTER 6

*As an urban environmental organization, Urban Ecology's mission is to create cities where both humans and nature can thrive. To accommodate our social and economic activities, this entails bringing intelligent urban design and compact land use policies to neighborhoods and cities. To provide the basis for functioning ecosystems, this means preserving physical land assets—from small pockets to large areas of uninterrupted acres, from land allowed to remain wild to formally designed and landscaped parks—within a larger urban design. The function of nature in the city is twofold: it brings people in contact with nature every day, and it allows light, air, water, and soil to interact and form the basis for thriving urban ecosystems.*

During the Gold Rush era, when Oakland first established itself as a city, nature flourished: "huge old oak trees that might have covered half a city block were everywhere, and acres of poppies and other wildflowers carpeted the sunny meadows. Quail, rabbits, deer and other game abounded; oysters, clams, and fish were plentiful in the creeks and the estuary."<sup>1</sup> Today, Oakland's land area is highly urbanized, despite its 3,000 acres of parkland, dozen creeks, and 19 miles of shoreline. The Telegraph-Northgate neighborhood provides little relief from the concrete landscape of downtown Oakland. Telegraph Avenue and many neighborhood streets lack trees, which provide shade and beauty. Although Lake Merritt is less than a mile away, the neighborhood has no physical or visual connection to the lake or the estuary that flows into the San Francisco Bay. It lies west of the network of creeks that flow into the lake's basin.

Healthy public open space is also largely absent from the Telegraph-Northgate neighborhood. The neighborhood has one park on 25<sup>th</sup> Street and Martin Luther King Jr. Way, and one plaza at 21<sup>st</sup> Street and San Pablo Avenue. Both are located near the freeway; the underpasses act

Corner park at 25th Street and Martin Luther King Jr. Way



as a major barrier for residents living from east of the freeway to Telegraph Avenue. The small park on 25<sup>th</sup> Street and Martin Luther King Jr. Way has no play equipment; its only features are several overgrown trees and a few benches located on the northwest side. On a typical day, homeless people primarily use the park benches. The plaza on 21<sup>st</sup> Street and San Pablo Avenue has several concrete seating areas, making it difficult to see from one end of the plaza to the other. Since the plaza is adjacent to St. Mary's—a center that provides lunches and services to seniors who are homeless—many of their clients use this park.

<sup>1</sup> Beth Bagwell, *Oakland, the Story of a City* (Oakland: Oakland Heritage Alliance, 1982), 36.

**OPEN SPACE, CONSERVATION AND RECREATION ELEMENT OF THE GENERAL PLAN (OSCAR)**

The City of Oakland acknowledges the Telegraph-Northgate neighborhood's dearth of open space in the Open Space, Conservation and Recreation Element of the General Plan (OSCAR). Passed in 1996, this element is the official policy document addressing the management of open land, natural resources and parks in Oakland. The Telegraph-Northgate neighborhood is included within the Central Planning Area, made up of the eastern section of the Telegraph-Northgate neighborhood, downtown, Chinatown, Pill Hill, South-of-Nimitz and the Adams Point and Richmond Boulevard areas. This area totals 1,607



*Plaza at 21<sup>st</sup> Street and San Pablo Avenue*

acres and includes a population of approximately 28,800 residents. The total park area, including two schoolyards, is 117 acres. The bulk of this acreage is within Lakeside Park that serves a much broader radius than the Central District. Discounting Lakeside to account for its regional draw, park acreage per capita is 1.65 acres per 1,000 residents in the Central Planning Area. The City of Oakland recommends four acres per 1,000 residents to supply children, youth and adults with sufficient parks to relax and play.

The OSCAR also cites the inequities between the provision of open space and park land for residents in the flatlands versus those in the hills: the flatland neighborhoods are home to approximately 80 percent of the city's population and only about 15 percent of

OPEN SPACE AND PARKS

**OSCAR DIRECTIVES FOR OPEN SPACE AND RECREATION (PARTIAL LIST)**

- ▶ Establish specific, measurable criteria for the City to follow when acquiring new parks in the hills and in the flatlands. Place priority on flatland open space acquisitions.
- ▶ Promote and support the emerging community gardens movement, including providing technical support.
- ▶ Look at innovative options for open space dedications including land banking, donations of land to the city, transfer of development rights, land trusts, and street closures. Emphasize increasing open space in underserved areas and protecting environmentally sensitive areas.
- ▶ Utilize "functional open spaces," such as freeway right-of-way, East Bay Municipal Utility District tank sites and watershed lands, large parking lots and storage areas, and the airport.
- ▶ Utilize open space development to enhance community character and define neighborhood boundaries.
- ▶ Support a street tree plan and planting program.
- ▶ Prioritize the provision of space and services in underserved areas.
- ▶ Adopt strategies to make parks safer for park users.

its open space. This is due to the fact that Oakland's flatlands were developed for industry and trade in the early 1800s, and the city's planners preserved the hills, which were believed to be Oakland's most scenic and ecologically sensitive areas. This pattern was never counteracted during Oakland's decades of suburbanization and disinvestment. Land was not set aside in the flatlands, and the historic squares that date to the beginning of the century have either been built over or are ill-maintained. Some of these include Clinton Park and Lafayette Park (which benefited from a recent redesign). Thus, it remains true that many of Oakland's largest and most scenic parks, especially those maintained by East Bay Regional Parks District, are located adjacent to the most affluent parts of the city. Lower income Oakland households receive limited benefits from the regional and city park systems.

To begin to bridge the park inequities gap for residents in the flatlands, the OSCAR states that the city should "pursue a new city square or small neighborhood park in the neighborhood west of Broadway and north of 14<sup>th</sup> Street. The area has no public open space and has considerable residential development potential."<sup>2</sup>

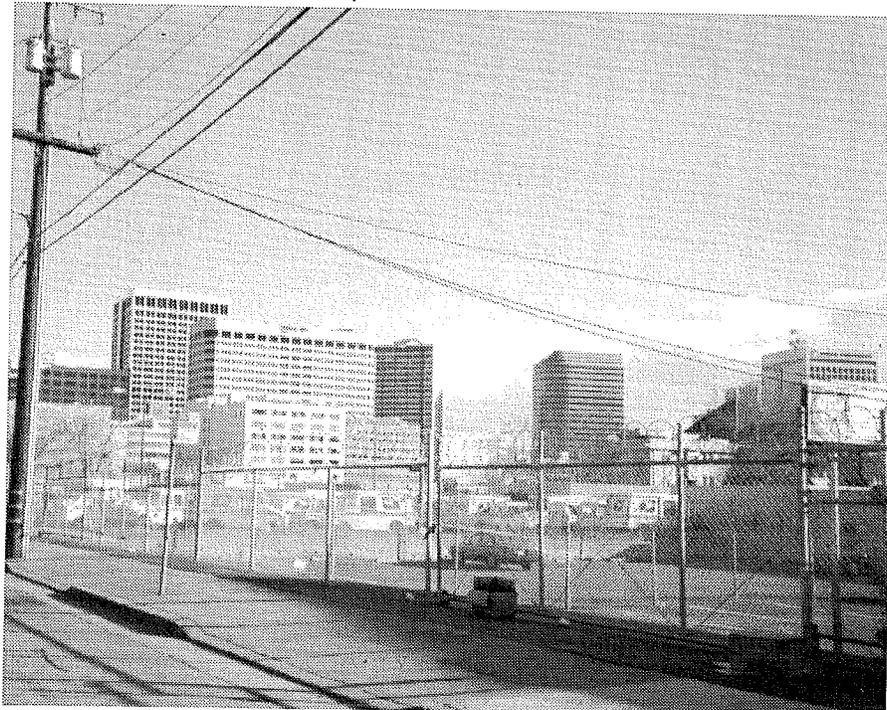
### A PARK PROPOSAL FOR TELEGRAPH-NORTHGATE

Telegraph-Northgate community members are acutely aware of their lack of healthy public spaces and the poor conditions of the neighborhood's existing public space. Residents and merchants are eager to see nature incorporated into their landscape. They have identified three greening priorities:

- ▶ Plant street trees along Telegraph Avenue and neighborhood side streets.
- ▶ Rehabilitate the existing park and plaza west of the freeway.
- ▶ Create a park that serves residents east of the I-980 freeway and north of 20<sup>th</sup> Street.

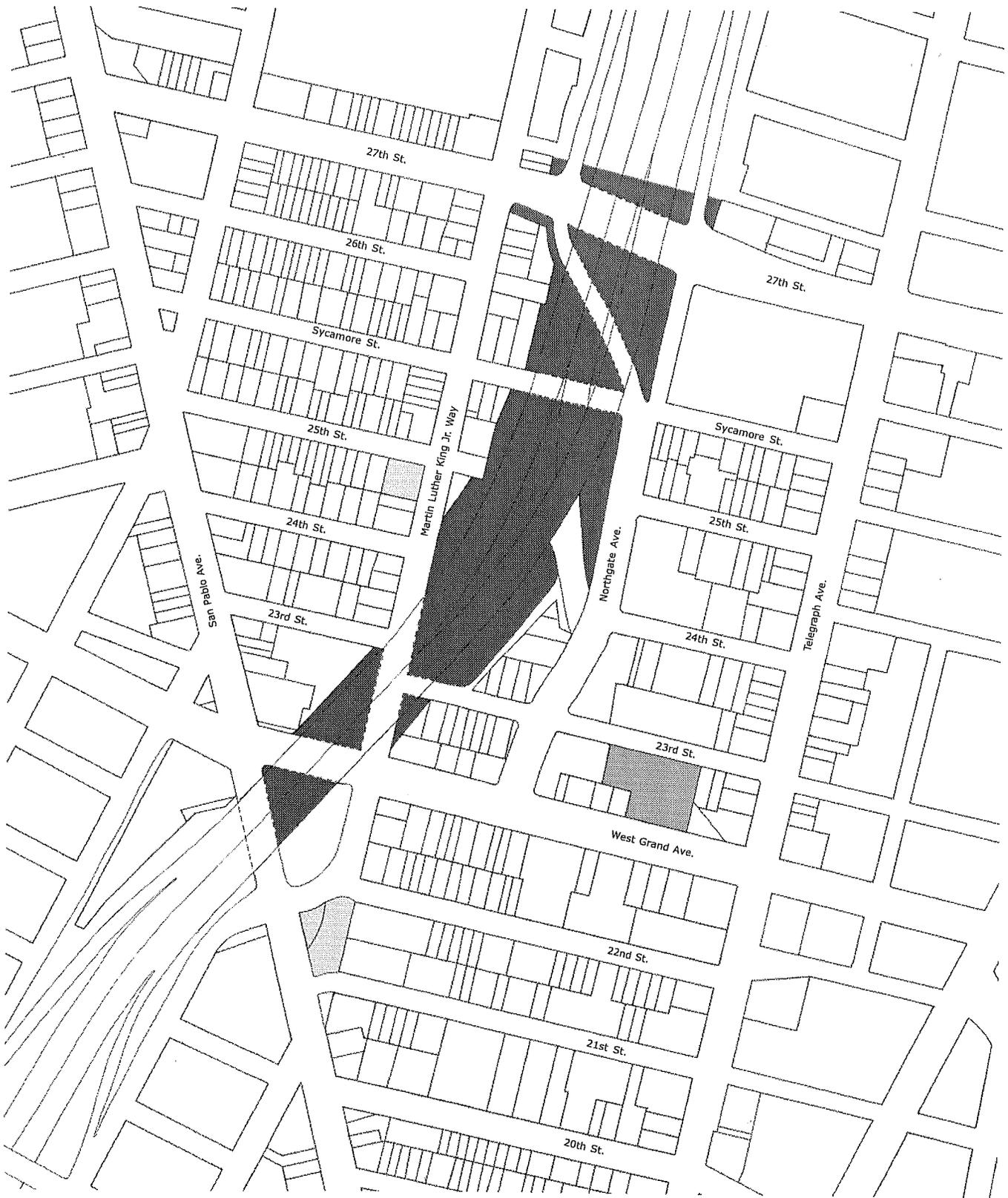
During the second community workshop, community members discussed possible locations for a future park. Urban Ecology searched the area for vacant lots or existing parking lots accessible to residents on or near Telegraph Avenue. Community members identified the United States Postal Service parking lot on 23<sup>rd</sup> Street as an ideal location for a park. (Refer to Figure 15: Proposed Parks and Plazas.)

*United States Postal Service parking lot on 23<sup>rd</sup> Street is a potential park site.*



This land is currently owned by BART and is leased to the Postal Service—a lease that will expire in 2001. At this writing, the pressure for office space in downtown is flowing into the Telegraph-Northgate neighborhood: Alameda County Social Services is exploring the possibility of purchasing the 38,350 square foot lot for a new self-sufficiency center. Their plan includes a 45,000 square foot building with a 220-car parking garage, which would assist up to 600 clients per day and accommodate 190 staff

<sup>2</sup> City of Oakland, *Open Space Conservation and Recreation, An Element of the Oakland General Plan*. Oakland: City of Oakland, 1996.



OPEN SPACE AND PARKS

-  EXISTING PARKS & PLAZAS
-  PROPOSED PARKS & PLAZAS
-  PROPOSED HIGHWAY ART & LANDSCAPE

Figure 15  
**Proposed Parks & Plazas**

## What makes A GOOD URBAN PARK?

Parks provide a place to relax, socialize and play. Unfortunately, many of our urban parks are in decay. It is not uncommon to find parks that urban dwellers rarely use or even avoid, such as the park at 25<sup>th</sup> Street and Martin Luther King Jr. Way.

As we begin to think about creating a new urban park along the Telegraph corridor, it is important to look at what characteristics make a good urban park. When we think about parks that are successful, we often think about Central Park in New York, Golden Gate Park in San Francisco and the shoreline of Lake Michigan in Chicago. While these are famous destination parks, they do provide insight to characteristics that make a successful neighborhood park.

The most popular parks provide a range of uses. In San Francisco, Dolores Park has a playground, soccer fields, tennis courts, basketball courts and grassy hills. On any weekend day, the park is packed with sunbathers, kids playing on the jungle gym, adults playing soccer, and people

walking their dogs. It is an area that provides enough opportunities for a diversity of uses and people.

One of the main reasons people avoid parks is their perception that parks are unsafe. Parks that are filled with broken glass and graffiti, rundown bathrooms, dying trees, and overgrown grass send a message that this is a space you don't want to be. Maintenance is key to keeping parks not only clean but welcoming. With assistance from the Parks and Recreation Department, community members can take responsibility for their parks by organizing tree planting and clean-up days.

Design is integral to making a park safe. In smaller urban parks, it is important that there are unobstructed views. People prefer to see from one end of the park to the other. There should also be sufficient lighting during the nighttime hours. Neighborhood parks should also be well located. Parks on the fringe of a neighborhood will seem out of the way and isolated. A five to 10 minute walk from most homes is a recommended gauge.

members. The center provides all services for CalWORKS, Food Stamps, Medi-Cal, General Assistance and employment services. While these services are important, the neighborhood seeks to distinguish itself from the downtown office district, and residents are interested in seeing this parking lot transformed into a park with amenities that enhance the neighborhood's civic life. A daytime parking lot owned by a public entity willing to work with the community presents a rare opportunity to develop a park.

### Community Design Charrette

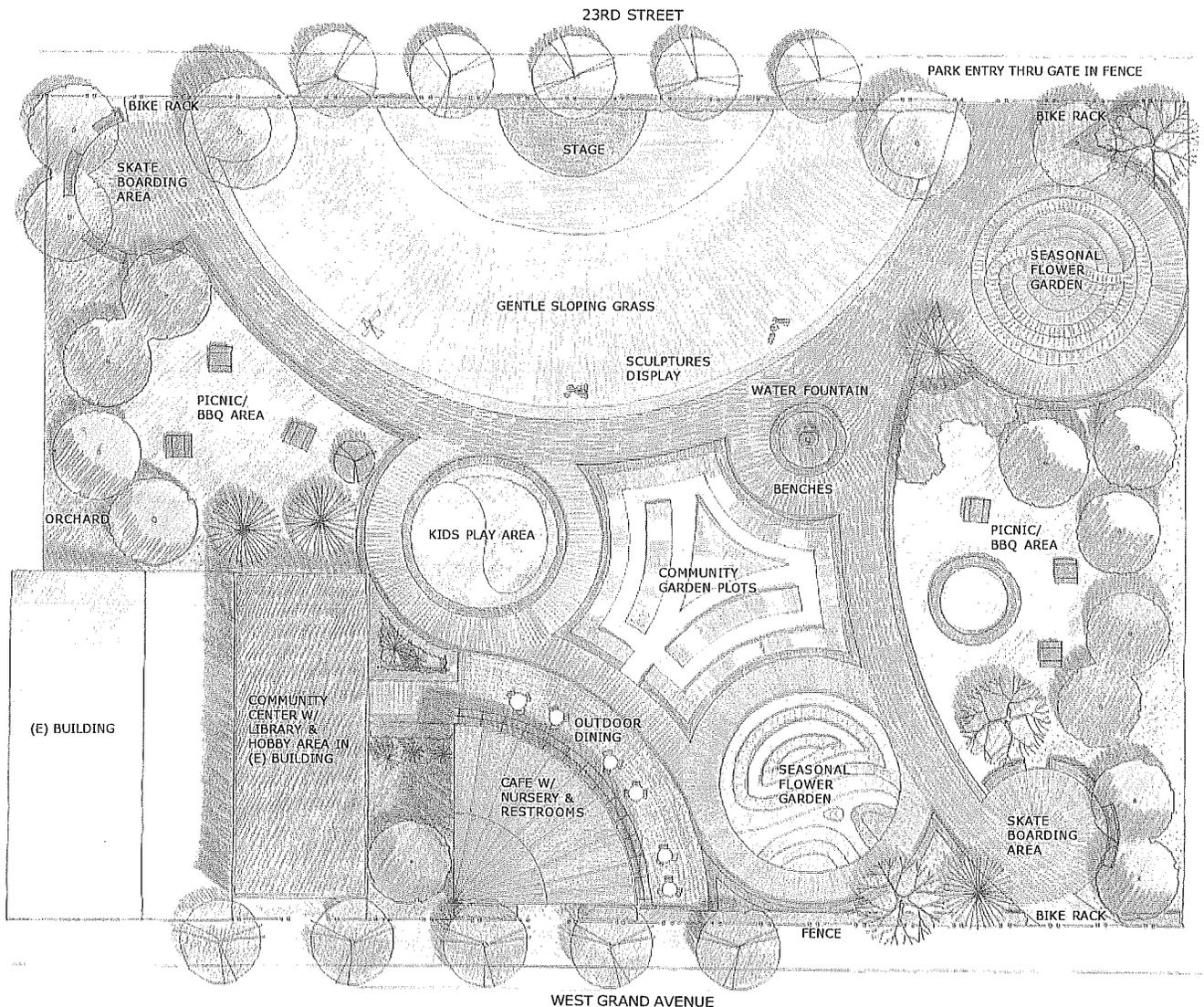
Urban Ecology conducted a workshop to further explore what community members want to see in a future neighborhood park. Residents are eager to create a neighborhood gem equipped with community gardens, picnic area, a community stage, and a center with a library extension. All of these amenities are currently absent in the neighborhood. There are no public spaces, particularly outdoor spaces, where community members can gather for block parties or a bake sale to raise funds for a school fieldtrip.

### Proposed Park Design

The United States Postal Service parking lot is one of the largest parcels in the neighborhood that can begin to accommodate some of the civic desires of the neighborhood. Since the BART right-of-way goes underground at 23<sup>rd</sup> Street, development options are limited.

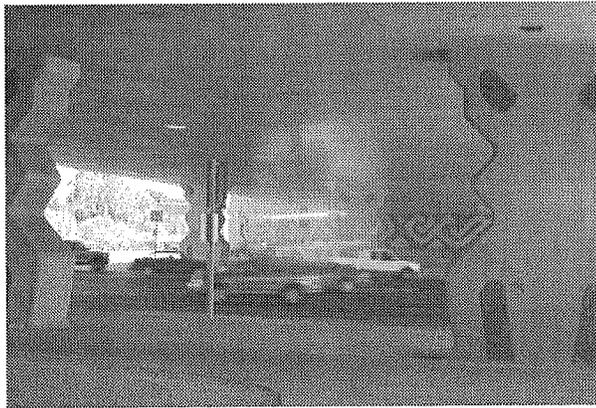
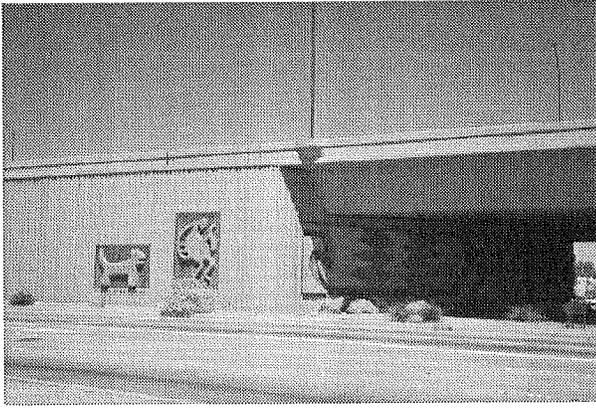
Given its location on West Grand Avenue—a busy thoroughfare—the proposed park design aims to create a barrier between the traffic and direct activities toward the more residential 23<sup>rd</sup> Street. While the design is conceptual, the following elements are included to reflect community members’ desires (refer to Figure 16: Proposed Park Design):

- ▶ Community stage
- ▶ Picnic and barbecue area
- ▶ Seasonal flower garden and community garden plots
- ▶ Community center
- ▶ Kids’ play area



OPEN SPACE AND PARKS

Figure 16  
Proposed Park Design



Freeway art in Phoenix

## FREEWAY UNDERPASSES

The I-980 freeway has created several acres of unused space beneath its overpasses. These areas are nuisances for members of the Telegraph-Northgate neighborhood since they are magnets for litter and overgrown landscaping. During community workshops, several suggestions were made about what to do with the awkward space. Community members are interested in incorporating public art and possibly using a larger parcel as a skateboard or dog run park.

Throughout the country, cities have implemented innovative projects to make freeway underpasses more pleasant and usable. In San Diego, freeway underpasses are used for storage. In Seattle, public art has been incorporated into the columns holding up the freeway—one of the freeway columns has been transformed into a troll's hand grabbing a car. In Phoenix, underpasses similar to the one under the I-980 freeway at San Pablo Avenue are painted with murals, and sculptures are designed into freeway walls. Wind harps, which can be installed along the underpasses, convert the wind generated from cars into music, as on Wind Harp Hill in the Bayview Hunters Point district of San Francisco. In Las Vegas, neon lights line many freeway underpasses.

For the past year, the City of Oakland has been working with a group of five artists to design public art at the Broadway/I-880 underpass. "Pedestrians will enter the space on slightly undulating, elevated sidewalks of recycled rubber, a material now used for playground floors. They will walk alongside walls of guardrails, buffed to a shine that will reflect the lights of passing cars. The now drab, huge concrete pillars will be painted fire engine red and lit from below."<sup>3</sup>

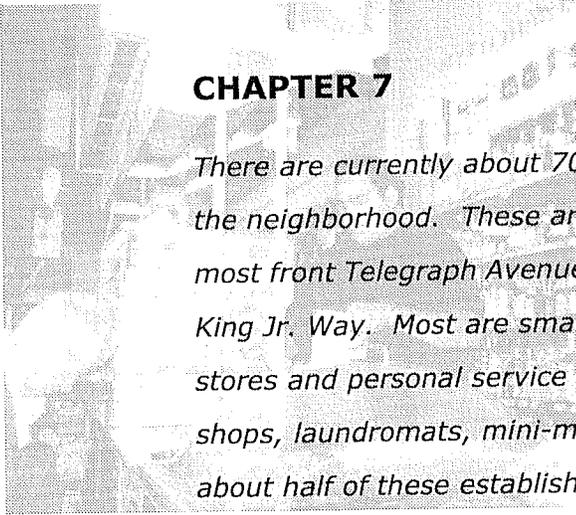
Caltrans owns and maintains most of the property under the freeway. Projects for the freeway underpasses would require coordination with Caltrans, the Public Works Department and local artists. Since improvements done under the freeway can incorporate public art, the freeway underpasses are eligible for funding from a wide range of sources.

<sup>3</sup>Janine DeFao, "Art Project OK'd for Oakland Underpass," *San Francisco Chronicle*, 29 March 2000, sec. A



Chapter 7

**Economic  
Development**



## CHAPTER 7

*There are currently about 70 retail establishments operating within the neighborhood. These are spread over more than 20 blocks, but most front Telegraph Avenue, San Pablo Avenue, and Martin Luther King Jr. Way. Most are small mom and pop convenience-oriented stores and personal service establishments. Barber shops, beauty shops, laundromats, mini-markets, and liquor stores account for about half of these establishments. (Refer to Figure 17: Retail and Commercial Business Land Use Patterns.) Most of these serve the local residents but some also capture sales from passing motorists and pedestrians. Restaurants, fast-food outlets, bars, and clubs account for another 25 percent of the neighborhood's retail establishments. The majority of their customers live outside the neighborhood. The remainder of the retailers in the neighborhood are a mix of small establishments.*

### SIGNIFICANT FACTORS AFFECTING RETAIL

There are three primary factors that have influenced and will continue to influence retail development in this neighborhood.

First, the population of the Telegraph-Northgate neighborhood is too small to support significant retail. The neighborhood has 3,249 people in 1,570 households living within the neighborhood; a minimum population of 10,000 is needed to support a single supermarket. Any additional population within the Telegraph-Northgate will certainly add retail support, but even under the most aggressive residential development scenarios, the neighborhood by itself will never have a large enough population to support major retailing. Compounding the small population is the generally low income levels of the neighborhood's residents, which limit the amount they can spend at retail establishments. Thus, to a large extent, successful retailers will have to rely on a customer base that extends beyond the neighborhood boundaries.

Second, retailing is currently primarily concentrated along two arterials: Telegraph Avenue and San Pablo Avenue. Both are major vehicular arteries carrying two lanes of traffic in each direction. Both possess historic buildings. Both start at almost the same point in the heart of downtown Oakland and pass through either side of Telegraph-Northgate, widening the distance between them as they head north. Both are commuter corridors and carry significant levels of local and regional traffic, because they offer excellent access to Oakland, Berkeley, and Emeryville. Telegraph Avenue terminates at Sather Gate, the main entrance of U.C. Berkeley, while San Pablo Avenue passes through a half dozen cities and is the primary non-freeway thoroughfare of northwest Alameda County. Both are also major retail corridors with neighborhood, community and regional retailing concentrated in various portions of each. For all of these reasons, retail development within the neighborhood should continue to be concentrated and encouraged along these two corridors.



ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

**Retail/Commercial Business Tallies**

Art Galleries	6	Fast Food Outlets	5
Banks	1	Food Markets	3
Barber Shops	4	Furniture/Appliance Stores	5
Bars/Clubs	8	Laundromats	3
Beauty Shops	7	Liquor Stores	5
Beauty Supply Stores	3	Mini-Markets	8
Bookstores	2	Quick Printers	1
Cafes/Restaurants	8	Retail Shops	14
Check Cashing Services	2	Retail Auto Parts	2
Department Stores	1	Wholesale Supply Businesses	10
Dry Cleaners	6		

Figure 17  
**Retail & Commercial Business  
 Land-Use Patterns**

Third, the I-980 Freeway and portions of above-ground BART bisect the neighborhood into physically distinct areas. From a retailing standpoint it is difficult and highly improbable that this physical and psychological barrier could be bridged to encourage frequent and easy pedestrian and shopper circulation between the two sides. Thus, retail development on San Pablo and Telegraph Avenue are independent of each other; each should be encouraged to develop separately.

## **SECONDARY FACTORS AFFECTING RETAIL**

A grouping of Korean restaurants and stores have concentrated along Telegraph Avenue between West Grand Avenue and 28<sup>th</sup> Street. These serve the Korean ethnic community located throughout the East Bay. These are regional serving stores and more should be encouraged.

West Grand Avenue, an east-west aligned street with a block and a half of frontage in the neighborhood, is also a retail arterial and a primary entrance for the neighborhood from the east (Kaiser Center/Lake Merritt/Piedmont). The intersection of Telegraph Avenue and West Grand Avenue has the highest traffic levels in the neighborhood. Uses compatible with high traffic volumes should be encouraged along this artery.

A number of art galleries are located in the neighborhood and vicinity. More of these should be encouraged and grouped as close to each other as possible.

Downtown Oakland is located at the neighborhood's southern edge, as is the downtown's largest store, Sears. There are still many retail locations in downtown that are superior to retail locations within the neighborhood. Thus, the neighborhood cannot compete with traditional comparison goods shopping.

Broadway Auto Row, a concentration of new and used auto dealers, is located two to three blocks east of Telegraph Avenue, just outside the boundary of the neighborhood. A significant concentration of auto repair and service shops is located within the neighborhood, most within the blocks between Telegraph Avenue and Broadway. (Refer to Figure 18: Automobile Land Use Patterns.)

Telegraph-Northgate currently has an approximately 20 percent vacancy rate of retail store space. The quality of the vacant and available retail space can generally be described as poor to fair.

## **RETAIL REVITALIZATION PLAN**

We propose the following seven-point plan as a practical and economically efficient program to revitalize retailing in the Telegraph-Northgate neighborhood.

### *Designate and Concentrate Retail Areas*

Encourage and concentrate retail along Telegraph Avenue, San Pablo Avenue, and the short stretch of West Grand Avenue.

- ▶ Require new development and redevelopment to have ground floor retail space fronting these three streets.
- ▶ Discourage retail development along other streets of the neighborhood. Encourage redevelopment of existing retail space on these other streets to higher-density residential.

### *Develop Destination Retailing*

Encourage regional-serving retail groupings along Telegraph and San Pablo Avenues.

- ▶ Build on the existing core of Korean establishments along Telegraph Avenue.



ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Figure 18  
**Automobile Land-Use Patterns  
Repair, Manufacturing, Suppliers & Sales**

- ▶ There are a number of furniture stores already in the neighborhood. Furniture and home furnishing stores are often located at the outer edges of regional retail areas and downtowns, and such stores benefit from locating close to one another. This might be a good use type for San Pablo Avenue.
- ▶ There are currently a number of art galleries in the neighborhood and nearby. Galleries work well with book stores (used and new) and small ethnic restaurants and clubs. Grouping a number of these together would create a draw for entertainment and browsing. To create the strongest pull, these galleries and book stores must be either all located on San Pablo Avenue or on Telegraph Avenue, and not split between the two.
- ▶ Restaurant groupings create a strong identity. Restaurants can also be interspersed with almost any other type of use. Encourage ethnic restaurants that would attract downtown workers during the day and visitors at night.

### *Group Convenience Retailers*

Concentrate convenience retail (specialty foods, barbers, beauty salons, drug stores, laundromats) around a grocery store; one on Telegraph Avenue and one on San Pablo Avenue. Other smaller convenience stores can be dispersed along these main streets to serve residents, visitors, and vehicular traffic.

### *Group Auto Repair Shops*

Located here because of the proximity to Broadway Auto Row, there are a significant number of auto repair shops located east of Telegraph Avenue. These auto-repair shops bring workers and customers to the neighborhood during the work day. This is an untapped customer base, especially for restaurants located along Telegraph Avenue.

### *Improve Retail Streetscape*

Creating a pleasant streetscape and improving the façades of small businesses encourage a unique retail identity for the neighborhood. Activities should include:

- ▶ Street tree plantings and improved street lighting along Telegraph Avenue and San Pablo Avenue frontages
- ▶ Increasing sidewalk sweeping and street cleaning
- ▶ Cleaning up building façades and encouraging window displays and signage

### *Form Merchant and Property Owners Committees and Implement Programs*

An opportunity exists to create small business committees within the Telegraph-Northgate Neighborhood Association for San Pablo Avenue and Telegraph Avenue. As in other neighborhood commercial districts of Oakland, the purpose of these merchant committees is to coordinate promotion and clean-up, recruit new merchants to the area, train existing and new merchants, and provide group representation to the city.

### *Employ a Retail Manager*

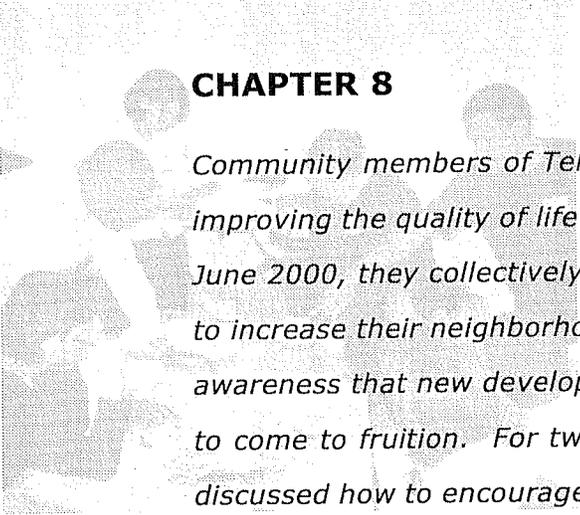
A primary advantage that shopping centers have over neighborhood retail districts is a single point of authority for property ownership and management. A retail strategy can easily be implemented in shopping centers where one manager is responsible for the physical structures, ongoing maintenance, cleaning, security, as well as choosing and actively pursuing tenants. The Main Street program also uses this retail manager approach. Successful implementation of a retail strategy for the Telegraph-Northgate neighborhood will require the employment of a retail manager.



Chapter 8

**Community Stabilization &  
Future Neighborhood Issues**





## CHAPTER 8

*Community members of Telegraph-Northgate are committed to improving the quality of life in their neighborhood. From June 1998 to June 2000, they collectively created a vision and defined civic amenities to increase their neighborhood's livability. There is a growing awareness that new development is vital for the neighborhood's vision to come to fruition. For two years, community members have discussed how to encourage development while retaining affordable housing, how to establish mutually respectful relationships with developers, what kind of development is appropriate, and how community members can effectively influence new development.*

An important goal of this Neighborhood Plan is to secure new investment in the form of new housing and commercial development, and at the same time ensure the neighborhood's long-term affordability. At this writing, the Bay Area is experiencing a regional housing shortage and transportation crisis, causing rapid displacement of entire communities and posing tremendous challenges to local decision-making. This plan proposes strategies that community

members can pursue to hold the reins of development and retain the neighborhood's current residents and businesses. This chapter addresses the impacts of new development, strategies for development without displacement, and future neighborhood issues.

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**"The seeds that sprout in a neighborhood will reap benefits for the larger community. Jane Jacobs' *Life and Death of Great American Cities* talks about gradual change versus catastrophic change. Gradual change doesn't erase the history of a community; it builds on it. This collaboration of Urban Ecology and the Telegraph Northgate Neighborhood Association will shepherd such gradual, positive growth."**

- BART Board member  
Tom Radulovich

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### IMPACTS OF NEW DEVELOPMENT

Any new development, including demolition, new construction or neighborhood beautification, has a direct impact on the neighborhood. It impacts local real estate values, the property tax base, school demographics, transportation patterns, the local business customer base and the neighborhood's sense of community. A narrow way of examining the success of a development project is to examine only economic indicators. For example, did the new project contribute to a rise in surrounding property values? Has the new project attracted new customers or increased the spending of the existing customer base?

This kind of traditional economic analysis does not capture the social impact of development, which is strongly influenced by the larger regional conditions of employment, housing and the commercial real estate market. From 1995 to this writing in July 2000, the Bay Area region has experienced a period of unprecedented economic and employment expansion accompanied by the relatively slow pace of housing construction. In the older urban neighborhoods which have more cultural offerings and public transit infrastructure, the price of new, resale, and rental housing has skyrocketed as demand has far outstripped supply.

In today's hot real estate market, property owners are clearly disposed to sell or rent at the highest possible price. Housing demand has outpaced supply to such a degree that bidding wars over fixer-uppers are common. Further, the technology and telecommunications industries are dominated by young professionals who prefer urban locations, both for office space and living. This high-income group has fueled the demand in the Bay Area's urban housing markets—centered in San Francisco, Oakland and San Jose. Urban residents with higher levels of disposable income are quickly followed by businesses supplying high-end goods, services and entertainment.

The negative impact of these actions is the displacement of many low- and moderate-income families. The appearance of shops and services targeted to wealthier professionals gives property owners even more incentive to raise residential rents. The consequence, which happens at a rapid pace, is that low- and moderate-income households move out of older urban neighborhoods like Telegraph-Northgate and into less expensive and less desirable parts of Oakland, older suburbs and even to rural areas outside the Bay Area. The term "gentrification" has been used to describe this trend of displacement of low-income households, along with the businesses that serve them, to be replaced by higher-income households who enjoy the economic freedom to choose where they want to live.

The Bay Area is now experiencing the detrimental impacts of gentrification. Because of the wholesale breakdown of social networks that have been built over time, residents and leaders from these older urban neighborhoods now often fear development. Development is equated with displacement, and the fear of gentrification is often legitimate. To date, no city has successfully struck a balance between bringing new investment by the private market and community control over development decisions. Once low-income neighborhoods open their doors to investment, they run the risk of displacing the current residents and businesses. Low-income neighborhoods face the choice of either shunning investment—which deprives them of a much-needed economic catalyst—or making themselves vulnerable to speculative real estate projects that seek profits and pay no attention to social impacts.

In the Bay Area, cities are failing to respond to this predicament. Many local government leaders are pursuing development at any price. Some have enacted some protective policies, including inclusionary zoning ordinances and long-term deed restrictions. Yet these policies are proving inadequate to address the full scope of the problem.

## **STRATEGIES FOR DEVELOPMENT WITHOUT DISPLACEMENT**

This section outlines strategies that will support the neighborhood's present renaissance at a pace that does not displace today's residents and businesses. While there are few positive examples of cities that have enacted strong protective policies, there are several successful examples of community groups in the Bay Area that have managed to leverage public and private development, and at the same time retain the neighborhood's residents and businesses. We have drawn upon experiences of neighborhood groups in San Francisco (the Mission District, Bernal Heights and the Tenderloin) to piece together strategies for development without displacement. Achieving this goal involves building a strong neighborhood organization that can work to improve city policies. It means working with a range of partners, from community development corporations to advocacy groups. It also involves carrying out a range of activities, from community organizing to working closely with developers.

### **Strengthen the Telegraph-Northgate Neighborhood Association**

The first step in this process is to strengthen the Telegraph-Northgate Neighborhood Association's organizational capacity. The association was founded in 1997 by a group of social service providers, merchants, property owners and residents, and currently has a membership totaling 40 people. Operating on a volunteer basis with no paid staff or funding, the Association's current activities include holding monthly meetings, circulating a

neighborhood newsletter, organizing neighborhood clean-up days, meeting with developers to guide development within the neighborhood and working with Urban Ecology on this Neighborhood Plan.

With a permanent staff, the Association would be able to monitor local infrastructure improvements (such as park improvement or street tree planting), participate and monitor new development projects, advocate for the existing stock of affordable housing units and commercial spaces, and organize community members to attend public meetings. The Association will need a regular spokesperson to speak on its behalf, coordinate communication and act as a liaison with the city. A long-term strategy for the Association could be to create a "Community Council", a local elected body that has some power over the approval of new development proposals located within the neighborhood. The vision laid out in this Neighborhood Plan could become the basis of criteria for the Community Council to approve new developments within the neighborhood.

Building the Telegraph-Northgate Neighborhood Association will take considerable effort, organization and funds. It will need a strategic plan that outlines the process for organizational development including finding a fiscal sponsor and funding for the short-term, while creating long-term goals such as obtaining non-profit status, establishing a board of directors, setting up an organizational structure, and developing a long-range fundraising campaign.

### **Build a Partnership with a Community Development Corporation**

Within the next year, it is key that the Telegraph-Northgate Neighborhood Association form a close partnership with an existing community development corporation (CDC). Development driven solely by the private market may not fulfill the neighborhood's needs, especially in terms of housing and securing a grocery store. A partnership with a CDC

## **DUDLEY STREET NEIGHBORHOOD INITIATIVE**

### **Roxbury Neighborhood, Boston, MA**

"Like many low-income urban neighborhoods in the Bay Area, the Dudley Street community in Boston, Massachusetts faced decades of deliberate policies of disinvestment, redlining, and neglect that resulted in a landscape dominated by dumping trash on vacant lots, numerous hazardous waste sites, extensive lead poisoning, and boarded up buildings.

Realizing that no outside institution or program could effectively reverse the decline of the Dudley neighborhood, community leaders started the Dudley Street Neighborhood Initiative (DSNI). DSNI is dedicated to the development of the community without displacement. DSNI carried out a detailed community planning process and slowly began transforming Dudley's vacant and razed lots. Over 240 new affordable homes, including cooperative units, have been built so far. Hundreds of other

existing units have been rehabilitated by community development corporations and youth-based housing rehabilitation programs.

Knowing that piecemeal redevelopment would be ineffective and could lead to speculation and displacement, DSNI decided to seek eminent domain authority over 30 acres of vacant land in the most distressed part of the neighborhood. DSNI established a community land trust in the neighborhood to ensure long-term community control over land-use and housing affordability. Community land trust removes property from the speculative market for uses decided by the community. Uses can include cooperative businesses, parks and limited equity housing. Limited equity housing limits the profit owners can make when they resell, thus assuring a housing unit can stay affordable over the long run."<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Urban Habitat Program, *There Goes the Neighborhood* (San Francisco: Urban Habitat Program, 1999), 9.

would allow the Association to directly create affordable housing and influence development in the neighborhood.

The Bay Area has a strong network of CDCs, which have become the most prominent and active developers in many communities. They build and finance affordable housing, assist small businesses in management and expansion, and provide community social services. To develop affordable housing, a CDC tries to buy vacant land or dilapidated buildings on inexpensive or favorable terms. They have boosted homeownership among low-income households by approaching landlords to sell either to the building's current tenants or to the CDC.

### **Retain the Neighborhood's Affordable Housing Stock**

A high priority for the neighborhood is to maintain the existing affordable housing stock. Today, Telegraph-Northgate has a high proportion of renters. The 1990 census reports that of the 1,743 housing units in the area, 94 percent are renter-occupied, while only six percent are owner-occupied. The area also contains approximately 677 subsidized housing units for seniors, the formerly homeless, and low-income people with disabilities. There are many examples of development built and well-managed by non-profits in the neighborhood including the Hamilton Apartments, San Pablo Hotel, Providence House, Friendly Manor, Rosa Parks, and the soon to open CURA Oakland.

Displacement is not a significant threat for residents living in subsidized and managed housing. Those under the greatest threat of displacement include low, moderate and median-income residents who rent within the private market. Renters are easily displaced in a strong economic cycle with rising rents and low vacancies. The City of Oakland has weak tenants rights, with broad loopholes for evictions and only a minimum 30-day notice period. Many low-income residents live in privately owned units with Section 8 vouchers. These residents face the possibility that their landlords will choose not to renew their 20-year contracts with HUD and instead join the more lucrative private rental market. Recent news reports have found this trend is on the rise in Oakland, as contracts signed in the late 1970s and early 1980s come up for renewal.

It is important that the Neighborhood Association lobby the City of Oakland for stronger city policies that will protect existing residents from displacement. The following are possible policies

## **What are**

### **COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT CORPORATIONS?**

Community development corporations (CDC's) often have their beginnings as neighborhood associations. The Tenderloin Neighborhood Development Corporation in San Francisco was able to raise money from local foundations to hire a director and take advantage of five Americorps volunteers to organize the neighborhood. The neighborhood association eventually became a CDC after partnering with a parent CDC on a number of affordable housing projects.

The Bernal Heights Neighborhood Center also started out as a small grassroots organization. Their development work to date includes building affordable housing and securing a grocery store and bank on Cortland Avenue, the main street in the Bernal Heights neighborhood of San Francisco.

The Telegraph-Northgate Neighborhood Association may want to follow a similar path because there is no community development corporation with a strong presence in the neighborhood. Given the booming development market in Oakland and the Bay Area, it is more strategic to partner with a community development corporation in the short term.

that would offer stronger protections to preserve affordability in all Oakland neighborhoods:

- ▶ **Tenant Protection Ordinances:** Advocate for stricter rent control laws, eviction control, and restrictions on condo conversions.
- ▶ **Development Linkage Fees:** Require market-rate developers to contribute funds to a trust that generates money for financing future affordable housing in Oakland.
- ▶ **Inclusionary Zoning:** Require all new housing developments with 10 or more units to set aside at least 10 percent of the new units for moderate- or low-income families.
- ▶ **Promote the right of first refusal,** which require property owners selling property to first offer it to the existing tenants and then to local community development corporations.

The association can place permanent deed restrictions on the neighborhood housing that is managed by nonprofits. This was the tactic used in the Tenderloin in the early 1980s, which resulted in the retention of hundreds of single-room occupancy units despite downtown development pressures. Buildings can also be made permanently affordable by deed restrictions written in the building's lease.

In terms of market-rate housing, the association can place stipulations on developers. Most cities throughout the Bay Area have inclusionary zoning—developers must designate some percentage, typically 10 percent but sometimes 20 percent, of the total number of units as affordable. Urban Ecology and other groups are currently supporting an inclusionary zoning regulation for the City of Oakland, which may go before City Council in 2000. In the meantime, the Association can make developers voluntarily include inclusionary units on new market-rate developments in their neighborhood.

### **Retain Local Businesses**

Telegraph Avenue is lined with mixed-use buildings that are two to seven stories with retail on the ground floor and office space or apartments on the upper levels. The small businesses in the neighborhood include corner market stores, a 25-year-old bicycle shop, a few small restaurants, beauty supply stores, several Korean specialty stores and bars/pool halls. A total of five bars/pool halls are located on Telegraph Avenue, which is the dominant retail use on the corridor. Telegraph Avenue's storefront vacancy rate is approximately 20 percent (as of Spring 2000).

The displacement of small businesses on Telegraph Avenue poses less of a threat than the displacement of local residents. Because of the existing retail infrastructure, Telegraph Avenue has the potential to become a strong retail spine with a unique identity, as discussed in Chapter Seven—Economic Development. Community members currently travel to Chinatown, Emeryville or the Temescal neighborhood to shop for their everyday needs. There is no full-service grocery store in the area, nor are there banks, drug stores, or clothing stores. Community members have prioritized these retail services, and have identified a need for a bakery, a hardware store, a coffee shop and restaurants. Community members also want to avoid retail chain stores.

In order to secure local retail, the Neighborhood Association can encourage the development of subsidized housing above ground-floor retail in mixed-use buildings. In this model, already in use by CDCs in the Bay Area, financing for the housing is not contingent upon revenue from the retailer, and so the commercial spaces can be rented at reduced or break-even rates.

The Telegraph-Northgate Neighborhood Association has begun working with developers to guide development and discuss what types of retail they would like to see in the neighborhood. Members of the Association have met with representatives of a cooperative grocery store in San Francisco and the National Cooperative Bank in order to try to attract a grocery store to the area. With paid staff, the Association could be more aggressive with approaching retailers

and negotiating with developers. For example, the Bernal Heights Neighborhood Center negotiated directly with a retailer, the Good Life grocery store, and convinced them to open a second store in their neighborhood. In 1999, a new community-oriented grocery store, Gateway Foods, opened in West Oakland's remodeled Jack London Gateway Plaza (located at 7<sup>th</sup> and Market Streets). While these examples show that grocery stores can be brought back to low-income neighborhoods, Telegraph-Northgate's disadvantage is its relatively small population. Until more downtown housing is built, it appears that locating a new grocery store in the Telegraph-Northgate neighborhood may not be feasible.

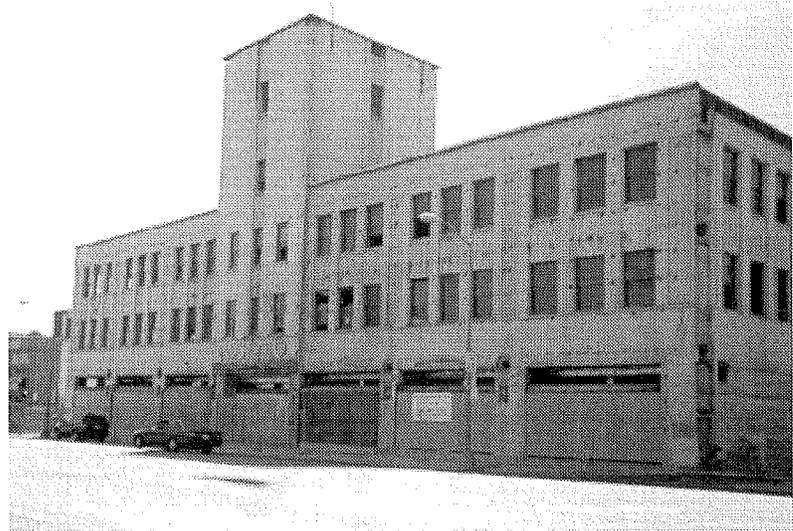
Another strategy is for the Association to work with the City of Oakland to create a retail business incubator. For example, the Communications Technology Cluster, a business incubator for high tech start-ups, is located at 21<sup>st</sup> Street and Broadway, only a few blocks away from the Telegraph-Northgate neighborhood. Business incubators provide support to start-up businesses and new micro-enterprises, as well as management services and retail space at low rents. The Pajaro Development Corporation manages a successful retail business incubator in Watsonville.

### **Partner with Community-Based Organizations**

It is vital that the Telegraph-Northgate Neighborhood Association continue to work with larger nonprofits with a strong community presence, like Urban Ecology, who are working to make Oakland a better place to live. These nonprofits can advocate with the Association for the neighborhood's well being. Besides lobbying for stronger tenant protections, the Association should be aware of "redlining" practices among banks, and toxics and hazardous materials in the neighborhood. The Association should continue to call on organizations like People United for a Better Oakland (PUEBLO) and Communities for a Better Environment to ensure economic vitality and environmental health for the neighborhood.

### **FUTURE ISSUES**

Few cities in the country have Oakland's assets: the cultural and economic diversity of its residents; a natural landscape that includes lakes, creeks, hills and shorelines; an urban downtown core with excellent access to mass transit and city blocks filled with fine historic buildings. As the city manages the current development boom, these assets should be respected and enhanced. As community members of Telegraph-Northgate move forward in creating an inclusive and thriving neighborhood, they will seek support from their elected representatives. Oakland's leaders and staff should prioritize the city's cultural and natural assets.



*Live-work housing is planned for the old Sears Building*

Over the next few years, a number of issues and projects will emerge that will affect the future of the Telegraph-Northgate neighborhood. The following section outlines some of these in relation to this Neighborhood Plan.

### **Mayor Brown's 10K Plan**

There is a strong political push from Mayor Brown to develop new urban housing in the greater downtown area that will bring 10,000 middle-class residents to Oakland. Working with the Redevelopment Agency, the city has a wide range of incentives to offer developers. Since the Telegraph-Northgate neighborhood is located within the Central District Urban

Renewal project area, community members must pay constant attention to new development proposals that may be located within the neighborhood. Early notification of new development proposals is important to give community members time to understand, analyze and respond to proposals.

### **Uptown Mixed-Use Development**

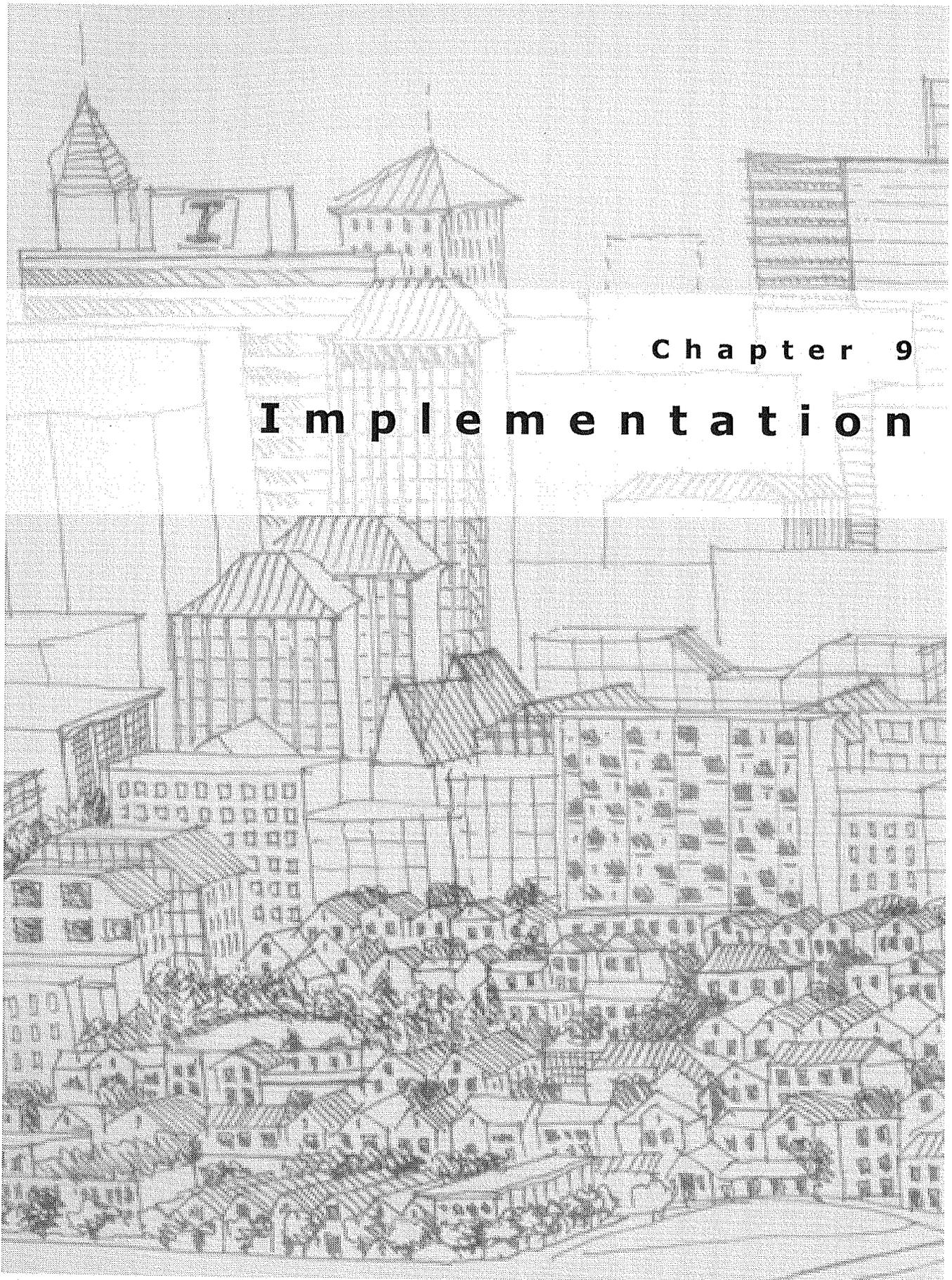
At this writing, Forest City, a development firm based in Cleveland, has proposed 2,000 units of housing (a combination of rental, ownership and hotel rooms), 150,000 square feet of high-end retail, 1,300 parking spaces, and a half-acre urban park in the Uptown area. The size of this project and the type of retail desired suggest that this development will have a large impact on downtown Oakland and the Telegraph-Northgate neighborhood. It will be important for community members to continue to shape the design and density of this project to best match the "Downtown Transition" land-use designation discussed in this Plan. This project is also an opportunity to secure the neighborhood's retail needs. With an influx of 2,000 units of housing, securing a grocery store may be a possibility after all.

### **Telegraph Avenue Bicycle Lane**

For the past year, the City of Oakland has been working to implement its citywide pedestrian and bicycle plan. The Neighborhood Association has fully supported the striping of a bicycle lane from 51<sup>st</sup> Street to downtown Oakland. The bicycle lane would assist in achieving several of the traffic-calming and pedestrian-oriented goals of this plan. (Refer to Figure 19: Telegraph Avenue Perspective.)



Figure 19  
**Telegraph Avenue Perspective**



Chapter 9

**Implementation**

## CHAPTER 9

*In order to see this plan to fruition, the Telegraph-Northgate Neighborhood Association must enter a new domain. Monitoring capital improvements in the neighborhood will require a community-based organization that is prepared to work consistently with city staff. Community groups can participate at all stages of neighborhood projects, including small- or large-scale development and projects that vary in scope from retail attraction to park land acquisition. This section discusses the steps needed to undertake improvements in the Telegraph-Northgate neighborhood, including potential sources of funding.*

### TELEGRAPH-NORTHGATE INFRASTRUCTURE IMPROVEMENTS

The Neighborhood Plan outlines the areas targeted for infrastructure improvement: housing, retail, streetscape design, park design, traffic calming and freeway underpasses. Each of these areas requires sources of private and public funding as well as coordination of city agencies. Because this plan is largely conceptual, the Association may wish to continue to meet with the community to evaluate specific sections. For example, community members may want to further define specific methods and additional locations for traffic calming. Once the desired level of input is obtained, a design development process can occur that leads to the production of construction drawings and a final budget for all infrastructure projects.

The bullets below outline the basic steps necessary to achieve implementation and the city agencies that need to be involved.

#### *Housing Development:*

- ▶ Partner with a CDC for rehabilitating existing and new housing developments.
- ▶ Identify sites for new affordable housing construction.
- ▶ Identify vacant buildings for rehabilitating into affordable housing.
- ▶ Spearhead a homeownership drive.

#### *Retail Development:*

- ▶ Work with the Neighborhood Commercial Revitalization Coordinator on façade improvements, businesses plans, window displays for vacant storefronts and securing needed retail.
- ▶ Directly approach retailers to move into the neighborhood.
- ▶ Work with the National Cooperative Bank to identify funding mechanisms.
- ▶ Work with housing developers to secure needed retail on the ground floor of projects.

#### *Park Development:*

- ▶ Work with BART to acquire the United States Postal Service parking lot.

- ▶ Work with the Park and Recreation Department on land acquisition and park development.
- ▶ Work with the Trust for Public Land on land acquisition and park development.

#### *Traffic Calming:*

- ▶ Work with the Department of Public Works on developing traffic calming measures along Northgate Avenue.
- ▶ Further define methods of traffic calming and continue to work with city staff on pedestrian improvements as noted in Oakland's Pedestrian Plan.

#### *Freeway Underpasses:*

- ▶ Work with Caltrans and Public Works on incorporating public art into the freeway underpasses.
- ▶ Secure funding for public arts projects.
- ▶ Identify artist groups and send out a request for proposals (RFP).

#### *Streetscape Design:*

- ▶ Work with the Department of Public Works to stripe a bicycle lane on Telegraph Avenue.
- ▶ Work with the Department of Public Works on identifying where to locate bus shelters, street trees, trash cans and increased lighting.

### **THE CITY OF OAKLAND'S FINANCIAL CONSTRAINTS**

Proposition 13 and other state laws affecting the collection and expenditure of local property and sales taxes curtails Oakland's ability to provide continuous municipal services and capital improvements. California cities as a result have "fiscalized" their land use policies. "Many localities use both their legal powers and their financial resources to clear out the losers and replace them with projects that will jack up tax revenue. In many cases, the traditional concern for a balanced community that will provide its citizens with everything they need—a variety of housing types, jobs, shops, culture—has been replaced by an overriding desire to increase the local tax base."<sup>1</sup> In addition, Oakland has unique characteristics that make it difficult to maintain and improve the city's infrastructure:

- ▶ Oakland's 52 square miles are spread across steep hills, industrial and residential flatlands, and the environmentally sensitive shorelines of the estuary and San Francisco Bay.
- ▶ Although it has pockets of affluence, Oakland is not a wealthy city. Poverty and unemployment rates reach 25 to 30 percent or higher in some Oakland neighborhoods, creating demand for well-funded, high-quality social services (housing, job training, prenatal and early childhood health programs, enriched public education and police and emergency services). The provision of these services competes with the expense of maintaining and improving the city's infrastructure. (Alameda County, which provides some social services to Oakland, also faces fiscal constraints not unlike those of Oakland and cannot eliminate the stress on the municipal budget.)
- ▶ Oakland has an extensive amount of vacant industrial land, much of it contaminated and in need of environmental remediation and considerable public and private investment. In addition, downtown and other commercial districts have a large number of buildings damaged and unused since the 1989 earthquake. Private owners of these buildings will not undertake the expense of retrofitting until the commercial real estate market provides incentive. Oakland's brownfields and vacant or underutilized buildings produce little in the way of local tax revenues.

<sup>1</sup>William Fulton, *Guide to California Planning* (Point Arena: Solano Press Books, 1999), 236.

**The 1996-2001 plan allocates \$1.4 million for Parks and Recreation, \$10.4 million for local street improvements, and \$542,000 for traffic. The Telegraph-Northgate Neighborhood Plan contains components fitting each of these three categories.<sup>2</sup>**

**FUNDING SOURCES AND MUNICIPAL PROGRAMS**

Telegraph-Northgate neighborhood improvements may still be eligible for funding from various city sources, but efforts can also be made to secure regional, state, federal, and private funds. All of these funds are highly competitive and require strong political contacts with elected officials and city staff. The following is Urban Ecology's best assessment of available funding resources and existing city programs. With the plan in hand, the Telegraph-Northgate neighborhood and the City of Oakland have an opportunity to seek funding for capital improvements.

**Oakland's Capital Improvement Program**

Oakland finances many physical improvements according to its five-year Capital Improvement Plan. Funds for this period have already been allocated, but the city reviews its Capital Improvement Plan annually and updates it every two years to reflect changing conditions. As a result, funds might become available that could be tapped for Telegraph-Northgate. In addition, the next Capital Improvement Plan will make significant funding available in 2002.

A long-term approach for Telegraph-Northgate should seek funding from this program. In order for Telegraph-Northgate to receive Capital Improvement funds, the project must be sponsored by a city agency, such as Neighborhood Commercial Revitalization, Parks and Recreation, Public Works, or Life Enrichment. Advance coordination is needed to ensure that Telegraph-Northgate be considered for the 2002-2007 Capital Improvement Plan.

**Special Districts, Financing, and Community Build**

Because resources are limited, Oakland's city administration is receptive to initiatives undertaken by community groups to fund all or part of local improvement projects. Despite local leadership in obtaining such funds, all involve approval and handling by city or county staff, requiring good coordination and communication. Alternatively, staff might act as liaisons between the community and the city during planning and implementation phases of a local improvement initiative.

Some of these programs require payments by local businesses. Because Telegraph-Northgate forms part of a low-income neighborhood, the ability of local business owners to make contributions is restricted. The small businesses along Telegraph and San Pablo

Table 8  
**Oakland's Capital Improvement Program**

<b>Type of Funds:</b>	<b>Applicability to Telegraph-Northgate Neighborhood Plan:</b>
Alameda County Street Aid	streetscape
Equipment Fund	n/a
FEMA	n/a
Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century	streetscape
State Gas Tax	n/a
Lighting and Landscape Assessment District	street lighting
Measure B	streetscape
Measure I	park
Measure K	park
Multi-Purpose Reserve	park and streetscape
Municipal Improvement Capital	park and streetscape
Sewer Service Charge	n/a
State (SB 140)	n/a
City Administration Project	park and streetscape

<sup>2</sup> City of Oakland, 1997-2002 *Capital Improvement Program*. Oakland: City of Oakland, 1995.

Avenues have a consistent clientele, but the total amount of available consumer dollars in the district is limited by the neighborhood's low-income status. This affects the viability of funding mechanisms that draw on community resources.

Municipalities frequently establish Business Improvement Districts (BIDs)—where local businesses make regular donations to a local improvement fund and set priorities for how the funds are spent—to fund and facilitate improvements in commercial areas. At this writing, the City of Oakland is setting up procedures for neighborhood-level BIDs. In order to set up a BID, the Telegraph-Northgate Neighborhood Association, as the local business association, would have to gain non-profit status and oversee allocation of the funds. BID funds are used for maintenance, security, marketing, special events, parking and transportation improvement, and capital improvements.

California law also permits the establishment of Special Districts, housed within city or county government, to accomplish limited purposes in specific parts of the city. These are funded by a property tax that applies to the district alone. In addition, cities around California are exploring ways to use state funds to cover the up-front costs of local infrastructure investment. These state funds would be paid back over time by fees on private developers.

Table 9 **Special Districts and Financing Mechanisms<sup>3</sup>**

Type of District	Responsible Entity	Description
Business Improvement District (BID)	TNNA Technical Assistance from Oakland	Business owners within a specified geographical area agree to contribute annually to a fund targeted for improvements to the area. The participants form an advisory committee to determine priorities for how the funds should be spent.
Special Assessment District	Alameda County City of Oakland	Special Assessment Districts are used to finance projects that will directly benefit local property owners. The county and city governments can levy a special property tax from the property owners who will directly benefit from the local improvements being made.
Mello-Roos District Community Facilities Districts ("Special Districts")	City of Oakland TNNA as community advisors	Mello-Roos and Community Facilities Districts have a limited purpose and are created to carry out a specific function. They are established as units within the local government, and are empowered to carry out the service that the community wants. Thus, the special district can tax local residents and businesses, issue debt, and enter into contracts for service.
Tax-Increment Financing	Alameda County City of Oakland TNNA	Local governments draw a district around a specific area in which certain infrastructure improvement goals have been established, and the assessed tax value is frozen at a point in time. From that point on, two sets of tax records are kept for that district. Taxes are collected on the frozen base and distributed normally. Any additional taxes from an increase in assessed property values from that district are contributed to a fund for capital improvements within that district. Local groups are involved in drawing the lines of the district and leading a community advisory committee for expenditure of the funds.

<sup>3</sup> Much of the information in this chart was compiled from Building Together: Investing In Community Infrastructure. National Association of Counties, National Association of Home Builders, Government Finance Officers Association, Lincoln Institute of Land Policy, and the Urban Land Institute, 1990.

TELEGRAPH - NORTHGATE NEIGHBORHOOD PLAN

Table 10

**City of Oakland's Programs for Housing**

Housing Program	Description
HMIP Amortized Loan Program	Provides low-interest rehab loans to low-and moderate-income owner-occupants of one-to four-unit dwellings.
HMIP Deferred Payment Loan	Provides rehab resources to any low-income homeowner unable to qualify for an interest bearing loan.
HMIP Vacant Housing Loan	Provides assistance for rehabilitating properties which have been vacant for more than six months.
Minor Home Repair Program	Provides grants to homeowners for emergency home repairs.
Rental Rehab Program	Provides loans to property owners to assure an adequate supply of affordable rental housing for low-income tenants.
Access Improvement Program	Provides grants for accessibility modifications for rental and owner-occupied properties.
Community Restoration Program	Provides loans with flexible repayment terms to buy, fix-up, and then sell vacant and blighted houses in targeted areas in Oakland. The Telegraph-Northgate neighborhood qualifies.
FHA Title 1 Loans	Provides market rate loans to property owners, without income restrictions, for rehabilitation of one-to four-unit properties.
Self-Help Paint/Free Paint Program	Provides free paint, hand painting tools and free instructions on how to paint for owner occupied homes in the Community Development Districts.
Weatherization Program	Provides repairs to reduce utility costs by keeping heat in and cold out during the winter, and cooling air during the summer.
First-time Homebuyer Mortgage Assistance Program	Provides loans up to \$30,000 for low-and moderate-income, first-time homebuyers to purchase homes in Oakland.
Predevelopment Loan Program	Provides loans and grants to non-profit housing developers to cover predevelopment costs (feasibility analyses and preparation of loan applications) and to cover costs of preparing projects for syndication.
Housing Development Program	Funds are allocated through periodic competitive funding rounds to preserve and expand the supply affordable housing for low-and moderate-income households.
Emergency Housing Program	Provides emergency shelter and essential service to the homeless population in Oakland. The City annually funds local shelters, emergency housing programs, and a legal advocacy program for the homeless.
Housing Counseling	Provides counseling in default and delinquency, low-and moderate-income homeownership, landlord-tenant relations, home rehabilitation and mortgage bonds programs.
Center for Independent Living	City funded, this organization provides the disabled population with housing search, counseling and variety of referral services regarding housing.
Relocation Services	Provides services to businesses and families who live in housing scheduled for demolition or rehabilitation, which are forced to relocate due to Agency or city action.
Code Enforcement Relocation Program	Provides payment of relocation benefits to tenants by landlords when the landlord has effectively displaced tenants due to non-compliance with Housing Code requirements.

IMPLEMENTATION

### City of Oakland's Programs for Housing (Continued)

Housing Program	Description
Project Share	City funded, Eden Council for Hope and Opportunity (ECHO) provides education and publicity for shared housing.
Home Equity Conversion	City funded, ECHO provides reverse mortgage programs services to seniors.
Rental Assistance Program	City funded, ECHO helps people who have fallen behind in rental payments or who need money for a security deposit through contractual agreements between tenant and landlord.
Fair Housing Services	City funded, Operation Sentinel and East Bay Housing Rights provides landlord-tenant counseling and investigates legal remedies for housing discrimination.
Housing Residential Rent and Relocation Board	The Board acts as a legal mechanism to prevent excessive rent increases. It also works to encourage open communication and to foster a climate of understanding between Oakland landlords and tenants.

Table 11

### City of Oakland's Programs for Small Businesses

Small Business Program	Description
Commercial Property Façade Improvement Program	This program offers one to one matching grants up to \$10,000 per building, to businesses and property owners, for approved exterior renovations. Free architectural services are provided.
Merchant Association Assistance/Organizational Development	Assistance is available to merchant groups to develop and strengthen merchant associations. Services include planning and attending monthly meetings, facilitation, organizational development, and referrals for city programs and services.
Neighborhood Commercial Revitalization District Plans	Assistance is available to community organizations to develop comprehensive plans that reflect the community's vision for revitalization of the neighborhood commercial district.
Neighborhood Windows Project	Windows of vacant and underutilized commercial buildings are used to display works of local artists in conjunction with the façade improvement program.
Main Street Program	A national and state program that aims to revitalize older commercial districts.
East Bay Small Businesses Center	The Center provides free business assistance and services: accounting, maintenance and operations, marketing, sales, cash flow analysis as well as several other services.
Oakland Business	The Center provides loans from \$5,000-\$60,000 for working capital, inventory Development Center and equipment.
One Stop Capital Shop	The One Stop Capital Shop provides direct commercial business loans for expansion, attraction and retention.
ReEnergize East Bay	This organization provides assessment of energy- and money-saving equipment.

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The community might also contribute to the park’s revitalization through a community building project. This concept, which is gaining popularity in different parts of the country including the Bay Area, has community members contribute time, labor, and materials—sweat equity and in-kind donations—to improving public space. In the City of Alameda, for example, a skateboard park was constructed in 1999 with \$55,000 from public funds and an equivalent of \$200,000 in in-kind donations and volunteer hours. (Refer to Table 9: Special Districts and Financing Mechanisms.)

**Redevelopment and Tax Increment Financing**

As mentioned in Chapter Four, the eastern portion of the Telegraph-Northgate neighborhood is in the Central District Urban Renewal project area, which was established in 1969. Tax increment financing is allowed in redevelopment areas. The total assessed value of property within the project area is established—the frozen base—and for the next 45 years, most of the property tax revenues generated from increases in the assessed value above the frozen base will be allocated to the Redevelopment Agency. The revenues can be spent on fostering businesses, creating jobs, stimulating private investment, rehabilitating and financing housing and financing capital improvement projects. (Refer to Table 9: Special Districts and Financing Mechanisms.)

**Enterprise Zone**

The Telegraph-Northgate neighborhood is also a part of Oakland’s Enterprise Zone, which is a tax incentive program designed to stimulate business development and employment growth. The objective of the Enterprise Zone is to reduce the cost of doing business by offering a series of tax credits to companies located in the Zone. The Enterprise Zone offers six tax credits: hiring tax credit, sales and use credit, business expense deduction, net operating loss carryover, net interest deduction for lenders and employee tax credit.

**City of Oakland Programs for Small Businesses and Housing**

The City of Oakland’s Community Economic Development Agency (CEDA) has programs specifically targeted for revitalizing aspects of older Oakland neighborhoods, especially retail corridors and housing rehabilitation. For small businesses, there are programs to assist in façade improvements, acquiring loans and assistance in business development. CEDA’s housing program works to preserve and create affordable housing. Many of the programs are available to the Telegraph-Northgate neighborhood since it falls into two Community Development Districts—Chinatown and Central, and West Oakland. Housing programs provide a range of services from free paint to tenant-landlord counseling. (Refer to Table 10: Oakland Programs for Housing and Table 11: Oakland Programs for Small Businesses.)

**Regional and State Sources**

In 1997, the Metropolitan Transportation Commission established its Transportation for Livable Communities program. Drawing funds from the federal Transportation Efficiency Act for the 21st Century (TEA-21), this program takes advantage of recent federal and state legislation transferring greater decision making power to regional metropolitan planning organizations.

Table 12

**Regional and State Funding Sources**

<b>REGIONAL SOURCES</b>		
<b>Fund</b>	<b>Responsible Entity</b>	<b>Applicability to elements of the Telegraph-Northgate</b>
Transportation for Livable Communities: Transit-oriented Planning Fund Grants	TNNA	Infrastructure that enhances pedestrian safety, calms traffic, and facilitates bus movement
	City of Oakland	
	Entity with the ability to contract for construction	
<b>STATE SOURCES</b>		
<b>Type of District</b>	<b>Responsible Entity</b>	<b>Description</b>
Office of Planning & Research	City of Oakland	The OPR has a revolving loan fund that provides grants for local planning processes. Grants are paid back over time by development fees from projects built according to plans.
	California OPR	

IMPLEMENTATION

Table 13

**Federal Funding Sources**

Type of District	Responsible Entity	Description
Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) <sup>4</sup>	City of Oakland	<p>CDBG funds are programmed every year by the Redevelopment Agency. Oakland is eligible for CDBG funds and has received them since the program was established in 1974. Eligible activities include:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Land and building acquisition</li> <li>2. Reconstruction or rehabilitation of property within distressed communities, in order to create or enhance housing, playgrounds, shopping centers, etc.</li> <li>3. Construction of public facilities and improvements, including streets, sidewalks, water systems, community and senior citizen centers, and recreational facilities</li> <li>4. Workforce preparation</li> <li>5. Economic development within distressed areas, including micro-loans to small entrepreneurs and business expansion loans to help retain existing businesses that employ low-income workers</li> <li>6. Public services for youth, seniors, or the disabled, including day care centers, youth and elderly services, health care facilities, transportation, or counseling</li> <li>7. Crime reduction initiatives, including neighborhood watch programs, extra police patrols, police substations, and clearing abandoned buildings used for illegal activities</li> <li>8. Down payment and closing cost assistance and subsidized interest rates for low-income homebuyers</li> <li>9. Enforcing local building codes to reverse housing deterioration</li> </ol>
Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century (TEA-21)	<p>City of Oakland Public Works Department</p> <p>Alameda County Congestion Management Agency</p> <p>Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC)</p>	<p>Passed in 1998, TEA-21 is the most recent federal transportation legislation. It provides an unprecedented amount of local control over transportation decisions and investments, an aspect that is being utilized by MTC in creating and funding its TLC program, described above. In addition, many aspects of TEA-21 encourage transportation planning and investments that serve local community needs, fit within the established infrastructure, and improve air and water quality.</p> <p>Decisions about programming and spending federal and state transportation funds are made on an ongoing basis by the city, county, and regional transportation agencies. These processes require plenty of lead time, and so should be viewed as long-term approaches to local improvements.</p>
Resources 2000 Land and Water Conservation Fund	<p>Bill introduced by Barbara Boxer and George Miller; pending approval by Congress.</p> <p>Administration of the funds remains to be determined.</p>	<p>Announced in February 1999, this legislation will establish a permanent fund for land acquisition, urban park revitalization, historic preservation, land restoration, ocean and farmland conservation, and endangered species recovery. The fund will be established and replenished by federal oil and gas revenues. Pending approval, \$1.4 billion will be allocated to start the fund, and an additional \$2 billion is expected to be added annually.</p>

<sup>4</sup>Information on CDBG compiled from HUD's website at <http://www.hud.gov>.

INFORMATION

In 2000, MTC will make available \$250,000 in community-based planning grants and \$25 million for infrastructure improvements. A 15 percent local funding match is required. The components of this plan related to traffic calming, transit facilities, and bicycle or pedestrian facilities are eligible for funding. (Refer to Table 12: Regional and State Funding Sources.)

**State Sources**

California’s Office of Planning and Research offers limited funds for local planning efforts. At this writing, a large parks bond is pending in the state legislature, a sizable portion of which is earmarked for urban parks. (Refer to Table 12: Regional and State Sources.)

**Federal Sources**

Numerous federal sources exist for funding for expanded community development activities in the neighborhood. Telegraph-Northgate is currently eligible for funds through Community Development Block Grants, TEA-21 funds, and Resource 2000 funds. The federal government prefers to transfer funds and management responsibility to municipal and county governments. (Refer to Table 13: Federal Funding Sources.)

**Private Sources**

In response to declining public funds for park and public land conservation and restoration, private nonprofit organizations and foundations have directed funds to park rehabilitation programs. The Trust for Public Land’s Green Cities Initiative, the Packard Foundation, and the Rails to Trails Conservancy work to revitalize parks in urban areas. Many foundations also offer assistance to small neighborhood groups like the Telegraph-Northgate Neighborhood Association. (Refer to Table 14: Private Funding Sources.)

Table 14

**Private Funding Sources**

Fund	Description
Rails to Trails Conservancy	Technical assistance with planning and maintenance of urban parks, especially those that act as connectors along bicycle or pedestrian routes
Trust for Public Land	Land acquisition, assistance in planning and project coordination, real estate transactions, legal resource, public financing campaigns and long term financing options
Packard Foundation - Conservation Program	Urban park restoration and open space protection
Common Counsel Foundation	Capacity building assistance to small neighborhood groups
Vanguard Foundation	Capacity building assistance to small neighborhood groups
Greenville Foundation	Capacity building assistance to small neighborhood groups

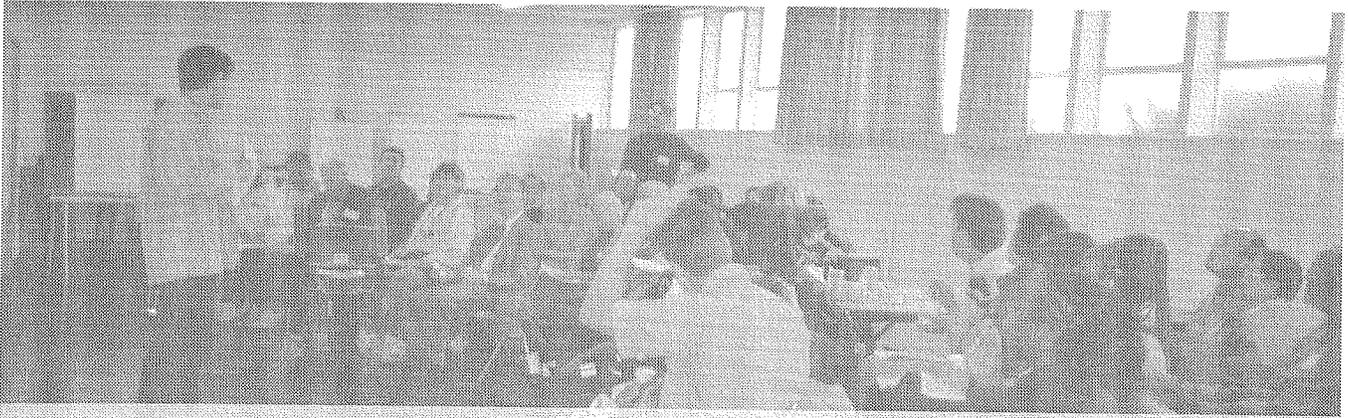
**Long-Term Maintenance**

Long-term maintenance is an important issue facing cities and communities seeking to revitalize public spaces. Maintaining the landscape, ensuring the health of trees and plants, cleaning graffiti and restrooms, and picking up trash are all activities best carried out by trained and insured staff.

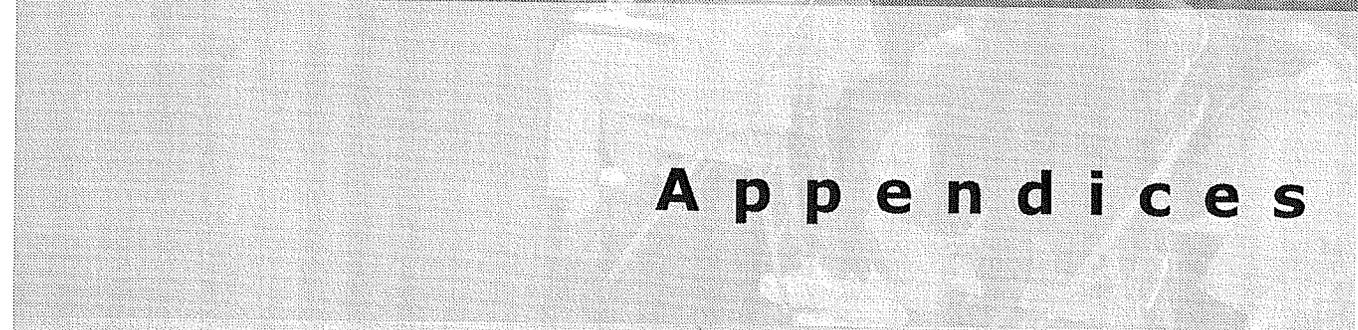
Like all city departments, however, Oakland’s Public Works and Parks and Recreation Departments have a limited budget and staff. Options for improving maintenance include:

- ▶ If a local contribution/special district is considered, part of the funds can be directed to fund a portion of a Public Works staff person’s time to be specifically spent on park and street maintenance.
- ▶ Team Oakland provides work crews of young men and women who carry out basic street and park maintenance and graffiti abatement. Applications are considered each fall for year-long contracts.
- ▶ Similar to Team Oakland, the East Bay Conservation Corps employs crews of young men and women.

I M P L E M E N T A T I O N



# A p p e n d i c e s



**APPENDIX A: COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION**

From August 1998 to April 2000, Urban Ecology and the Telegraph-Northgate Neighborhood Association organized the following events to gather community input. Community members participated in planning processes by attending workshops, focus groups and individual meetings; filling out surveys; or participating in the Telegraph-Northgate Neighborhood Association's monthly meetings.

<i>Date</i>	<i>Event</i>	<i>Number of Participants</i>
February 24, 1999	Kick-Off	40
March 3, 1999	First Community Workshop	21
April 30, 1999	Focus Group: Korean Seniors at West Lake Christian Terrace	18
May 5, 1999	Focus Group: Youth at Samaritan Neighborhood Center	7
May 20, 1999	Focus Group: San Pablo Avenue Social Service Providers	8
June 5, 1999	Second Community Workshop	34
April 4, 2000	Third Community Workshop	30

APPENDIX

<i>Full Name</i>	<i>Affiliation</i>	<i>Organization</i>
Beverly Allen	Resident	Northgate Terrace
Johnnie L. Baldwin	Resident	
Michael Belfer	Resident	
Randolph Belle	Merchant	Oakland Art.Com
Samret Berhe	Youth	Samaritan Neighborhood Center
Phillip Boyd	Merchant	Cabel's Reef
A.L. Brown	Resident	
Charles Brown	Resident	29th Street Neighborhood Association
Ella Brown	Resident	Satellite Senior Homes
Julius Butler	Resident	
Claudia Castro	Resident	
Rahwa Caidey	Youth	Samaritan Neighborhood Center
Tom Carpenter	Resident	
Juanita Chittock	Merchant	Stork Club
Brian Chrisman-Boutte	Resident	Providence House
Catherine Coleman	Church Member	First Presbyterian
Charlotte Collins	Resident	Providence House
Pamela Collins	Resident	Providence House
Jennifer Cooper	Government	Community & Economic Development Agency
Leilani Cotton	Merchant	New Day Preschool
Jaime Cosio	Merchant	Jaime's Barber Shop
Gloria Crowell	Lobbyist	H&H Ecoprises
Donald Davis	Youth	Samaritan Neighborhood Center
Juanita Davis	Youth	Samaritan Neighborhood Center
Angela Davis-Lincoln	Government	Oakland Police Department
Jamae Decuir	Youth	Samaritan Neighborhood Center

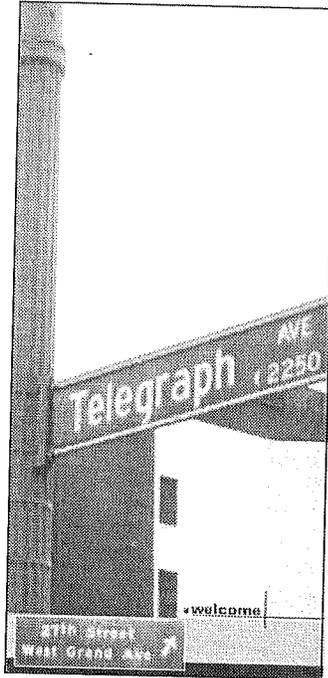
Mardisa Dickerson	Social Service Provider	East Bay Community Recovery Project
Leo DuBose	Merchant	A Round World Bike Shop
Sister William Eileen	Social Service Provider	St. Vincent de Paul
Jack Everhart	Merchant	Cabel's Reef
Thelma Ferguson	Property Owner	
Gregory Fields	Resident	Hamilton Apartments
Maria Fontaben	Government	Alameda County Health Department
H. Vincent Franklin	Merchant	21st Century Tech, Inc.
Ben Fulcher	Resident	
Sandra Gaines	Resident	
Katharine Gale	Government	Alameda County Housing & Community Development
Tim Gardes	Resident	
Neil Goldman	Resident	Satellite Senior Homes
Michael D. Gottung	Government	U.S. Postal Service
Alex Grohem	Resident	
Ruth Halend	Resident	
Soonbong Han	Resident	West Lake Christian Terrace
Susan Han	Resident	West Lake Christian Terrace
Elizabeth Hanzel	Merchant	Hanzel Auto Body Works
Henry Hanzel	Merchant	Hanzel Auto Body Works
Michael Hardaway	Merchant	Cabel's Reef
M.W. Harris	Merchant	Telegraph Cleaners
Richard Harris	Resident	Hamilton Apartments
Ahmed Hassan	Merchant	S & A Quality Market
Mohammed Hassan	Merchant	S & A Quality Market
Patricia Hauser	Staff	Providence House
Heather Hensley	Government	Community Economic Development Agency
Pil Ya Hong	Resident	West Lake Christian Terrace
J. Imani	Government	Oakland City Council: Councilmember Nancy Nadel
Son Jung Ja	Resident	West Lake Christian Terrace
Charlotte Jayag	Resident	St. Francis De Sales
Colin Jersey	Resident	
Carol Johnson	Social Service Provider	St. Mary's Center
Dorothy Johnson	Social Service Provider	Friendly Manor
Cheryl Jones	Merchant	Growing Alternatives
Nancy Jordan	Social Service Provider	Rosa Parks House
Sak Yong Jun	Resident	West Lake Christian Terrace
Kyung Roe Jung	Resident	West Lake Christian Terrace
Esseye Kefelegn	Merchant	Arada African Heritage Gebeya
Allena Keele	Resident	Providence House
Beth Kim	Resident	

Bok Kyung Kim	Resident	West Lake Christian Terrace
Kang Yeoul Kim	Resident	West Lake Christian Terrace
Sookja Kim	Resident	West Lake Christian Terrace
Soonbae Kim	Resident	West Lake Christian Terrace
Tae Won Kim	Resident	West Lake Christian Terrace
Yong Sik Kim	Resident	West Lake Christian Terrace
Roderick Kiracofe	Property Owner	Haig G. Mardikian Enterprises
Harold Knopp	Church Member	
Ruth Knopp	Church Member	
Charly Kroth	Resident	Providence House
Capt. Ralph Lacer	Government	Oakland Police Department: Area I Commander
Kyechul Lee	Resident	West Lake Christian Terrace
Soonbok Lee	Resident	West Lake Christian Terrace
Cheryl Locey	Property Owner	Northgate Manor Apartments
Lauren Locey	Property Owner	Northgate Manor Apartments
Erik Lyngen	Resident	
Jim Maciedone	Merchant	Johnson Plating Works
Tim Martinez	Merchant	Papa Buzz
Ian McDonald	Resident	
April McDonald	Resident	
David McIntyre	Property Owner	
Chuck McLain	Social Service Provider	Satellite Senior Homes
Eric Lyngen	Resident	
Mary Sue Meads	Church Member	
Philip F. Meads, Jr.	Church Member	
Andy Meckstroth	Church Leader	First Baptist Church
Joseph Mikelarkis	Government	Caltrans District
Namane Mohlabane	Government	Oakland City Council: Nancy Nadel's Office
Mr. & Mrs. Serito Montoya	Resident	
W. Murphy	Resident	
Nate Nackley	Merchant and Resident	NCW
Gumjee Nam	Resident	West Lake Christian Terrace
John Neilson	Resident	Providence House
Daniel Niles	Resident	
Darlynn Nixon	Resident	West Lake Christian Terrace
Hyung Man Oh	Resident	West Lake Christian Terrace
Myungsook Oh	Resident	Friendly Place
Sr. Carol Anne O'Marie	Social Service Provider	Providence House
David Dice Paradise	Resident	Providence House
Gwen Patton	Resident	Samaritan Neighborhood Center
Ruel Paul	Youth	Gallery 23Ten
Lisa Pesch	Merchant and Resident	

Dan Pitcock	Merchant	Roberts Electric Company
Ronald Pond	Merchant	Mattress Factory Outlet
Phil Porter	Merchant and Resident	
Jerry Ellis Powell	Resident	
Lynn Rabburn	Resident	Northgate Terrace
Lydia Rakow	Resident	Northgate Terrace
Vince Reese	Merchant	Stork Club
Steve Reimer	Social Service Provider	Samritan Neighborhood Center
Pat & Frank Reis	Resident	Oakdale Apartments
Ed Rippy	Resident	
Helen Robinson	Government	Alameda County Public Health Department
Reverend Luccia Rogers	Social Service Provider	Providence House
Maggie Roth	Social Service Provider	Providence House
Michelle Lyn Rousey	Resident	Providence House
Micki & Wes	Merchant	Stork Club
Jessica Russworn	Youth	Samaritan Neighborhood Center
Michael Sanchez	Resident	Providence House
Ursula Sands	Government	Community Economic Development Agency
JD Schreiber	Merchant and Resident	Gallery 23Ten
Jan Scott	Church Member	
Sonya Scott	Social Service Provider	Hamilton Apartments
Mr. & Mrs. Richard Scott	Church Member	First Baptist Church
Lisa Simirenko	Resident	
Ed Sisson	Social Service Provider	The San Pablo Hotel
George W. Spalt	Property Owner	
Rochelle Spiering	Property Owner	
Gary Sponholtz	Staff	Providence House
Gloria Tillman	Merchant	New Day Preschool
Michael Tom	Resident	
Gene Ward	Merchant	Jimmie's
Katherine Webster	Social Service Provider	East Bay Recovery Project—Project Pride
Keira Williams	Government	
Marilyn Williams	Church Member, Resident	First Presbyterian Church
Alton Wilson	Resident	
Tami Wilson	Resident	
Doran Woods	Resident	Providence House
Haksoul Yi	Resident	West Lake Christian Terrace
Yvonne Young	Social Service Provider	Samaritan Neighborhood Center
Tim Zaricznyj	Social Service Provider	Providence House, Chair of the Telegraph-Northgate Neighborhood Association

APPENDIX B: WORKSHOP FLYERS

Front



Back

\* you're invited to,

**The Telegraph-Northgate Planning Study Commencement Party**

Wednesday, February 24, 1999  
5pm to 7pm  
at: Gallery 23TEN, 2310 Telegraph Avenue in Oakland

featuring: brief presentations by, Mayor Jerry Brown, and Nancy Nedel, City Councilmember, District 3

music by: The Blue and Tan  
refreshments provided

sponsored by: Telegraph-Northgate Neighborhood Association, Urban Ecology, and the Community Economic Development Agency (CEDA)-City of Oakland

TELEGRAPH-NORTHGATE NEIGHBORHOOD

What is the future of the Telegraph-Northgate Neighborhood?

**Come & make your voice heard!**

Join your neighbors in creating a vision for the future:

- What should happen to make this a safe, prosperous & beautiful place to live?
- What improvements should be made to Telegraph & San Pablo Avenues in between 26th and 27th Streets?
- What new stores do you want to see?
- What kinds of parks and playgrounds do you need?

Join us Saturday, March 20th, 1999  
10:00 am to 1:00 pm  
Providence House - 540 23rd Street (444-6839)  
*refreshments and children's activities provided*

Sponsored by: Telegraph-Northgate Neighborhood Association, Urban Ecology and the City of Oakland

APPENDIX

TELEGRAPH-NORTHGATE NEIGHBORHOOD

What is your vision of the Telegraph-Northgate Neighborhood?

**Come make your voice heard!**

Join your fellow merchants & neighbors for the 2nd Community Workshop

- What improvements should be made to Telegraph & San Pablo Avenues between 26th and 27th Streets?
- What new stores do you want to see?
- What kinds of parks and playgrounds do you need?
- What should happen to make this a safe, prosperous, and beautiful place to live?

Saturday, June 5th, 1999  
10:00 am to 2:00 pm  
First Baptist Church - 534 22nd Street  
*Refreshments provided  
Admission free/invite available*

Sponsored by: Telegraph-Northgate Neighborhood Association, Urban Ecology and the City of Oakland  
Organized by: CEDA Strategic Planning Director 814-8877 or CEDA Office Buildings at 251-4533

TELEGRAPH-NORTHGATE NEIGHBORHOOD PLAN

After a year of community workshops and neighborhood meetings, residents and merchants have created a vision for the Telegraph-Northgate Neighborhood (26th to 27th Streets and Telegraph to San Pablo Avenues). **Come and give your input on:**

- Future park designs
- Traffic calming on Northgate Avenue
- Art for the freeway underpasses
- Streetscape design for Telegraph Avenue

**Town Hall Meeting**  
Wednesday, April 5, 2000  
6:30 pm to 8:30 pm  
Gallery 23TEN, 2310 Telegraph Ave  
*Refreshments provided*

Sponsored by: Telegraph-Northgate Neighborhood Association, Urban Ecology and the City of Oakland  
Organized by: CEDA Strategic Planning Director at 814-8877 or CEDA Office Buildings at 251-4533

**APPENDIX C: MERCHANT SURVEY RESULTS**

**Distribution**

Total Distributed: 27  
 Completed: 16  
 Rate of Response: 60%

**Business Climate**

1. What are the **positive** aspects of doing business in Telegraph-Northgate? (Check all that apply.)

- Visible location-12
- Proximity to customers-9
- Pedestrian traffic-8
- Draw customers from nearby businesses-7
- Good parking-6
- BART proximity-6
- Customers are familiar with location-6
- Affordable rents-5
- Great building/space-2
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_ - not selected

2. What are the **negative** aspects of doing business in Telegraph-Northgate? (Check all that apply.)

- Drug dealing, crime, lack of safety-12
- Poor perception of area-11
- Loitering, panhandling, prostitution-11
- Litter, graffiti, poor appearance-7
- Limited foot traffic-4
- Lack of support businesses, services-3
- Expensive space-2
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_ -2
- Responses: **parking sometimes; lack of exposure**
- Far from customers-not selected

3. Which public improvements and services do you think are needed in Telegraph-Northgate? (Mark your top five.)

- Storefront renovation-10
- More street and sidewalk cleaning, including trash cans and trash pickup-10
- Greater police presence-8
- Trees/more landscaping-7
- Street lighting-7
- Graffiti abatement-7
- Improved bus stops/shelters-6
- More parking/off-street parking-5
- Parks/recreational facilities-4
- More special events-4
- Signage about the neighborhood-4
- Other \_\_\_\_\_ -4
- Responses: **Less vicious parking meter enforcement; safe parking; cooperation**
- Billboard removal-1

4. What types of businesses or services are needed in Telegraph-Northgate? (Check all that apply.)

- Grocery store-9
- Restaurants-9
- Copy center-8
- Office supplies-7
- Coffee shops-6
- Banks-6
- Entertainment/recreation-5
- Specialty stores \_\_\_\_\_-5
- Responses: **Any except porno stores; books, music; cultural**
- Insurance/legal/accounting-3
- Dry cleaner-3
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_-3
- Responses: **Retail shopping center; clothing; centers: education, athletic, library, vocational**
- Gasoline-1

5. How would you rate your overall confidence in the economic future or vitality of the Telegraph-Northgate neighborhood?

- High-6
- Moderate-6
- Low-3
- Don't Know-1

6. What are your near-term business plans? (Check all that apply.)

- Renovate exterior of store-6
- Renovate interior of store-5
- Add more employees-5
- Relocate-4
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_-4
- Responses: **Continue business; hold events; sell & move; change nature of business**
- No plans-3
- Expand office space and/or range of merchandise-2
- Close the business-not selected

7. What types of services do you feel would be most helpful to businesses in the area? (Check all that apply.)

- Small business loans-9
- Storefront improvement programs-8
- Business attraction program-7
- Marketing-5
- Employee training-4
- Technical assistance:-4
- Accounting-3
- Signs-3
- Design assistance-2
- Store layout-2
- Business association-2
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_-2
- Responses: **BART and Caltrans main property; computer technical education**
- Merchandising-1

8. Are you willing to consider paying for these and other improvements through a special tax assessment that would include all the Telegraph-Northgate property and business owners?

Somewhat willing-6  
Not very willing-5

Don't Know-5  
Very willing-not selected

**Business Customer Base**

9. Approximately how many customers/visitors do you serve on a typical day?

11-25 5  
1-10 4  
26-50 3  
over 100 2  
51-100 1

10. How do your customers get to your business? (Check all that apply.)

Car 12  
Walk 9  
Public Transit 8  
Bike 7

11. Where do the majority of your customers live?

Oakland 12  
East Bay 9  
Immediate neighborhood (within 10 blocks) 7

12. Why do you think customers patronize your business? (Check all that apply.)

Personal treatment-14  
Quality of product/service-11  
Unique product/service-9  
Convenient location-8  
Low price-5  
Proximity to another store-3

Other: \_\_\_\_\_ -3

Responses: 40 years business, 100 years same location; 81 years in the area; membership

13. What percentage of your customers are repeat customers (have shopped in your store or used your business previously) \_\_\_\_\_%?

20%	1	75%	3
42%	1	80%	2
50%	2	90%	1
65%	1	97%	1

14. How have your revenues changed in the past year?

Increased a little	5
Stayed the same	2
Decreased a lot	2
N.A./New business	2
Decreased a little	1
Increased a lot	not selected

**General Business Information**

Business Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Business Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Person Responding: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Position with Business: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Business Owner (if not above): \_\_\_\_\_  
 Property Owner: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Property Owner Address \_\_\_\_\_

15. Business Type:

Service: \_\_\_\_\_ -6  
 Responses: **Metal refining; art gallery; auto-repair; dry cleaning; electrical contractor, preschool**  
 Other: \_\_\_\_\_ -4  
 Responses: **Coffee house; furniture; social service; barber**  
**Bar, Pool Hall, Night Club-2**  
**Specialty Goods-1**  
**Fast Food Restaurant-1**  
**Convenience/Liquor Store-1**  
**Apparel-not selected**  
**Full-Service Restaurant-not selected**  
**Grocery Store-not selected**  
**Specialty Food Store-not selected**  
**Financial, Insurance, Real Estate-not selected**

16. Do you own or rent your commercial space?

Rent	<b>11</b>
Own	<b>3</b>

17. If you rent, what is the length of the lease?

1 month	<b>4</b>	5 years	<b>3</b>
3 years	<b>1</b>	no limit	<b>1</b>

18. If you rent, what is your current lease rate?

\$1/square foot	<b>\$2500/month</b>
<b>\$1650/month</b>	<b>\$4400/month</b>
<b>\$2100/month</b>	

APPENDIX

19. (a) How long have you been in business?

new	1	20 years	3
2 years	1	27 years	1
4 years	1	35 years	1
6 years	1	40 years	2
10 years	1	81 years	1
15 years	1	88 years	1

(b) How long have you been at your current address?

2 months	1	15 years	1
1 year	4	20 years	1
2 years	1	53 years	1
3 years	1	71 years	1
7 years	1	100 years	1
10 years	1		

20. How many employees work at your business?

2-10 employees	7
1 employee	4
11-25 employees	2
over 25 employees	<b>not selected</b>

21. How many employees live in the area?

1 employee	6
2-10 employees	5
11-25 employees	1
over 25 employees	<b>not selected</b>

## RECOGNITION

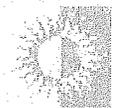
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