

8 Design and Preservation

The Design and Preservation Element addresses Piedmont’s character, appearance, and historic resources. Although the California Government Code does not require a General Plan element on these topics, they are matters of great concern to Piedmont residents. Issues such as aesthetics, view preservation, architectural quality and integrity, building scale and height, exterior materials, privacy, and buffering are the focus of many Planning Commission hearings and the source of much public discussion. General Plan policies can provide a framework for the City’s design review program and a foundation for future community design decisions.

Piedmont has an extraordinary architectural heritage; protecting this heritage is one of the major functions of the City’s Planning Department. Over the years, the City Council has adopted guidelines and procedures which promote the compatibility of new construction with existing homes and neighborhoods. The City’s commitment to architecturally sensitive design has enabled Piedmont to retain its image as one of the most attractive and desirable cities in California.

Piedmont’s character is also shaped by its landscapes, its views and vistas, its parks, and its streets and public spaces. Protecting and enhancing this “public realm” is a top civic priority. General Plan policies on the aesthetics of public space can help guide long-term decisions on issues such as undergrounding of overhead utility lines, landscaping of public spaces, public art, and view protection.

Historic preservation is another important aspect of community design. Older buildings and sites provide a tangible link to history and can expand our understanding of the places we live. The styles, materials, and tastes of past inhabitants place our own lives in context. Preservation provides a tool for strengthening a city’s sense of identity. There are also practical benefits to preservation, including economic value, environmental sustainability, and aesthetics.

The goals, policies, and actions in this element address the following key topics:

- City Identity and Aesthetics
- Residential Architecture
- Yards and Landscapes
- Archaeological Resources
- Historic Preservation
- Preservation Advocacy and Awareness

“What I like best about Piedmont are the beautiful homes with proper yards--well landscaped and maintained--the wide shady streets, and the real sense of community.”

“Piedmont has a very unique character and well established neighborhoods. Every house is different and is well maintained in a park-like environment.”

*- General Plan Survey
Responses*

URBAN FORM

Piedmont’s Identity

Piedmont has a distinct identity shaped by its topography, views, tree canopy, street pattern, architecture, and residential land use pattern. Its image is principally defined by relatively large single family homes constructed during the early 20th Century. In many ways, Piedmont’s homes epitomize the best aspects of that era—quality craftsmanship, attention to detail, attractive and spacious front and rear yards, pedestrian oriented streets with sidewalks, large street trees, and a traditional development scale. While these qualities are not uniform across the city, they are prevalent enough to create a memorable and positive visual image.

The city’s identity has also been shaped by its proximity to Oakland. Piedmont’s status as an incorporated city surrounded by Oakland tends to reinforce its “enclave” identity. On the other hand, the absence of a traditional retail-oriented downtown makes Piedmont functionally connected to adjacent business districts in Oakland. While Piedmont does have a “downtown”, its focus is on banking, schools, and civic functions rather than shopping and dining. The city does not have well defined “gateways” and in most areas the border between Piedmont and Oakland is seamless.

As noted in Chapter 2, the form of the city is defined by terrain and elevation. Dimond and Moraga Canyons provide strong edges on two sides. The western or “lower” part of Piedmont tends to be more “urban”, with older homes and a traditional street grid. In the eastern parts of the city, streets follow natural contours, creating a more suburban development pattern. The City’s identity is also shaped by public schools, churches, and parks—these uses provide important focal points for Piedmont neighborhoods. Throughout the city, panoramic views and vistas provide orientation and an aesthetic amenity.

The City will protect and enhance its identity in the future. The integrity of residential areas will be conserved through design guidelines and zoning standards which reflect neighborhood context. The city’s non-residential areas will be strengthened as attractive community gathering places.

The text box on the next page profiles the different residential development prototypes found in the city. Collectively, these areas create a distinctive sense of place that is uniquely Piedmont.

DESIGN AND PRESERVATION ELEMENT

Neighborhood Typologies in Piedmont

Although Piedmont contains many different architectural styles, its neighborhoods can be broadly grouped into the following five typologies:



Bungalow and cottage neighborhoods include areas west of Grand Avenue and areas just above Oakland's Grand Lake district. They are characterized by small lots of less than 5,000 square feet. Much of the housing stock is over 90 years old. Housing is eclectic, and includes a mix of small one-story bungalows and cottages, larger brown-shingle homes, former farmhouses, Victorians, and a handful of small apartment buildings. Although these are Piedmont's most urban areas, they still retain a small town ambience.



Streetcar suburbs include most of the tracts developed between incorporation (1907) and 1930. This is the dominant neighborhood type in Piedmont. Neighborhoods are characterized by 5,000 to 15,000 square foot lots and include many Mediterranean Revival, Brown Shingle, Tudor, Prairie Style, and Colonial Revival homes developed on a modified street grid. Some blocks are characterized by a single style; others are eclectic. Many homes were built with one-car garages or detached rear-yard garages.



Estate neighborhoods are characterized by large lots with spacious homes. Included are the Sotelo-Glen Alpine "loop" and Seaview and King Avenues—streets lined with grand and elegant homes that convey an image of tradition. Many lots exceed ½ acre and are heavily wooded, creating a semi-rural feel. These areas contain some of Piedmont's most memorable homes, and showcase some of the finest work of early 20th Century California architects.



Hillside neighborhoods are located on the steep slopes of eastern Piedmont and are characterized by winding narrow streets and multi-level hillside homes. Many of the homes incorporate contemporary architectural styles and are designed to maximize views. However, the area also includes century-old homes that harken to the days when Piedmont was considered "the country" and was home to many artists and writers.



Mid-century neighborhoods include St. James Wood and other areas of eastern Piedmont that were primarily developed after 1940. While these areas include some "traditional" pre-war architecture, they are characterized by more contemporary California ranch homes. Many of the homes were designed with open floor plans, post and beam construction, attached two-car garages, shake roofs, and other features and amenities associated with the 1950s and 60s. One-story construction predominates in these areas.

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Trees vs Views



Chapter 3 of the Piedmont Municipal Code recognizes the conflicts that can arise as the city balances its goals of tree protection and view preservation. Trees and views are both highly valued, yet as the code acknowledges, “tree planting locations and species selections may produce both intended beneficial effects on the property where they are planted, and unintended deleterious effects on neighboring properties of equal or higher elevations.”

The City Code establishes a means for property owners to address tree trimming and view issues as a civil matter between property owners. The Code includes rules for documenting view obstruction, measuring view quality and benefits, apportioning the cost of tree trimming between neighbors, determining the extent to which trees must be cut back, and carrying out the trimming.

Visual Landmarks and Gateways

Visual landmarks are structures or landscape features that provide orientation and identity. They may be located within the city or they may be on the horizon. Important landmarks in Piedmont include the Oakland Avenue Bridge, the Civic Center complex, the Excedra at Piedmont Park, Piedmont Community Hall, the allee of trees along Oakland Avenue, and the city’s churches and schools. More distant landmarks that shape Piedmont’s identity are the Oakland and San Francisco skylines, the Golden Gate and Bay Bridges, Lake Merritt and San Francisco Bay, and the Oakland Hills. Views to these horizon features are an important part of the city’s character.

Gateways are the key points of entry into a city, its neighborhoods, and business districts. They shape first impressions, create a sense of arrival, and present an opportunity to strengthen civic identity. Gateways in and out of Piedmont are presently understated and are marked only by small “neighborhood watch” signs. There are no “city limit” signs or monuments on the major arterials in and out of the city. More substantial neighborhood gateways exist on local streets. For example, pillars mark the entrances into St. James Wood from Park Boulevard and the Piedmont Manor tract along Grand Avenue. Although these are privately maintained, they create a strong visual imprint for motorists and pedestrians.

During 2007, Piedmont used centennial “banners” to enhance approaches to the Civic Center area along Highland Avenue. There may be other opportunities to strengthen city gateways in the future—or to create stronger civic “branding” through signage, graphics, and street lighting. There are also opportunities for new visual landmarks on school campuses and in the Civic Center area. Features such as public art, clock towers, or spires on new or refurbished buildings can quickly become local landmarks or points of visual interest.

Views and Vistas

Views in Piedmont enhance property values, provide a sense of orientation, and inspire local architecture. Many homes in the city have partial or full westerly views taking in skylines, bridges, water bodies, and hills. Short-range views are also important, with many homes looking out over wooded canyons or eastward toward the Oakland Hills. View preservation is addressed by the Piedmont Municipal Code (see text box at left) and by design review criteria for second story additions.

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City Hall

PUBLIC REALM

Piedmont’s “public realm” includes city streets, parking strips, sidewalks, parks and plazas, civic buildings, and other areas within the public rights-of-way. The appearance and physical condition of these areas shapes the city’s image in the same way that private properties do. Design details such as pavement, street lights, benches, trash receptacles, newspaper stands, bike racks, and street signs are all important public realm elements. Their style, color, and materials can help otherwise unremarkable areas stand out in a positive light. Their level of maintenance provides an indicator to residents about the quality of services and life in the community.

The 2007 General Plan Resident Survey found that Piedmont residents take great pride in the quality of the city’s public spaces, particularly its parks, landscaped medians, and planted street islands and triangles. Aesthetics ranked fourth in the Survey’s query of what residents liked best about Piedmont, behind schools, safety, and small town character. A concerted effort is necessary to keep public space in top condition, while at the same time responding to fiscal constraints and meeting competing goals such as water conservation and a shift toward native landscaping.

Specific elements of the public realm are highlighted below.

Landscaping

Landscaping is an important part of community aesthetics and complements the city’s architectural heritage. Piedmont’s parks and rights of way are maintained by the Department of Public Works, with assistance from volunteer organizations such as the Piedmont Beautification Foundation and the Piedmont Garden Club (see text box, next page).

Piedmont’s ordinances also encourage, and in some cases require, the landscaping of private property. For residential uses, lots are required to have not less than 30% of the site devoted to landscaping (40% in the estate zone), and all required street setbacks must be landscaped. The requirement is 20 % for commercial uses, with at least 75 % of the requirement satisfied in the front setback. Applications for conditional use permits, new residences, and other large projects that substantially change existing vegetation must include landscape plans.

Keeping Piedmont Beautiful

Piedmont benefits from having two outstanding civic organizations committed to improving the city's aesthetic quality.

The **Piedmont Garden Club** was founded in 1923. Over the years, its activities have varied from mosquito control and creek restoration to planting, horticulture, and park renovation. The Piedmont Garden Club regularly undertakes conservation, education, and beautification projects on Piedmont lands.

The **Piedmont Beautification Foundation (PBF)** was incorporated in 1964 to initiate and support community improvement and beautification projects through tax-deductible contributions. The PBF supports the planning, improvement, beautification, and maintenance of the community center, parks, streets, schools, and other civic places. Its commemorative tree and bench program honors Piedmont citizens and families. Its Endowment Fund provides a continuing source of financial support for civic projects and for Piedmont's future needs.

Street Trees

Street trees are an important part of the public realm. Because trees are also an essential environmental resource, they are discussed in the Natural Resources and Sustainability Element of the General Plan (see Chapter 5).

Signs

Signs are regulated by Chapter 17 of the Piedmont Municipal Code. Different standards apply to residential and nonresidential property. On residential properties, owners may erect one sign no larger than four square feet. On non-residential properties, signs require approval by the Planning Commission. Usually, a maximum of one sign (other than those required by law) is permitted on the face of the building. Signs must be compatible in design, color, and scale with the building and its surroundings. Chapter 17 also addresses the placement of signs on public property. The City also regulates the placement and size of political signs, consistent with state and federal law.

Municipal signs, street signs, and directional signs are also important components of the Piedmont streetscape. The City ensures that these signs are aesthetically pleasing and graphically consistent. Piedmont street signs use a white-on-green light-reflective material that is easily readable after dark. These signs indicate ascending house numbers on adjacent blocks, helping to orient motorists. Additionally, City ordinances require that each house clearly display its address number either on the house or on some structure or plaque between the house and the street. Some residents have also had house numbers painted on their curbs to assist in emergency response and to assist visitors.

Public Art

Public art includes sculptures, statues, monuments, murals, fountains, and other forms of art which beautify and enliven public spaces in the city. Good public art can enrich civic life and celebrate local culture and history. The City sponsors temporary public art exhibits as well as permanent works of art in public spaces, subject to review by the Council and City commissions.

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Civic Buildings

The appearance of schools and municipal buildings conveys an important message about a city's commitment to education and public services. Piedmont's civic buildings are well designed and in excellent condition, but some structures show signs of age or obsolescence. As noted elsewhere in the General Plan, the Piedmont Unified School District is undertaking a major seismic upgrade of its school campuses, providing an opportunity for new or refurbished buildings. New or renovated municipal buildings are also likely in the Civic Center over the next 10 years. Future civic buildings should demonstrate the same commitment to quality design and construction required of private property owners.

Lighting

The lighting of streets and buildings can serve an aesthetic purpose as well as a functional and safety purpose. In Piedmont, most street lighting consists of cobra-head fixtures attached to wooden utility poles. Where utilities are underground, a variety of lighting standards are used. In some locations, decorative or vintage lighting fixtures contribute to neighborhood ambiance.

Utility Undergrounding

A majority of Piedmont's electric and telecommunication lines consist of overhead wires supported by wooden poles. There is a general—though not universal—consensus that the lines are unsightly and should be underground. Undergrounding could provide other benefits, including safety, view enhancement, increased service reliability, and the removal of potential obstructions for emergency vehicles after an earthquake or severe storm. However, these benefits must be weighed against the costs to property owners, which are very high. There is no consensus about the cost-benefit “tipping point” and the issue is often controversial.

The 2007 General Plan Survey indicated that undergrounding was one of the most polarizing issues in the city today. Although 41 percent of the survey respondents indicated they would “strongly support” increased taxes or fees for undergrounding, 17 percent were “strongly opposed.” Many residents were concerned about the additional tax burden and initial costs.

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Rule 20 A, B, and C

Undergrounding projects in Piedmont typically occur through the creation of undergrounding districts comprised of multiple contiguous properties. These districts may be initiated by the city or by groups of property owners. The former are known as Rule 20A or Rule 20 B districts.

Rule 20A districts are municipal projects that are funded by PG&E. They are often earmarked for arterial streets, historic districts, and neighborhood business districts. Rule 20B districts are funded by creating a City-Council approved assessment district, with costs allocated to owners based on the special benefits each property receives. In the absence of majority protest, the Council has the authority to approve or deny a Rule 20B district.

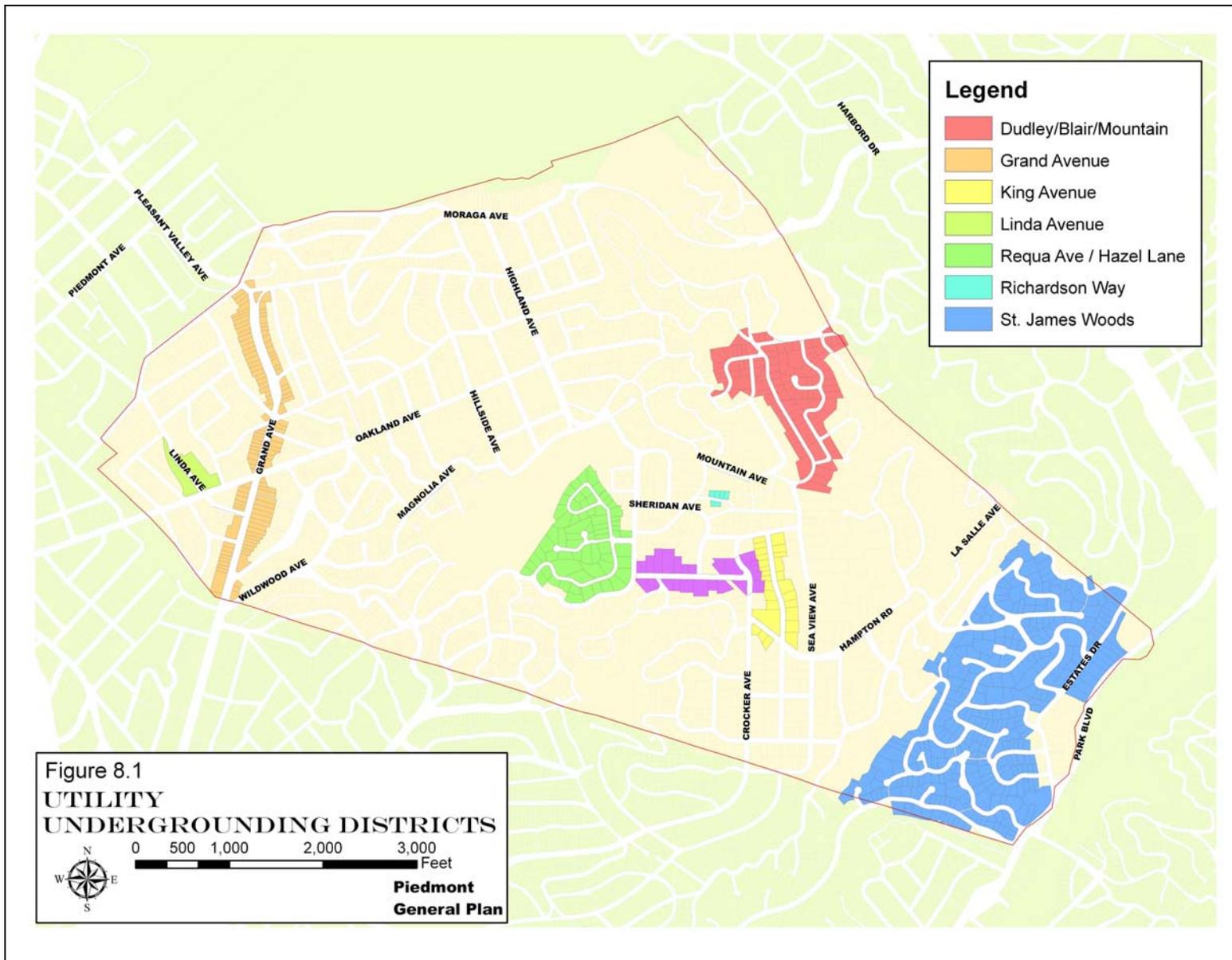
Undergrounding projects can also be initiated by private property owners under Rule 20C; 100 percent approval is required. Rule 20C is usually used for projects that only involve a small number of owners.

Undergrounding projects are subject to California Public Utility Commission rules and regulations (see text box at left). The work is typically done by creating assessment districts within a neighborhood or sub-area of a city. Citywide projects are uncommon due to the high cost, the difficulty of obtaining necessary voter support, and the disruption associated with construction and citywide road closures. Most local governments are not equipped to make the financial contributions that would be necessary to substantially reduce costs to property owners, although some allocation of General Fund dollars toward engineering and administrative costs may be made. PG&E is not in a position to underwrite the cost, nor is it required to do so by the Public Utilities Commission.

While there is no “typical” cost for undergrounding, expenses of \$30,000-\$40,000 per parcel are not unusual in a city such as Piedmont. In addition to these costs, property owners face the expense of replacing their overhead laterals (the wires between the house and the street) with underground conduits.

The City of Piedmont adopted its current undergrounding policy in 2003. The policy establishes a formal procedure for neighborhood groups seeking to form an undergrounding district. Currently, 70 percent of the owners in a proposed district must sign a petition before work begins on design and assessment. Several undergrounding districts have been created in Piedmont, and at least two more are pending.

DESIGN AND PRESERVATION ELEMENT



The Three Tiers of Design Review

Piedmont has a three tiered system of design review:

Administrative Design Review is an expedited process for minor projects such as replacing an existing feature with a new feature that is slightly different in material, function, or design. A public hearing is not required, although neighbors may be asked to sign off on the improvements. The process normally takes 10-14 days.

Staff Design Review applies to most projects that are less than \$75,000 and that do not require a Variance. The process takes about 40 calendar days, including a 14-day notification period and a 10-day appeal period. Adjacent neighbors are notified and are given an opportunity to comment.

Planning Commission Design Review applies to most projects that are more than \$75,000 or that require a Variance. In some cases, story poles (showing the extent of the airspace to be enclosed) may be required. Notification requirements vary from 100 to 300 feet depending on the scope of the project, and all residents may comment during a formal public hearing.

DESIGN REVIEW

A majority of Piedmont's housing stock has been renovated in the past 50 years, with many homes undergoing substantial expansion. During this time, the City has developed a design review program that accommodates a homeowner's right to alter or expand his or her residence while respecting neighborhood context and protecting the privacy and aesthetics of neighbors. This program applies to brand new homes as well as alterations. However, because only two or three new homes are built in Piedmont in a typical year, the most frequent applications are for remodels.

The City Council has delegated design review responsibilities to the Planning Department and Planning Commission. The process has evolved in response to construction trends, community feedback, and public expectations. The nature of design review is such that there will always be tension between individual rights and community aesthetics. Piedmont's Design Review Guidelines make the process less subjective by spelling out (and illustrating) in detail the City's expectations for new construction, additions, and alterations.

The intent of design review as stated in the Piedmont Municipal Code is to promote orderly, attractive, safe, and harmonious development. It reinforces numerous General Plan goals, such as maintaining Piedmont's residential character, preserving its architectural heritage, protecting its environment, and enhancing its natural beauty and visual character. The Municipal Code notes that all property improvements should be properly related to their own site and to surrounding sites, with due regard to aesthetics, natural terrain, landscaping, and the exterior appearance of nearby structures.

Design review applies to most projects requiring building permits and all improvements requiring variances, conditional use permits, and demolition permits. It also applies to children's play structures visible from the street, other secondary and accessory structures, and large satellite dishes. Interior remodeling is exempt, as are most on-grade improvements (patios and pathways), and most fences, trellises, and retaining walls that conform to other aspects of the planning code. Small satellite dishes and normal home repairs are also exempt.

The city's design review requirements are profiled in the text box at left.

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The 2007 General Plan Resident Survey indicated majority support for the City's design review requirements. However, about one-third of the respondents felt the requirements were too restrictive and expressed frustration with the rules and procedures.

The 2007 General Plan Resident Survey indicated majority support for the City's design review requirements. However, about one-third of the respondents felt the requirements were too restrictive and expressed frustration with the rules and procedures. Critics of the process felt it was too intrusive and subjective and gave too much oversight to neighbors. A large number of suggestions were made to streamline the process, including exempting projects that are minimally visible to neighbors, applying more flexibility, and clarifying the rules.

A much smaller number of survey respondents felt the rules were not strict enough. Some residents felt that design review should go further to protect views and discourage oversized homes. Others felt the city should add landscaping guidelines and require tree removal permits.

During the coming years, the City will use the feedback from the General Plan Survey to explore changes to the design review program. Piedmont will continue to explore ways to streamline and simplify design review without compromising the program's basic objectives.

Residential Design Guidelines

The Piedmont City Council adopted Residential Design Guidelines in 1988. The Guidelines are intended for use by the Planning Commission, City Planning staff, and the general public to ensure that construction projects are properly related to their sites, surroundings, and broader community setting. Five categories of construction are addressed:

- New construction, which includes new homes, reconstructed homes, and accessory structures
- Additions and remodeling, including room additions, decks, and porches
- Garages
- Retaining walls
- Fences and walls, including any structure designed to screen views or mark property lines.

The guidelines consider aesthetic design, compatibility, and safety for each feature. These attributes are evaluated at three different geographic scales: (a) the neighborhood; (b) adjacent parcels; and (c) the site itself. Illustrations are used to convey design ideas and to graphically show "do's" and "don't's" for changes such as room additions, new porches, and windows. The guidelines strive for architectural compatibility and consistency across the city.

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Crocker Park

Community Standards

Piedmont has high standards of property maintenance and upkeep. Conditions which substantially detract from the appearance of a neighborhood or which may impair surrounding property values are prohibited by Section 6.1 of the City Code. The City requires abatement of deteriorating structures, nuisances, and blight. City regulations address weeds and overgrown vegetation; exterior debris such as boxes and lumber; disabled or mothballed vehicles, boats, and trailers in yards; unsafe or unsightly buildings; and other property conditions which could diminish the enjoyment or aesthetics of adjacent properties. The City has the authority to abate such nuisances at the expense of the property owner, including the use of liens.

The City is responsible for maintaining its own property, including city parks, streets, street trees, and civic buildings. General fund allocations for property maintenance are provided in the municipal budget each year. The City conducts routine street sweeping and publishes a street sweeping schedule during the rainy season so that residents can plan accordingly. As noted in the Natural Resources and Sustainability Element, the City also provides green waste collection service. This encourages residents to keep their yards free of garden, leaf and pruning debris.

Preservation provides cultural benefits such as education and life enrichment; aesthetic benefits such as the protection of distinctive architecture; and economic benefits such as tax credits, jobs for skilled craftspersons, and business attraction for neighborhood shopping areas.

HISTORIC PRESERVATION

Historic preservation refers to the sensitive maintenance, continued use, and restoration of older buildings, districts, and properties having historic, architectural, aesthetic, or other special interests or values. Broadly defined, preservation may also include archaeological resources, including Native American sites.

Preservation provides cultural benefits such as education and life enrichment; aesthetic benefits such as the protection of distinctive architecture; and economic benefits such as tax credits, jobs for skilled craftspersons, and business attraction for neighborhood shopping areas. It also provides environmental sustainability benefits by preserving and reusing building materials, and conserving the resources that would otherwise be needed to rebuild.

The National Park Service and State Historic Preservation Office have developed criteria for defining what is “historic.” These criteria are sometimes supplemented by local guidelines adopted by cities or counties. Generally buildings are eligible for historic designation if they are more than 50 years old; have significance to the history of the community, region, state, or nation; are representative of a significant architectural style or type of construction; are the site of a significant historic event; are associated with important people or organizations in the community’s past; are a significant work of a renowned architect or builder; or have design, engineering, material, artistry or craftsmanship representing notable innovations.

Historic properties may be identified as individual sites, or as groups of sites (known as historic districts). Federally listed properties are eligible for tax benefits. The State of California also has tax reduction programs for historic properties. For example, the Mills Act involves a 10-year contract between a City and a property owner to provide property tax relief in exchange for restoration and maintenance of a historic structure.

Most preservation programs are based on standards for the treatment of historic properties developed by the US Department of the Interior (see next page). These standards distinguish between preservation, rehabilitation, restoration, and reconstruction. In fact, Piedmont’s Residential Design Guidelines incorporate many of the same principles as the Secretary of the Interior’s standards, including guidelines for the treatment of windows, doors, roofs, and porches.

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Secretary of the Interior Standards



62 Farragut Av, circa 1920



62 Farragut Av, circa 2008

The US Department of the Interior has developed standards intended to promote responsible preservation practices by local governments across the country. These standards identify four possible “treatments” for historic resources, defined below:

Preservation places a high premium on the retention of historic fabric through conservation, maintenance and repair. It reflects a building’s continuum over time, through successive occupancies, and the respectful changes and alterations that are made.

Rehabilitation emphasizes the retention and repair of historic materials, but more latitude is provided for replacement because it is assumed the property is more deteriorated prior to work. Both Preservation and Rehabilitation standards focus attention on the preservation of those materials, features, finishes, spaces, and spatial relationships that, together, give a property its historic character.

Restoration focuses on the retention of materials from the most significant time in a property’s history, while permitting the removal of materials from other periods.

Reconstruction establishes limited opportunities to re-create a non-surviving site, landscape, building, structure, or object in all new materials.

A set of design principles has been developed by the Secretary of the Interior for each of the treatments listed above. Choosing the most appropriate treatment requires an evaluation of a building’s historical significance, as well as other factors such as its relative importance in history, its physical condition, its proposed use, and mandated code requirements.

The city's earliest homes include some of the Bay Area's best examples of Victorian, Bungalow, American Foursquare, Craftsman, Colonial Revival, and English/Tudor residential architecture. Many of these homes include period details that have been preserved or restored over the years, while others have been substantially altered.

Native American Resources

Native Americans inhabited the East Bay Plain for hundreds of years before European settlers arrived. The area around Piedmont was populated by the Ohlone (also known as the Muwekma or Costanoan) Tribe. Evidence of their presence includes shell mounds along the Bay, and arrowheads, tools, skeletons, and ornaments occasionally unearthed in settlement sites. Most Ohlone settlements were located along the shoreline and on creeks. The settlements nearest to Piedmont were along Temescal Creek in North Oakland and along Trestle Glen near Lake Merritt.

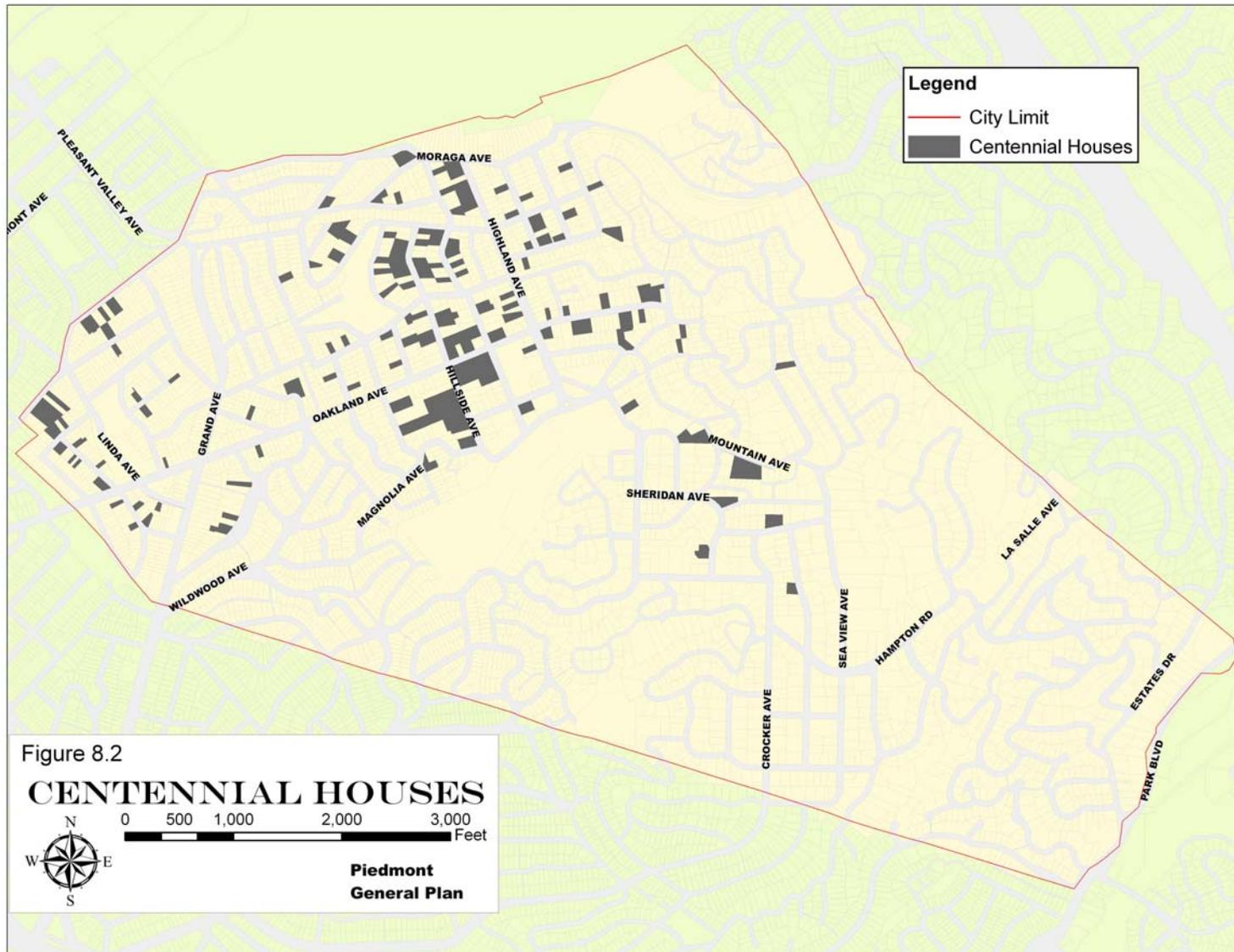
As part of the General Plan Update, the city consulted with Native American tribes and the California Native American Heritage Commission to determine the extent of pre-settlement resources in Piedmont. Although no places of special significance are documented, it is still possible that artifacts exist. The most likely locations would probably be in open space areas such as Piedmont Park (site of historic mineral springs), Moraga Canyon, and Indian Gulch.

Centennial Homes

There are just over 170 existing homes in Piedmont that pre-date the City's incorporation in 1907. These homes were catalogued and their individual stories told in "*Cottages and Castles*" a 2007 publication prepared as part of Piedmont's Centennial celebration. The city's earliest homes include some of the Bay Area's best examples of Victorian, Bungalow, American Foursquare, Craftsman, Colonial Revival, and English/Tudor residential architecture. Many of these homes include period details that have been preserved or restored over the years, while others have been substantially altered.

The location of the city's "Centennial Houses" (over 100 years old) is shown in Figure 8-2. The greatest concentration is in Central Piedmont along streets such as Hillside, Bonita, Highland, Mesa, and Oakland Avenues, and in the area near Grand Avenue, particularly along Sunnyside, Rose, Lake, and Kingston. There are also several estates on larger lots east of Piedmont Park that date from the pre-incorporation period.

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A Legacy of Older Homes

More than 70 percent of Piedmont’s homes were built before 1940, the highest percentage of any city in the Bay Area. Even when only single family homes are counted, the city still retains a higher percentage of pre-war dwellings than San Francisco, Berkeley, or Oakland.

| Percent of Homes Built Before 1940 | | |
|------------------------------------|-------------------|---------------------|
| | All housing units | Single family homes |
| Alameda | 33.4% | 39.3% |
| Albany | 41.9% | 68.6% |
| Berkeley | 48.8% | 67.3% |
| Charleston, SC | 17.2% | 16.2% |
| Los Angeles | 16.7% | 20.9% |
| Oakland | 35.1% | 43.5% |
| Pasadena | 30.0% | 42.9% |
| New York City | 36.0% | 35.7% |
| Philadelphia | 41.7% | 46.3% |
| Piedmont | 70.5% | 71.6% |
| San Francisco | 49.9% | 49.9% |
| San Leandro | 11.7% | 14.7% |
| Savannah, GA | 16.4% | 14.6% |
| Vallejo | 11.6% | 11.7% |
| Washington, DC | 34.6% | 49.8% |

Source: Census 2000

Post Incorporation

Between 1907 and 1940, some 2,500 homes were built in Piedmont—nearly 70 percent of the city’s existing housing stock (see text box at left). It was during this era that Piedmont became known as the “City of Millionaires,” with large, stately homes constructed on many of its avenues. Some of these homes were designed by well-known early 20th Century architects such as Julia Morgan, Bernard Maybeck, John Hudson Thomas, Charles Sumner Greene, and Newsom and Newsom. Some, like the former residence of Frank Havens (101 Wildwood Gardens), are significant not only for their architecture but also because they were home to notable individuals. Others are remarkable for their amenities, craftsmanship, beauty, design innovation, and even their sheer size.

Most Piedmont homes are not considered individually historic, but collectively they have a transcendent quality that defines the image of the city. Piedmont contains block after block of fine early 20th century residential architecture, representing some of the Bay Area’s best examples of the styles of the 1910s and 1920s. Although some of the city’s architectural legacy has been lost to demolition, fire, and unsympathetic remodeling, most of Piedmont’s older buildings are remarkably intact. The city’s neighborhoods evoke a sense of nostalgia and convey an image of permanence and enduring quality. It is easy to take these qualities for granted, but they are truly what makes Piedmont the special place it is.

Many of the city’s civic buildings also date from the 1907-1940 period, including City Hall, Piedmont Community Church, and the former Christian Science Church. Local architect Albert Farr was particularly important during this period, and designed many of Piedmont’s early civic landmarks. The Oakland Avenue Bridge is another example of an important historic civic feature—when it opened in 1910, it was the largest of the new concrete reinforced spans in the United States.

Some of the formal gardens and open spaces from the city’s early days also have historic importance. Piedmont Park was developed according to a master plan that is now almost 90 years old, and still contains historic statuary, pathways, and restored street furniture. Mature trees are part of the city’s historic landscape as well, uniting neighborhoods and creating enduring symbols of the city’s heritage.

Although Piedmont does not have designated historic districts, the entire city is effectively treated as a neighborhood conservation district through the application of design guidelines that reflect prevailing architectural styles and context.

Preservation Efforts and Opportunities

Despite the large number of historic resources and older buildings in the city, Piedmont has only one house on the National Register of Historic Places—the Wetmore house at 342 Bonita Avenue. The house is adjacent to City Hall and is the oldest residence in Piedmont. It was built in 1877 and has been listed since 1978. There are many other properties in the City that are potentially eligible for the National Register, or that could be considered as potential California Historic Landmarks or Points of Historical Interest.

Most of the preservation activity in Piedmont occurs through the design review program. Although Piedmont does not have designated historic districts, the entire city is effectively treated as a neighborhood conservation district through the application of design guidelines that reflect prevailing architectural styles and context. These guidelines are reinforced by zoning standards that maintain single family uses, limit excessive height and bulk, and discourage replacement of older homes with substantially larger homes. The combination of zoning and design review has effectively protected the older building stock and in many cases led to the restoration of original architectural features.

No addition, alteration, or new construction may be approved in Piedmont unless it is found to be harmonious with existing and proposed development in the neighborhood. In addition to looking at height and bulk, the Planning Commission examines details such as the line and pitch of the roof, exterior materials, and the treatment of windows and doors. Staff also considers these features in administrative and staff-level design review applications. Adherence to these standards over the past few decades has helped sustain property values and substantially reduced the threat of demolition.

Conserving and restoring older buildings is only one aspect of historic preservation. Advocacy, documentation, and education are also critical. These are the goals of the Piedmont Historical Society (PHS), a non-profit organization that actively promotes preservation in the city. The Society maintains a collection of memorabilia in the Piedmont Recreation Center. Its broader mission is to encourage interest and increase knowledge of Piedmont's local history, publish material of historical interest, produce exhibits and events, and collect material of historic importance to the city.

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It is also important to recognize that history is not static—part of looking forward is continually redefining what was most significant about the past. Surveying and cataloguing historic resources must be an ongoing process.

There are opportunities to substantially expand the public’s awareness of Piedmont’s historic resources. Brochures, walking tours, historic fairs, awards programs, lectures, websites, and other media can be used to broaden public appreciation of local history and culture. The City currently sponsors a local history program for all Piedmont third graders, and has prepared a guide to Piedmont history designed for elementary school students. Historic trails such as the recently dedicated Centennial Trail in Piedmont Park can also be an effective educational tool. While many of the city’s early structures remain standing, some are long gone—their commemoration through plaques and markers can keep the past alive and create a sense of living history

There is also more that can be done to catalog and survey Piedmont’s historic resources. The Centennial home inventory should be seen as a model for similar surveys and publications covering the post-incorporation period. The City and Historical Society have a wealth of photographic archives, blueprints, old permits, and other records that have been used to chronicle the history of important Piedmont homes. Much of the work has been—and will continue to be—done by volunteers. Grants and other funding sources for preservation activities may be pursued to support these efforts.

It is also important to recognize that history is not static—part of looking forward is continually redefining what was most significant about the past. Surveying and cataloguing historic resources must be an ongoing process. In this regard, the significance of Piedmont’s mid-century (1940-1965) architecture is now starting to be appreciated and acknowledged. During the coming decades, it will become more important to take stock of the “recent past.” Similarly, preservation must look not only at the built environment, but also at the people and events that have shaped Piedmont history.

Finally, preservation is as much about shaping the future as it is about saving the past. Some of the historic elements that have been lost in Piedmont—including historic schools and older commercial buildings in the Civic Center area—can provide the inspiration for future construction. This will be especially important as Piedmont schools are rebuilt and as the city’s two business districts evolve. It is also an important philosophy to embrace in the event existing structures must be reconstructed due to fire, earthquakes, or other natural disasters.

GOALS, POLICIES, AND ACTIONS

Goal 27: City Identity and Aesthetics

Ensure that streets, parks, civic buildings, and other aspects of the “public realm” contribute to Piedmont’s overall identity, beauty and visual quality.

Policies and Actions

Policy 27.1: Streets as Public Space

Recognize that streets are important public spaces as well as transportation routes. Sidewalks, street trees, landscaping, and other amenities should be provided and maintained to keep these spaces attractive.

Policy 27.2: Sidewalks and Planting Strips

Manage sidewalk space and planting strips along Piedmont streets to promote pedestrian safety and comfort, enhance visual character, and reduce the impact of vehicle traffic on adjacent yards.

See also Transportation Element policies on sustaining a pedestrian friendly city, and on siting parking lots to the rear of non-residential buildings rather than in the front setback.

Policy 27.3: View Preservation

Recognize and protect significant views in the city, particularly Piedmont’s characteristic views of the San Francisco and Oakland skylines, Lake Merritt and San Francisco Bay, the Bay and Golden Gate Bridges, and surrounding hills, canyons, and geological features. Discourage the obstruction of such views by upper level additions, tall structures, and devices such as communication towers. Similarly, tree planting should avoid species or locations that will lead to the obstruction of desirable views.

Policy 27.4: City Gateways

Create more distinctive and memorable points of entry into the city to provide a stronger sense of arrival and define city edges.

Policy 27.5: Beautification Efforts

Support local beautification and median planting efforts by neighborhood and community groups.

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*Bufano Sculpture, Bear and Cubs
Crocker Park*

Policy 27.6: Public Art

Encourage the placement of public art in parks, around public buildings, and in important civic spaces and visitor areas. Such art should reflect the city's history, character, landscape, and people.

Policy 27.7: Street Lighting

Provide street lighting that improves public safety and assists travelers while also enhancing neighborhood character. Street lights should complement the city's architecture, avoid light and glare conflicts, and be consistent with the energy conservation goals laid out elsewhere in the General Plan.

Policy 27.8: Utility Undergrounding

Support neighborhood efforts to underground utilities throughout Piedmont, with due consideration given to the level of community support and the financial impacts on the City and its residents. Underground utilities shall be required for any new subdivision.

Policy 27.9: Signs

Require quality, balance, consistency, and high quality materials in the design of signs, including commercial business signs, municipal signs, street signs, and traffic signs. Signs should be compatible with buildings and streetscapes, and should be minimally obtrusive to surrounding uses.

27.10: Design Continuity

Apply consistent standards for pavement, signage, street furniture (benches, planters, trash receptacles, bus shelters, etc), and other elements of public space to help unify the city and strengthen Piedmont's identity

See also Land Use Element Policy 4.1 on strengthening the Civic Center as a community gathering place.

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“It is important to us that the city keeps its original appearance and that everybody’s interests are taken into account when new construction projects are approved.”

**- General Plan Survey
Response**

- **Action 27.A: Viewshed Ordinance**
Increase public awareness of the viewshed ordinance and provide technical assistance as needed to property owners filing claims.
- **Action 27.B: Rooftop Structures**
Encourage residents to remove obsolete rooftop features such as antennae and satellite dishes that are no longer in use. At the same time, regulations and guidelines for rooftop structures should be reviewed to ensure that “green” features such as photovoltaic panels are not precluded or discouraged.
- **Action 27.C: Gateway Enhancement**
Consider a program to enhance the gateways in and out of Piedmont (on Grand, Moraga and Oakland Avenues) with landscaping, art, and signage that helps define Piedmont’s boundaries. Priority should be on the two Grand Avenue gateways, the Oakland Avenue gateway, and the Moraga Avenue gateway at the eastern edge of the city.
- **Action 27.D: Funding for Beautification Projects**
Apply for grants and other funding sources for citywide improvements, including landscaping, street trees, and street lighting.
- **Action 27.E: Changes to City Undergrounding Policies**
Continue the public dialogue on alternative solutions to utility undergrounding and prioritization of Rule 20A funds. Modifications to current City practices and procedures for the use of Rule 20 undergrounding funds should continue to be studied. Any changes to current City policy should be vetted with the community through an open and transparent process.
- **Action 27.F: Street Lighting Standards**
Study street-lighting standards in Piedmont to ensure that they result in an appropriate level of lighting. Street lights should avoid excessive light pollution and energy consumption, while ensuring public safety and safe road conditions.

See also Policies 14.3 and 14.6 on trees and views

“Every change to a residence has a strong impact on individual homes on the street and to the potential resale value. There should be wise design approval for all.”

“Homes have to fit character and vintage details of neighborhood. If the street is one story bungalows, does a big 2-story addition really fit?”

- *General Plan Survey Responses*

Goal 28: Residential Architecture

Integrate new residential construction, additions, and alterations in a way that is physically compatible with existing structures, their immediate surroundings, and the community as a whole.

Policies and Actions

Policy 28.1: Scale, Height, and Bulk Compatibility

Strengthen the defining qualities of Piedmont neighborhoods by relating the scale of new construction, additions, and alterations to existing homes and neighborhood context. Overpowering contrasts in scale and height on adjacent lots should be avoided.

Policy 28.2: Style Compatibility

On blocks where one architectural style or design theme is predominant, require new construction and alterations that respect and are compatible with the prevailing style. On blocks where no particular style is predominant, new construction and alterations should be compatible with the style of homes nearby. This applies not only to the house as a whole but to building elements such as foundations, porches, exterior stairs, doors, exterior materials, ornamentation, roofs, and doors.

Policy 28.3: Additions

Discourage residential additions which appear “tacked on” or which obstruct views from adjacent houses. The mass and scale of additions should not overpower the existing residence.

Policy 28.4: Setback Consistency

Wherever possible, maintain the established setbacks along neighborhood streets by orienting new or remodeled buildings in a manner that is consistent with prevailing setbacks.

Policy 28.5: Garages, Decks, and Porches

Encourage garages, decks, and porches to complement the architecture and design of the primary residence and adjacent residences. Garages should be visually integrated with the neighborhood and respect the amenities enjoyed by residences on contiguous parcels. New garages should be sited to minimize safety impacts and should not encourage parking that blocks all or part of a sidewalk.

DESIGN AND PRESERVATION ELEMENT

On steep hillside sites, take advantage of topography and views and encourage designs that reduce effective visual bulk. New hillside homes should follow the contour of the slope, with buildings broken into several horizontal and vertical elements rather than large building planes.

Policy 28.6: Exterior Materials

Encourage the use of exterior materials that are appropriate to the property, neighborhood and natural setting.

Policy 28.7: Hillside Home Design

On steep hillside sites, take advantage of topography and views and encourage designs that reduce effective visual bulk. New hillside homes should follow the contour of the slope, with buildings broken into several horizontal and vertical elements rather than large building planes.

Policy 28.8: Acoustical and Visual Privacy

Encourage the siting of windows, vents, exhaust ports, skylights, and other appurtenances in a way that respects the acoustical and visual privacy of adjacent residences and yards.

Policy 28.9: Eyes on the Street

Locate and design windows and doors in a manner which discourages views into the house by persons driving or walking by, but allows for views of the street by the occupants themselves.

Policy 28.10: Multi-family Design

Require any new development in Piedmont's multi-family and mixed use areas to be compatible with the single family architectural styles of Piedmont. Avoid "motel style" apartment buildings which face the side yard rather than the street, and "podium" (or soft-story) units built over street-facing parking bays. Where feasible, multi-family buildings should be broken into clusters to reduce perceived size and bulk.

Policy 28.11: Design Review

Implement General Plan residential design policies through zoning and design review. Design guidelines, requirements, policies, and procedures should be stated clearly and applied consistently.

Policy 28.12: Creativity and Innovation

To the extent possible, avoid the imposition of artificial or excessive limitations in the interpretation of the city's design guidelines. The policies laid out herein should be carried out without eliminating the possibility for architectural creativity and innovative design.

DESIGN AND PRESERVATION ELEMENT



Seaview Avenue

- **Action 28.A: Zoning Ordinance Implementation**
Apply the development standards in the zoning ordinance, including setback, height, floor area ratio, and lot coverage, to help achieve the city's design policies.

See also Action 6.B on revising development standards to achieve City goals.

- **Action 28.B: Design Review Program**
Continue the design review process for new development, alterations, and additions.
- **Action 28.C: Design Review Amendments**
Consider methods to streamline the design review process in response to feedback from the 2007 General Plan Resident Survey, including additional exemptions for rear yard projects that comply with zoning standards and are minimally visible to neighbors. Adjustments to the fee schedule also should be considered to ensure that fees are logical and equitable.
- **Action 28.D: Design Media**
Develop additional media and educational tools to assist residents with navigating the design review process. This could include new or improved informational brochures and local access cable / web broadcasts that lay out design review requirements.

See Also Action 6.C on the City Planning and Building websites.

- **Action 28.E: Residential Design Guidelines Update**
Update Piedmont's 1988 Residential Design Guidelines. At minimum, the Guidelines document should be given a more contemporary look, and reformatted to reflect current graphic design standards. As needed, the guidelines should also be assessed and a determination should be made about which guidelines have proven to be effective and which should be modified or eliminated altogether. Two key issues that could be added are special provisions for structures on: (a) steep hillside lots, and (b) small (less than 5,000 square feet) lots. In addition, the guidelines should establish priorities so that the relative importance of habitable space, decks, porches, garages and other building elements are defined; and the treatment of setbacks is better articulated.

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Use landscaping to soften the appearance of buildings, frame desirable views, screen undesirable views, and buffer potentially incompatible uses.

- *Action 28.F: Commercial, Mixed Use, and Multi-Family Guidelines*
Expand the City's design guidelines to address commercial, mixed use, and multi-family residential development. Although the number of lots zoned for these uses is small, there are currently no adopted design guidelines for them.

Goal 29: Yards and Landscapes **Encourage well-maintained residential yards that enhance the park-like image of the city.**

Policies and Actions

Policy 29.1: Conserving Residential Yards

Recognize the importance of yards to the overall balance and composition of Piedmont neighborhoods. Avoid overbuilding or excessive coverage of yards with structures.

Policy 29.2: Landscape Design

Use landscaping to soften the appearance of buildings, frame desirable views, screen undesirable views, buffer potentially incompatible uses, and maintain an attractive streetscape. Landscape design should fit the surrounding context and complement the city's natural landscape.

See also policies in the Natural Resources and Sustainability Element on conserving large, mature trees; and policies on the use of drought-tolerant and native plants.

Policy 29.3: Front Yard Enclosures

Regulate front yard fences, walls, and equipment enclosures so that the open quality of Piedmont's streetscape is maintained. Enclosure of front yards should be discouraged except in rare instances due to traffic, topography, lack of alternative outdoor living space, or other unique site circumstances.

Policy 29.4: Maintaining Privacy

In lieu of fences, encourage the use of landscaping to define private outdoor areas on corner lots and in the front yards of properties with little or no usable rear yard space.

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Olive Avenue

Policy 29.5: Fence and Wall Design

Encourage fences and walls to be designed in a way that complements the architecture of adjoining residences. Adverse visual effects of fences and walls on adjacent properties should be minimized.

Policy 29.6: Retaining Walls

Minimize the visual prominence of retaining walls by requiring construction in a stepped or terraced fashion where feasible. Landscaping should be used as necessary to minimize the visual impact of larger walls.

Policy 29.7: Driveway and Parking Location

Locate driveways and off-street parking areas in a manner that minimizes their visual prominence and avoids front yards dominated by parked cars, paved surfaces, and garage doors. Driveways should also be located to minimize the need for grading, paving, and tall retaining walls.

Policy 29.8: Exterior Lighting

Discourage excessive or overly bright exterior lighting and lighting which could interfere with motorist safety. Exterior yard lighting should be designed to avoid spillover on to adjacent properties.

Policy 29.9: Sight Obstructions

Avoid landscape designs that create safety hazards, impair driver visibility, or create the potential for conflicts between pedestrians and motorists, especially on driveways and at intersections.

▪ *Action 29.A: Landscape Guidelines*

Consider developing landscape guidelines to assist residents with plant selection and design concepts. The guidelines should achieve multiple city goals, including the greater use of native plants, conservation of Piedmont's urban forest, and reduction of fire hazards, as well aesthetic improvements.

See also Action 15.A on Bay-friendly landscaping

See also Policy 19.2 on maintaining "defensible space" around residences and using less flammable plants for landscaping on fire-prone hillsides.

▪ *Action 29.B: Fence and Wall Guidelines*

Update provisions in the 1988 Residential Design Guidelines addressing fences and retaining walls.

DESIGN AND PRESERVATION ELEMENT

Identifying Archaeological Resources

Although there are no known archaeological resources in Piedmont, the city is located in an area that was inhabited by Native Americans for hundreds of years before European settlement. There is a possibility resources could be discovered during construction. Archaeological resources include **prehistoric** materials and **historic** materials.

Prehistoric materials may include flaked-stone tools (e.g., projectile points, knives, choppers) or obsidian, chert, or quartzite tool-making debris; midden (i.e., darkened soil containing heat-affected rock, ash and charcoal, shellfish remains, and cultural materials); and stone milling equipment (e.g., mortars, pestles, handstones).

Historical materials might include wood, stone, concrete, or adobe footings, walls and other structural remains; debris-filled wells or privies; and deposits of wood, metal, glass, ceramics, and other refuse.

- **Action 29.C: Nuisance Abatement**
Enforce city ordinances to abate weeds, debris, litter, and other property nuisances.
- **Action 29.D: Street Sweeping**
Conduct regular street sweeping to keep streets and curb areas free of leaves, litter, and other debris. Amend the street sweeping schedule as needed.

Goal 30: Archaeological Resources Protect Piedmont's archaeological resources.

Policies and Actions

Policy 30.1: Archaeological Resource Protection

Ensure that future construction and/ or earth movement does not result in the loss of important archaeological resources (see text box at left).

- **Action 30.A: Procedures for Managing Archaeological Resources**
Implement the following procedure in the event that archaeological deposits or features are discovered and/or disturbed: (1) Work within 50 feet of the discovery should cease until the find is flagged, secured, and assessed by a qualified archaeologist. (2) If the find is determined to be isolated or recent, then construction may resume. If it is potentially significant, appropriate mitigation measures should be developed and the City and property owner should be notified. Movement of significant materials by personnel other than a qualified archaeologist should be prohibited. (3) Following resolution, a report documenting the methods, findings, and recommendations of the archaeologist should be prepared.
- **Action 30.B: Procedures for Managing Native American Remains**
Follow accepted protocol in the event that human remains from the period of pre-European settlement are encountered during construction. This includes halting work in the immediate area until the Alameda County Coroner and California Native American Heritage Commission have been contacted. As appropriate, it may also include contact with the Most Likely Descendant to make recommendations for the respectful treatment of remains and related burial goods, and accompanying documentation.

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Wetmore House (1878)

Goal 31: Historic Preservation

Identify, preserve, and maintain Piedmont’s cultural and historic resources and recognize these resources as an essential part of the city’s character and heritage.

Policies and Actions

Policy 31.1: Comprehensive Approach to Preservation

Take a comprehensive approach to historic preservation in Piedmont, considering cultural history as well as architectural history, neighborhoods as well as individual buildings, the natural landscape as well as the built environment, and archaeological resources as well as living history.

Policy 31.2: Preserving Historic Resources

Ensure that planning and building decisions, including zoning and design review approvals, are sensitive to historic resources and promote the conservation of Piedmont’s historic neighborhoods. The demolition of historically important structures shall be strongly discouraged.

Policy 31.3: Context-Sensitive Design

Ensure that the repair, maintenance, and expansion of Piedmont’s historically important structures uses appropriate materials and architectural details and respects historic context.

Policy 31.4: Restoration

Promote the restoration of original period details to older Piedmont homes and where feasible, the modification of exterior alterations that were unsympathetic to the original design of the home.

Policy 31.5: Older Public Buildings

Sustain exemplary standards of stewardship for historic buildings owned by the city, including Piedmont City Hall and the Community Hall. Ensure that the rehabilitation of older public buildings adheres to generally accepted preservation standards.

Policy 31.6: Historic Landscapes

Preserve important historic landscape features, including parks, landscaped traffic islands, and neighborhood entry pillars dating back to Piedmont’s early subdivisions. Ensure that new public works such as street lights, street furniture, and sidewalks are compatible with the historic context of Piedmont’s neighborhoods.

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In the event that a historically important structure is destroyed by fire or earthquake, or is deemed unsafe and in need of replacement, encourage the new structure to respect the historic architectural character and form of the building it replaces.

Policy 31.7: Adaptive Reuse

Where it is no longer feasible to continue using an older building for its originally intended use, encourage adaptive reuse of the structure rather than demolition and replacement

Policy 31.8: Replacement of Historic Structures

In the event that a historically important structure is destroyed by fire or earthquake, or is deemed unsafe and in need of replacement, encourage the new structure to respect the historic architectural context.

Policy 31.9: Recent Past

Anticipate the need to recognize and preserve structures from the “recent past”, that is, the “California modern” era between 1945 and 1960.

- ***Action 31.A: State Historic Building Code***
Allow the use of the State Historic Building Code in appropriate circumstances to achieve the preservation of important historic structures, provided that public health and safety are assured.
- ***Action 31.B: Historic Preservation Ordinance***
Consider adopting a historic preservation ordinance that establishes a program of designating local landmarks and establishes a process for review of alterations to these landmarks.
- ***Action 31.C: Financial Incentives to Preservation***
Consider financial incentives to preservation, including state and federal historic preservation tax credits and tax relief programs, grants and funds for preservation, and Mills Act preservation contracts.

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Piedmont Park, 1870s

Goal 32: Preservation Advocacy and Awareness
Raise public awareness of Piedmont’s history and historic resources, both locally and throughout the Bay Area.

Policies and Actions

Policy 32.1: Documentation of Historic Resources

As resources allow, conduct surveys and inventories of Piedmont’s historic resources, using criteria and survey methods that are consistent with state and federal guidelines.

Policy 32.2: Preservation Education

Provide outreach to Piedmont residents on the cultural, physical, and social history of the city. Promote understanding not only of Piedmont history, but also of the community benefits of historic preservation.

Policy 32.3: Preservation Partnerships

Create partnerships between the City of Piedmont, the Piedmont Historical Society, the Piedmont Unified School District, other community groups, and the private sector to advance historic preservation activities in the city.

Policy 32.4: Historic Plaques and Markers

Support the identification of historically important properties through plaques, markers, and heritage trails.

Policy 32.5: Historic Resource Media

Encourage the development of books, videos, brochures, display exhibits, websites, and other media that increase awareness of historic sites and structures.

Policy 32.6: Preservation Events

Promote preservation awards, festivals, conferences, walking tours and other special events that celebrate Piedmont history and historic places.

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- ***Action 32.A: Roster of Historic Properties***
Work collaboratively with the Piedmont Historical Society to expand the locally maintained roster of historically important structures in Piedmont. The City's historic surveys and on-line data base of Piedmont properties should be expanded as resources allow. Future surveys should utilize generally accepted practices for defining what is "historic" and for cataloguing historic resources.
- ***Action 32.B: Nomination of Additional Properties***
Consider the nomination of additional Piedmont structures to the National Register of Historic Places, and the listing of structures or sites as California Points of Historical Interest, California Historical Landmarks, or California Register of Historical Resources landmarks. Any proposals for designation should be done systematically and consistently, in consultation with property owners and the general public.
- ***Action 32.C: Certified Local Government Program***
Study the feasibility of becoming a "Certified Local Government" (CLG) to promote historic preservation at the grass roots level. Becoming a CLG would make Piedmont eligible for federal and state funds that support preservation activities, including education and surveying.
- ***Action 32.D: Historic Data in the GIS***
As resources allow, expand information on historic resources as a data layer in the city's geographic information system (GIS).
- ***Action 32.E: Teaching Piedmont History***
Work collaboratively with the Piedmont Historical Society, the Piedmont Unified School District, and other community groups to maintain the history room at the Piedmont Recreation Center, and to continue efforts to teach Piedmont students about the history of the city.

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ELEMENT

