

MARCH 2003

neighborhood improvement plan

Market Almaden



STRONG NEIGHBORHOODS INITIATIVE

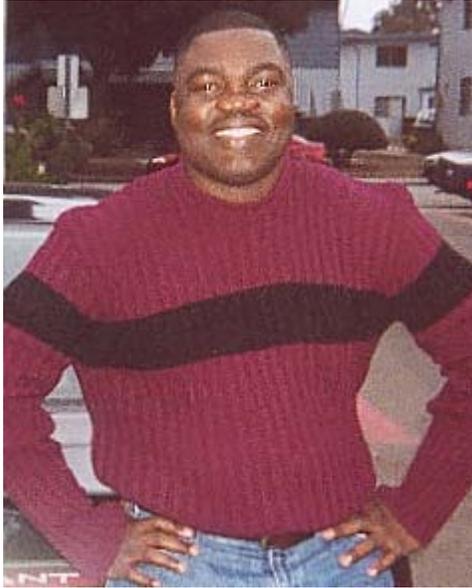


Market-Almaden Neighborhood Improvement Plan

Approved by the San José City Council
on
March 18, 2003

City of San José

Dedication



The Market-Almaden Strong Neighborhood Plan is dedicated to San José State Urban Planning graduate student, Nana Kofi Addo Koranteng. Nana contributed to the background research and neighborhood outreach portions of this project. He was a valued student, colleague and friend. Nana passed away on August 18, 2002.

Nana was one of four children born to Mr. Philip Owusu Koranteng and Ms. Christina Barrow Acolatse in Accra, Ghana, West Africa. He graduated from Kwame Nkrumah University of Science & Technology in Kumasi, Ghana with a Bachelor's Degree in Planning. He was continuing his education in the Masters of Urban Planning Degree program at San José State University until his untimely death in Stockton, California. His wry wit and quick smile will be missed.

Market-Almaden: Vision for the Future

Throughout the planning process, community workshop participants, neighborhood youth, and members of the Neighborhood Advisory Committee described their shared vision for the neighborhood.

The vision presented below depicts a snapshot of the neighborhood twenty years from today.

Market-Almaden 2022.....

Market-Almaden is a unique urban village located in the heart of downtown San José. A strong, cohesive community, the neighborhood imparts a welcoming atmosphere for a diverse range of families. It is this strong sense of community that makes the neighborhood also a great place to raise children.

Residents know their neighbors; help each other, and together work to initiate positive changes within their community. Children and adults are often seen together interacting at the neighborhood parks and open spaces.

Market-Almaden possesses a wonderful sense of pride and a visible personality in that distinguishes the neighborhood from its surroundings highlighting the area as a special place in the Downtown. The neighborhood's unique collection of turn-of-the-20th-century residences is beautifully maintained to showcase the historic character and origins of the buildings. The features and design of newer structures respect the surrounding historic charm by protecting and reflecting the central historic core of the neighborhood.

Neighborhood streets are quiet and safe; the pedestrian-friendly environment invites people to walk or bike to convenient downtown destinations. Excellent restaurants, parks, museums and stores provide goods and services that support the daily life of the Market-Almaden community. The thriving South of First Area (SoFA) district offers world-class entertainment opportunities nearby.

Many residents and visitors make use of the efficient local public transportation system conveniently located within quick walking distance from the neighborhood. The neighborhood is also located near major thoroughfares and highways that help further connect residents with the larger Bay Area region.

Executive Summary

Throughout the planning process, community members described their shared vision for the Market-Almaden neighborhood.

Goals

The following goals were derived from the community’s vision for Market-Almaden.

- Protect and strengthen the unique character of the residential neighborhood core.
- Define the edges of the neighborhood and provide appropriate transitions between future new development and the existing residential core.
- Provide outdoor recreation and open space for residents of all ages within the boundaries of the neighborhood.
- Enhance the walking environment and strengthen pedestrian and bicycle access to nearby downtown destinations.

Strategic Actions

Through a series of community and NAC meetings, Market-Almaden residents identified a list of specific strategies (actions) that would most contribute towards positive change in the neighborhood. The goals presented above form the foundation of a plan that includes twenty-nine specific actions to improve the neighborhood.

“Top Ten” Priority Actions

The following ten priorities reflect the community’s weighing of current neighborhood issues, their goals and their long-term vision for the neighborhood.

1. Develop a neighborhood park on the Caltrans easement between Highway 280 and West Reed Street.
2. Ensure that potential new development on the block bounded by Almaden Boulevard, Balbach Street, Almaden Avenue and West Reed Street follows the design recommendations set forth in this plan, addressing neighborhood concerns.
3. Acquire and rehabilitate 75 West William Street.
4. Explore the establishment of the Market-Almaden area as a Conservation Area.
5. Ensure that project design for the edge of the Convention Center expansion along Balbach Street follows the design recommendations set forth in the Neighborhood Improvement Plan, addressing neighborhood concerns.
6. Design and install pedestrian and bicycle safety improvements on Balbach Street and Almaden Boulevard, and establish Balbach Street as a pedestrian corridor.
7. Install pedestrian safety improvements on Market Street at the Balbach Street, William Street and Pierce Avenue intersections.
8. Initiate a neighborhood-wide traffic calming study in 12 to 18 months, once traffic patterns resulting from current traffic mitigation measures have been established.
9. Facilitate the improvement of the pedestrian environment along Market Street with enhanced landscaping and storefronts.
10. Ensure that undergrounding utilities throughout the neighborhood remains a priority for the City.

Acknowledgements

The following people are gratefully acknowledged for providing valuable assistance in the development of the Market-Almaden Neighborhood Revitalization Plan, Strong Neighborhoods Initiative.

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A special thank you to all Market-Almaden Neighborhood Community Workshop participants and people who have expressed interest in this planning process.

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Students enrolled in the following urban planning courses at San José State University conducted background research, and explored preliminary land use and design recommendations for the Market-Almaden neighborhood:

Planning Problems I (UrbP 201), Fall 2001. Dayana Salazar, Instructor
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Introduction

Setting

Surrounded by the City of San José's flourishing downtown, the Market-Almaden neighborhood enjoys a unique geographical location. While having immediate access to major downtown amenities, this small neighborhood successfully retains a small town, historic atmosphere within its residential core.

Market-Almaden residents take pride in their neighborhood, and work hard to protect and enhance its unique character. A strong base of committed residents enthusiastically plans and implements positive changes in their community.

Physically, the neighborhood is comprised of a residential core with a strong historic and architectural heritage, surrounded by four distinct edges facing out towards the commercial, entertainment and cultural districts of downtown San José. The edges of the neighborhood are further bounded by major roads and highways which serve as gateways into the City of San José. The neighborhood's unique geographic setting is the source of its major assets as well as its major challenges.

The road system surrounding the neighborhood provides easy connections to regional transportation arteries. However, heavy traffic volumes along these transportation corridors impede safe pedestrian and bicycle access to nearby downtown amenities.

Therefore, even though there is an exceptional wealth of recreational, commercial and cultural facilities located within a five-minute walk from Market-Almaden, its residents view these amenities as out-of-reach and disconnected from the day-to-day life of the neighborhood.

New development along the edges of Market-Almaden has the potential to bring needed neighborhood-oriented services, increase the residential population, and physically define the outer boundaries of the neighborhood while protecting its residential core. Without appropriate urban design guidance, however, new development also has the potential to alter and detract from the unique scale, character and flavor of this urban village.

Two such major development projects in particular will play a crucial role in defining the edges and the future of Market-Almaden: the potential expansion of the Convention Center to the north of the neighborhood; and potential new high-intensity development along the Almaden Boulevard business corridor to the west of the neighborhood.

Planning Process

In order to address these challenges and protect the special character of Market-Almaden, the City of San José Strong Neighborhoods Initiative and the Market-Almaden community joined in a strategic planning process that established a shared vision and goals for the neighborhood. The vision, goals and specific actions for neighborhood improvement presented in this document serve to coordinate future planning decisions and guide physical changes in the neighborhood.

The planning process to develop the Market-Almaden Neighborhood Improvement plan included many community meetings and approximately ten months of hard work by community members, City staff and planning consultants. A Neighborhood Advisory Committee (NAC) made up of 16 Market-Almaden community members was formed to guide the development of the improvement plan. The NAC met at least once a month with City staff and planning consultants throughout the planning process.

The planning process, designed to facilitate community consensus around a vision for the future of the neighborhood, was structured according to the following five phases.

INITIAL ASSESSMENT AND ISSUE IDENTIFICATION

During this stage, residents, business owners, property owners and City staff identified the challenges, assets and opportunities in the Market-Almaden community.

To gather community input, an initial Neighborhood Advisory Committee (NAC) meeting and a community workshop were held in February and March, 2002. Participants in these meetings helped create a list of neighborhood needs and priorities which was used to guide future community discussions.

DEVELOPMENT OF ALTERNATIVES AND ACTIONS FOR SPECIFIC NEIGHBORHOOD SUB-AREAS

Subsequent NAC meetings and workshops --to which members of the community at large were invited as well-- concentrated on exploring planning issues for specific areas of the neighborhood in more detail.

Meetings designed to discuss the background, existing conditions, alternatives and possible solutions, were held once a month, concentrating on specific areas of the neighborhood as follows: the Residential Core on April 8th; the Almaden Boulevard block on May 13th; the Convention Center Expansion, Market Street, and West Reed Street on June 10th.

In addition to these workshops and meetings, special activities designed to elicit input from the neighborhood children were conducted in May 2002. These activities included guided photographic essays of the neighborhood and planning

workshops concentrating on issues of particular importance to the youth of Market-Almaden.

Input from these meetings and activities provided the basis for the *Improvement Plan Concepts* section of this document (page 26), which presents specific actions and alternatives to bring the community's vision to reality.

REVIEW OF CONCEPTS AND PRIORITIES

At a community-wide workshop held in July 2002, residents, business owners and other concerned individuals evaluated a full spectrum of actions proposed to improve the area. Participants voted for their highest priorities. Workshop results provided the basis for extensive discussion at NAC meetings to clearly define the Top Ten Priorities for Market-Almaden.

DRAFT IMPROVEMENT STRATEGIES

NAC meetings were held in August and September 2002, to continue reviewing and refining the initial plan concepts and improvement strategies.

Input from these community meetings provided direction to create the final Neighborhood Improvement Plan document.

PLAN PROCESS AND ADOPTION

The final phase of the planning process was the Neighborhood Improvement Plan's review and adoption. The finalized Plan was presented to and recommended for approval by the Planning Commission on March 12, 2003 and presented to and approved by the City Council on March 18, 2003.

Plan Summary: Goals and Priorities

Throughout the planning process, community members described their shared vision for the neighborhood. The following goals were derived from the community's vision for Market-Almaden.

- Protect and strengthen the unique character of the residential neighborhood core.
- Define the edges of the neighborhood and provide appropriate transitions between future new development and the existing residential core.
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Through a series of community and NAC meetings, Market-Almaden residents identified a list of specific strategies (actions) that would most contribute towards positive change in the neighborhood. The goals presented above form the foundation of a plan that includes twenty-nine specific actions to improve the neighborhood.

The following ten priorities reflect the community's weighing of current neighborhood issues, their goals and their long-term vision for the neighborhood.

1. Develop a neighborhood park on the Caltrans easement between Highway 280 and West Reed Street.
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9. Facilitate the improvement of the pedestrian environment along Market Street with enhanced landscaping and storefronts.
10. Ensure that undergrounding utilities throughout the neighborhood remains a priority for the City.

These priority actions are further described in the *Strategic Action Plan* section of this document (page 63).

The Strong Neighborhoods Initiative

The success of this plan relies on a participatory process and on implementation of proposed neighborhood improvements. Both of these are part of a larger citywide goal: to listen to San José residents' ideas for neighborhood improvement, connect

neighborhoods to resources, and respond to neighborhood priorities. This goal is an integral part of the Strong Neighborhoods Initiative, launched in July 2000.

The Strong Neighborhoods Initiative (SNI) is a collaboration among the City, the San José Redevelopment Agency and San José residents and business owners to strengthen the City's neighborhoods. The initiative aims to improve neighborhood conditions, enhance community safety, improve community services, and strengthen neighborhood associations. The Market-Almaden neighborhood is one of 20 planning areas in San José specified as a Strong Neighborhoods area.

The Strong Neighborhoods Initiative process is made up of two stages: planning and implementation. The planning stage includes the development of 20 Neighborhood Improvement Plans (including this plan) and the formation of a Redevelopment Project Area. The implementation stage shepherds the proposed neighborhood improvements (such as revitalization projects, improved community services, and new development projects) to fruition. The Initiative is funded through resources from the City of San José, the Redevelopment Agency, private investments, and public-private partnerships.

To guide the planning process, each Strong Neighborhoods Initiative area formed a Neighborhood Advisory Committee (NAC) made up of residents, property owners, business owners, and other community members and stakeholders. NAC members made a one-year commitment to the project, met regularly to provide guidance to City staff and planning consultants, acted as representatives for the Market-Almaden community, and helped develop the content of the Neighborhood Improvement Plan. At full participation, the Market-Almaden NAC was made up of 16 community members, business owners and community stakeholders.

In order to provide at least a portion of the funding required to implement the Neighborhood Improvement Plans, a Redevelopment Project Area made up of all 20 Strong Neighborhoods Initiative areas was formed. This Redevelopment Project Area is necessary to leverage redevelopment funds to implement neighborhood improvements.

On June 19, 2002, the City Council approved a 52-member Project Area Committee (PAC), comprised of 35 elected representatives (17 residential tenants, 13 owner-occupants, and 5 business owners) and 17 community organization representatives appointed by the City Council. On May 22, 2002, the PAC approved the SNI Redevelopment Plan. With City Council/Agency Board approval of the Redevelopment Plan, the PAC will continue as an advisory body to the Redevelopment Agency for three years.

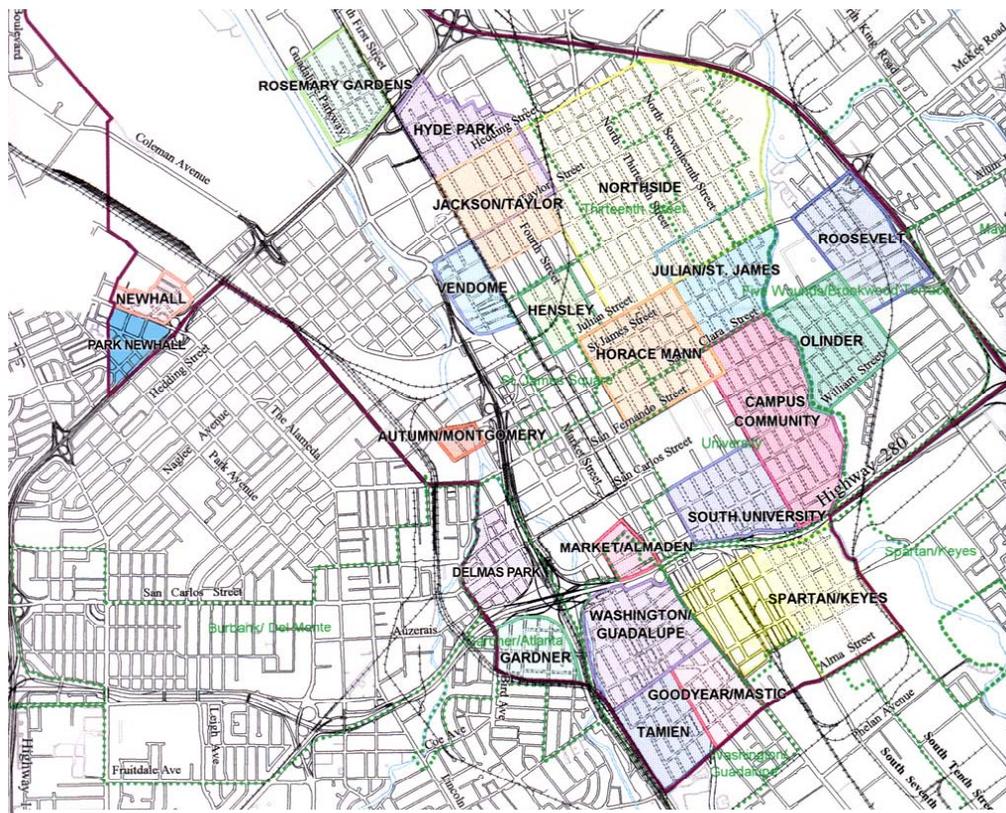
INTRODUCTION

Neighborhood Profile

Overview

The Market-Almaden neighborhood, located within the greater downtown, possesses its own distinct character and pleasant residential atmosphere, highlighting the area as special place in San José. Occupying five city blocks just south of the heart of the City's flourishing downtown, this small neighborhood rests in a unique geographical location. The San José McEnery Convention Center and the City's cultural and commercial districts bound the neighborhood to the north. To the west lies Almaden Boulevard with a wide, landscaped median that provides green space to the area and is planned to serve as the south business gateway to downtown San José. South First Area (SoFA), the City's increasingly vibrant art and entertainment district is located to the east of the neighborhood. Highway 280, one of the valley's busiest transportation arteries connecting San José and San Francisco, bounds the neighborhood to the south.

The neighborhood lies in the midst of a growing and thriving downtown and yet is successful in retaining the small town, historic atmosphere that characterized the San José valley within its residential core. The Market-Almaden neighborhood is ideal for the modern urbanite who seeks a uniquely historic residential setting with abundant personality in close proximity to community resources and cultural centers.



Location Map of Market-Almaden and surrounding downtown neighborhoods

The Market-Almaden Strong Neighborhood Initiative Area

Market-Almaden was at one time part of a larger neighborhood that has since been divided and made compact over the years by freeway construction and urban development. Today, only a few blocks remain, leaving an island of established single and multi-family homes surrounded by the Convention Center, freeways, busy surface streets and small businesses. Although small in size, the neighborhood has played a long and important role in the history and formation of San José.

A LONG HISTORY

The *Archeological Resources of Downtown San José* reports that Market-Almaden was “probably occupied by aboriginal peoples in pre-contact times and should be considered part of the prehistoric district of San José¹”. There is evidence of Spanish and Mexican occupation when the land was most likely utilized for agriculture. Remnants of an adobe dwelling from this time period can be found on maps dating as late as 1884². An extinct drainage, Canoas Creek, once flowed through the western portion of the area, possibly functioning as a seasonal overflow channel for the Guadalupe River.

In 1849, German-born John Balbach came to California to join countless others in the search of gold. According to records, he was robbed of his possessions and means of transportation while lodging in San José. Left with nothing, John Balbach stayed in the south end of town in what is now Market-Almaden.

Balbach, a trained machinist, opened “Pioneer Carriage Manufacturing”, where he manufactured the first plows on the Pacific Coast.³ By 1854, Balbach was becoming an established businessman and a civic leader in San José. He purchased eight acres surrounding his carriage factory, extending from Market Street west to the Guadalupe River. Soon after, Balbach became one of the founding members of San José’s first volunteer fire department,⁴ served 2 terms on San José’s Common Council and five years as a member of the Board of Education. He married, built a home at 523 South Market Street, and raised 10 children.

When San José’s downtown streets were being formalized in 1862, the area’s residential character was simultaneously becoming established with one and two-story homes along quiet back streets. Commercial development was mostly concentrated along Market Street. Many of the existing structures in Market-Almaden date from this period.

At the turn of the 20th century, Market-Almaden was a stable, primarily white and middle-class neighborhood with infrequent changes to house



John Balbach

¹ John Findlay and Donna Garaventa, *Archeological Resources of Downtown San José: A preliminary Planning Summary of Prehistoric and Historic Sites in the Central Business District*. (March 1983).

² 1915 Sanborn Map, Image 92. California Room, San José Public Library.

³ Patricia Loomis, *Signposts #2*. (San José: San José Historical Museum Association, 1985), 15-16.

⁴ *Biographical Sketches* (San José Public Library), 569-570.

ownership⁵. Neat rows of Victorians and Craftsman bungalows with breezy porches overlooked the narrow streets of the neighborhood and were lined with cool shade trees and “state of the art” gas streetlights. By the early 1920s, auto repair shops began to dominate along Market Street. The Firestone building, located at the corner of West Reed Street and Market Street, is a representative of this historical period.



Victorian on Almaden Avenue

During the 1950s, the ethnic composition of the greater neighborhood began to shift with the advent of Mexican migrant workers who came in increasing numbers into the area in search of work and consequently settling in the downtown neighborhoods.⁶

MARKET-ALMADEN TODAY

Market-Almaden remains primarily a residential neighborhood. Parks, schools, libraries and other civic buildings are located in close proximity to the area, just beyond the neighborhood boundary. The adjacent San José McEnery Convention Center is a regional venue. The South First Area (SoFA), located east of the neighborhood, is expected to attract visitors, artists, and entertainers from the larger region. Franchise and local commercial businesses line Market Street and Almaden Boulevard. The residential core of the neighborhood retains the old historic homes with a few new residential developments located at the edges of this core.

The neighborhood consists of roughly 80 single-family homes, a few small apartment buildings, and one large apartment complex. Most of the homes were built between the late 1800s and early 1900s and reflect the smaller “bungalow” profiles of Victorian and Craftsman forms. These “old vics” and their craftsman relatives both feature high step-up entrances, front porches, prominent gables and elaborate painting schemes that establish the general historical character of the neighborhood. Recent construction in the area has attempted to fit and blend in with these styles with varying degrees of success.

Of great concern to the residents is the current and planned construction of high-rise buildings around the periphery of the Market-Almaden neighborhood. The community voiced concerns about the negative impacts of a recently completed eighteen-story office tower now located at the northwest corner of Market-Almaden, which is reflective of the downtown mid-rise character rather than the small scale historic character of the neighborhood.

Market Almaden Neighborhood Association

Market-Almaden maintains an active and flourishing neighborhood organization that was formed by the residents in 1983. Over the years, the Market-Almaden Neighborhood Association (MANA) has grown in strength and has become increasingly effective, hosting regular meetings to address neighborhood issues dealing with zoning, blight, street lights, street trees, undergrounding utilities, traffic diversion, permit parking



MANA: Community Day, 1997

⁵ Gregory McCandless, *A Study of the Physical and Social Evolution of a Central San José Neighborhood*. (San José: San José State University, 1983).

⁶ McCandless, *A Study of the Physical and Social Evolution*.

and new developments proposals. MANA strives to keep its community informed and has accommodated its diverse population by distributing their agendas in both Spanish and English.⁷

As principal concerns, MANA focuses on issues regarding health and safety and historical preservation. MANA serves as an active collective voice for the neighborhood by expressing preferences and concerns regarding new development proposals and emphasizing the need to retain and improve upon the historic quality of the neighborhood.

As one of the many accomplishments of MANA, the organization has successfully organized and lobbied in the past to preserve the low density, residential zoning designation for the core of the neighborhood. In 1992, the group's active participation during review of proposed amendments to the City's General Plan played an integral role in down-zoning the area from Core Area Commercial and High-Density (R-4) to Single-Family Residential (R-1). Resident's desires to maintain a neighborhood of single-family homes is highlighted in a 1985 study that was prepared for the neighborhood: "this area [Pierce, William & Colton Place] exhibits strong homeowner's desires for preservation as a single family neighborhood⁸". Moreover, the following memo from a resident and member of MANA reinforces the community's strong desire to keep the small-town residential character of the neighborhood:

Setting aside the architectural and historic significance of the neighborhood, I'd like to impress upon you that this isn't just an enclave of old houses in the downtown. But rather this is a neighborhood of people. People that sit out on their porches and say hello to their neighbors and help their neighbors. This is a neighborhood rich in cultural, ethnic, social, racial, and economic diversity. We have the young, the old, the single, the married and the families. And, we have children you can see playing in the streets. We are a neighborhood that plans parties, has neighborhood meetings, decorates street lamps during the holidays and even spends our own hard earned money and labor planting street trees. This is a neighborhood of people and families that have chosen to live here and like living here.⁹

MANA has also been successful in requesting that the City implement additional improvements for the neighborhood, including diverting northbound through-traffic from Almaden Avenue to Almaden Boulevard, reconverting Almaden Avenue to a two-way neighborhood street; establishing a residential parking permit program; repairing curbs and gutters; planting street trees; and installing antique-style street lights.

One of the earliest community actions to improve the quality of life in the neighborhood was the establishment of a permit-parking program in 1984. Since then, improvements to the permit parking program have mitigated parking encroachments associated with the nearby Convention Center and organized city events.

⁷ Steve Carlson, interviews by Karoline Eschwey. San José, October 19 and November 2, 2001.

⁸ Prodis Associates, *Guadalupe/Auzerais Neighborhood Study*. (San José: Redevelopment Agency, 1985)

⁹ Steve Greene. *Re-zoning of Market/Almaden Neighborhood*, Memo to San José City Council members (San José: March 15, 1992).

Demographics

The Market-Almaden neighborhood is a small subset of the greater San José metropolitan area. The neighborhood's surface area is equivalent to five typical city blocks. Since any slight over or under-counting from the Census or other survey can significantly skew the demographic and economic profile of Market-Almaden, this report cross-references a variety of alternative sources of information to ensure that an accurate profile of the neighborhood.

POPULATION

The 2000 Census determined the population of the Market-Almaden to be 645. Approximately 43 percent of the Market-Almaden residents live on the block located between Pierce Avenue and West Reed Street.

Because of the relatively small population, the Market-Almaden neighborhood does not, nor should it be expected to reflect the vast diversity of the City as a whole. Still, the neighborhood is racially and ethnically diverse.

Whites are the largest racial group in Market-Almaden, comprising 40% of the neighborhood population, which is slightly lower than 48% for the larger City. The African-American population in Market-Almaden is 4%, and is proportionally higher than the City's 3%. Asians, on the other hand, are represented by only 3% within Market-Almaden, but make up 27% of the City's population. Nearly 53% of residents identified themselves as being of another race, which stands much higher compared to 33% for the City. The majority of residents, 64% consider themselves as ethnically Hispanic, a figure that is more than twice that for the City (30%)¹¹.

HOUSEHOLDS AND HOME TENURE

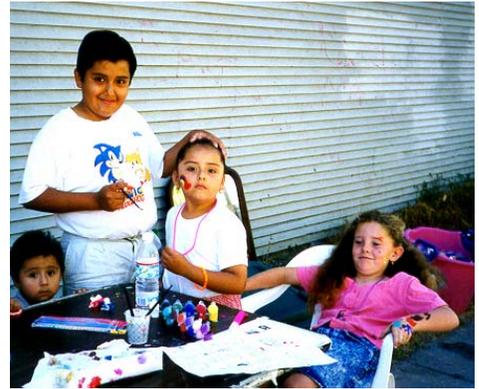
Market-Almaden presently reports 193 total households with an average size of 3.0 persons per household, while the average for the City of San José stands at 3.2 persons per household.

Home tenure differs sharply with citywide figures. Home ownership is a mere 23% in the neighborhood compared to a City average of 60%. However, once people move into the neighborhood, they tend to stay for many years. There is a sizable core population of homeowners (26%) that have lived in their homes for ten or more years.

Conversely, the percentage of renter-occupied housing units is significantly higher for the neighborhood at 77% compared to the City's overall 40%. This level of ownership has remained constant for some time. Even in 1970, the area was made up of 31% owners and 70% renters¹².

ECONOMIC DATA

Housing units in Market-Almaden are 38 years old on average, although there are many substantially older Craftsman and Victorian buildings. In 2001, home prices in this area averaged \$338,869, trailing



Children at a neighborhood event

¹¹ The Census Bureau considers "Hispanic" an ethnic, rather than a racial, classification, and therefore is presented as a separate category.

¹² Collected from 1970 U.S. Census Data.

substantially the City average of \$664,392¹³. Rental prices, however, more closely match the low end of the city average, with studios beginning at \$1,000 and single units at \$1,600¹⁴.



New homes on Pierce Avenue

In contrast, the median household income for the Market-Almaden neighborhood in 1999 was \$ 34,625, less half the median household income for the city of San José (\$ 70,243).

San Jose's Department of Housing administers programs, such as grants and loans, to improve, preserve and increase affordable housing. To determine eligibility, the department sets annual income levels based on an Area Median Income (AMI).¹⁸ As of February of 2002, San José's AMI was \$76,800 for a family of two and \$96,000 for a family of four.¹⁹ There may be a sizable number of Market-Almaden residents who meet the income criteria to qualify to the Department of Housing's rehabilitation and first-time homebuyers assistance programs.

Conditions and Challenges

Market-Almaden lies in an area of great locational advantage for easily accessing commercial and cultural facilities. Most of San José's museums and entertainment opportunities are located within three to five blocks of the neighborhood. Cultural facilities within walking distance from Market-Almaden include the Children's Discovery Museum, the San José McEnery Convention Center, the San José Museum of Technology, the San José Museum of Art, and MACLA (Movimiento the Arte y Cultura Latinoamericano), a wide variety of restaurants and retail establishments among others.

In addition, regional and downtown open spaces such as the Guadalupe River Park, Discovery Meadows, McEnery Park and Plaza de Cesar Chavez are all within a ten-minute walk from the neighborhood.

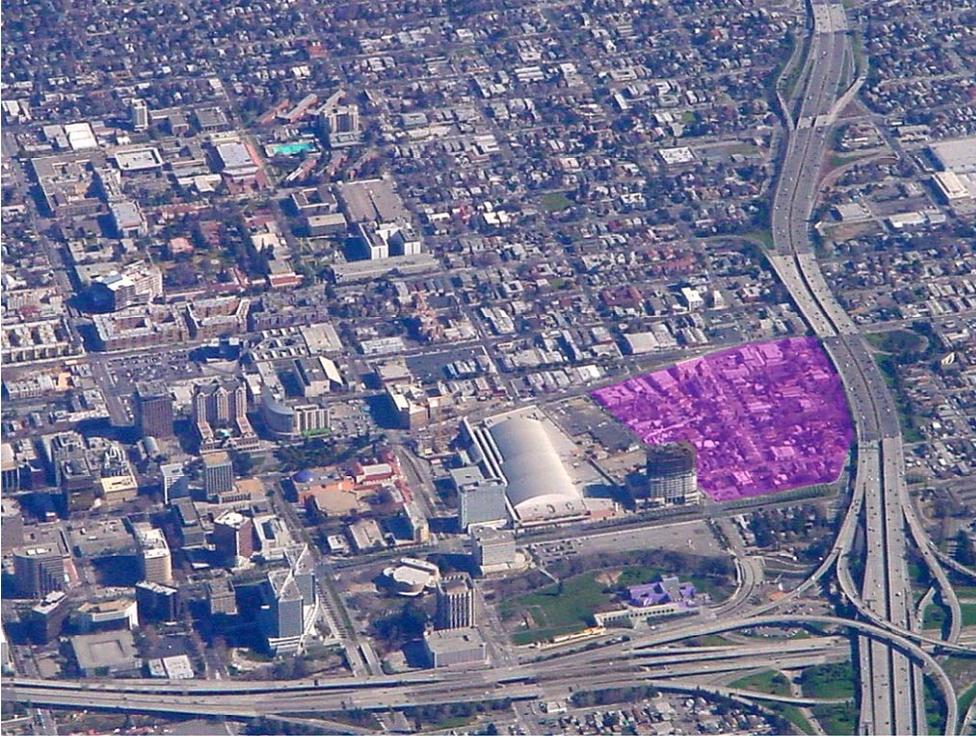
The neighborhood also offers excellent transportation opportunities and is well within walking distance of all major downtown commercial and cultural venues, and various public transportation services including bus, light rail, Amtrak and Caltrain lines. The neighborhood is also within ten minutes driving time to San José's Mineta International Airport.

¹³ Official site of the National Association of Realtors, available from <http://www.realtor.com>; accessed 30 October 2001.

¹⁴ Interview with John V. Pinto, realtor. San José, 30 October 2001.

¹⁸ Area Median Income is the halfway point between the highest and lowest area incomes.

¹⁹ San José Department of Housing, Income Eligibility, Criteria 2002. Available from: <http://www.sjhousing.org/data/eligible.html>.



Aerial photograph of downtown San José, with Market-Almaden highlighted

Location is both Market-Almaden's strongest asset and also the source of significant impacts generated by adjacent urban uses. Because of its geographical relation to the takeoff and landing patterns of the Norman Y. Mineta International Airport, airport noise is a major concern for residents. With the expansion of the runways underway, air traffic may increase. The airport serves more than 11.5 million passengers annually with 347 daily flights. The ten-year airport expansion plan projects use levels to increase by an additional 6.1 million passengers with a 20% increase in daily flights.

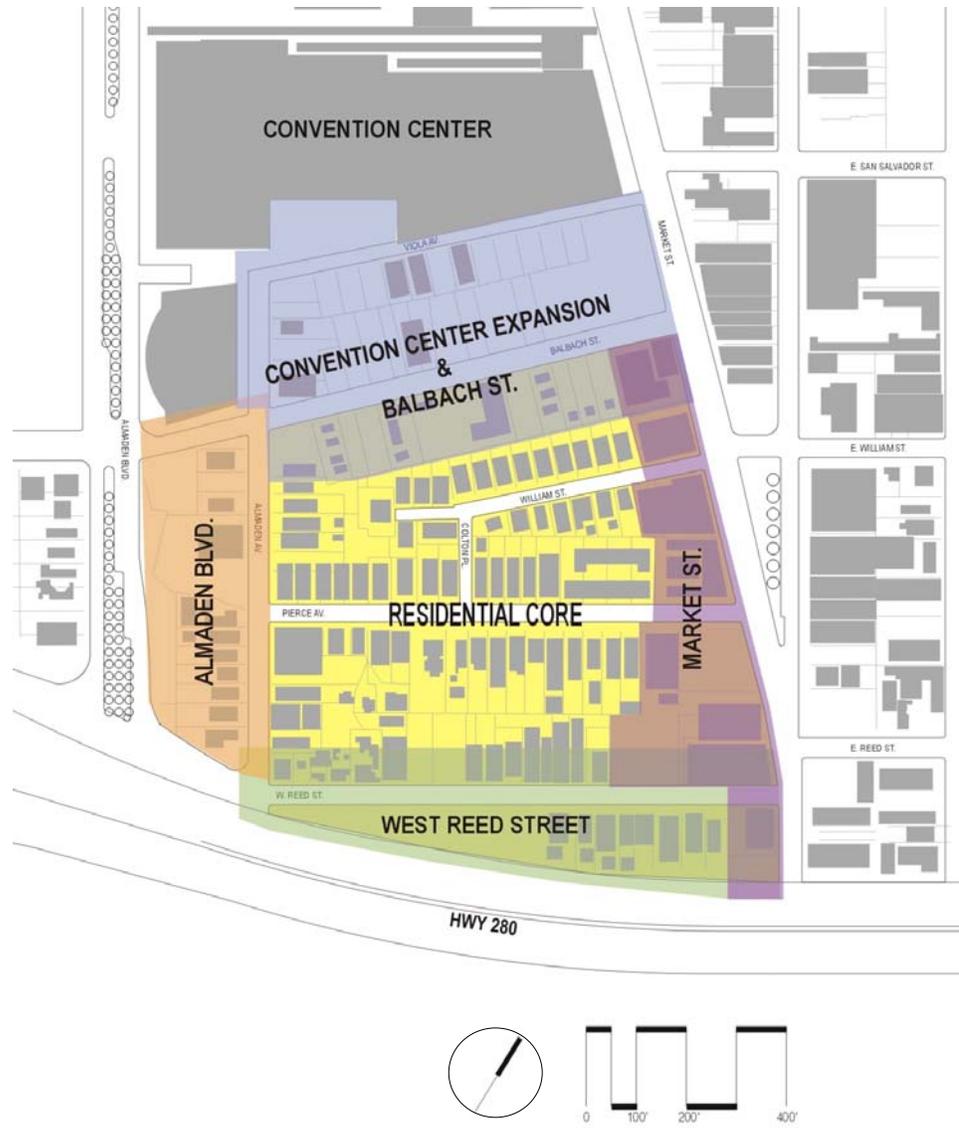
The proximity to the San José downtown business core also subjects the neighborhood to traffic, noise, and visual impacts related to the future expansion of the Convention Center and other large private developments. The community is concerned that the goal for increased activity in the central business center will result in increased traffic and safety issues for neighborhood residents.

A neighborhood, regardless of its size or location, is not simply an assemblage of buildings and streets; a neighborhood is a community of people. Market-Almaden residents are aware of and appreciate the assets of their urban oasis, and also recognize the challenges confronting it.

NEIGHBORHOOD ASSESSMENT

Four distinct edges with unique conditions, opportunities and challenges frame the residential core. The following section first presents the conditions that impact the neighborhood at large and then concentrates on each particular edge.

NEIGHBORHOOD PROFILE



The residential core and the four edges of the Market-Almaden neighborhood

Existing conditions that are consistent throughout the neighborhood include the streetscapes and building typologies. City trees, many newly planted, form green canopies that line the streets of the neighborhood. The area also shares buildings of similar styles, scale, and age. Homes and other structures are placed along a regular setback to their front steps and individual lots tend to be narrow and deep throughout Market-Almaden.

GENERAL PLAN AND ZONING DESIGNATIONS

San José's General Plan (adopted in 1994) represents the City's official policy regarding the quality and physical character of future development. The General Plan is the "roadmap" for decision-making that balances citywide and local concerns. New development and redevelopment of properties are guided by the General Plan, which specifically outlines the types of uses allowed for the land.

The Zoning Ordinance is a regulatory tool intended to control and regulate growth based upon the specific character and uses that are specified for each parcel in the General Plan and therefore, zoning is expected to support the goals and purposes of the General Plan.

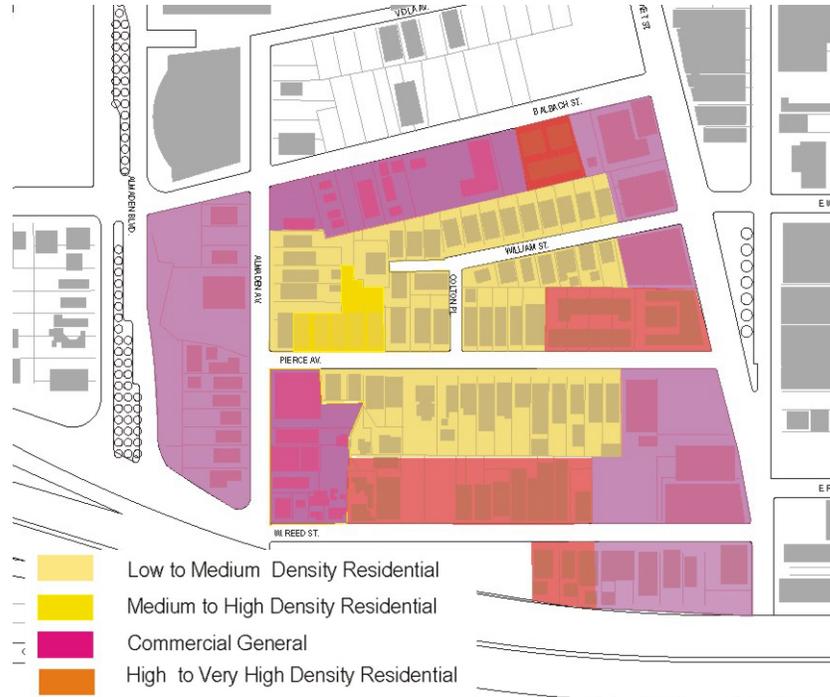
When examining closely Zoning and General Plan diagrams for Market-Almaden, it is evident that some areas present inconsistencies between the two designations. Nevertheless, it is important to pay special attention to General Plan designations, as they typically prevail over Zoning when making decisions regarding future development patterns for the neighborhood.

According to the General Plan Land Use Map, the properties along Market Street and along Almaden Boulevard are designated Downtown Core Area. The south side of Balbach Street is designated by the General Plan as Medium-High Density Residential, which allows future development at densities of 12 to 25 dwelling units per acre. The neighborhood core and the area along Reed Street is designated Medium-Low Density Residential, defined as 8 dwelling units per acre.

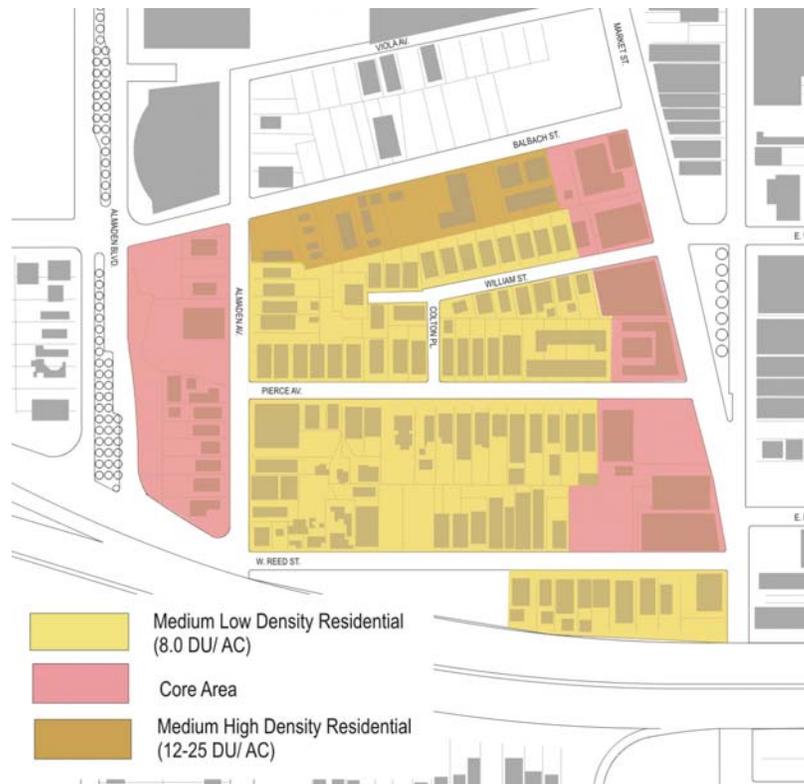
Zoning regulations generally divide an urban area into the districts and land use designations that are prescribed by the General Plan. Zoning also regulates the composition and uses allowed for new development. As per Zoning, the south side of Balbach Street is General Commercial except for three parcels that have been combined and zoned Medium- to High-Density Residential (8 to 25 dwelling units per acre). The Almaden Boulevard block, Almaden Avenue south of Pierce, and most of Market Street are also zoned General Commercial. West Reed Street is zoned High- to Very-High Density Residential (over 25 dwelling units per acre).

At Market Street and Pierce Avenue the Market-Gateway apartments, a 55-unit complex, has a High- to Very-High Density Residential (over 25 dwelling units per acre) zoning designation. Also on Pierce Avenue, there is infill residential development that has a zoning designation of Medium- to High- Density Residential (8 to 25 dwelling units per acre) rather than the Low to Medium Density Residential (up to 8 dwelling units per acre) designated for the rest of Pierce Avenue, Colton Place, and William Street.

NEIGHBORHOOD PROFILE

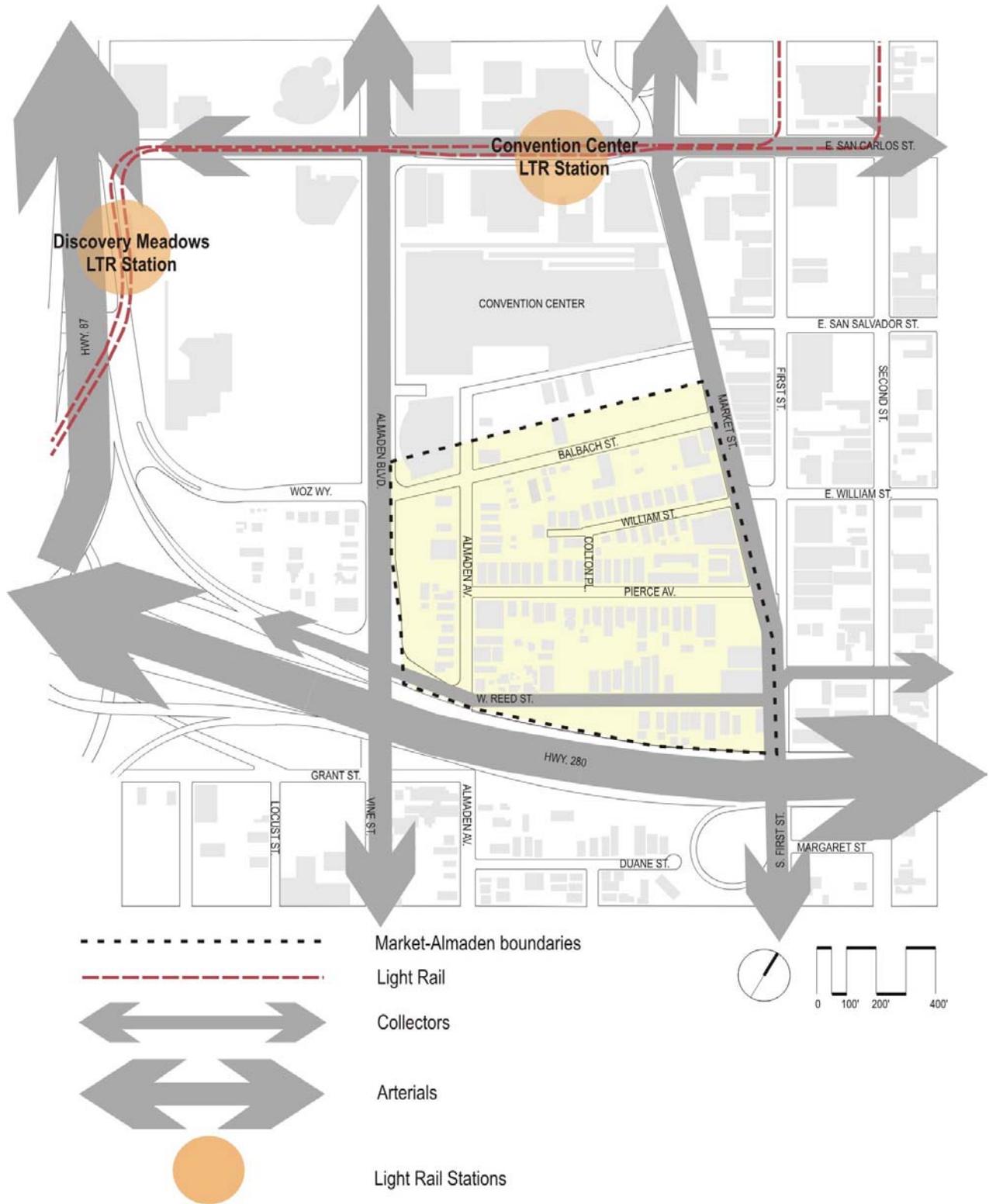


Zoning Designations for Market-Almaden



General Plan designations for Market-Almaden

STREET CIRCULATION AND TRAFFIC CALMING



Current circulation diagram

Residents have expressed concerns about vehicular circulation within the neighborhood and in its vicinity. Residents find it difficult to enter or leave the neighborhood due to the drastic differences in speed and high traffic levels, especially to and from Market Street.

Market Street (State Highway 82) is a busy, four lane, major arterial that connects downtown San José to the south. Almaden Boulevard is another major north-south arterial. West Reed Street is a major local collector for highway 280. The other streets within Market-Almaden are local streets not intended for heavy traffic. Balbach Street and West Reed Street are the only east-west connectors and are expected to increase in traffic loads. A traffic light is scheduled for installation at the intersection of Market Street and Balbach Street by May 2003.

Residents are concerned about the traffic speeds of vehicles shortcutting through the neighborhood on Balbach, William and West Reed Streets. They are also worried about the number of commercial trucks that use Colton Place.

Temporary bulbouts have just been installed on Pierce Avenue at Colton Place. In addition to the future installation of a stop sign, the bulbouts are intended to calm traffic on Pierce Avenue and to further dissuade trucks from using Colton Place as a through road.

The north end of Almaden Avenue at Balbach Street has been closed as a result of the office tower construction at Almaden Boulevard and Balbach Street. This permanent street closure is intended to mitigate traffic and parking associated with the new office structure, and block through traffic.

While the City is scheduled to resurface local streets in the next few years, there are no major plans for street expansions. Balbach Street and West Reed Street share the load of traffic transversing Market-Almaden. If downtown San José continues to expand, more traffic calming measures may be needed in this area.



PERMIT-PARKING

There is a resident-only permit-parking program in place for residential neighborhood streets. Although neighbors are generally satisfied with the program, many believe stronger enforcement is needed to ensure the effectiveness of the permit parking system, particularly during citywide events such as Cinco de Mayo, the 4th of July, and the Christmas holiday season when large numbers of outside visitors travel into the downtown area.

STREETLIGHTS

As a result of petitions organized by MANA, antique streetlights now illuminate most of the area. All streetlights except those on Almaden Avenue and West Reed Streets have been converted to the antique Victorian style. Residents would like to continue incorporating the antique streetlights throughout the neighborhood to help unify the image of Market-Almaden.

UTILITIES

Overhead power and telephone poles and transmission lines are omnipresent throughout the neighborhood. Pacific Gas and Electricity (PG&E) is past due in undergrounding the overheard utilities. Because

of the current economic crisis in the energy sector, the undergrounding project has been postponed by PG&E and is scheduled for completion in 2004.

STREET MAINTENANCE

The internal streets within Market-Almaden are just wide enough to serve local traffic levels. Presently, several neighborhood streets show differences in surface treatments. San José's Department of Transportation maintains its roads and streets on a 10-year cycle. Street maintenance for roadways in the neighborhood is not synchronized, leaving streets in varying levels of maintenance. Residents prefer a consistent surface treatment throughout its local streets. Balbach Street, for instance, was chip-sealed and Colton Place was slurry-sealed in 2001. Currently, Pierce Avenue is slurry-sealed and is scheduled for resealing in 2002. Reed Street is slurry sealed and is due for slurry sealing again in 2005. Almaden Avenue is currently chip-sealed and due to be slurry-sealed in 2008²⁰.

SIDEWALKS

Some sidewalks in Market-Almaden are old, narrow and cracked. The use of small concrete paver bricks around street trees has resulted in an uneven surface for pedestrians. The width of sidewalks makes the use of walkers, wheelchairs and strollers a challenge throughout most of the neighborhood.

Pedestrians also find it difficult to travel through the neighborhood. Heavy traffic on the wide streets of Market Street and Almaden Boulevard, combined with aged crosswalks, make east-west circulation difficult for pedestrians.

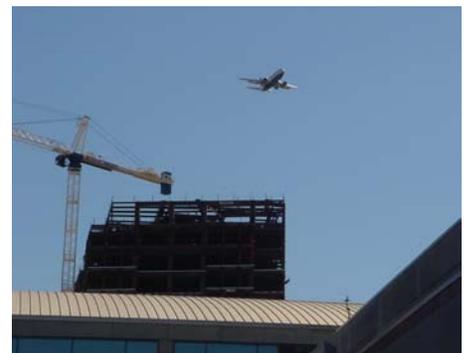
Bicyclists also face challenges when attempting to enter or leave the neighborhood. There are no bike detector loops to affect traffic signals; cyclists must await autos or push pedestrian buttons to trigger signals.

External Pressures

NOISE

Due to Market-Almaden's close proximity to Norman Y. Mineta International Airport, residents report relatively high noise levels throughout the neighborhood.²¹ Because of aviation-related noise levels, the area is targeted for inclusion in the expanded acoustical program identified in the ongoing *San José Norman Y Mineta International Airport 2020 Master Plan*.

The acoustical program includes the provision of soundproofing measures such as home insulation, new double-paned windows, weather-stripping, and air-conditioning units on homes located in the sound abatement zone to mitigate the current noise levels. Participation in the acoustic program is voluntary and handled on a house-by-house basis. The benefits of the acoustical program are of major importance to several community residents; however, some question the quality and long-term



²⁰ Lori Popovich, presentation at a Neighborhood Advisory Committee Meeting. (8 April 2002).

²¹San José International Airport, Airport Noise Advisory Committee, *San José International Airport Noise Exposure Map* (11 February 2002)

historic and cosmetic effects that may result from the program’s home improvements. The Acoustical Treatment Program (ACT) seeks “to improve the living conditions of people residing in eligible areas near the San José International Airport by reducing the aircraft-related noise in their living spaces to meet Federal and State noise standards”²².

FLOOD ZONE

Nearly half of the homes in the neighborhood lie within the boundary of the computed 100-year flood zone.²³ Living within a designated flood zone carries not only the threat of flood, but also the burden of higher home insurance rates. This problem is being mitigated with the construction of the Guadalupe River Flood Diversion Project. An updated Flood Insurance Rate Map (FIRM) is scheduled for 2004, after completion of the project by the Federal Emergency Management Agency²⁴.

West Reed Street



Apartment complex on West Reed Street

West Reed Street, the southern edge of the Market-Almaden neighborhood, is lined by small cottage-style homes and apartment buildings, many in need of repair. A proportionally large number of Market-Almaden residents live along the West Reed Street corridor. More than 85 percent of the people living along the West Reed Street corridor residents are renters²⁵. This area is noted in the General Plan as Medium-Low Density Residential²⁶.

West Reed Street is designated in the City’s General Plan as a Collector; it is therefore a busy road during commute hours, carrying large volumes of east-west traffic. Cars and trucks use West Reed Street to cross from Market Street to Almaden Boulevard and to access the onramp of highway 280.



Looking west on Reed Street

Walking across West Reed Street can be difficult. The block is long and offers two crosswalks, one at the end of the street. Future plans for SoFA and the Almaden Boulevard office corridor are expected to increase the traffic levels on West Reed Street, which raise concerns for pedestrian use of the street.

Along with airport noise, noise generated by the elevated highway (Highway 280) is also of concern to residents. There is no sound wall to defray some of the highway noise. Moreover, the fact that the highway is so close to the neighborhood results in little horizontal distance between the highway and the neighborhood to reduce the sound.

A fenced Caltrans easement located along the slope of Highway 280 encompasses approximately half of the southwestern corner of the block. This long triangular piece of property is unused, overgrown, and

²²Reprinted from official San José Airport Website. Available from <http://www.sjc.org/>

²³City of San José Planning Services Division, *Market-Almaden SNI Area- Flood Zone Map* (July 2002).

²⁴ FEMA, the Federal Emergency Management Agency, is responsible for issuance of Flood Insurance Rate Maps (FIRMs).

²⁵ 2000 U.S. Census Block Summary File 1 Data Blocks 1009-1010 of Tract 5017

²⁶ San José General Plan Medium-Low Density Residential designation allows 8 dwelling units per acre.

unkempt, and residents have reported that this area has been the location of homeless encampments in the past.

Almaden Boulevard

The neighborhood block along Almaden Boulevard between Balbach Street and West Reed Street is currently zoned as general commercial, which allows for high-density commercial development.

The Almaden Boulevard block is currently occupied by a large commercial establishment (The House of Pizza), a small office complex, a small apartment building, and five single-family homes. The House of Pizza is the only use oriented towards Almaden Boulevard. All other structures are located on the eastside of the block and face eastward into the core of the neighborhood. Most structures are in need of at least surface cosmetic improvements, with several needing significant repairs. Three of these properties –507, 565 and 589 Almaden Avenue–, have been identified as historic resources in surveys conducted in downtown San José²⁷. The Census estimates that 46 people live on this block with all of the housing units utilized as rentals.

The north side of the block abuts a new high-rise office building developed by the Sobrato Development Companies (nearing completion at the time of this writing). This eighteen-story building is visible throughout the neighborhood. The tall mid-rise structure is out of scale compared to the surrounding single- and two-story homes –though its scale relates more closely to high rise buildings to the north of the neighborhood along Almaden Boulevard. The mitigation measures developed for the Sobrato building include the provision of a small landscaped parcel for use as open space on the north end of the block, across the street from the mid-rise, and traffic calming measures throughout the neighborhood.

The east side of Almaden Avenue is lined with tidy, older homes of various sizes that are consistent with the housing styles characteristic of the neighborhood. Included among these homes is a designated City landmark at 524 Almaden Avenue. This block serves as the western boundary of the neighborhood core.

There is also one commercial building located at the corner of Almaden Avenue and Pierce Avenue that has been subdivided into four separate business addresses. This block of Almaden Avenue south of Pierce Avenue is designated Medium-Low Density Residential in the General Plan (8 units per acre), but is presently zoned as General Commercial.



Sobrato Office Tower under construction



City Landmark at 524 Almaden Avenue

Balbach Street

The area encompassing Balbach Street and the Convention Center expansion is Market-Almaden’s rather undefined northern edge. The City’s General Plan designates this block as Medium-High Density Residential (12-25 dwelling units per acre), but the Zoning Ordinance designates most of the block as General Commercial. The south side of Balbach Street is home to several multi-family housing units, part of Tate’s Family Auto Service (a commercial business located on South

²⁷ Dill Design Group. *Historic Resources Survey Downtown San José*. (San José: Department of Planning, Building and Code Enforcement, October 2000)



Streetscape and parking on Balbach Street

Market Street), and T & K Auto Services (located mid-block). T & K Auto Services, a complex of several auto related companies, occupies nearly 25% of the block. There are also a number of duplexes and multiplexes on this block.

The houses and businesses of Balbach Street are generally in disrepair: Front yards are unkempt; fences and buildings show cosmetic damage; the auto yard is filled with a collection of vehicles parts and heaps of auto remains.

Vehicular activity on Balbach Street is already rather busy with a mix of trucks and autos. Some of the traffic is generated by the commercial businesses and residential units located on Balbach Street, but many other drivers use the street as a crosscut from Market Street over to Almaden Boulevard to access area highways.

Balbach Street is often lined with parked cars and trucks. Although the neighborhood has a residential permit parking program, it does not apply on the north side of Balbach Street. Current multi-family housing with insufficient off-street parking further contribute to the demand for on-street parking.

The barren southern wall of the San José McEnery Convention Center and the vacant block between Balbach Street and Viola Avenue, now used for public parking, may be developed in conjunction with the proposed expansion of the Convention Center. At this time, no plans on the design or scale of this expansion are confirmed, but the land has been cleared to allow potential growth south of the Convention Center towards the north edge of Balbach Street.

Market Street

Market Street, between Viola Avenue and East Reed Street, establishes the eastern edge of Market-Almaden and the western edge of another downtown special planning process –the South First Area District (SoFA) Plan. The two planning areas overlap along Market Street.

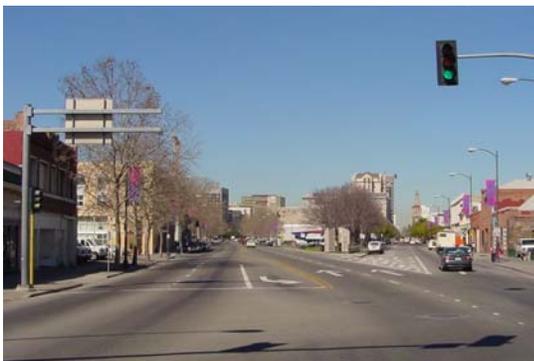
The Market Street edge is comprised of a new multi-story apartment complex (Market Gateway Apartments) and a variety of commercial buildings, most of which are used for automobile oriented retail. Most of the businesses are housed in historic two-story masonry buildings.

Even though all the businesses open out onto Market Street, commercial traffic regularly use Balbach Street, William Street, Pierce Avenue, and West Reed Streets for various purposes. Parking tends to be relegated to Market, which appears to be sufficient for these businesses. The S & G Discount Carpet store often uses a forklift to transfer rugs via William Street. The apartment complex located at South Market and Pierce Avenue has off-street parking with an entrance and exit on Pierce Avenue.

Market Street is the main feeder for most neighborhood residents. Due to the high traffic volumes during commute hours, residents report that it is difficult to exit the neighborhood in the mornings or to enter the neighborhood in the evenings. Residents also note that delivery trucks frequently line-up along West William Street off Market



La Peñita Restaurant on Market Street and West Reed Street



Market Street looking north from Reed Street

Street, impeding vehicular movement through this segment of the neighborhood.

Across busy Market Street is Parque de los Pobladores (formerly Gore Park), the only park located directly adjacent to the neighborhood. The park is a thin slice of land, surrounded by wide busy roads that impede easy access onto the public space. A short black wall of artwork lines the west side of the park, and unfortunately prevents visibility through the park, enticing its use by transients. Both SoFA and Market-Almaden would like to see changes made to the park to improve access to the site and to make the area more visible.

The Residential Core

Pierce Street, William Street, Colton Place and the east side of Almaden Avenue make up the residential core of the Market-Almaden neighborhood. The majority of single-family homes are located in the core, showcasing some of the community's best examples of Victorian cottage and Craftsman style. The largest and most established trees spread their canopies here, adding character to the area. Infill development within the core has attempted to respect the existing historic character with varying levels of success.

The residential core has its share of traffic issues and other infrastructure concerns. While there are limited available lots for new housing construction or as receiving sites for historic homes, ongoing house repairs and remodeling is prevalent throughout the neighborhood.

There is a vacant Victorian at 75 West William Street that the community would like to see repaired and occupied. The structure is boarded up and in disrepair. At this time the structure is privately owned on property zoned as General Commercial and in a Downtown Core area of the General Plan.



Victorian on Pierce Avenue

NEIGHBORHOOD PROFILE

Goals

The following goals for neighborhood improvement serve as the overall framework for the Neighborhood Improvement Plan. They were derived from the community's vision for Market-Almaden. They provide the foundation from which specific proposed actions for neighborhood improvement are derived.

- Protect and strengthen the unique character of the residential neighborhood core.
- Define the edges of the neighborhood and provide appropriate transitions between future new development and the existing residential core by:
 - Ensuring that any expansion of the San José McEnery Convention Center contributes positively to defining Balbach Street as a pedestrian corridor and complements the character of the northern edge of the neighborhood.
 - Ensuring that new development along Balbach Street creates an effective transition between the residential core of the neighborhood and the Convention Center.
 - Ensuring that new development along the edge of Almaden Boulevard respects the character of and creates an adequate transition to the residential core of Market-Almaden, while incorporating the general urban design goals for the Greater Downtown area of the City of San José.
 - Ensuring that new development along Market Street creates appropriate transitions towards the residential core of Market-Almaden and responds to the emerging character of the South First Area (SoFA).
- Provide outdoor recreation and open space for residents of all ages within the boundaries of the neighborhood.
- Enhance the walking environment and strengthen pedestrian and bicycle access to nearby downtown destinations.

Neighborhood Improvement Plan Concepts



This section introduces improvement concepts to guide the City and Market-Almaden residents in their efforts to preserve and enhance the physical conditions and living environment of the neighborhood.



These neighborhood improvement concepts stem from a vision for the community developed in close collaboration with area residents, property and business owners, and other interested citizens. A special effort was made to incorporate the youth perspective through workshops and activities, such as a guided walking tour and a photographic survey of the neighborhood conducted by the children in the community.



The Conceptual Plan diagram (next page) illustrates the overall Market-Almaden Neighborhood Improvement Plan. The concepts of this plan are fully described in this section. Each concept is categorized under one of the following five specific planning sub-areas of the neighborhood, or under one of three neighborhood-wide systems, as listed below.

PLANNING SUB-AREAS

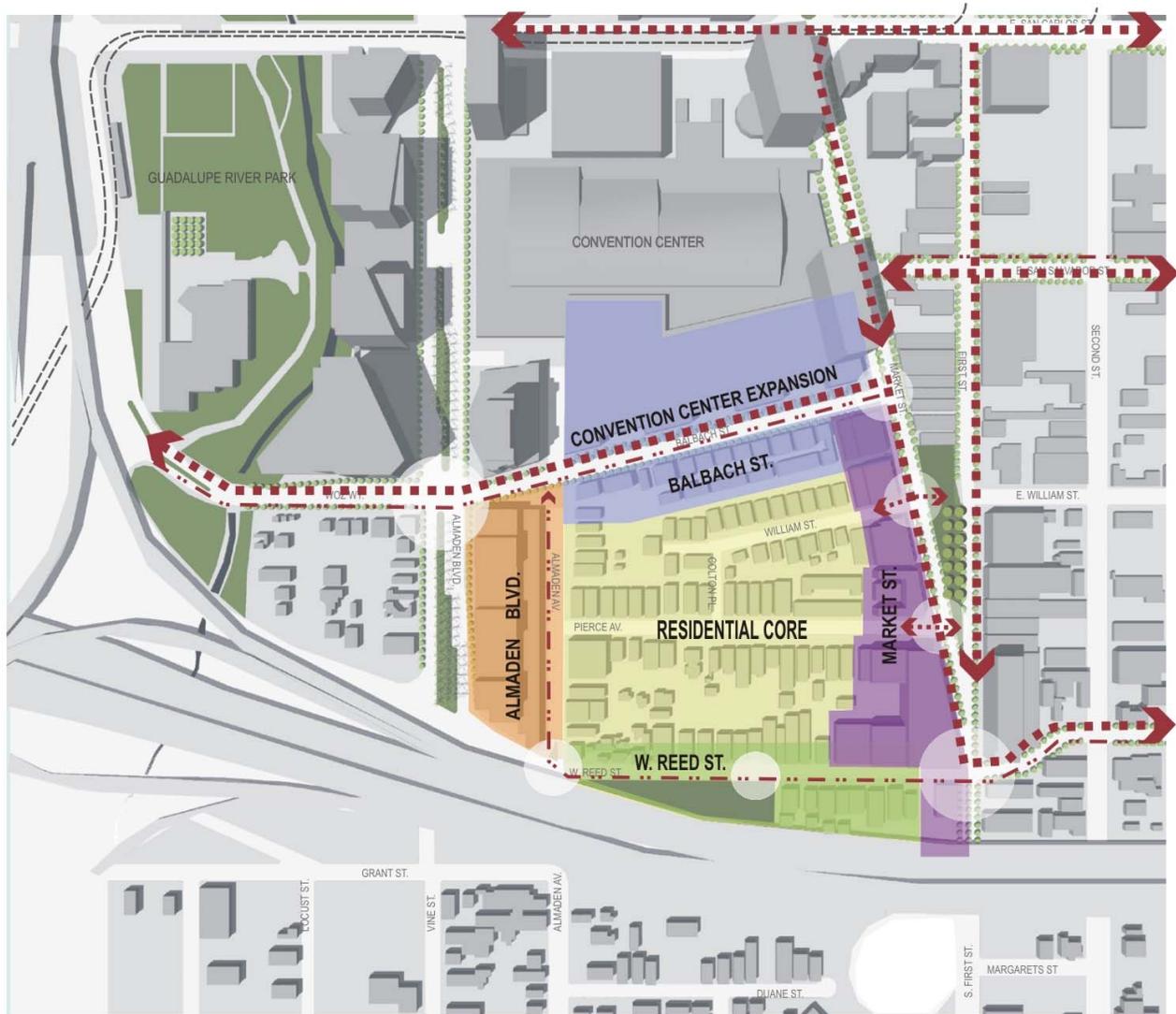
- Residential Core
- Convention Center Expansion
- Balbach Street
- Almaden Boulevard
- Market Street



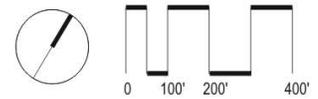
SYSTEMS

- Open Space
- Pedestrian and Bike Connections
- Streetscapes

Images from community workshops



-  Downtown pedestrian corridors
-  Local pedestrian connections
-  Bike connections
-  Open Space
-  Pedestrian Intersections



Conceptual Plan illustrating the main improvement recommendations for the Market-Almaden neighborhood, including planning sub-areas, pedestrian and bicycle circulation, open space and potential development



Locator map:
Residential Core

Residential Core

The residents believe that Market-Almaden is first and foremost a residential neighborhood, and that the viability of its residential core is critical to the health of the community. This depends not only on preserving its historic character, but also on increasing homeownership and improving the maintenance of properties in disrepair.

HISTORIC PRESERVATION

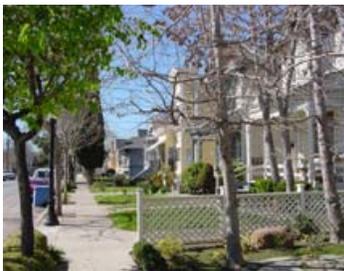
Over half of the properties in Market-Almaden have been identified as historic resources in the *2000 Historic Resources Survey*¹. Residents are strongly committed to maintaining and preserving the neighborhood's historic character. They would like to explore

strategies to achieve this goal, such as designating Market-Almaden a Conservation Area.

A Conservation Area is defined as “an overlay that delineates a geographically defined area of the City with identifiable attributes embodied by architecture, urban design, development patterns and history”². The focus is on maintaining the basic character of the area.

The City of San José is currently developing specific criteria and a process to identify qualifying neighborhoods as potential Conservation Areas. As the City develops these guidelines, a group of residents may proactively initiate the process of nominating Market-Almaden as a Conservation Area.

The application process may include a historic resource survey of properties within the proposed conservation area. Potential historic structures in the Market-Almaden neighborhood may need to be identified and catalogued, complementing previous downtown-wide surveys such as the *2000 Historic Resources*.



Pierce Avenue

RELOCATION OF HISTORIC STRUCTURES

A significant number of historic structures in the neighborhood have been earmarked for relocation or demolition. Fifteen residences located between Viola Avenue and Balbach Street were acquired by the San José Redevelopment Agency (SJRA) to accommodate the proposed expansion of the San José McEnery Convention Center³. The only remaining structure, the Greeninger House, is potentially eligible for listing as a City Landmark, and is planned to be relocated to a site on South Third and William Street, in the University Neighborhood. Relocation of historic structures has become a means to preserving the City's historic heritage.



Greeninger house

¹ Dill Design Group. *Historic Resources Survey, Downtown San José Year 2000*. San José, 2000.

² *Memorandum to Historic Landmarks Commission: Draft Report on Conservation Areas for Study Session*. April 3, 2002.

³ Dill Design Group. *Historical and Architectural Resource Evaluation for the city block bounded by South Market Avenue, Viola Avenue and Balbach Street*. San José, 2001.

Relocation within the neighborhood is preferred, though site availability within the boundaries of the neighborhood is limited. If relocation in the neighborhood is not possible, opportunities to relocate historic structures to suitable receiver sites in adjacent neighborhoods, such as Thirteenth Street⁴ or the University Neighborhoods SNI areas, should be actively pursued.

There exists an opportunity to relocate a historic structure to a vacant parcel on 123 West Reed Street. In addition, residents have expressed their desire to relocate a historic structure to a parcel on Balbach Street across from the proposed Convention Center Expansion. Residents envision that this structure could be used as a “bed and breakfast” or similar facility to serve Convention Center visitors.

BUILDING DESIGN GUIDELINES FOR THE RESIDENTIAL CORE

Future development in Market-Almaden, in the residential core and along the edges of the neighborhood, should derive from, protect, and respect the architectural assets that contribute to the neighborhood’s special identity.

In order to understand and learn from the building patterns, features, proportions and elements that contribute to the uniqueness of the residential core, a sample study of representative residential structures was conducted. Two groups of typologically distinct buildings were studied: a group of generally tall and narrow structures (Victorians: Stick, Italianate, Neoclassic) and a second group of relatively low, horizontal Craftsman bungalows and cottages.

The following architectural design guidelines were developed to ensure that new buildings throughout the neighborhood complement the established visual character of the residential core of Market-Almaden.

Volume

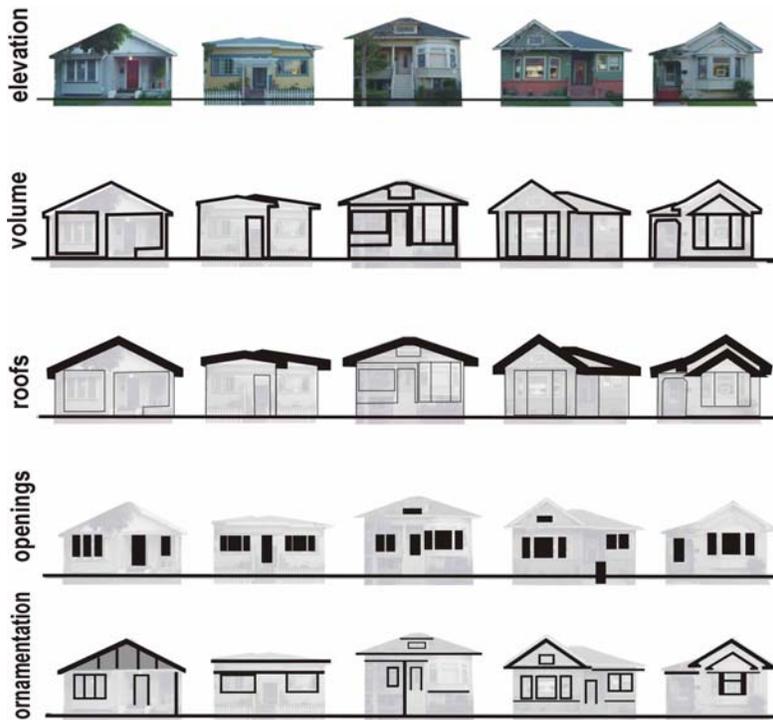
The overall building volumes throughout the neighborhood are highly articulated, layered and three-dimensional. Complex building forms should therefore be encouraged. This effect may be achieved through changes of plane, by the inclusion of projections and recesses (such as bays, porches, towers, balconies). The overall building mass should be made of a varied combination of volumes in order to generate a rich pattern of textures and shadows.



Façade study of tall, narrow residential building types

⁴ The Thirteenth Street and the University Neighborhoods SNI areas have expressed their desire to relocate historic structures to receiver sites within their boundaries.

Flat buildings, with no expression or definition of individual component volumes, should be strongly discouraged.



Façade study of low residential building types

Roofs

Roofs throughout the neighborhood tend to be varied, including hipped, gable, cross-gable and flat parapets. Separate, smaller roofs are often used to emphasize front porches. New roof forms should follow this pattern of complex roof shapes.

Window Openings

Windows and entrances throughout the neighborhood follow a general vertical orientation (tall and narrow) and are frequently grouped and aligned in such a way as to create a horizontal band. Vertical window openings following the overall pattern of the neighborhood should be encouraged. The overall composition of grouped openings may be tied together in horizontal bands.

Window frames should follow the prevailing historical types. For instance, double-hung windows of vertical proportions are preferred over horizontal sliding windows.

Doorway Openings (Entrances)

Primary entrances should face the neighborhood streets. Entrances should be recessed and raised, with steps leading towards the front door. Entryways should be clearly recognizable and accentuated by architectural treatments such as porches, porticos, steps, overhangs, or decorative molding (see figure next page).



Photomontage using Foster City's Metro Center as an example of the use of vertical windows and complex, layered volumes



Entrances facing the street should be elevated, recessed, and emphasized with a porch, portico or decorative treatment

Spacing

The overall length of new buildings in the neighborhood should be articulated to match the existing rhythm and spacing set in the interior streets. Building design should, for instance, strive to integrate a vertical module that approximates the typical width of structures in the residential core (25 to 45 feet wide) within its overall façade articulation.



Long volumes should be modulated (articulated) to create smaller sections, following the rhythm and spacing set in the interior streets of the neighborhood



Ornamentation

Trims and other details are amply used through the neighborhood to emphasize either the openings (doors and windows) or the various individual volumes that make the overall mass of the house.

Façades should emphasize three-dimensional detailing such as trims, cornices, window moldings and reveals to cast shadows and create visual interest. These details should be placed in such a way as to emphasize the various elements that, together, comprise the overall structure, its openings or individual volumes.



Abstraction of historical elements such as cornice lines, window and door trim should be encouraged

Materials

Building materials reflect a historic period in time and celebrate the traditional style of a community. In order to meet this goal, building materials should be consistent with the predominant materials found in the historic structures of Market-Almaden, with emphasis on wood, lap-siding and, to a lesser degree, stucco.

HOME OWNERSHIP

Twenty-two (22) percent of Market-Almaden houses are owner occupied, compared to 59 percent citywide. Increased homeownership will contribute to the long-term stability of this community. Opportunities for promoting homeownership in Market-Almaden should be actively pursued. Programs that aid homeownership include the following⁵:

- The City of San José Housing Department, Second Mortgage Assistance Program assists first-time homebuyers to qualify for loans to buy a condominium or townhouse in a San José Redevelopment Area. It would also encourage developers to build ownership, rather than rental housing.
- Neighborhood Housing Services Silicon Valley (NHSSV) HomeVenture Fund offers down payment assistance loans.
- The California Housing Finance Agency (CHFA) offers below market interest rate first loans.
- The Housing Trust of Santa Clara County (HTSCC) offers deferred second loans.
- The Teacher Mortgage Credit Certificate Program (Teacher MCC) offers two percent income tax credit on home loan interest.
- The City of San José Teacher Homebuyer Program (THP) offers down payment assistance.



Illustrative plan representing potential development on the edges of the neighborhood

Home ownership opportunities may also be created through the development of new, for-sale affordable housing. Such development should be encouraged on available development sites throughout the neighborhood. New housing will also provide a desirable increase in the residential population of the neighborhood. Potential development sites are concentrated on the Balbach Street, Almaden Boulevard and Market Street edges of the neighborhood. These sites could support the development of Medium-High Density (12 to 25 dwelling units per acre) to High-Density (over 25 dwelling units per acre) housing.

MAINTENANCE AND REHABILITATION OF PROPERTIES

Improving neighborhoods often involves a slow and continual effort to recycle abandoned homes and rescue others from deterioration. By helping individual homeowners finance needed home repairs, replacements and alterations, the Market-Almaden community can work towards preserving

and enhancing the quality of its residential environment. The City of San José has a number of programs designed to assist the community

⁵ More information on these programs is available in the City of San José, Department of Housing's *First-Time Homebuyer's Quick Reference Guide* (March, 2002).



Locator map:
Convention Center Expansion

Convention Center Expansion

In 1992, the Downtown 2010 Strategy Plan⁶ identified the area between Viola Avenue, Market Street, Balbach Street and Almaden Avenue as the expansion area for the San José McEnery Convention Center.

The expansion was later listed as one of the top priorities in the *Greater Downtown Strategy for Development, Strategy 2000*, and accepted by the Redevelopment Agency Board in February 2001.

The proposed Convention Center project is currently under conceptual development. The programming for the operations of the Convention center will play a major role in determining the building edge along Balbach Street.

A new addition to the Convention Center, however, presents a unique opportunity for shaping the southern edge of the new building so that it defines Balbach Street as an active pedestrian corridor and complements the character of the northern edge of the Market-Almaden neighborhood. This northern edge would further be defined by Medium-High Density housing development lining the south side of Balbach Street.

In order to achieve an appropriate interface between the Convention Center Expansion and the northern edge of the neighborhood, including a pleasant pedestrian corridor, the neighborhood has identified a series of design objectives for the Balbach Street edge that should be taken into careful consideration if and when such an expansion occurs:

- The design, massing and landscaping of the Convention Center addition should facilitate the establishment of Balbach Street as a pedestrian corridor.
- The Balbach face of the Convention Center addition should be sufficiently open and transparent to provide natural surveillance opportunities (e.g. “neighborhood watch”) along the pedestrian corridor.
- The potentially large mass of the Convention Center building should be designed to enhance compatibility with the smaller scale residential structures located across the street.
- The design and materials of the new addition should be high quality and should employ significant variety in the massing.

The design guidelines included in this *Plan* are intended to be illustrative of techniques available to achieve the design objectives expressed by the community. These design guidelines, therefore, are not expected to be inclusive of all potential alternatives for achieving those design objectives. Additional design alternatives may be considered but should also carefully integrate, support and meet the design objectives. The Market-Almaden community members should be given an opportunity to provide their input regarding the design throughout any public process related to this effort from its early stages.

⁶ *Downtown 2010 Strategy Plan*. City of San José, 1992.

BUILDING GUIDELINES FOR THE BALBACH STREET EDGE OF THE CONVENTION CENTER

The Market-Almaden neighborhood feels that it is essential that the design of the Balbach Street edge of any expansion of the Convention Center be guided by the following concepts:

Activity

In order to provide natural surveillance opportunities along Balbach Street, small scale pedestrian-oriented, active uses should be encouraged along the built edge of the Convention Center Expansion. The neighborhood has identified preferred uses such as: outdoor cafés, retail stalls, small indoor or outdoor exhibition spaces, and peripheral circulation corridors with windows or other openings. Pedestrian access into the Convention Center may be afforded through any of these active uses facing Balbach, or even through small direct entrances. These entries, however, should be inconspicuous and infrequent and should not be convenient to any Convention Center related parking.

Vehicle oriented uses and vehicular access should be avoided along this edge of the Convention Center site. Non-active uses, including storage space and mechanical rooms, should be minimized and widely spaced.

Transparency

To promote indoor/outdoor interaction and provide visual interest, design incorporating substantial window areas, multiple openings or pedestrian entrances should be encouraged. Openings should be varied in size and design to provide visual interest and avoid repetition, particularly along lengthy walls.

Covered parking structures should incorporate generous numbers of openings to provide natural ventilation. These openings should be relatively small and covered with screening materials in order to prevent a clear view of the vehicles parked inside. Concrete blocks, ceramic tiles, louvers, decorative bars and other materials with cut-outs should be considered to add variety to the wall.

Building Articulation

Emphasis on volume articulation should be encouraged in order to reduce the apparent bulk of the building and create visual interest. Such articulation can be achieved through changes in planes and materials, both horizontally and vertically.

Protruding architectural features and ornamentation provide another means for volume articulation. These features include bay windows, trims, awnings, fins, and exposed columns and beams. These features should be configured in such a way as to provide shade and depth for the openings.

Step-backs

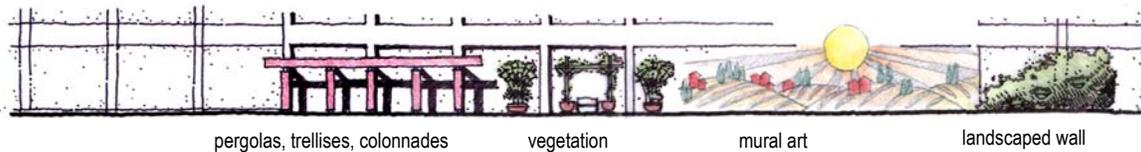
The second floor of the Convention Center Expansion should step-back from Balbach Street to reduce the overall bulk of the building mass. This also creates opportunities for open terraces. Where possible, the second level terraces should be wide enough to incorporate active outdoor uses such as outdoor cafés and outdoor exhibition areas. The incorporation of public art, distinctive architectural features, small canopy trees and edgings of trailing landscape planters along the terraces can further enhance the visual interest of the structure.

Roofline Articulation

Exhibition halls usually have super-structure roofs. Large roof structures should step-back from the outer walls to reduce the bulk of the overall mass. Decorative features such as cornices, parapets, fins and rails should be considered. Structural roof elements should be hidden from view, unless they display special design features

Walls

Expanses of blank walls along pedestrian ways should generally be avoided. Decorative architectural features such as colonnades, pergolas, trellises and lattices, combined with climbing vegetation, may be used to mitigate the impact of solid blank walls. Such treatments should be designed in concert with other landscape treatments along the buffer zone.



Texture and variation enhance the visual interest of otherwise blank walls

Materials

Durable, high quality materials should be required for this edge of the Convention Center Expansion, as this building will be a landmark and a source of public pride. Stainless steel, glass, brick, ceramic, mosaic and other composite materials should be encouraged.

Loading Yard

The use of non-solid walls to screen any service yards is preferred to the use of solid, blank walls. Concrete blocks, ceramic tiles, louvered panels, decorative bars, lattices with climbing vegetation, or other materials with cut-outs are all examples of materials that may be used. These treatments may be used separately or in combination to provide a more pleasing expanse, while effectively screening the loading areas.

Noise

Noise generating equipment should be placed away from the Balbach Street side of the Convention Center and buffered properly.

Vehicular Access

If vehicular access of any kind is required along the south edge of the Convention Center, it should be provided from the north stub of Almaden Avenue adjacent to the Sobrato building. Truck routes in particular to this entry point should be limited to Almaden Boulevard and Balbach Street along the southern edge of the Sobrato building, and should avoid Balbach Street between Almaden Avenue and Market Street.

Public Art

Public art, either two or three-dimensional, both permanent and temporary, should be exhibited along Balbach Street. This includes murals, reliefs, sculptures and water features such as fountains and waterfalls. The location of public art and its installation methods should be carefully considered as an integral part of the design of the building. Art can be integrated not only in the building, but also on the ground along Balbach. Local artists and arts groups should be included as part of the design team for the Convention Center in order to optimize the integration of art into the project.

Community Space

The Convention Center as a member of the community should make every effort to make space available for the community in scheduling neighborhood association meetings, festivals and community-wide events.

The preferred location for this space should be along the southern edge of the new building, within easy access from Balbach Street.

LANDSCAPE BUFFER GUIDELINES*Landscape Buffer*

A wide landscape buffer should be provided along the Balbach Street edge of the Convention Center Expansion, in order to soften and visually reduce the mass of this edge of the building. The landscape buffer wall may consist of layers of vegetation, starting with tall hedges next to the wall, down to low shrubs and groundcover at the edge of the sidewalk. Variation in vegetation mix and the use of special landscaping features are strongly recommended where there is a change in uses or in building setbacks, or where public art is displayed.

Berm

A landscape berm, sloping down at the base of the Convention Center wall towards the edge of the sidewalk is recommended. The berm, however, should not be uniform throughout the length of the building edge, but rather be interrupted when there is a change of use, a setback, or where public art is displayed.

Canopy Trees

A canopy of trees along the sidewalk should be provided by planting two rows of trees, one along the park strip and the other along the edge of the landscape buffer. A double row of trees is particularly recommended along blank walls or where there are no active uses inside the building (i.e., in front of storage rooms, mechanical rooms and restrooms). Where there are active indoor uses, smaller or wider spaced canopy trees should be considered in order to allow natural light into the building.

Accent Trees

Accent trees and special landscaping treatments should be provided at key public gathering locations such as the community space, any ground level retail uses, or a terrace café. Examples of accent trees include decorative maple, flowering trees and bamboo.

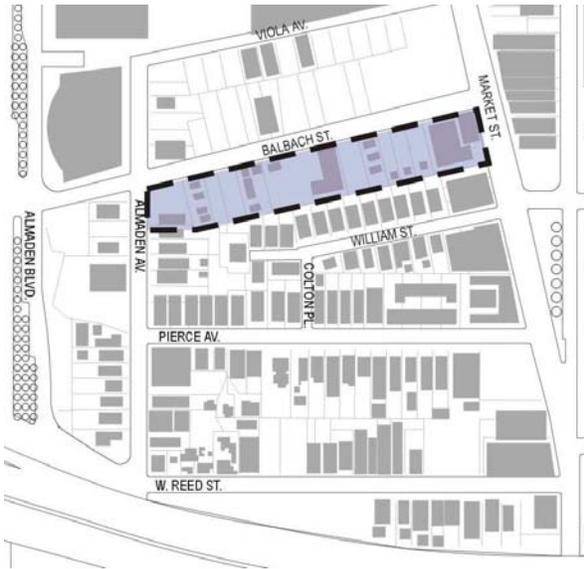
Sidewalk

Provide a wider sidewalk and/or plaza at locations where retail uses, outdoor activities and public art predominate. The landscape buffer zone may be interrupted where the space is needed for purposes other than screening a blank wall, such as active uses or entrances. To add visual interest and flow, the alignment of the sidewalk may vary.



*Conceptual illustration
of landscape buffer
along Balbach Street*

Balbach Street



Locator map:
Balbach Street

Across from the Convention Center expansion, Balbach Street establishes the northern edge of the Market-Almaden neighborhood. There are a number of vacant or underutilized parcels in this area of the neighborhood where new development will potentially occur, thus presenting an opportunity to establish the northern edge of the neighborhood. The community also expressed its desire to relocate historic structures to these parcels.

Balbach Street is envisioned by the community as a pedestrian corridor leading to the Guadalupe River Park, with the Convention Center Expansion defining its northern edge, and three-story medium to high-density (12 to 25 units per acre) residential buildings framing the southern edge of the street.

As new projects are developed along Balbach Street, the neighborhood desires that careful consideration be given to the design recommendations presented here. These recommendations are intended to meet the following design objectives:

- Create a transition in height and building character from the taller edge of the Convention Center toward the lower structures located in the residential core of the neighborhood.
- Establish Balbach Street as a pedestrian corridor, with a clearly defined building edge framing the public space along the street.
- Ensure that the architectural language of new residential development on Balbach reflects and responds to the historic heritage of the neighborhood (see *Building Design Guidelines for the Residential Core* on page 29).

DESIGN GUIDELINES AND DEVELOPMENT STANDARDS FOR NEW DEVELOPMENT ALONG BALBACH STREET

The community supports the following design guidelines and development standards for new development along Balbach Street:

Heights

As the southern edge of Balbach Street is redeveloped, new structures along Balbach Street should provide an appropriate transition from the taller volume of the Convention Center across the street, toward the smaller one to two-story residential structures along William Street.

The street edge should be defined with the taller buildings lining Balbach Street (up to 45 feet in height), while stepping down toward the rear of the site (up to 35 feet in height).

Front Street Setbacks

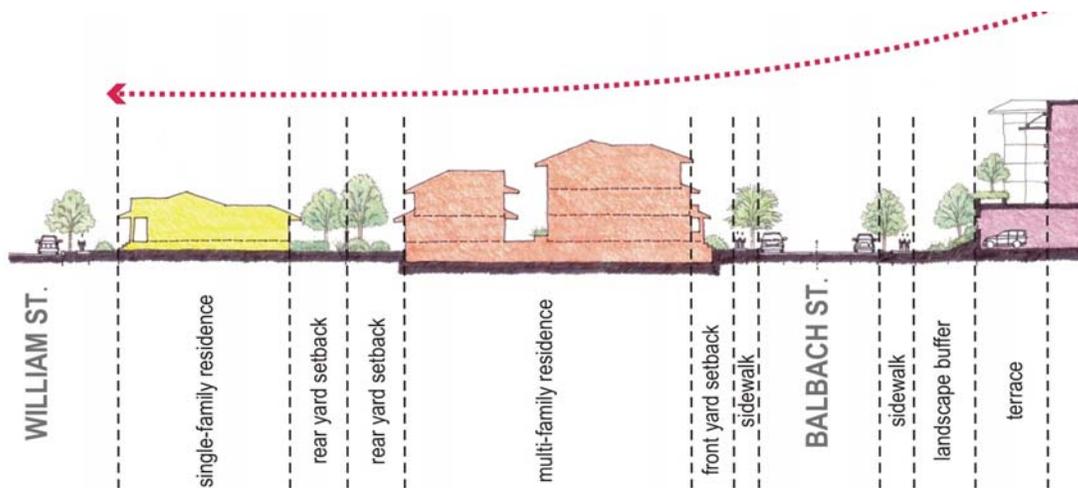
A continuous building edge would help define the pedestrian corridor of Balbach Street. New development, such as a condominium project approved on 98 Balbach Street, can set the alignment for the building

edge –if built, the front edge of the Balbach condos will be placed at 17 feet from the interior sidewalk line. New buildings should continue this front setback pattern. Appropriate landscaping in front of the building and a continuous canopy of trees on the park strip should be provided to enhance the character of the Balbach Street pedestrian corridor.

Rear Setbacks

Rear setbacks create a transition at the rear of a lot by allowing some open space and landscaping between buildings. In order to minimize visual and noise impacts on adjacent residential properties, buildings along Balbach should be setback a minimum of 20 feet from the rear property line. Surface parking should be set 10 feet back from the rear property line.

The rear setback should be landscaped with a dense screen of mature, evergreen trees in order to maximize visual privacy throughout the year. At time of planting, trees should have reached a minimum height of ten feet.



Conceptual illustration of building sections across Balbach Street

Parking

Parking should be located either behind or tucked under the building. Garage entries should not be placed in prominent locations nor should they dominate the building's street frontage.

If the garage is underground, the first floor living space above it should not rise more than three feet above the finished grade at the street front. This pattern of raised entrances follows the typology of the residential core of the neighborhood.

Ground level parking may be placed at the rear of a building, provided that it is located behind habitable ground-floor space facing the public street.

Architectural Language

Both the front and rear facades of the building should follow the building design guidelines presented on page 29. High quality design and materials are essential on all facades and exterior walls, including rear facades facing the backyards of adjacent residential uses.



Locator map:
Almaden Boulevard block

Almaden Boulevard

The “Almaden Boulevard block”, which is bounded by Almaden Avenue, West Reed Street, Almaden Boulevard and Balbach Street, defines the western edge of the Market-Almaden neighborhood. The Almaden Boulevard block is strategically located within the City’s downtown core and enjoys excellent visibility from major transportation corridors such as Almaden Boulevard, Highway 280 and Guadalupe Expressway. It is also within easy walking distance from two light rail stations: the Children’s Discovery Museum and the Convention Center stations are located two blocks away from Almaden Boulevard.

The Almaden Boulevard block is presently occupied by a mix of low intensity residential and commercial uses, as well as vacant land utilized as surface parking lots. Any potential new development on the Almaden Boulevard block will create an opportunity to determine the character of the western edge of the neighborhood, and should respond to the City’s vision of the site as a “premier business district” along Almaden Boulevard, and the existing needs and concerns of the residential core of the Market-Almaden neighborhood located along Almaden Avenue.

The Almaden Boulevard block is presently occupied by a mix of low intensity residential and commercial uses, as well as vacant land utilized as surface parking lots.



Strategy 2000: Illustrative sketch for Almaden Boulevard

In community workshops conducted early in the neighborhood planning process, Market-Almaden residents expressed their desire to see the properties within the Almaden Boulevard block dedicated to infill residential uses at low densities and as receiver sites for historic structures earmarked for relocation.

At the same time, residents also acknowledged the various regulatory and economic factors at work along Almaden Boulevard that would preclude the continuation of low-intensity development patterns along this corridor.

The Almaden Boulevard corridor has been designated as a commercial area for the City of San José in various planning and policy setting documents for the past 20 years. More recently, the *San José Greater Downtown Strategy for Development (Strategy 2000)*, a document that guides policy, planning and budgetary decisions pertaining to development in the Greater Downtown San José through the year 2010, conceptually presents Almaden Boulevard as the “premier business district” of San José, with high-rise development creating a built edge to the street’s wide right-of-way⁷.

Policy setting documents for the City of San José, including *Strategy 2000*, clearly recognize the need to respect the unique quality and

⁷ *San José Greater Downtown Strategy for Development* is the result of a 7-month strategic planning process in which the consultants, Field Paoli and SMWM, guided a 33-member citizen Task Force and conducted a series of monthly public meetings to study the opportunities and challenges of the Greater Downtown.

scale of the neighborhoods in the downtown core, while advancing the overall urban design goals for the Greater Downtown. The following excerpts taken from the *Strategy 2000* document summarize some urban form and land use strategies for the Greater Downtown area which specifically relate to conditions along the Almaden Boulevard block:

- Downtown buildings can step down in height as they approach the surrounding residential neighborhoods to emphasize the downtown skyline and respect the scale of adjacent neighborhoods (*Strategy 2000*, p. 63).
- [Promote] higher densities and mixed land uses throughout the downtown to promote access by proximity-commuting, mid-day errands, and evening entertainment all within a short, comfortable walk (*Strategy 2000*, p. 83).
- Promote and facilitate the development of mixed housing types in the Greater Downtown, with particular emphasis on high-density, mixed-income housing (*Strategy 2000*, p. 63).
- Locally oriented retail uses should be built near residential developments with easy access to adjacent neighborhoods (*Strategy 2000*, p. 64).
- Structures should be oriented such that open spaces receive adequate direct sun and filtered daylight and are protected from building glare, excessive shade and wind (*Strategy 2000*, p. 65).

DEVELOPMENT GUIDELINES FOR THE ALMADEN BOULEVARD BLOCK

In light of the factors presented above, Market-Almaden community members discussed the importance of clearly articulating design objectives to guide development along this critical edge of the neighborhood. The community supports the design objectives summarized below:

- Protect the unique character and scale of the residential core of the Market-Almaden neighborhood.
- Promote the identity of Almaden Boulevard as a premier corridor for the City of San José.
- Create an effective transition from the more intense urban edge of Almaden Boulevard to the low-rise residential core area of the neighborhood.
- Minimize the bulk and shadows that new development may project on the neighborhood.
- Respect the historic character and heritage of the neighborhood.
- Maximize open space opportunities for passive recreational uses.

The intent of the guidelines presented here is to ensure that new development along Almaden Boulevard follows sound urban design and architecture standards, and interfaces sensitively with the residential core on the east side of Almaden Avenue. With care, the community is confident that new development can respect the scale and character of the core neighborhood while contributing fully to the planned street wall on Almaden Boulevard.



Residents work on a 3D massing exercise designed to visualize the potential range of building volumes as well as various urban design and development factors at work on the Almaden Boulevard block

The design guidelines included in this *Plan* are intended to be illustrative of techniques available to achieve the design objectives expressed by the community. These design guidelines, therefore, are not expected to be inclusive of all potential alternatives for achieving those design objectives. Additional design alternatives may be considered but should also carefully integrate, support and meet the design objectives. The Market-Almaden community members should be given an opportunity to provide their input regarding the design throughout any public process related to this effort from its early stages.

Land Use Guidelines

Preferred Uses

Multi-family residential uses should be encouraged on the Almaden Boulevard block. Given the strategic location of this block, residential uses could expand the population base of the Market-Almaden neighborhood, bring people closer to downtown amenities, and broaden their transportation choices.

In addition, ground level retail could complement residential units above, provide convenient services, offer natural surveillance opportunities and bring life to the street. Locally oriented, high intensity pedestrian uses such as cafés, delicatessens, dry cleaners or restaurants are greatly desired by the residents.

A variety of complementary uses in close proximity, such as housing and retail, would help ensure a lively street environment around the clock and provide needed services where people live.

Interim Uses

Until new development is planned and built on the Almaden Boulevard block, any interim uses should be active and compatible with the residential character of the Market-Almaden core neighborhood. Residential uses should be maintained on this block, and particularly along Almaden Avenue, until planned new development occurs.

Parking lots that are appropriately landscaped, operated, maintained and screened from the adjacent residential streets may be acceptable as interim uses. However, parking lots should not comprise more than one third of the Almaden Boulevard block between Balbach and Reed Streets.

An effort should be made to relocate early 20th century structures that will be replaced by the redevelopment of this block within the neighborhood, if possible.

Transition along Almaden Avenue

Residential uses of moderate height and density could create an appropriate buffer and transition between the residential core of the neighborhood and taller development on Almaden Boulevard.

Residential uses such as townhomes and/or live-work structures should be encouraged along Almaden Avenue. These residential uses should be oriented toward Almaden Avenue to help animate the street and to become part of the Market-Almaden neighborhood.

Open Space

Opportunities for passive recreational uses should be maximized by aggregating all open space areas required or provided by new development on the Almaden Boulevard block. New neighborhood open space generated on the Almaden Boulevard block should be carefully integrated with a proposed pedestrian corridor along Balbach Street. New development should be set back to allow for a pedestrian corridor and landscaping along Balbach Street, while preventing the formation of an enclosed “canyon” between tall structures on the south and north sides of the street.

Park development fees generated by new housing development on the Almaden Boulevard block should be applied to the creation of open space within the Market-Almaden neighborhood.

Design Guidelines*Building Design Guidelines*

Development along Almaden Avenue should follow the building design guidelines presented on page 29 to ensure that its architectural language respects the character of the neighborhood.

Skyline

Buildings should step down in height as they approach the southern end of Almaden Boulevard to emphasize the downtown skyline, respect the scale of the residential neighborhood and minimize shading.



Conceptual illustration of skyline along Almaden Boulevard

Street Wall

The tallest structures should be located away from Almaden Avenue and toward Almaden Boulevard. This could help reduce the bulk and impact of taller buildings on the residences along Almaden Avenue and also help continue the urban edge, or “street wall” along the Almaden Boulevard corridor.

Solar Access

The overall bulk and height of new buildings on Almaden Boulevard should be designed in such a way as to minimize the impact of shadows onto the neighborhood. Decisions regarding height and volume configuration should carefully consider the access to sunlight in the residential streets of the neighborhood, and particularly along Almaden Avenue.

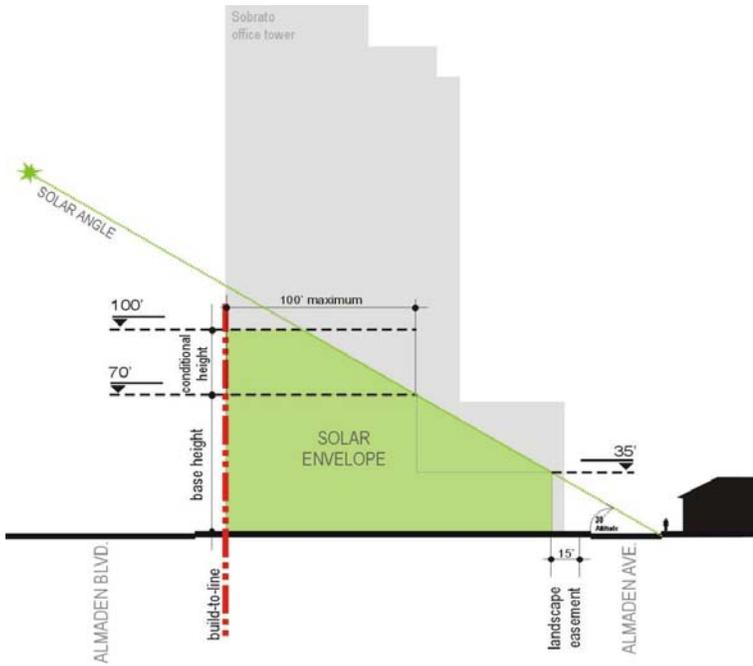
Base Heights

Development along Almaden Avenue should not exceed 35 feet, or 2 ½ stories in height, in order to respect the scale, sunlight access and visual privacy of the residential properties across the street.

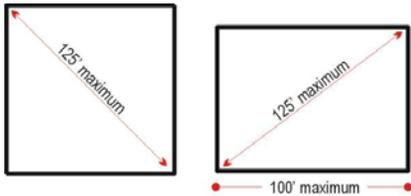
Basic heights along Almaden Boulevard should not exceed 70 feet (5 or 6 stories).

The sun angle gives an approximation of the height limits for assuring sunny streets. Solar angles were examined by a community group for the Almaden Boulevard block in order to ensure sunlight access along the sidewalk on the eastern edge of Almaden Avenue for eight

months –February through October—throughout the day until three hours before sunset. The residents felt that these height limits are particularly critical along the east edges of the Almaden Boulevard Block.



Building within the solar envelope above would ensure direct sunlight access for 8 months of the year (February through October) until 3 hours before sunset



The bulk controls above would apply to volumes above the 70' base height

Conditional Heights

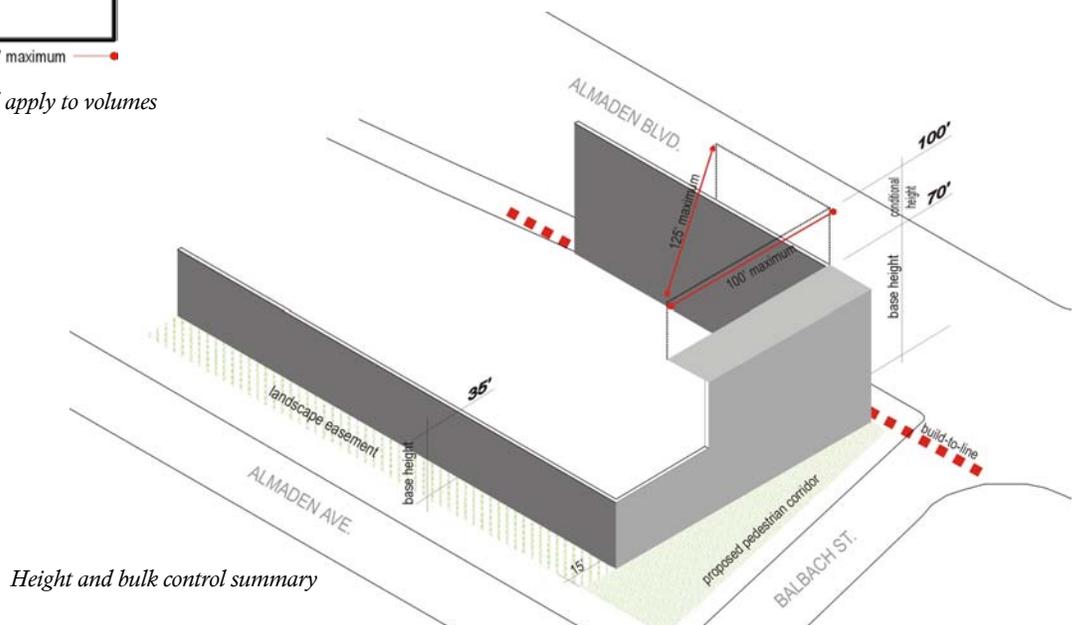
In addition, residents felt that some minor building incursions above the solar envelope –up to 100 feet– might be considered along Almaden Boulevard, provided that they carefully meet the bulk and location criteria specified below.

Location: Conditional heights should be placed only along the build-to-line on Almaden Boulevard, and away from Almaden Avenue and Balbach Street.

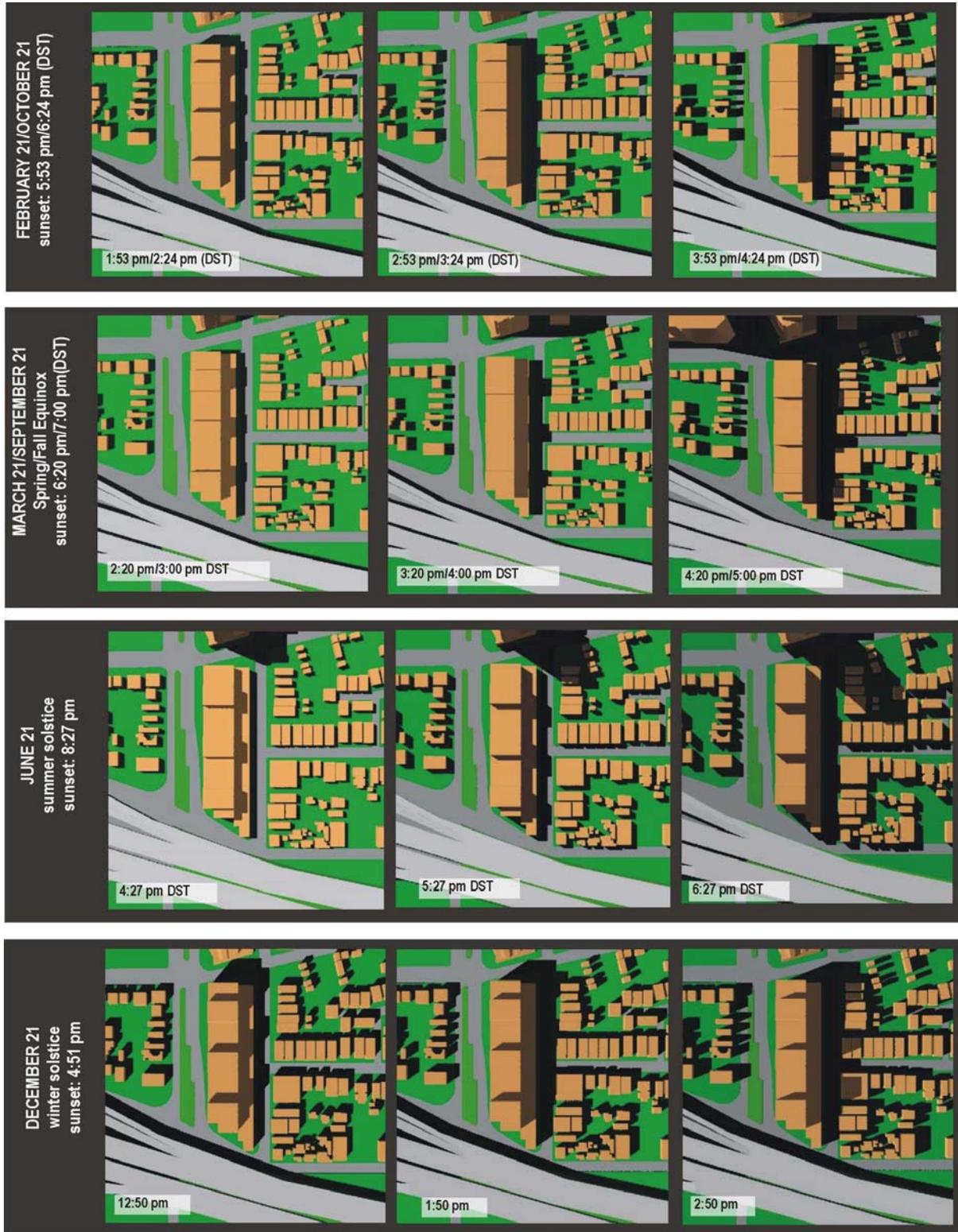
Bulk: Buildings along Almaden Boulevard that are taller than 70 feet should be widely spaced and very slender in their north/south dimension (i.e. the dimension parallel to Almaden Boulevard and Almaden Avenue, and facing the neighborhood).

Any volume projecting above the base height on Almaden Boulevard should be subject to bulk limitations restricting its maximum floor size. The length of any side of the volume should not exceed 100 feet, with a maximum plan diagonal of 125 feet (see illustrative diagram below).

The community believes it is most important to avoid the appearance of “walling-in” the neighborhood on its west side.



Height and bulk control summary



Illustrative shadow study of a massing model for the maximum building envelope that would meet the height and bulk criteria for the Almaden Boulevard block

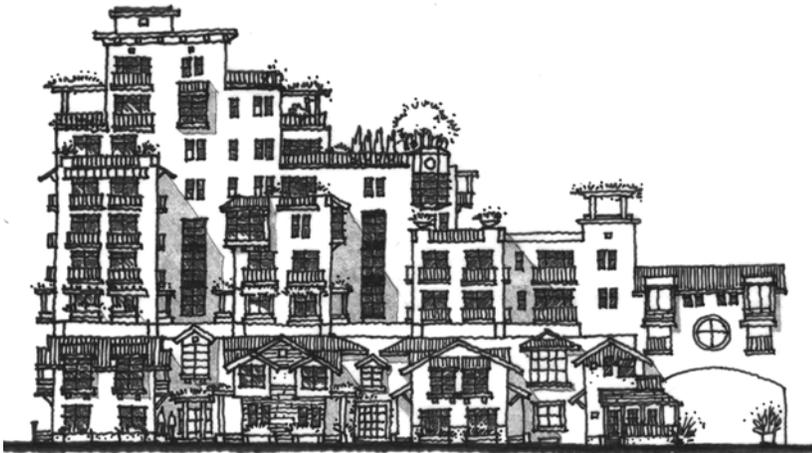
Stepping-down

Taller buildings should provide transitional scaled steps eastwards towards the residential core of the neighborhood along Almaden Avenue, for compatibility with the single-family residential scale of the Market-Almaden neighborhood.

The building volumes generated by the stepped down approach also provide opportunities to create rooftop terraces and upper level private and semi-private open spaces. Architectural features such as pergolas, gazebos, arbors and trellises on rooftop gardens can be incorporated into the overall building design.

Building Articulation

Building volumes should be articulated in order to minimize the mass and apparent bulk of large buildings. Articulation can be achieved through variation in heights, planes, materials, offsets and setbacks.



Building envelopes should be articulated with changes in plane, offsets, setbacks and architectural features such as balconies, bay windows, loggias, towers, etc.



*Wall with texture and landscaping
(Ernst & Young building on Almaden Boulevard)*

Access

Vehicular access associated with new development on this block, including construction and service traffic, should be confined to Almaden Boulevard and Balbach Street as much as possible to minimize the impact of through traffic in the neighborhood.

Vehicular entrances should be carefully designed, built, and operated to respect the pedestrian environment, especially along the proposed pedestrian corridor on Balbach Street and neighborhood streets.

Parking should be located either behind or tucked under the building. Garage entries should not be placed in prominent locations nor should they dominate the building's street frontage.

If there are main pedestrian entrances to housing units along Almaden Avenue, then limited vehicular entrances may also be appropriate on this neighborhood street.

Walls

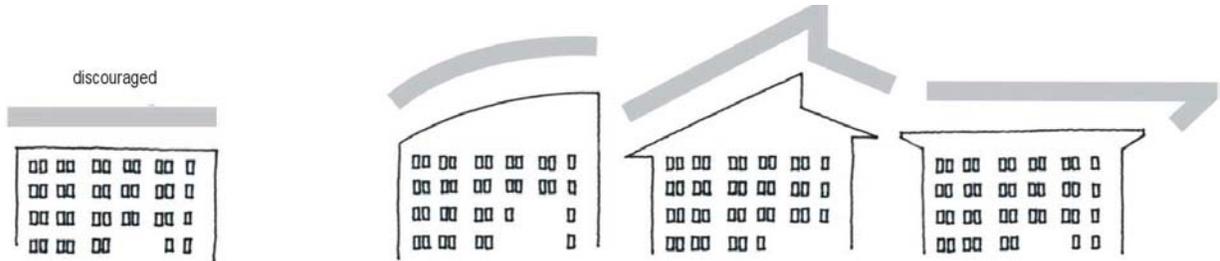
Long, blank walls should be strongly discouraged. However, if unavoidable, blank walls could be treated with decorative architectural features such as colonnades, pergolas, trellises and lattices. Climbing vegetation can also be used to cover blank walls.

Streetscape

A dense canopy of trees and landscaping should be used to create a soft edge along Almaden Avenue.

Roof Forms

Tops of taller buildings should provide a silhouette that is distinctive during the day and night and contribute to the identity of the city's skyline. Equipment on the roof of buildings should be enclosed and integrated into the building form.



Distinctive rooftops are encouraged

Market Street

Market-Almaden shares its Market Street edge with another planning area, the South First Area, or SoFA. A strategic plan for SoFA has been developed concurrently with the Market-Almaden Neighborhood Improvement Plan. A special effort has been made to coordinate the two planning processes and ensure open lines of communication between the two citizen advisory groups, the Market-Almaden NAC and the SoFA Committee.

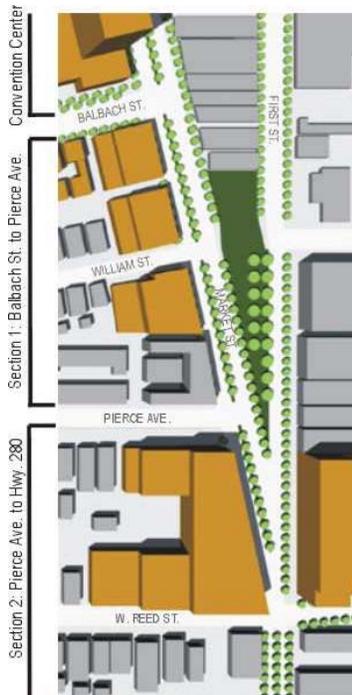
The overarching goal of Market-Almaden residents is to establish a unique and distinct place within San José along Market Street, where a variety of businesses, activities and people congregate in a vibrant and memorable pedestrian environment. Market Street can provide a unique opportunity to introduce neighborhood-oriented retail to expand the range of goods and services available in this district within walking distance of Market-Almaden and other downtown neighborhoods.

Changes along Market Street in the near future may be in the form of incremental infill development of underutilized parcels, as well as the gradual replacement of existing automobile-oriented uses with pedestrian and neighborhood-oriented uses. As new projects are developed along Market Street, careful consideration should be given to these design objectives:

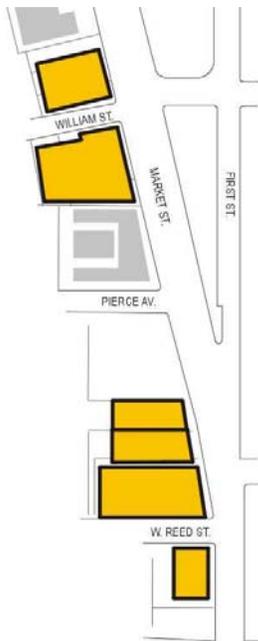
- Ensure that Market Street is lined with active, pedestrian-oriented uses –including neighborhood-oriented retail–, and that the buildings engage pedestrians at the street level.
- Ensure that the height and bulk of new buildings along Market Street are appropriately transitioned to the scale of adjacent neighborhoods and smaller scale buildings.
- Recognize and respect the historic character of buildings and places along Market Street.



*Locator map:
Market Street*



Conceptual illustration of potential development on Market Street



Historic structures of merit along the western edge of Market Street

DEVELOPMENT GUIDELINES FOR MARKET STREET

The community supports the following design guidelines and development standards for new development along Market Street:

Land Use Guidelines

Uses

Uses along Market Street should support the needs of the residential neighborhoods nearby, and also contribute positively to the arts and entertainment character of the district.

A vertical integration of a mix of land uses should be encouraged on Market Street, with emphasis on local retail, commercial and/or institutional uses on the lower levels and housing on upper levels. A variety of complementary uses in close proximity could help ensure a lively street environment around the clock. Mixed uses can help bring activity to the street and provide needed services where people live and work.

Uses that attract and generate pedestrian activity should be strongly encouraged on the ground level along Market Street. These may include restaurants, art galleries, delis, cafes, dry-cleaners, pastry shops, and bookstores among many other pedestrian generating uses.

Housing

Some quantity of new housing along and near Market Street can make a positive contribution to the area, not only to provide needed housing for San José residents and workers, but also as a means of attracting and supporting the commercial uses discussed above.

In addition, affordable housing and live-work opportunities to accommodate local artists should be encouraged along Market Street.

Live-work, or residential development with occupational space, can be particularly attractive to artists, since it supports studio space within the housing unit. The space is a residence that provides a workspace, typically in the form of an office or workshop. The predominant use of a live-work unit should be residential with commercial activity as a secondary use.

Flexible Space

Flexible space, or alternate use space, should be encouraged along Market Street, in order to appropriately respond to the natural market fluctuations in demand for any one of the preferred uses presented above.

Flexible, or alternate, space should be designed and built to accommodate more than one specific use over time, for instance, residential, live-work, retail, and/or office space. Care should be taken to provide these spaces with the features such as plumbing, trash facilities, generous all purpose ceiling heights, etc., that will ensure the practicality of uses evolving over time.

Historic Character

Six buildings along the southwestern segment of Market Street have been classified by the Historic Landmarks Commission as “structures

of merit”⁸, and are representative of an early 20th century automobile district in San José.

Given their ease of land assembly, relatively large areas and deep parcel size, and the strategic location, the community acknowledges that many of the properties containing these historic buildings could be redeveloped. When new development is proposed along Market Street, the decision making process should include an analysis of its impacts on buildings with historic value. A special effort should be made to reuse and/or integrate distinctive materials, features and architectural elements of buildings with historic significance.

A few of the properties containing historic buildings, such as the property located at the southwest corner of Reed and Market Streets, may have relatively little redevelopment potential. The preservation, rehabilitation, and adaptive reuse of these historic structures should be strongly encouraged.

Architectural Language

Infill development along South Market Street should respect and embody the historic and architectural assets of the SoFA district and also the residential building types found in Market-Almaden.

The design of the building façades facing the residential core should ensure compatibility with the neighborhood’s building types (see *Recommendations on Building Design Guidelines for the Residential Core*, page 29).

Design Guidelines

Active Pedestrian Environment

Buildings along Market Street should engage pedestrians at the street level by providing human-scale details such as windows, signage and awnings. Active ground-floor uses should face and open-up towards the street.

“Storefronts” with frequent entries and active uses could contribute positively to maintain the vitality and pedestrian continuity along Market Street. A large percentage of the storefronts should be transparent to promote indoor-outdoor interaction and to increase natural surveillance opportunities along the street (“eyes on the street”).

Height

Two segments of Market Street are distinct: Balbach Street to Pierce Avenue and Pierce to Highway 280. Building height variations should respond to the particular conditions of these sections along Market Street.

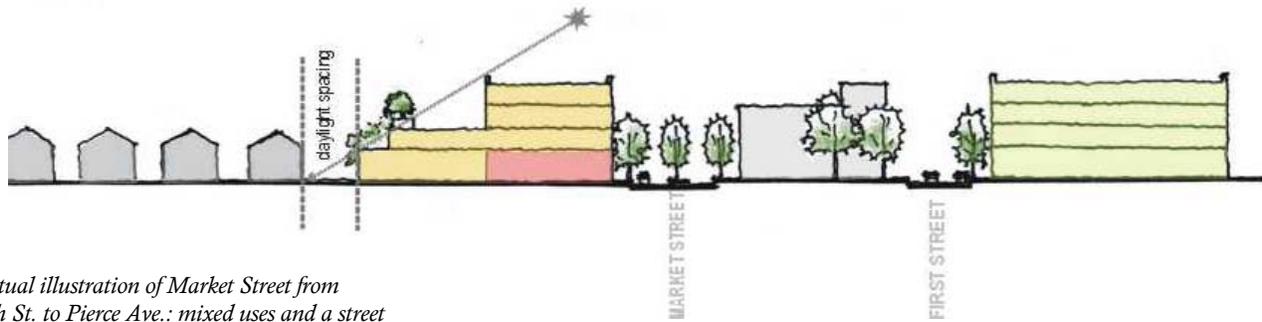
Balbach Street to Pierce Avenue

The segment of Market Street from Balbach Street to Pierce Avenue is envisioned as a low-rise area, with buildings of up to 60 feet high (4 or 5 stories), lining the street. This segment faces Parque de los Pobladores.



601-609 South Market: structure of merit

⁸ A “Structure of Merit” has been determined to be a resource through evaluation by the Historic Landmark’s Commission’s Historic Evaluation Criteria, and for which preservation should be a high priority.



Conceptual illustration of Market Street from Balbach St. to Pierce Ave.: mixed uses and a street wall stepping down towards the residential core of the neighborhood.

Pierce Avenue to Highway 280

Relatively taller, mid-rise buildings in the South Market area from Pierce Avenue to Highway 280 could help define and frame the gateway into the downtown from the south. The block between Pierce Avenue and Reed Street may represent the greatest potential for taller and higher intensity redevelopment along the feet (eight to twelve stories). west side of Market Street. With depths of 230 to 320 feet, it provides an opportunity for creating an optimal transition between the taller buildings at the Market Street frontage and the single-family homes on Pierce Avenue and Reed Street.

While ultimate heights may be less important than avoiding the appearance of “boxing-in” or “walling-in” the Market-Almaden neighborhood, maximum heights should be no more than 120 feet (eight to twelve stories).

Building Articulation

A high degree of volume articulation should be encouraged to provide variety and richness to the urban environment along Market Street. Articulation can be achieved through variation in heights, planes, materials, offsets and setbacks.

Street Wall

Taller buildings should be placed against the Market Street edge to define the street wall, and minimize the visual impact of the taller structures on the residential core of the neighborhood.

Transition

In order to create an appropriate transition between taller buildings fronting on Market Street and the low-rise core neighborhood, those taller structures should gradually step-down toward the neighborhood, and eventually match the height of adjacent residential buildings (up to 30 feet).

The building volumes generated by the stepped down approach can provide opportunities for useable terraces or rooftop gardens. Greenery can be integrated with the terraces to minimize the visual impact of the building mass and to create a visual filtering or screen effect.

Rear setback

For new buildings between Market Street and the residential properties in the core of the neighborhood, minimum setbacks should be provided to ensure sunlight filtration and privacy. A minimum 8-inch setback should be required for every foot of structure height. For instance, a minimum 10-foot setback should be required for a 15-foot

tall building –or building elements–, and a 20-foot setback for a 30-foot tall building. A minimum 10-foot setback from adjacent residential properties is required for any structure.

On the block between Pierce Avenue and Reed Streets, existing significant vegetation at the rear of the site should be left in place within that setback area, in the event the site is redeveloped.

Parking

Parking should be located either behind or tucked under the building. Garage entries should not be placed in prominent locations nor should they dominate the building’s street frontage.

Over time, most existing surface parking lots will probably be displaced by new, more urban forms of development. Since surface parking lots along major urban streets typically appear as “gaps” in the urban fabric, new parking should be provided either at the rear of a site or in a structured configuration. Vehicular entrances should be carefully designed, built and operated to respect the pedestrian environment along neighborhood streets.

Equipment and service areas should be enclosed and integrated with the built structures.

West Reed Street

West Reed Street is lined with low-income rental housing units. This affordable housing stock along West Reed Street, and throughout the neighborhood, should be preserved. New medium-low density housing units (up to 8 dwelling units per acre) should be built on vacant and underutilized parcels on this street as opportunities emerge. In addition, code enforcement should be carefully enforced on this street to ensure that these units are safe and well maintained.

Open Space

The Market-Almaden neighborhood is located within walking distance from some of the City of San José’s signature urban parks: Guadalupe River Park, Plaza de Cesar Chavez and Parque the los Pobladores (Gore Park).

Neighborhood residents, however, fail to make regular use of these parks either because they are frequently occupied for large citywide events or because of the difficulty to access them. In order to reach either Guadalupe River Park, Parque de los Pobladores or Plaza de Cesar Chavez, Market-Almaden residents have to negotiate four to six lanes of fast moving traffic. Hence, there is a dearth of useable open space for the Market-Almaden neighborhood to claim as its own.

The neighborhood children powerfully highlighted the deficiency in parks during special youth workshops that were designed to specifically discuss their own needs and wishes. Children reported that they use an unimproved vacant parcel on Reed Street and the asphalted parking lot on Balbach Street as playgrounds, as there are no other outdoor recreational opportunities within safe distance of their homes.

The community has recognized a critical need to provide new outdoor recreation and open space within the boundaries of the neighborhood and strengthen the pedestrian connections to existing

parks. Opportunities for outdoor recreation are vital for the health of the community, and should support not only the needs of children, but also residents of all ages.

The community urges that following actions be taken in order to fulfill the need for neighborhood oriented open space in Market-Almaden:

- Convert the Caltrans easement for Highway 280 along the Southern side of West Reed Street into a park to be used by residents of all ages.
- Enlarge and redesign Parque de los Pobladores (Gore Park) in order to accommodate not only art and entertainment, but also neighborhood- oriented events.
- Enhance pedestrian and bicycle connections to Guadalupe River Park.



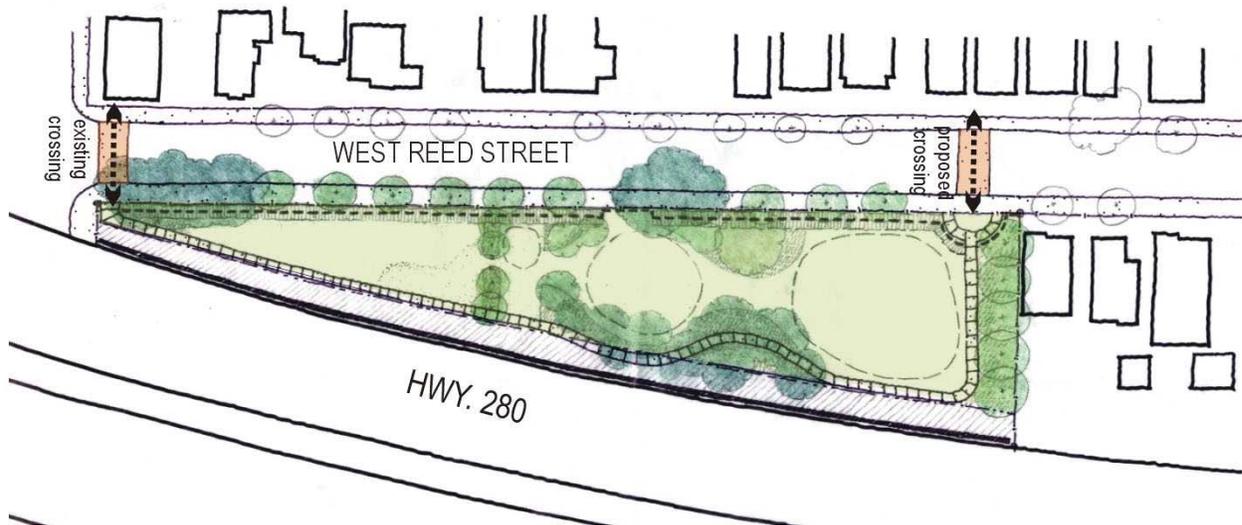
Existing and proposed neighborhood-serving open space

BALBACH PARK

A 0.7-acre triangular strip of land, left over after the construction of Highway 280 on the southern edge of the neighborhood, was identified as the preferred location for a park to serve a variety of recreational purposes in the neighborhood.

The community would like this park to be named in honor of John Balbach, an early settler of the area, to celebrate the German heritage of the neighborhood.

There are significant challenges to the conversion of this strip of land to an active park: highway 280 runs unprotected and approximately 20 feet high along the parcel's southern edge; residents report witnessing cars falling off the edge of the highway and into this vacant parcel; the southern edge dips steeply from the highway towards the middle of the site; and West Reed Street to the north of the parcel carries a significant volume of thru-traffic to and from Highway 280.



Conceptual sketch for a neighborhood park on West Reed Street

The following design concepts for this park are intended to provide passive and active recreational opportunities for residents of all ages, maximize the serviceable area of the site and ensure the safety of park users.

Protective Barrier along Highway 280

Given its location and surrounding vehicular traffic, safety measures such as a protective concrete or masonry barrier should be constructed along the park's edge on Highway 280. This barrier may not only help reduce the noise, but also may protect the neighborhood from vehicles veering into the park.

The community would prefer an adequate sound barrier in this location.

Crosswalks

The neighborhood expects most of the park users to originate from the core of the neighborhood, requiring most to cross West Reed to access the park. Crosswalks should be provided in front of the park entrances and at mid-block for pedestrian safety and ease of access. Auditory signals should be installed at signalized crosswalks to assist visually impaired users.

In order to slow down traffic along West Reed Street, it is recommended to raise these crosswalks up to the sidewalk level. Traffic calming measures at these locations are also recommended, as well as removing some parking spaces in order to enhance the

visibility for both approaching cars and pedestrians crossing the street.

Edges

A protective fence should be installed along the West Reed Street edge of the park as well, with the intention of defining the park's boundaries and entrances and preventing young users from running off into the street. Users should be directed to enter and exit the park only at designated entrances.

The fence should be open and transparent to allow full visibility of the park. Appropriate materials could be low rails, wrought iron, picket fences, low shrubs or thick groundcover. Chain-link fences are discouraged. A combination of landscape buffer and a low fence is preferred.

Uses

Amenities that support active and passive uses for a wide range of neighborhood residents should be provided. Such amenities could include: children's play area, a tot-lot, a picnic area, paths for strolling or jogging and a landscaped area maintained by the community, space permitting. Other support facilities such as benches and informal sitting areas, a drinking fountain, a bulletin board or kiosk and a storage shed could be considered as well.

Even though lighting may be necessary for safety, the nighttime use of the park should be restricted.

Entrances

The park entrances should be clearly defined and limited in order to discourage users living north of West Reed Street from crossing in the middle of the block. Two entrances are recommended, one at the Almaden Avenue end and the other toward the eastern-most end of the park.

An arbor, trellis or a gate can be used to define the park's entrances. Other suggestions include the use of natural elements such as large stones or shrubs.

Pathways

Straight paths leading through the entrances are discouraged, since they may encourage children to run directly onto the street. Paths should instead turn, twist or split at the entrances.

Landscape

Encourage a landscape design concept that fosters the ability of residents to provide informal surveillance of the park to help deter crime. Both passersby and police officers should have clear, uninterrupted visibility of the whole park. Plant materials and any built structures such as a storage shed should not create blind spots or block views.

Landscape the sound/protective wall along Highway 280 and the slope leading up the wall to both deter erosion and beautify this edge of the park. Shrubs and trees can be used to cover parts of the wall and slope. Parts of the slope should be left accessible with low groundcover in order to allow children a place for free play.

Buffer

A landscape buffer should be provided next to adjacent residential property to help mitigate the impact of the park use. The buffer should filter noise, dust, and block visibility into the residential property. For instance, either a wooden fence lined with hedges, or a dense row of evergreen canopy trees can be installed as a landscape buffer.

PARQUE DE LOS POBLADORES

Both the Market-Almaden and the SoFA community planning groups have clearly identified the need to make Parque de los Pobladores more welcoming to the wide range of users in the area, including the arts and entertainment and the residential communities around it. This would entail reconfiguring the park as well as expanding it to the east by taking over one row of parking along First Street, and to the north across William Street. The central area of the park should be reconfigured to accommodate art exhibitions, entertainment and community events.

In addition, pedestrian access to the park across both Market and First Streets should be significantly enhanced in order to attract residents from adjacent neighborhoods to use the park. Pedestrian crossing safety enhancements include the installation of a median or refuge island and clearly marked crosswalks at key intersections (see *Pedestrian and Bike Connections* on page 57 for details).

As an alternative to naming the park on Reed Street, the Market-Almaden community would like to explore the possibility of renaming Parque de Los Pobladores after John Balbach to reflect the German heritage of the area.

GUADALUPE RIVER PARK

The proximity to Guadalupe River Park is a great asset to the Market-Almaden neighborhood, not only because of the recreational and cultural opportunities it offers, but also because it serves as an access point to a pedestrian and bike trail system that may eventually encircle the Bay Area. The trail system is projected to eventually connect the Los Gatos Creek, Coyote Creek, and the Guadalupe River trails, linking them with the Ridge Line Trail circulating the San Francisco Bay. Connections to the Los Gatos Creek trail are scheduled for completion in the spring of 2005⁹.

In order to facilitate and promote access to the Guadalupe River Park from Market-Almaden and other neighborhoods in the downtown, it would be important to significantly improve east-west pedestrian and bike connections along Almaden Boulevard, particularly the Balbach Street intersection (see *Pedestrian and Bike Connections*, page 57, for details).

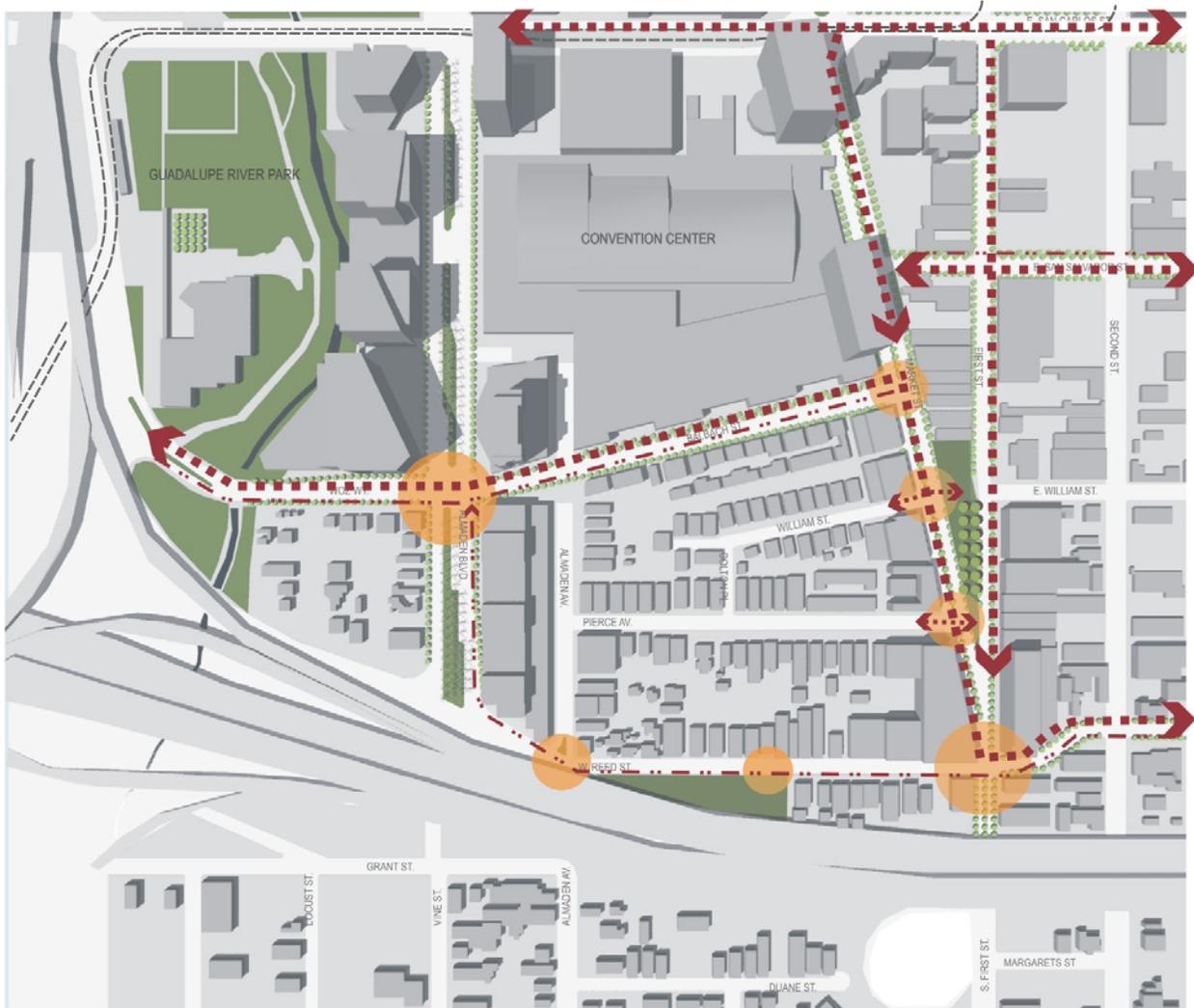


Conceptual illustration of Parque de los Pobladores extended to the north

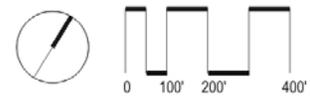
⁹ Redevelopment Agency of the City of San José. *Guadalupe River Park Master Plan*. 2001

Street Network

The street network is an important factor in determining the character of a neighborhood. Streets and sidewalks comprise almost 90 percent of the total public open space in a typical neighborhood, and provide the primary means of pedestrian and bicycle movement, and a stage for community interaction.



-  Downtown pedestrian corridors
-  Local pedestrian connections
-  Bike connections
-  Pedestrian Intersections



Pedestrian and bicycle connections

The character, vitality and comfort of the pedestrian environment in Market-Almaden play a crucial role in the health of this community. This section presents a series of recommendations developed by the neighborhood for the street network in Market-Almaden, which intend to:

- Enhance pedestrian and bike safety and comfort throughout the neighborhood.
- Enhance and enhance pedestrian and bike connections within the neighborhood and to nearby downtown destinations.
- Improve the character of neighborhood streets.
- Explore traffic calming measures designed to reduce traffic speeds, increase safety and enhance the quality of the walking environment throughout the neighborhood.

PEDESTRIAN AND BIKE CONNECTIONS

Pedestrian and Bike Safety Enhancements

In order to facilitate and promote pedestrian and bicycle circulation through the neighborhood, the following enhancements are recommended for specific locations throughout the neighborhood:

Balbach Street

Balbach Street has been identified as a pedestrian corridor to continue an east-west connection originating in Coyote Creek and terminating in Guadalupe River Park. The pedestrian corridor begins on Reed Street, turns northwards along Market Street, continues westwards on Balbach Street and ends at the entrance to Guadalupe River Park on Woz Way.

The Balbach Street pedestrian corridor should be defined with a wide sidewalk and a park-like landscaped buffer with pedestrian lighting along the southern edge of the Convention Center expansion (see *Landscape Buffer Guidelines* for the Convention Center Expansion, page 37 for details).

The pedestrian crossing at the intersection of Almaden Boulevard and Balbach Street needs to be made much more visible and easier to cross. Pedestrians are presently exposed to six lanes of uninterrupted traffic; although there is a median island along Almaden Boulevard, the island ends before reaching the crosswalk. It is recommended to clearly mark a wider crosswalk, extend the median island, and/or install pedestrian count-down lights.

Balbach Street should also be designated as a bicycle lane, leading to the Guadalupe River Park. This segment could connect to bicycle lanes on Reed Street, Woz Way and Almaden Boulevard. However, the current width of Balbach Street (36 feet) would not accommodate full bicycle lanes without removing parking at least on one side of the street. When the Convention Center Expansion is built, the widening of Balbach Street in order to accommodate bicycle lanes and parking on both sides of the street should be explored.

A bicycle loop detector, or other means to facilitate safe crossing for bicyclists, should be installed and clearly marked at the intersection of Balbach Street and Almaden Boulevard.



Example of an enhanced crosswalk



Conceptual illustration of pedestrian improvements along Market Street

West Reed Street

West Reed Street is designated as a “Major Collector Street” in the City’s General Plan. It carries a significant volume of through traffic as it connects to an access ramp for Highway 280 and serves as an alternate entrance from Almaden Avenue to the downtown¹⁰.

West Reed is lined with a large number of multi-family, rental housing units, where the majority of the children in the Market-Almaden neighborhood live. In addition, the community has identified a vacant parcel on the southern edge of West Reed Street along Highway 280 as the location for a future neighborhood park, with activities for children and adults alike.

Given the combination of large traffic volumes and high levels of activity along West Reed Street, it is crucial to ensure that the pedestrian environment and the ability to cross the street are significantly enhanced.

A mid-block pedestrian crossing in front of the eastern-most entrance to the proposed neighborhood park should be installed. This mid-block crossing should also serve as a traffic-calming device by installing devices such as a textured crosswalk and signage to alert drivers of pedestrians crossing the street (See *Open Space, West Reed Park* on page 53 for details).

Other means to reduce traffic speed and enhance pedestrian safety on West Reed should be explored, including the Neighborhood Automated Speed Compliance Program (NASCO). According to current traffic speeds and volumes, West Reed Street qualifies for the NASCO program. Residents may initiate the implementation process by submitting a request to install a photo-radar van.



Conceptual illustration of Reed Street realignment

Market Street

Market Street is a state highway (State Highway 82), carrying large traffic volumes both into and out of the downtown. The speed and volume of traffic, along with the width of Market Street impede easy pedestrian movement from Market-Almaden towards the SoFA district and neighborhoods located to the east.

A series of intersection and crosswalk improvements are proposed in order to make pedestrian connections to the eastern side of Market Street easy and safe:

- Install a median island and visibly marked crosswalks on Market Street at the Balbach Street, William Street, and Pierce Avenue intersections. Left turn lanes onto neighborhood streets should be provided where appropriate.
- Realign the intersection of West Reed and Market Street to facilitate pedestrian crossing. Install a median island and visibly marked crosswalks.
- Add “do not block intersection” signs on Market Street at the William Street and Pierce Avenue intersections.

¹⁰A traffic count conducted by the Department of Transportation in June 2002 reported 5,550 vehicles in a 24-hour period.

Neighborhood-wide Traffic Calming

In addition to the specific recommendations for pedestrian and bike improvements, an area-wide traffic calming study should be conducted that aims towards protecting Market-Almaden from the impact of heavy and fast traffic through the neighborhood.

A series of traffic-calming measures are in the process of implementation to address community concerns about the traffic impacts of the office tower being built by the Sobrato Development Companies on the northwestern corner of the neighborhood. These traffic calming measures include closing the northern end of Almaden Avenue to through traffic, re-opening the southern end of Almaden Avenue for incoming and outgoing traffic, installing bulb-outs and a stop sign on Pierce Avenue at Colton Place, and a traffic light at the intersection of Balbach and Market Streets.

These traffic-calming devices will affect the vehicular circulation patterns in and around the neighborhood, in ways that are difficult to predict. It is recommended that a traffic calming study be conducted in 18 to 24 months, once new traffic patterns have been established. The study should examine how new traffic patterns affect the neighborhood. Larger traffic patterns through this section of downtown San José should be taken into account, including nearby districts such as SoFA, University Neighborhoods, Almaden Boulevard and Washington Neighborhood. Residents are particularly interested in exploring ways to protect the interior residential streets from heavy through traffic, while facilitating access from surrounding streets such as Market Street.

STREETSCAPES

For the past nineteen years, the Market-Almaden community has made it a priority to improve the streetscape and pedestrian environment of the neighborhood. The Market-Almaden Neighborhood Association (MANA) worked with the City to install antique lights and plant trees through most of the neighborhood's streets. MANA also worked to implement a residential parking permit program, which has been generally successful.

The following are some strategies and recommendations to continue and complement the many streetscape improvements initiated by MANA.

Antique Lighting

Antique-style lighting should be expanded along West Reed Street and Almaden Avenue, and maintained throughout the neighborhood.

Maintenance of existing antique lights should be increased. Many have been damaged by commercial trucks that strike them when illegally traversing neighborhood streets. If any existing antique lights are removed, they should be replaced with the same type of fixture.

Market Street Streetscape

The pedestrian environment along Market Street should be improved, strengthening this segment of the pedestrian corridor linking Reed Street and Balbach Street. A dense canopy of trees –continuing the pattern of sycamore planting already established–, pedestrian level lighting and a continuous line of active uses on the ground level



Antique light fixture

should be provided to help create a walkable, pedestrian-friendly environment.

Storefronts along Market Street provide an opportunity to increase the street's liveliness and walkability. A special effort should be made to ensure the viability of the local businesses which contribute positively to the arts and entertainment character of SoFA while supporting the needs of the residential neighborhoods nearby.

The Redevelopment Agency of the City of San José offers a variety of business assistance loans that can be used to revitalize contributing businesses. These programs include the Unreinforced Masonry grants, Commercial Building loans and the Façade Improvement Grant program. Local merchants should be encouraged to take advantage of these opportunities to improve their stores.

Street Sweeping Signage

Street sweeping throughout Market-Almaden is not always as effective as it could be, as vehicles are regularly parked on neighborhood streets during the days and times when the sweeping truck is scheduled to cover the area.

Street sweeping signage along neighborhood streets, posting the dates and times when parking is not allowed, would provide a means to address this problem.

In order to establish a street sweeping signage program within Market-Almaden, the community must determine whether a majority of its residents are interested in enforcing street sweeping parking restrictions in the neighborhood. The community can then approach the Department of Transportation to begin the process of installing street sweeping signage.

Sidewalk Repairs and Widening

Some cracked, broken and uneven sidewalks throughout the neighborhood are in need of repair. In the City of San José, property owners are responsible for maintaining the sidewalk, park strip area and curb and gutters adjacent to their property. Damaged sidewalks may be inspected free of charge in response to requests from residents. Property owners are then notified of the repairs that need to be completed.

The City of San José offers a grant program to reimburse eligible property owners for the cost of sidewalk repairs. Owner-occupied, single family residential units are eligible for this grant. This program should be publicized throughout the neighborhood to encourage property owners to apply.

The northwestern intersection of William and Market Streets has very narrow sidewalks with a less than two feet clearance. As new private development occurs on properties such as the S&G Carpet property on William Street, opportunities for widening the sidewalk will be available.

Street Trees

MANA also lead efforts to replace dead street trees throughout the neighborhood with sturdier species. Some trees on West Reed Street have died from lack of watering and need to be replaced.

Local volunteer resources such as Our City Forest may assist by donating the trees and planting expertise. It is important, however, to ensure that the young trees are watered regularly until they become self-sufficient.

Underground Utilities

Overhead utilities in Market-Almaden have already been funded and scheduled for undergrounding by the year 2004. It is important, however, to ensure that undergrounding these utilities continues to be priority for the City, as this action will significantly improve the streetscape of the neighborhood and will also allow street trees to grow larger canopies.

Permit Parking

MANA was instrumental in implementing a residential permit parking program on neighborhood streets. The permit parking program has been by-and-large successful. However, residents report they have problems with overflow parking during large citywide events, such as seasonal festivals at Plaza de Cesar Chavez or Discovery Meadows.

It is necessary to enhance enforcement of the residential permit parking program in Market-Almaden, particularly during large city events.

In addition, permanent signage should be added at the entrances to the neighborhood to let visitors know that this is a permit parking area.

Neighborhood Traffic

Enforcement of commercial traffic and speed restrictions through the neighborhood needs to be enhanced. Existing regulations restricting truck traffic are frequently disregarded by local commercial trucks that traverse and block local streets. In addition, speeding vehicles frequently cut through the neighborhood. Residents often report commercial trucks double-parking on William Street, therefore blocking the vehicular movement along this narrow street.

Traffic enforcement should concentrate on specific streets where speeding and commercial trucks have been identified as a problem. These streets include: Pierce Avenue, William Street, Balbach Street and West Reed Street.

Street Maintenance

The community expressed their preference for a uniform treatment of all the street surfaces in the neighborhood. The smoother slurry finish is preferred over chip-seal.

In addition, the schedule for various types of street paving, maintenance, and public works projects throughout the neighborhood should be coordinated to avoid damaging freshly paved streets.

Strategic Action Plan

This chapter describes the actions needed to implement the recommendations for neighborhood improvement. It is organized into two sections:

“Top Ten” Priority Actions: The ten most important recommendations were identified with input from the community at large. Information on specific steps to expedite implementation of the “Top Ten” priorities is included in this section.

Action Matrix: The *Action Matrix* presents a comprehensive list of the policies and physical improvements recommended in the neighborhood improvement plan.

“Top Ten” Priority Actions

The community identified a list of ten specific strategies that would most contribute towards positive change in the neighborhood. They were selected from 27 specific actions for the Market-Almaden neighborhood, which are presented in the *Action Matrix* (see page 73).

Each “Top Ten” priority action is described in detail and includes information on approaches to initiating implementation. The “Top Ten” list is arranged in order of the level of community support, beginning with the highest priority action. The list, however, does not necessarily imply that each priority action will be completed in sequence, since other factors such as funding availability, access to resources and community support within the neighborhood will also determine the pace of implementation.

The following ten priorities reflect the community’s weighing of current neighborhood issues, their goals and their long-term vision for the neighborhood, and their assessment of the feasibility of implementing the recommended actions.

1. Develop a neighborhood park on the Caltrans easement between Highway 280 and West Reed Street.
2. Ensure that potential new development on the block bounded by Almaden Boulevard, Balbach Street, Almaden Avenue and West Reed Street follows the design recommendations of the community set forth in this plan, addressing neighborhood concerns.
3. Acquire and rehabilitate 75 West William Street.
4. Explore the establishment of the Market-Almaden area as a Conservation Area.
5. Ensure that the project design for the edge of the Convention Center expansion along Balbach Street follows the design recommendations of the community set forth in this Neighborhood Improvement Plan, addressing neighborhood concerns.
6. Design and install pedestrian and bicycle safety improvements on Balbach Street and Almaden Boulevard, and establish Balbach Street as a pedestrian corridor.
7. Install pedestrian safety improvements on Market Street at the Balbach Street, William Street and Pierce Avenue intersections.
8. Initiate a neighborhood-wide traffic calming study in 12 to 18 months, once traffic patterns resulting from current traffic mitigation measures have been established.

9. Facilitate the improvement of the pedestrian environment along Market Street with enhanced landscaping and storefronts.
10. Ensure that undergrounding utilities throughout the neighborhood remains a priority for the City.

Each action listed in the “Top Ten” as well as in the overall action plan, outlines the following:

- The action to be taken or improvement to be made. Some action items require a series of specific steps to complete the improvement.
- The anticipated time frames for completing individual action items, which may be either: *Immediate* (0-18 months); *Short Term* (0 to 3 years); *Medium Term* (3 to 6 years); *Long Term* (6 years or more); or *Ongoing*.
- The City Department or Division that is expected to take the lead on implementing a given action.
- A preliminary cost estimate that has been provided by the City Department or Division Project Lead to complete a given action or improvement. Costs are not identified for cases that first require a preliminary study to determine the scope of work.

1. Develop a neighborhood park on the Caltrans easement between West Reed Street and Highway 280

Residents of all ages expressed the need for a park within the boundaries of the Market-Almaden neighborhood. A 0.7-acre triangular highway easement on the southern edge of the neighborhood was identified as the preferred location for a park to support a variety of active and passive uses. The community voted unanimously to make the neighborhood park its highest priority for implementation.

The preferred park site presents significant safety challenges due to surrounding high traffic volumes that must be addressed prior to opening the park for public use. The following steps are required to convert this site into a park and provide for safe public access:

Time Frame: Short to Medium Term

Project Manager: San Jose Redevelopment Agency

Total Estimated Project Cost: \$ 1, 125, 000

Action Steps:

- A. Conduct a field inspection of the site to determine viability.

Project Lead: Department of Public Works

- B. Negotiate with Caltrans to obtain a use agreement for the easement.

Project Lead: San Jose Redevelopment Agency; Department of Parks Recreation and Neighborhood Services, Parks Division

Additional Responsible Parties: Caltrans

- C. Secure funding for and install a safety barrier along Highway 280.

Project Lead: San Jose Redevelopment Agency

Additional Responsible Parties: Caltrans; Department of Transportation

- D. Develop a Master Plan for the neighborhood park, with community input.

Project Lead: Department of Parks Recreation and Neighborhood Services, Parks Division

Additional Responsible Parties: Community

- E. Secure funding for the development of the park.

Project Lead: San Jose Redevelopment Agency

Additional Responsible Parties: Community

- F. Install enhanced pedestrian crosswalks directly across from the park entrances in order to improve safety for park users, while providing traffic calming measures along West Reed Street.

Project Lead: Department of Transportation

Additional Responsible Parties: Department of Public Works

- G. Design and construct the neighborhood park.

Project Lead: San Jose Redevelopment Agency;

Department of Parks Recreation and Neighborhood Services, Parks Division

2. Ensure that potential new development on the block bounded by Almaden Boulevard, Balbach Street, Almaden Avenue and West Reed Street follows the design recommendations set forth in this plan, addressing neighborhood concerns

The Almaden Boulevard block is presently occupied by a mix of low intensity residential and commercial uses, as well as vacant land utilized for surface parking. Any potential new development on the Almaden Boulevard block will create an opportunity to determine the character of the western edge of the Market-Almaden neighborhood.

New development on the Almaden Boulevard block should follow the design goals and guidelines presented in this plan to the greatest extent possible. By responding sensitively to the character of Almaden Boulevard as well as the specific conditions of the residential core of Market-Almaden, new development can enhance the urban environment, not only of the neighborhood, but also of the San José community at large.

Action Steps:

- A. Ensure that potential new development on the block bounded by Almaden Boulevard, Balbach Street, Almaden Avenue and West Reed Street follows the design recommendations set forth in this plan, addressing neighborhood concerns

Time Frame: Immediate to Ongoing

Estimated Costs: Staff time

Project Lead: Redevelopment Agency; Planning, Building and Code Enforcement, Planning Division

- B. Consider developing a regulatory procedure, such as a special overlay or zoning district, to set general parameters for land uses and intensity of development for the Almaden Boulevard block in accordance to the design recommendations presented in the Neighborhood Improvement Plan.

Time Frame: Immediate

Estimated Costs: Staff time

Project Lead: Redevelopment Agency; Planning, Building and Code Enforcement, Planning Division

3. Acquire and rehabilitate 75 West William Street

Improving property maintenance and increasing home ownership in the neighborhood are important goals for the Market-Almaden community.

The community has earmarked a vacant Victorian residential structure located on 75 West William Street for rehabilitation. The building has been vacant for more than two years, and the City has placed a lien in excess of \$ 100,000 against the property after repeated code violations. 75 West William has also been identified as a historic resource in the *Historic Resources Survey for Downtown San José* (2000).

It is therefore important to actively explore avenues to acquire and rehabilitate it. Neighborhood Housing Services Silicon Valley, a non-profit housing organization based in San José is exploring the possibility of applying its *Acquisition, Rehabilitation and Resale* program (ARR) to make this property the home of a moderate-income family.

Time Frame: Immediate to Short Term

Action Steps:

- A. Actively pursue the acquisition of 75 West William Street.

Estimated Costs: \$ 300,000

Project Lead: Housing Department

Additional Responsible Parties: City Attorney's Office; Neighborhood Housing Services Silicon Valley (NHSSV)

- B. The City should either fully or partially rehabilitate the property following city standards for residential uses while also respecting the building's historic character.

Estimated Costs: \$ 200,000

Project Lead: Housing Department

Additional Responsible Parties: Neighborhood Housing Services Silicon Valley (NHSSV); Planning, Building and Code Enforcement

- C. Explore funding opportunities to assist a potential home-buyer with the purchase of the fully restored property, or with the purchase and completion of its restoration.

Estimated Costs: To be determined

Project Lead: Housing Department

Additional Responsible Parties: Neighborhood Housing Services Silicon Valley (NHSSV); Redevelopment Agency

- D. Explore techniques, such as provisional funding assistance, to encourage owner occupancy of the property for at least some minimum period of time.

Estimated Costs: To be determined

Project Lead: Housing Department

Additional Responsible Parties: Neighborhood Housing Services Silicon Valley (NHSSV); San Jose Redevelopment Agency

- E. The Planning Department should initiate a General Plan amendment from the property’s present Downtown Core designation to Medium-Low Density Residential.

Estimated Costs: Staff time

Project Lead: Planning, Building and Code Enforcement

4. Explore the establishment of the Market-Almaden area as a Conservation Area

An important priority for the Market-Almaden community is to preserve its historic heritage and the unique architectural character of its late 19th and early 20th century buildings. This goal can be supported by designating of Market-Almaden as a Conservation Area. Conservation Areas are districts with a distinct character that include structures with significant architectural and historic merit and where preservation, protection or conservation are goals. Conservation Areas warrant special planning attention due to their special character, even though they do not quite merit Historic District designation. A Conservation Area is usually designated as a neighborhood overlay, and it provides less stringent design restrictions than a Historic District. The focus of a Conservation Area is on maintaining the basic character of the area.

Homeowners in Conservation Areas in San José would need to obtain a Single Family House Permit for the remodeling of a single-family home. These permits currently do not go to the Historic Landmarks Commission, except in rare cases where demolition or radical alteration is proposed and attention by the Landmarks Commission is warranted.

Currently, the City of San José does not have a procedure for establishing Conservation Area, and is presently developing appropriate criteria and procedures. The City is studying the feasibility of expanding the “Areas of Historic Sensitivity” in the San José General Plan to include Conservation Areas. A group of residents can, in the meantime, proactively initiate the process of nominating Market-Almaden as a Conservation Area.

The application process may include a historic resource survey of properties within the proposed conservation area.

Time Frame: Immediate to Short Term

Action Steps:

- A. Conduct a study, with the assistance of a historic preservation consultant, to complete previous surveys of historic structures within the neighborhood.

Estimated Costs: Historic Resources Survey: \$ 5,000

Project Lead: Planning, Building and Code Enforcement; Planning Services Division

- B. Based on the results of the historic resources study, determine the specific sections of the neighborhood that could be nominated as a Conservation Area.

Estimated Costs: Staff time

Project Lead: Planning, Building and Code Enforcement; Planning Services Division; Community

- C. Consider changes to the General Plan to designate Market-Almaden as a Conservation Area. This process can be initiated by community members, with assistance from City Planning staff.

Estimated Costs: Staff time

Project Lead: Planning, Building and Code Enforcement; Planning Services Division

Additional Responsible Parties: Community

5. Ensure that project design for the edge of the Convention Center expansion along Balbach Street follows the design recommendations set forth in the Neighborhood Improvement Plan, addressing neighborhood concerns

The proposed expansion of the McEnery Convention Center is a high priority for the City of San José. A Convention Center Expansion presents an opportunity to clearly define the northern edge of the Market-Almaden neighborhood and give form to a pedestrian corridor along Balbach Street.

The community has clearly expressed its desire to ensure that the southern edge of any Convention Center Expansion respects the character of the residential core of the neighborhood. Therefore, a set of design guidelines for the Balbach Street edge of the Convention Center Expansion are presented in this Neighborhood Improvement Plan. Project design should incorporate the design goals and guidelines for the building edge, a landscape buffer and a pedestrian corridor along Balbach Street to the greatest extent possible.

Lead City agencies and the design consultants for the Convention Center Expansion should make a concerted effort to include the Market-Almaden community as well as other community stakeholders in the planning and design phases of the project.

Time Frame: Short to Medium Term

Estimated Costs: Staff time

Project Lead: Conventions, Arts and Entertainment; Redevelopment Agency

Additional Responsible Parties: Department of Transportation

6. Design and install pedestrian and bike safety improvements on Balbach Street and Almaden Boulevard, and establish Balbach Street as a pedestrian corridor

In order to facilitate and promote pedestrian and bicycle circulation through the neighborhood, as well as enhance the connections within the neighborhood and to nearby destinations, a series of improvements should be implemented on the northern edge of the neighborhood. These improvements include enhancing the crosswalks on Almaden Boulevard, installing a bicycle detection device on Balbach Street, establishing Balbach Street as a bicycle lane leading to the Guadalupe River Park, and establishing Balbach Street as a pedestrian corridor. A conceptual design for the corridor should be developed in coordination with the project design team for the proposed Convention Center expansion, the University Neighborhoods' Reed Street Pedestrian Corridor committee and the SoFA planning team.

The pedestrian corridor is envisioned as a wide landscape strip along the southern edge of the Convention Center expansion with pedestrian amenities such as a double canopy of trees, benches and public art along a wide sidewalk, pedestrian count-down lights, an extension of the median on Almaden Boulevard, and visibly marked wide crosswalks.

Time Frame: Short Term

Total Estimated Project Cost: 1, 400,000

Action Steps:

- A. Study the feasibility, design and secure funding to install pedestrian enhancements at the intersection of Almaden Boulevard and Balbach Street as appropriate.

Project Lead: Department of Transportation

- B. Design and construct pedestrian crosswalk enhancements on Almaden Boulevard and Balbach Street.

Project Lead: Department of Transportation

- C. Designate Balbach Street as a bicycle lane from Market Street across Almaden Boulevard and into Woz Way.

Project Lead: Department of Transportation

- D. Install devices to facilitate bicycle crossing at the Almaden Boulevard and Balbach Street intersection. These devices may include a bicycle detection device or a bicycle signal.

Project Lead: Department of Transportation; Public Works

- E. Develop a conceptual design for the Balbach Street pedestrian corridor with extensive community input.

Project Lead: Department of Transportation

- F. Design and construct pedestrian corridor improvements along Balbach Street, such as a wide landscaping strip, a double canopy of trees, benches and public art along a wide sidewalk.

Project Lead: Department of Transportation; Public Works

7. Install pedestrian safety improvements (refuge island and enhanced crosswalks) on Market Street at the Balbach Street, William Street, and Pierce Avenue intersections

Market Street is a State Highway (82). The speed and volume of traffic and the width of Market Street impede easy pedestrian movement from Market-Almaden towards Parque de los Pobladores, the SoFA district and neighborhoods located to the east.

A series of intersection and crosswalk improvements are proposed to facilitate safe pedestrian connections to the eastern side of Market Street. The improvements include installing a median island and visibly marked crosswalks on Market Street at the Balbach Street, William Street, and Pierce Avenue intersections. Funding for the proposed corridor may be integrated with the implementation for the SoFA Strategic Plan.

Time Frame: Short Term

Action Steps:

- A. Explore feasibility of pedestrian safety improvements in collaboration with Caltrans.

Estimated Costs: Staff time

Project Lead: Department of Transportation, Caltrans

- B. Design and install pedestrian enhancements along Market Street with extensive community input and in coordination with the SoFA committee.

Estimated Costs: To be determined

Project Lead: Department of Transportation, Caltrans

Additional Responsible Parties: Redevelopment Agency

8. Initiate a neighborhood-wide traffic calming study in the next 18-24 months, once traffic patterns resulting from current traffic mitigation measures have been established

A series of traffic calming measures have either been installed or are in the process of being completed throughout the neighborhood. These include street closures, bulb-outs, intersection re-designs and signage. These traffic calming measures are the result of dedicated and well-organized neighborhood efforts of residents seeking to address traffic issues. Traffic patterns, however, will continue to change throughout the neighborhood as new development takes place and the new mitigation measures begin to take effect.

The neighborhood is committed to continuing to monitor these traffic patterns ensuring that inner residential streets remain protected from heavy and cut-through traffic and access into the neighborhood via downtown streets such as Market is enhanced.

Even though there are clear signs restricting commercial trucks over one ton and speeding through the neighborhood, residents report that these regulations are regularly violated. It is necessary to improve enforcement of existing regulations to achieve greater compliance. Emphasis should be placed on means to control speeding along streets with the heaviest traffic volumes, West Reed Street and Balbach Street in particular.

The Traffic Enforcement Unit should focus its enforcement efforts on specific streets where speeding and commercial trucking have been identified by the residents as a problem. These streets include: Pierce Avenue, William Street, Balbach Street and West Reed Street.

Action Steps:

- A. Improve enforcement of commercial traffic regulations and speeding through existing police programs.

Time Frame: Immediate and Ongoing

Estimated Costs: Staff Time

Project Lead: Police Department: Traffic Enforcement Unit

- B. Initiate a community planning process with the City's Department of Transportation to study the overall traffic patterns in and around the neighborhood in the next 12-18 months.

Time Frame: Short Term

Estimated Costs: \$ 50,000

Project Lead: Department of Transportation

- C. Implement traffic improvements as identified as needed and feasible in the above study.

Time Frame: Short Term

Estimated Costs: To be determined

Project Lead: Department of Transportation

9. Improve the pedestrian environment along Market Street with enhanced landscaping and storefronts

Market Street plays an important role not only for the Market-Almaden neighborhood, but also for the SoFA district since it serves as a gateway to the downtown from the south. The section of Market Street from Reed to Balbach Streets will also serve as a connecting link to the east-west pedestrian corridor connecting Coyote Creek to Guadalupe River Park.

It is important, therefore, to ensure that the pedestrian environment along Market Street supports a variety of activities and uses. A pedestrian-friendly uninterrupted row of shops and other active uses is desired, and should be supported by an attractive streetscape with a dense canopy of trees, pedestrian-scale lighting and improved sidewalks. Upper-story housing and other uses will frame the street and make it active and safe around-the-clock. Neighborhood-serving uses such as restaurants, delis, cafés and laundromats should be actively encouraged.

Streetscape design should be developed in close coordination with the SoFA planning team and surrounding neighborhoods. Funding for the proposed streetscape for Market Street should be integrated with implementation of the SoFA Strategic Plan.

Time Frame: Short to Medium Term

Action Steps:

- A. Develop a conceptual design for the streetscape along Market Street with extensive community input.

Estimated Costs: \$ 200,000

Project Lead: Redevelopment Agency

Additional Responsible Parties: Department of Transportation

- B. Design and construct streetscape improvements along the western side of Market Street.

Estimated Costs: To be determined

Project Lead: Redevelopment Agency

Additional Responsible Parties: Department of Transportation

- C. Assist existing businesses along Market with improving their storefronts and entrances.

Estimated Costs: To be determined

Project Lead: Redevelopment Agency

- D. Actively promote the Redevelopment Agency's commercial building assistance programs such as the Façade Improvement Program (FIP) and encourage business owners and tenants to apply for grants and loans to improve their facilities.

Estimated Costs: To be determined

Project Lead: Redevelopment Agency; Office of Economic Development

- E. Actively promote neighborhood serving ground level uses with residential units on the upper floors to replace existing automobile-oriented uses. Project approvals should incorporate the desired mix of uses recommended in this plan.

Estimated Costs: To be determined

Project Lead: Redevelopment Agency; Office of Economic Development

Additional Responsible Parties: Planning, Building and Code Enforcement; Planning Services Division

10. Ensure that undergrounding utilities throughout the neighborhood remains a priority for the City

Plans and funding to place utilities underground throughout Market-Almaden have been approved for more than a year. However, implementation has been delayed as a result of Pacific Gas and Electricity's (PG&E) financial crisis and ensuing shortages of technical personnel.

The current time frame for relocating utilities in the neighborhood is June, 2003. Given the high demand for these types of construction projects, it is crucial to ensure that undergrounding utilities in Market-Almaden remains a priority for the City of San José.

Time Frame: Short to Medium Term

Estimated Costs: PG&E

Project Lead: Department of Public Works; PG&E

Additional Responsible Parties: Community

Action Matrix

No.	Strategy/Action	Priority	Time Frame Immediate=0-18 ms Short=0-3 yrs. Medium=4-6 yrs. Long=7+ yrs.	Lead Responsibility & Other Partners	City Service Areas	Potential Funding Sources
RESIDENTIAL CORE						
1	Explore the establishment of the Market-Almaden area as a Conservation Area	Top Priority 4	Immediate	PBCE Community	EAND	City Budget CAP Grant
	A. Conduct a study, with the assistance of a historic preservation consultant, to complete previous surveys of historic resources within the neighborhood		Immediate	PBCE	EAND	City Budget
	B. Based on the results of the historic resources study, determine the specific actions of the neighborhood that could be nominated as a Conservation Area		Immediate	PBCE Community	EAND	City Budget
	C. Consider changes to the General Plan to designate Market-Almaden as a Conservation Area. This process can be initiated by community members, with assistance from City Planning staff		Short	PBCE Community	EAND	City Budget CAP Grant
2	Encourage home ownership in the neighborhood through promotion of first-time homebuyer programs		Ongoing	Housing Community	EAND	Housing
3	Encourage the appropriate maintenance of properties in the neighborhood through promotion of housing rehabilitation programs and enhanced code enforcement		Ongoing	PBCE Housing	EAND	Housing
4	Acquire and rehabilitate 75 West William Street	Top Priority 3	Short to Medium	Housing NHSSV SJRA PBCE City Attorney	EAND	NHSSV SNI funds
	A. Actively pursue the acquisition of 75 West William Street		Short	Housing City Attorney NHSSV	EAND	NHSSV SNI funds
	B. The City should either fully or partially rehabilitate the property following city standards for residential uses while also respecting the building's historic character.		Medium	Housing NHSSV PBCE	EAND	NHSSV SNI funds

STRATEGIC ACTION PLAN

No.	Strategy/Action	Priority	Time Frame Immediate=0-18 ms Short=0-3 yrs. Medium=4-6 yrs. Long=7+ yrs.	Lead Responsibility & Other Partners	City Service Areas	Potential Funding Sources
	C. Explore funding opportunities to assist a potential home-buyer with the purchase of the fully restored property, or with the purchase and completion of its restoration		Medium	Housing <i>NHSSV</i> <i>SJRA</i>	EAND	SJRA
	D. Explore techniques, such as provisional funding assistance, to encourage owner occupancy of the property for at least some minimum period of time.		Medium	Housing <i>NHSSV</i> <i>SJRA</i>	EAND	SJRA
	E. The Planning Department should initiate a General Plan amendment from the property's present Downtown Core designation to Medium-Low Density Residential		Medium	PBCE	EAND	City Budget
5	Promote the relocation of historic homes and structures to vacant and underutilized sites in the neighborhood		Ongoing	SJRA	EAND	SJRA Private funds
CONVENTION CENTER EXPANSION						
6	Ensure that project design for the edge of the Convention Center expansion along Balbach Street follows the design recommendations set forth in the Neighborhood Plan	Top Priority 5	Short	SJRA CAE <i>DOT</i>	EAND	City Budget
7	Incorporate a community space to be used for neighborhood events in the Convention Center Expansion		Short to Medium	SJRA SJCVB <i>PRNS</i>	RACS	SJRA SJCVB
BALBACH STREET						
8	Ensure that potential new development along the southern edge of Balbach Street follows the design recommendations set forth in the Neighborhood Plan		Immediate	SJRA PBCE	EAND	Private funds SJRA City budget
ALMADEN BOULEVARD						
9	A. Ensure that potential new development on the block bounded by Almaden Boulevard, Balbach Street, Almaden Avenue and West Reed Street follows the design considerations set forth in this Plan, addressing neighborhood concerns	Top Priority 2	Immediate & Ongoing	SJRA PBCE	EAND	Private funds

No.	Strategy/Action	Priority	Time Frame Immediate=0-18 ms Short=0-3 yrs. Medium=4-6 yrs. Long=7+ yrs.	Lead Responsibility & Other Partners	City Service Areas	Potential Funding Sources
	B. Consider developing a regulatory procedure, such as a special overlay of zoning district, to set general parameters for land uses and intensity of development for the Almaden Boulevard block in accordance to the design recommendations presented in the Neighborhood Improvement Plan.		Immediate	SJRA PBCE	EAND	City Budget
MARKET STREET						
10	Ensure that new development along Market Street follows the design recommendations set forth in this plan		Short to Medium	SJRA PBCE Council Office	EAND	Private funds SJRA City budget
OPEN SPACE						
11	Develop a neighborhood park on the Caltrans easement between West Reed Street and Highway 280	Top Priority 1	Short to Medium	PRNS <i>Community</i> <i>DPW</i> <i>DOT</i> <i>Caltrans</i>	RACS	SJRA SNI funds CDBG
	A. Conduct a field inspection of the site to determine viability		Short	DPW	RACS	City Budget
	B. Negotiate with Caltrans to obtain a use agreement for the easement		Short	PRNS <i>Caltrans</i>	RACS	City Budget
	C. Secure funding for and install a safety barrier along Highway 280		Short to Medium	Caltrans <i>DOT</i>	RACS	SNI Funds
	D. Develop a Master Plan for the neighborhood park, with community input		Short	PRNS <i>Community</i>	RACS	SNI Funds
	E. Secure funding for the development of the park		Medium	PRNS <i>Community</i>	RACS	CDBG SNI Funds
	F. Install enhanced pedestrian crosswalks directly across from the park entrances in order to improve safety for park users, while providing traffic calming measures along West Reed Street		Medium	DOT <i>DPW</i>	RACS	CDBG SNI Funds
	G. Design and construct the neighborhood park		Medium	PRNS	RACS	CDBG SNI Funds
12	Enlarge and reconfigure Parque de los Pobladores to accommodate art and neighborhood oriented events		Short to Medium	SJRA <i>PRNS</i> <i>DPW</i>	RACS	SJRA

STRATEGIC ACTION PLAN

No.	Strategy/Action	Priority	Time Frame Immediate=0-18 ms Short=0-3 yrs. Medium=4-6 yrs. Long=7+ yrs.	Lead Responsibility & Other Partners	City Service Areas	Potential Funding Sources
13	Expand the landscaped area along Balbach Street between Almaden Avenue and Almaden Boulevard for passive recreational uses		Short to Medium	SJRA PRNS DPW	RACS	Private funds City budget SJRA
PEDESTRIAN AND BIKE CONNECTIONS						
14	Design and install pedestrian and bicycle safety improvements on Balbach Street and Almaden Boulevard, and establish Balbach Street as a pedestrian corridor	Top Priority 6	Short	DOT SJRA DPW	TS	City Budget SNI funds CDBG TLC State & Federal grants
	A. Study the feasibility, design and secure funding to install pedestrian enhancements at the intersection of Almaden Boulevard and Balbach Street as appropriate		Short	DOT	TS	City Budget SNI funds CDBG TLC State & Federal grants
	B. Design and construct pedestrian crosswalk enhancements on Almaden Boulevard and Balbach Street		Short	DOT	TS	City Budget SNI funds CDBG TLC State & Federal grants
	C. Designate Balbach Street as a bicycle lane from Market Street across Almaden Boulevard and into Woz Way		Short	DOT	TS	City Budget
	D. Install devices to facilitate bicycle crossing at the Almaden Boulevard and Balbach Street intersection. These devices may include a bicycle detection device or a bicycle signal		Short	DOT DPW	TS	City Budget SNI funds CDBG TLC State & Federal grants
	E. Develop a conceptual design for the Balbach Street pedestrian corridor with extensive community input		Short	DOT	TS	City Budget SNI funds CDBG TLC State & Federal grants
	F. Design and construct pedestrian corridor improvements along Balbach Street, such as a wide landscaping strip, a double canopy of trees, benches and public art along a wide sidewalk		Short	DOT DPW	TS	City Budget SNI funds CDBG TLC State & Federal grants

No.	Strategy/Action	Priority	Time Frame Immediate=0-18 ms Short=0-3 yrs. Medium=4-6 yrs. Long=7+ yrs.	Lead Responsibility & Other Partners	City Service Areas	Potential Funding Sources
15	Initiate a neighborhood-wide traffic calming study in the next 12-18 months	Top Priority 8	Short	DOT SJPD	TS	City Budget
	A. Improve enforcement of commercial traffic regulations and speeding through existing police programs		Immediate & Ongoing	DOT	TS	City Budget
	B. Initiate a community planning process with the City's Department of Transportation to study the overall traffic patterns in and around the neighborhood in the next 12-18 months		Short	DOT	TS	SNI Funds
	C. Implement traffic improvements as identified as needed and feasible in the above traffic study.		Short	SJPD	TS	City Budget
16	Redesign the intersection of West Reed and Market Street to facilitate pedestrian crossing		Short to Medium	SJRA DOT	TS	SJRA
17	Install pedestrian safety improvements on Market Street at the Balbach St., William St. and Pierce Ave. intersections	Top Priority 7	Short	DOT SJRA Caltrans	TS	SNI funds CDBG
	A. Explore feasibility of pedestrian safety improvements in collaboration with Caltrans		Short	DOT Caltrans	TS	SNI funds CDBG
	B. Design and install pedestrian enhancements along Market Street with extensive community input and in coordination with the SoFA committee		Short	DOT <i>SJRA</i>	TS	SNI funds CDBG
STREETSCAPES						
18	Facilitate the improvement of the pedestrian environment along Market Street with enhanced landscaping and storefronts	Top Priority 9	Short to Medium	SJRA DOT <i>OED</i> <i>PBCE</i>	TS EAND	SNI funds
	A. Develop a conceptual design for the streetscape along Market Street with extensive community input		Short	SJRA	TS EAND	SNI funds
	B. Design and construct streetscape improvements along the western side of Market Street		Medium	SJRA <i>DOT</i>	TS	SNI funds
	C. Assist existing businesses along Market Street with improving their storefronts and entrances		Medium	SJRA	EAND	SNI funds

STRATEGIC ACTION PLAN

No.	Strategy/Action	Priority	Time Frame Immediate=0-18 ms Short=0-3 yrs. Medium=4-6 yrs. Long=7+ yrs.	Lead Responsibility & Other Partners	City Service Areas	Potential Funding Sources
	D. Actively promote the Redevelopment Agency's commercial building assistance programs such as the Façade Improvement Program and encourage business owners and tenants to apply for grants and loans to improve their facilities		Medium	SJRA OED	EAND	SNI funds
	E. Actively promote neighborhood serving ground level uses with residential units on the upper floors to replace existing automobile-oriented uses. Project approvals should incorporate the desired mix of uses recommended in this plan		Medium	SJRA OED	EAND	SNI funds
19	Install new and enhance maintenance of existing antique lights on West Reed Street and Almaden Avenue		Short	DPW	EAUS	SJRA
20	Gauge community support for installing street sweeping signage with parking enforcement		Short	DOT Community	TS	City Budget
21	Repair broken sidewalks where needed, and promote the City's sidewalk repair grant program		Ongoing	Property Owners Community DOT	TS	Sidewalk grant program
22	Widen existing narrow sidewalks as new projects are developed in areas such as the northwestern intersection of William and Market Streets		Short to Medium	SJRA	TS	Private Funds
23	Replace missing and dead trees on Reed Street and Almaden Avenue		Immediate	DOT Community	EAND	Our City Forest SJRA
24	Ensure that undergrounding utilities throughout the neighborhood remains a priority for the City	Top Priority 10	Ongoing	DPW PG&E Community	EAUS	PG&E
25	Improve the enforcement of residential permit parking, particularly during large civic events		Ongoing Immediate	SJPD	TS	City Budget
26	Improve the enforcement of existing commercial traffic and speed restrictions in the neighborhood		Immediate	SJPD	TS	City Budget
27	Synchronize street maintenance and consider using uniform street pavement throughout the neighborhood		Ongoing	DPW	TS	City Budget

KEY

Lead Responsibility

CAE: Conventions, Arts and Entertainment
DOT: Department of Transportation
DPW: Department of Public Works
NHSSV: Neighborhood Housing Services Silicon Valley
PBCE: Planning, Building and Code Enforcement
PRNS: Parks, Recreation and Neighborhood Services
SJRA: Redevelopment Agency of the City of San José
SJPD: City of San José Police Department

City Service Areas

EAND: Economic and Neighborhood Development
RACS: Recreation and Cultural Services
TS: Transportation Services
PSS: Public Safety Services
EAUS: Environment and Utility Services

Potential Funding Sources

CAP: Community Action Pride Grants
CDBG: Community Development Block Grants
TLC: Transportation for Livable Communities Grants

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