

# City of Albany



**TO:** ALBANY PLANNING & ZONING COMMISSION  
**FROM:** BARRY MILLER, GENERAL PLAN CONSULTANT  
**SUBJECT:** GENERAL PLAN UPDATE  
**DATE:** NOVEMBER 12, 2014

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## **REQUEST**

This is the 17<sup>th</sup> Planning and Zoning Commission Study Session on the Albany 2035 General Plan Update. This Study Session will cover the General Plan goals and policies for Environmental Hazards. An opportunity for public comment will be provided.

## **STAFF RECOMMENDATION**

This item is a study session and no Commission action is required.

## **SITE LOCATION**

The General Plan applies to all property in the City of Albany.

## **BACKGROUND**

The Planning and Zoning Commission has been conducting monthly or bi-monthly Study Sessions on the Albany 2035 General Plan Update for the last 18 months. About half of the Study Sessions thusfar have related to the Housing Element—including the 2007-2014 Housing Element, and more recently the 2015-2023 Housing Element Update. The remaining Study Sessions have been topic-based, covering a different chapter or “element” of the Plan at each session. To date, study sessions have been held on land use, transportation, housing, open space, and conservation/sustainability. The November 12 session will focus on the Environmental Hazards Element. A December session on the Community Services and Facilities Element is planned.

## **ENVIRONMENTAL HAZARDS ELEMENT**

### **Legal Requirements**

The Environmental Hazards Element covers two of the seven mandatory elements of the general plan: Safety and Noise. California Government Code 65302(g) requires that the General Plan include a “Safety” Element that addresses the protection of the community from:

- “risks associated with the effects of seismically induced surface rupture, ground shaking, ground failure, tsunami, seiche, and dam failure; slope instability leading to mudslides and landslides; subsidence; liquefaction; and other seismic hazards”;
- “risks of flooding to new development, evaluating whether new development should be located in flood hazard zones, and identifying construction methods or other methods to minimize damage if new development is located in flood hazard zones”; and
- “unreasonable risk of wildfire.”

Safety Elements also often address local emergency preparedness programs, protection of the public from hazardous materials, and other issues related to natural and man-made hazards (air and water pollution are also arguably safety issues, but they are addressed in the Conservation Element).

Government Code Section 65302(f) requires that the General Plan include a “Noise” Element that “identifies and appraises noise problems in the community.” The Element must include policies and implementation programs to address common sources of noise such as freeways, highways, airports, railroads, industrial uses, and stationary noise sources. The Noise Element is also intended to “serve as a guideline for compliance with the state’s noise insulation standards.”

Because the Safety Element and Noise Element both deal with environmental hazards, many communities have elected to address both topics in a single chapter of the General Plan. Albany’s 1992 Plan took this approach, and the new (2035) General Plan will also take this approach.

### **Environmental Hazards (Safety and Noise) Policy Audit**

As noted throughout the General Plan Update, the City’s is using the existing (1992) Plan and other adopted plans and programs as the benchmark for new General Plan policies and actions. The intent is not to “reinvent” existing policies, but to restate or update them in a way that reflects current regulations and issues. Accordingly, an “audit” of existing City of Albany Environmental Hazards policies has been prepared as part of this process.

Attachment “A” presents existing City safety and noise policies, drawing on the 1992 Albany General Plan, the Albany Hill Creekside Master Plan, and the UC Village Master Plan as sources. Additional safety and noise policies may be implicit in the Municipal Code, the City’s emergency preparedness plans, and other operating documents. Attachment A is organized alphabetically by topic, showing current policies for topics such as seismic hazards, noise, and flooding.

### **Draft Goals, Policies, and Actions**

Attachment “B” to this staff report includes the Draft Environmental Hazards policies. This is a Working Draft. Comments are encouraged and revisions are likely before a Draft General Plan is published.

Five goals have been identified:

1. Reduce the potential for injury, property damage, and loss of life resulting from earthquakes, landslides, floods, and other natural disasters.

2. Minimize wildfire hazards on Albany Hill and in other parts of the City where such hazards are present.
3. Reduce the exposure of present and future Albany residents and workers to hazardous materials.
4. Improve City programs and procedures for emergency preparedness and response.
5. Prevent the exposure of Albany residents to excessive noise levels.

Goals 1, 3, 4, and 5 are also expressed in the 1992 Plan. Goal 2 (wildfire) is a new goal, since the 1992 Plan did not explicitly address wildfire hazards. The 1992 General Plan included 21 policies on these topics. The proposed new policies are more comprehensive, and greater in number (there are 30). The new policies also have been accompanied by specific action programs in a few cases (there are 15 actions listed).

The “noise” policies are supplemented by a noise compatibility table which indicates the ambient noise levels that are acceptable for different land uses (see Page B-9, attached). The inclusion of such a table is strongly encouraged in General Plans, and is based on guidelines from the State Office of Noise Control and the State Office of Planning and Research. As part of the General Plan Update, this Element also will include a “noise contour diagram” showing the existing (2014) and projected future (2035) noise levels throughout Albany.

### **Commission Discussion**

The Planning and Zoning Commission will be asked to walk through the draft Environmental Hazards goals, policies, and actions at their study session. Commissioners should focus their review on Attachment “B” (Attachment “A” is being provided for reference only). As the Commission considers this material, the following questions will be asked:

- Do the policies as stated provide appropriate direction on the topic?
- Are there “missing” topics related to safety and noise that should be added?
- Are there additional implementation measures that should be considered?

An opportunity for public comment will be provided at the Study Session. Members of the public are encouraged to share their thoughts on the questions above.

**ATTACHMENT A:** Environmental Hazards Policy Audit

**ATTACHMENT B:** Draft Environmental Hazards Goals, Policies, and Actions

<b>ATTACHMENT A:</b>				
<b>AUDIT OF EXISTING (ENVIRONMENTAL HAZARDS) SAFETY AND NOISE POLICIES</b>				
	<b>Ref #</b>	<b>Existing statement</b>	<b>Topic</b>	<b>Evaluation</b>
92 GP	<b>Goal CHS-2</b>	<b>Strengthen and update City programs and procedures for emergency preparedness.</b>	Emergency Prep	OK as a goal--could also state as a goal to maximize disaster preparedness
92 GP	Pol CHS-2.1	Continue to develop a citywide disaster preparedness program to organize and train residents and area employees so they can assist themselves and others during the first 72 hours following an earthquake or other major disaster. This program should also include improved emergency procedures and assistance for businesses with disaster preparedness efforts.	Emergency Prep	OK to carry forward
92 GP	Pol CHS-2.2	Update and revise the Multi-hazard Functional Plan as appropriate, as part of the citywide earthquake preparedness program. As part of this effort, review the data and information available from other cities that responded to the 1989 Loma Prieta earthquake. In particular, the plan should include community and business resources that could be gathered to help with emergency response efforts (equipment, food, medical care, etc.).	Emergency Prep	Replace with a program to adopt a new emergency preparedness plan. Update references to Loma Prieta, and potentially replace with newer policies reflecting best practices
92 GP	Pol CHS-2.3	Develop the program, equipment, and procedures for an emergency operations center at the new Library/Community Center on Marin Avenue.	Emergency Prep	This is an action program, not a policy. Update to address post-disaster recovery and current status of EOC (adjacent to City Hall)
91 Creekside	P12-1, 3	Implement fuel treatments where ignitions are most likely to occur (grass near road, trailhead, etc.) and in locations adjacent to homes, heavy recreational use areas, or environmentally sensitive areas	Fire Prevention	Incorporate in broader citywide policy regarding vegetation management
91 Creekside	P12-4	Modify fuels in a way that facilitates access or creates locations where successful containment will have a greater benefit.	Fire Prevention	See statement below. Merge.
91 Creekside	P12-5	Maximize the opportunity for parallel (non fire-related) benefits when undertaking fire suppression programs, such as habitat restoration or reduced risk of falling, flooding, security, etc.	Fire Prevention	Good to have a policy to look for collateral benefits when doing vegetation management for fire suppression
91 Creekside	P12-7	Consider phased treatment to reduce fire hazard, with initial steps (such as tree removal, mechanical mowing, etc.) followed by subsequent actions (such as hand mowing)	Fire Prevention	Too detailed for GP
91 Creekside	P14	Create vertical separation between surface fuels and tree canopies by reducing ladder fuels, loose bark, hanging branches, tree understory, downed material with aerial components, etc. and horizontal separation to reduce rapid fire spread	Fire Prevention	Incorporate in text rather than as policy
91 Creekside	P14	Reduce dead materials and plants with high volatile oil, leaf duff, and hanging litter that is easily ignited	Fire Prevention	Incorporate in broader citywide policy regarding vegetation management

AUDIT OF EXISTING (ENVIRONMENTAL HAZARDS) SAFETY AND NOISE POLICIES				
Ref #	Existing statement	Topic	Evaluation	
91 Creekside  P14	Manage eucalyptus forest on Albany Hill to reduce the threat of wildfire. This should include a combination of removal of ladder fuels, managing groundcover and shrubs, removing loose or hanging bark, removing growth of previously cut stumps to reduce sucker growth, removing non-native trees such as acacia where they act as ladder fuels, managing accumulation of debris on the ground, maintaining the canopy to prevent invasive shrubs, and selectively thinning out denser stands.	Fire Prevention	Action program	
91 Creekside  P 15	Implement an annual treatment regimen for the Eucalyptus forest, grasslands, oak woodland, and toyon understory on Albany Hill to reduce fire hazard	Fire Prevention	Merge into action program above	
91 Creekside  P 15	Manage the Toyon understory on Albany Hill to maintain forest health and reduce overall fuel loads	Fire Prevention	Merge into action program above	
UCV- MP	Pol 7-13 Avoid development of residential and related buildings in the 100-year flood zone, or use construction or flood control measures to eliminate life-safety risks and or minimize the potential for structural damage.	Flooding	Valid as a citywide policy, potentially add policy to address sea level rise and related flood risks	
92 GP	Pol CHS-1.1 Conserve riparian and littoral habitat within the area 100 feet from creek centerline in appropriate areas both for its importance in reducing flood impacts and for its aesthetic value.	Flooding	OK, though this is more of a conservation issue with a side benefit of flood hazard reduction	
92 GP	<b>Goal CHS-1</b> <b>Minimize the impact of flooding, seismic, and geologic hazards on the citizens of Albany and their property.</b>	Hazards (general)	Conceivably separate out flooding as separate goal?	
92 GP	Pol CHS-1.6 Require review of the Environmental Hazards Map at the time a development is proposed. Assure implementation of appropriate mitigation measures if hazards are identified.	Hazards (general)	Frame as more general policy to consider hazards in site planning and design	
UCV- MP	Pol 7-20 Implement appropriate hazardous materials risk reduction measures.	HazMats	This is vague--not clear if it relates to construction or ongoing operations. Will be covered by GP policy on hazmat management	
92 GP	<b>Goal CHS-3</b> <b>Reduce the exposure of present and future Albany residents and workers to hazardous materials.</b>	HazMats	OK as a goal. Carry forward	
92 GP	Pol CHS-3.1 Evaluate and map the presence of hazardous materials at any development or redevelopment sites filled prior to 1974, or sites historically devoted to uses which may have involved hazardous wastes.	HazMats	Selection of 1974 baseline is unclear. In any event, replace with new policy to consider prior uses on the site, and evidence of groundwater or soil contamination (or hazardous building materials) in future planning/development	
92 GP	Pol CHS-3.2 Continue to participate and cooperate with the Alameda County Hazardous Waste Management Authority and the County Department of Environmental Health in their efforts to require proper storage and disposal of hazardous materials.	HazMats	Update with current agency names. Include policy on intergovernmental coordination. Should add state agencies as appropriate.	

AUDIT OF EXISTING (ENVIRONMENTAL HAZARDS) SAFETY AND NOISE POLICIES				
	Ref #	Existing statement	Topic	Evaluation
92 GP	Pol CHS-3.3	Support state and federal legislation to strengthen safety requirements for the transportation of hazardous materials.	HazMats	OK to carry forward.
UCV-MP	Pol 7-19	Implement appropriate noise reduction measures to protect proposed uses at University Village from excessive noise sources.	Noise	Part of larger citywide goal/ policy addressing protection of development from excessive noise
92 GP	Goal CHS-4	<b>Prevent exposure of Albany citizens to unacceptable noise levels and alleviate noise exposure problems where feasible.</b>	Noise	OK as a goal. Could be potentially be two goals.
92 GP	Pol CHS-4.1	Require preparation of an acoustical report for any project which would be exposed to noise levels in excess of those shown as "normally acceptable" in Figure 3 and Table 1 and as generally identified on the Noise Contours Map.	Noise	OK to include in new Plan.
92 GP	Pol CHS-4.2	Require mitigation measures for new residential, transient lodging, motel-hotel, school, library, church, and hospital development to reduce noise levels to "normally acceptable" levels.	Noise	Replace with broader policy to use the noise compatibility table when making land use decisions (it identifies normally acceptable and conditionally acceptable noise levels.)
92 GP	Pol CHS-4.3	Require post-construction monitoring and sign-off by an acoustical engineer to ensure that City guidelines have been achieved whenever mitigation measures to achieve conformance with the criteria in Figure 3 and Table 1 are imposed.	Noise	OK to carry forward, but is this done in practice? Unclear how this is administered and/or enforced. Is this an issue anywhere?
92 GP	Pol CHS-4.4	Require mitigation measures be incorporated into and an acoustical report be prepared for projects that would cause the following criteria to be exceeded or would have the potential for creating significant community annoyance: (a) the Ldn in existing residential areas to exceed an Ldn of 60 dB minimum; (b) the Ldn in existing residential areas to increase by 3 dB or more if the Ldn currently exceeds 60 dB; (c) noise levels that would be expected to create significant adverse community response.	Noise	May not need to be this prescriptive, if these provisions (or similar provisions) are included in the Municipal Code.
92 GP	Pol CHS-4.5	Work with Caltrans to evaluate and develop information on opportunities for improved noise insulation that could be given to residents wishing to reduce the noise levels at their homes.	Noise	Replace with broader policy about reducing exposure to highway noise through insulation, weatherization, etc. Consider an implementing program administered by Caltrans.
92 GP	Goal CHS-5	<b>Reduce the impact of BART noise.</b>	Noise-BART	Suggest broadening to include railroads, and addressing BART through one or more policies.
92 GP	Pol CHS-5.1	Develop a program to measure noise impacts along the BART corridor and develop a program to reduce identified noise problems.	Noise-BART	This is a program, rather than a policy. Policy would be to work with BART to reduce identified noise problems, and to use technology to run quieter trains.
92 GP	Pol CHS-5.2	Work with BART to install noise insulation improvements along the BART tracks as part of their overall capital improvement program during 1995-2000.	Noise-BART	Need to update and replace with equivalent program for the future (2015-2020)

<b>AUDIT OF EXISTING (ENVIRONMENTAL HAZARDS) SAFETY AND NOISE POLICIES</b>				
	<b>Ref #</b>	<b>Existing statement</b>	<b>Topic</b>	<b>Evaluation</b>
UCV-MP	Pol 7-11	Use Best Management Practices during construction for erosion control.	Seismic	OK to include an equivalent citywide policy
UCV-MP	Pol 7-12	Follow the University policy on seismic safety.	Seismic	Other General Plan policies will address this
92 GP	Pol CHS-1.2	Review and revise City codes and regulations to ensure that future construction of critical facilities (schools, police stations, fire stations, etc.) in Albany will be able to resist the effects of a 7.5 magnitude earthquake on the Hayward Fault and sustain only minor structural damage, remain operative, safe, and quickly be restored to service.	Seismic	Phrased as a program here, rather than a policy. Replace with policy that more broadly addresses retrofitting for seismic strength, and enforcement of Building Code to reduce risk in new construction.
92 GP	Pol CHS-1.3	Develop a seismic safety structural inventory and assessment program which reviews the structural integrity of all existing critical facilities and identifies what reconstruction would be necessary to meet a seismic safety standard. After this survey is completed, the City should evaluate the safest places to locate critical services and facilities.	Seismic	This is a program, not a policy. Was it done? Regardless, replace with policy to locate critical services and facilities in a manner that does not impair functionality after a major earthquake.
92 GP	Pol CHS-1.4	Require that a geologic investigation be conducted on new construction of critical facilities in areas identified on the Environmental Hazards Map as having medium-high to high susceptibility to ground failure during an earthquake.	Seismic	OK to carry forward. New General Plan will have updated versions of hazard maps
92 GP	Pol CHS-1.5	Develop an unreinforced masonry building program for commercial areas and multi-family residences. This program should be phased with the initial efforts aimed at determining the extent of risk to each identified building. In later phases, the City should focus efforts on strengthening or abating the most hazardous buildings and those with the highest occupancy loads. The program should also include various financing options and programs to aid private property owners in meeting the requirements.	Seismic	This is a program, not a policy. Per staff, it was done, but not all owners participated. Replace with policy to reduce the risk of structure failure in a major earthquake through various requirements and incentives to achieve retrofitting. Add a program to retrofit remaining URMs plus a program to retrofit soft story buildings.

**ATTACHMENT B**

**ALBANY 2035 DRAFT GENERAL PLAN  
ENVIRONMENTAL HAZARDS GOALS, POLICIES, AND ACTIONS**

**GOAL 1: HAZARD REDUCTION**

**Reduce the potential for injury, property damage, and loss of life resulting from earthquakes, landslides, floods, and other natural disasters.** *(Replaces 92 Plan Goal CHS-1)*

**Policy 1.1: Hazard-Sensitive Planning.** Ensure that future development is sited, designed, and constructed to minimize risks associated with earthquakes, flooding, landslides, and other natural hazards. Appropriate mitigation measures should be required to reduce hazard risks. *(Replaces 92 Plan CHS-1.6)*

*See Goal 4 for additional information on earthquake awareness, education, and preparedness.*

**Policy 1.2: Critical Facilities.** Ensure that critical public facilities such as City Hall, schools, the police station, and the fire station are designed and maintained in a manner that ensures their resilience and ability to function during and after a natural disaster. *(Replaces 92 Plan CHS-1.2)*

**Policy 1.3: Retrofits.** Strongly encourage the retrofitting of existing structures to reduce the risk of collapse and/or major damage and injury in an earthquake. As appropriate, the City may require seismic upgrading of structures when they are substantially rehabilitated or remodeled. *(new)*

**Policy 1.4: Soil-Related Hazards.** Use best management practices to reduce risks to structures, roads, and utilities associated with erosion, shrink-swell potential, subsidence, and other soil-related hazards. *(UCV MP Pol 7.11)*

**Policy 1.5: Building Codes.** Periodically update local building codes and regulations to incorporate emerging technologies and methods which reduce earthquake-related hazards. *(new)*

**Policy 1.6: Flood Plain Management.** Avoid development of structures in the 100-year flood zone. Where no other feasible alternative exists, use construction measures which reduce safety risks and minimize the potential for structure damage. *(UCV MP Pol 7.13)*



**Policy 1.7: Flood Control and Conservation.** Ensure that future projects to reduce flooding are compatible with and advance local conservation policies, including those to restore creeks and protect riparian habitat. Flood control measures should strive for solutions which restore natural features and protect the area extending 100 feet back on each side of creek centerlines, rather than replacing such features with engineered channels. *(Replaces 92 GP Policy CHD-1.1)*

*See the Conservation and Sustainability Element for additional policies on creek restoration and the protection of riparian areas.*

**Policy 1.8: Sea Level Rise.** Consider the effects of sea level rise on the long-term safety and viability of structures, utilities, and other improvements built in low-lying areas. *(new)*

#### *Implementing Actions*

**Action 1.A: Soil and Geological Reports.** Require soils and/or geologic reports for proposed development in areas with high susceptibility to ground failure during an earthquake, and in other areas with the potential risk of slope failure, landslides, or other geologic hazards. *(Replaces 92 GP Pol CHS-1.43)*

**Action 1.B: Unreinforced Masonry Buildings.** Continue efforts to retrofit the remaining Unreinforced Masonry Buildings in Albany. Various financing options and programs should be explored to assist private property owners in meeting current Building Code requirements. *(Replaces 92 GP Pol CHS-1.5)*

**Action 1.C: Soft-Story Buildings.** Prepare an updated inventory of Albany's soft-story buildings and develop incentives and other programs to assist owners in retrofitting such structures to improve their performance in a major earthquake. *(new)*

*Soft-story buildings are typically two to three story multi-family buildings with ground floor carports and other ground floor openings which require additional stability to withstand a major earthquake. Such structures have been identified as a vulnerable component of the City's building stock and would benefit from the installation of shear walls and other improvements to reduce the risk of collapse.*

**Action 1.D: Assessing Critical Facilities.** As part of the City's emergency preparedness planning, assess the structural integrity of critical public facilities and identify what additional measures might be needed to meet current seismic safety standards. *(Replaces Pol CHS-1.3)*

**GOAL 2: WILDFIRE PREVENTION**

**Minimize wildfire hazards on Albany Hill and in other parts of the City where such hazards are present.** *(new)*

**Policy 2.1: Vegetation Management.** Implement vegetation management and fuel reduction programs in the highest hazard areas on Albany Hill, including areas adjacent to homes and areas of heavy recreational use. *(Creekside Master Plan, P 12-1,3)*

**Policy 2.2: Collateral Benefits.** Maximize opportunities for collateral benefits associated with vegetation management projects, such as habitat restoration, increased security, and enhanced public access. *(Creekside Master Plan, P 12-4, 12-5)*

**Policy 2.3: Mutual Aid Agreements.** Work collaboratively with other jurisdictions to reduce wildfire hazards and respond to wildfire emergencies in the East Bay and elsewhere in California. *(new)*

**Policy 2.4: Defensible Space.** Ensure that private property owners in areas such as Albany Hill control weeds and other flammable vegetation around their homes in a manner that minimizes the risk of structure fires and threats to nearby properties. *(new)*

*IMPLEMENTING ACTIONS*

**Action 2.A: Albany Hill Eucalyptus Forest Management.** Manage the eucalyptus forest on Albany Hill to reduce the threat of wildfire. Consistent with the Albany Creekside Master Plan, this should include a combination of removing accumulated ground debris, managing ground cover and shrubs, removing loose or hanging bark, removing the growth of previously cut stumps, removing non-native trees such as acacia where they act as ladder fuels, maintaining the canopy to prevent invasive shrubs, and selectively thinning out denser stands. *(Creekside Master Plan, P 14)*

*See the Conservation and Sustainability Element for additional policies on vegetation management.*

**Action 2.B: Peak Load Water Supply.** Work with EBMUD to ensure that peak load water supply and water pressure is sufficient to respond to local fire emergencies. *(new)*

**GOAL 3: HAZARDOUS MATERIALS**  
**Reduce the exposure of present and future Albany residents and workers to hazardous materials.** *(Goal CHS-3)*

**Policy 3.1: Consideration of Prior Uses.** As part of the development review and approval process, consider potential risks associated with the previous uses of property that may have involved hazardous material handling, storage, or disposal. Require remediation where such hazards exist to ensure the health and safety of future residents and workers. *(Replaces Pol CHS-3.1)*

**Policy 3.2: Design of Storage and Handling Areas.** Ensure that hazardous material storage and handling areas are designed and operated to minimize the risk of environmental contamination and the potential for adverse health effects.

**Policy 3.3: Interagency Coordination.** Continue to work with Stopwaste.org, the Alameda County Waste Management Authority, the Alameda County Environmental Health Department, and state and federal agencies to ensure the safe storage, handling, and disposal of hazardous materials within Albany. *(Replaces Pol CHS-3.2)*

**Policy 3.4: Transportation Safety.** Support state and federal legislation which strengthens safety requirements for the transportation of hazardous waste by truck and rail through Albany and nearby cities. *(Replaces Pol CHS-3.3)*

**Policy 3.5: Hazardous Building Materials.** Coordinate with appropriate regulatory agencies and building owners to reduce potential hazards related to exposure to hazardous building materials, such as lead, mercury, and asbestos. Ensure that any hazardous materials removed during home renovations are properly handled and disposed. *(new)*

**Policy 3.6: Household Hazardous Waste.** Support expanded public education on household hazardous waste and the locations where such waste can be safely and properly disposed in Alameda and Contra Costa Counties. *(new)*

**Policy 3.7: Development Review.** Consider proximity to hazardous materials in the development review process. Zoning regulations and standards should ensure safe distances between businesses using hazardous materials and sensitive land uses such as housing. *(new)*

*IMPLEMENTING ACTIONS*

**Action 3.A: Public Education and Outreach.** Provide links from the City of Albany’s website to the websites of the County, State and federal agencies that regulate hazardous materials management. This should include a link to the State’s Envirostor data base, which includes archived reports on hazardous materials clean-up by address, and other data bases indicating where the use of hazardous materials has been permitted. *(new)*

**Action 3.B: CUPA Programs.** Continue to work with the Alameda County Department of Environmental Health in its capacity as the Certified Unified Program Agency (CUPA) for hazardous materials management programs in Albany, including implementation of requirements for Hazardous Materials Business Plans, Risk Management Plans, and hazardous waste permitting. *(new)*

**GOAL 4: EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS**  
**Improve City programs and procedures for emergency preparedness and response.** *(Goal CHS-2)*

**Policy 4.1: Response and Recovery Program.** Maintain an active and effective City of Albany emergency response and recovery program that provides direction and identifies responsibilities following a disaster.

**Policy 4.2: Resident and Business Preparedness.** Develop and expand local efforts to organize and train area residents and employees so they can assist themselves and others during the first 72 hours following an earthquake or major disaster. *(Replaces Pol CHS-2.1)*

**Policy 4.3: Emergency Operations Center.** Maintain a dedicated Emergency Operations Center to serve as the command point for emergency service delivery and communication. As directed by the Emergency Response Plan, identify supplemental sites (such as schools and/or the Library) where emergency services can be delivered and supplies can be stored. *(Replaces Pol CHS-2.3)*

**Policy 4.4: Utility Resilience.** Work with local gas, electric, cable, water, sewer, and other utility providers to maintain and retrofit their facilities and ensure their ability to function or be quickly restored following a disaster. *(new)*

**Policy 4.5: Responding to the Needs of a Diverse Community.** Ensure that emergency preparedness information is available in the primary non-English languages spoken in Albany, and that preparedness programs recognize the special needs of seniors and persons with disabilities. The City and Fire Department should work with local cultural institutions and special needs service providers to improve preparedness. *(new)*

*IMPLEMENTING ACTIONS*

**Action 4.A: Updated Emergency Preparedness Plan.** Update and revise Albany's emergency preparedness planning documents. As part of this effort, review current data and information on hazard levels, existing emergency response protocol, and the preparedness plans of major employers in the community. Emergency plans should be consistent with federal Standard Emergency Management System (SEMS) guidelines, and the standards used to determine funding eligibility for emergency planning, relief, and recovery. *(Replaces CHS-2.2)*

**Action 4.B: Upgrades to Critical Facilities.** Continue efforts to upgrade the City's schools and essential service facilities to ensure that they remain functional after a major disaster. *(new)*

**Action 4.C: CERT Training.** Continue the City of Albany and Albany Fire Department Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) and Albany Local Emergency Response Training (ALERT) training programs for residents. *(new)*

**Action 4.D: Emergency Supplies.** Regularly acquire, and as needed replace, emergency equipment, supplies, and communication systems, consistent with local emergency response plans. *(new)*

**Action 4.E: Drills.** Conduct periodic training exercises and disaster drills to test the effectiveness of local emergency response procedures. *(new)*

*See the Community Services and Facilities Element for additional policies on fire protection and emergency medical response.*

**GOAL 5: NOISE MANAGEMENT**

**Prevent the exposure of Albany residents to excessive noise levels.** *(Goal CHS-4)*

**Policy 5.1: Noise-Sensitive Design.** Ensure that ambient noise levels are considered in the design and planning of new development, including new construction and major alterations. Where appropriate, require noise reduction measures to reduce the exposure of residents and workers to excessive noise levels. *(Replaces Pol CHS-4.3, see also UCV MP)*

*Noise compatibility guidelines published by the California Office of Planning and Research (Table 1) should be used to establish the outdoor ambient noise levels that are “normally acceptable,” “conditionally acceptable,” and “normally unacceptable” for the development of different types of land uses. This table is adopted by reference as part of the Albany General Plan (see P. B-9). Typical design measures to reduce exposure to noise include insulation, double-paned windows, siting of sensitive activities away from nearby noise sources, landscaping, sound muffling devices, and acoustical barriers.*

**Policy 5.2: Noise-Generating Land Uses.** Establish conditions of approval for new activities with the potential to generate significant noise, and require ongoing or periodic monitoring to ensure that these conditions are being met. *(Replaces Pol CHS-4.3)*

**Policy 5.3: Domestic Noise Sources.** Maintain a Noise Ordinance as part of the Albany Municipal Code to regulate and reduce sources of domestic noise in the city, such as construction, business operations, and yard maintenance. *(new)*

**Policy 5.4: Roadway Noise.** Continue to work with Caltrans to reduce noise associated with traffic on the I-80 and I-580 freeways and other Caltrans facilities such as San Pablo Avenue. Programs to assist residents and businesses near these highways with reducing interior noise levels should be encouraged. *(Replaces Pol CHS-4.5)*

*See also Transportation Element Policy 5.7 on the designation of truck routes to reduce truck traffic (and associated noise) in residential areas.*

**Policy 5.5: BART Noise.** Continue to work with BART to reduce noise levels associated with passing trains. This should include the use of technologies and equipment that result in lower noise levels, as well as measures to absorb sound or insulate sensitive uses along the BART right-of-way. *(Replaces Goal CHS-5, and Pol CHS-5.1 and 5.2)*

**Policy 5.6: Train Noise.** Support measures to reduce train noise and vibration associated with rail traffic along the Union Pacific Rail line on the west side of Albany. *(new)*

*IMPLEMENTING ACTIONS*

**Action 5.A: Noise Ordinance Update.** Periodically review the Albany Noise Ordinance to ensure that is consistent with best practices in noise regulation, addresses current noise issues, and is consistent with the General Plan noise compatibility guidelines in Table 1. *(new)*

**Action 5.B: Acoustical Study Requirements.** Require preparation of an acoustical study for any project which exceeds the “normally compatible” noise levels in the Land Use Compatibility table, based on ambient noise measurements and the Noise Contour Diagrams. The City may also require acoustical studies for projects that meet the noise compatibility guidelines but have the potential to create a significant adverse community response. *(replaces Pol CHS-4.1 and CHS-4.4)*

**Action 5.C: Insulation Standards.** Continue to enforce, and update as needed, insulation standards for all new residential construction in order to maintain an interior standard of 45 dBA Ldn in all habitable rooms for dwelling units. *(new)*

**TABLE 1: NOISE COMPATIBILITY GUIDELINES FOR ALBANY (PROPOSED)**

Land Uses	Interior CNEL or L <sub>dn</sub> (dBA)	Exterior Noise Exposure, CNEL or L <sub>dn</sub> (dBA)					
		55	60	65	70	75	80
Residential-Low Density Single-Family, Duplex, Mobile Homes	45*	Normally Acceptable	Normally Acceptable	Normally Acceptable	Normally Acceptable	Normally Unacceptable	Clearly Unacceptable
Residential-Multiple Family	45*	Normally Acceptable	Normally Acceptable	Normally Acceptable	Normally Acceptable	Normally Unacceptable	Clearly Unacceptable
Transient Lodging, Motels, Hotels	45*	Normally Acceptable	Normally Acceptable	Normally Acceptable	Normally Acceptable	Normally Unacceptable	Clearly Unacceptable
Schools, Libraries, Churches, Hospitals, Nursing Homes	45*	Normally Acceptable	Normally Acceptable	Normally Acceptable	Normally Acceptable	Normally Unacceptable	Clearly Unacceptable
Auditoriums, Concert Halls, Amphitheaters	--	Normally Acceptable	Normally Acceptable	Normally Acceptable	Normally Unacceptable	Clearly Unacceptable	Clearly Unacceptable
Sports Arena, Outdoor Spectator Sports	--	Normally Acceptable	Normally Acceptable	Normally Acceptable	Normally Unacceptable	Clearly Unacceptable	Clearly Unacceptable
Playgrounds, Neighborhood Parks	--	Normally Acceptable	Normally Acceptable	Normally Acceptable	Normally Unacceptable	Clearly Unacceptable	Clearly Unacceptable
Golf Courses, Riding Stables, Water Recreation, Cemeteries	--	Normally Acceptable	Normally Acceptable	Normally Acceptable	Normally Unacceptable	Clearly Unacceptable	Clearly Unacceptable
Office Buildings, Businesses, Commercial and Professional	50	Normally Acceptable	Normally Acceptable	Normally Acceptable	Normally Unacceptable	Clearly Unacceptable	Clearly Unacceptable
Industrial, Manufacturing, Utilities, Agricultural	--	Normally Acceptable	Normally Acceptable	Normally Acceptable	Normally Unacceptable	Clearly Unacceptable	Clearly Unacceptable



**Normally Acceptable:**  
Specified land use is satisfactory based upon the assumption that any buildings involved are of normal conventional construction, without any special noise insulation requirements.



**Normally Unacceptable:**  
New construction or development should generally be discouraged. If new construction does proceed, a detailed analysis of the noise reduction requirements must be made and needed noise insulation features included in the design.



**Conditionally Acceptable:**  
New construction or development should be undertaken only after a detailed analysis of the noise reduction requirements is made and the needed noise insulation features are included in the design. Conventional construction, but with closed windows and fresh air supply systems or air conditioning will normally suffice.



**Clearly Unacceptable:**  
New construction or development generally should not be undertaken.

\* Noise level requirement with closed windows, mechanical ventilation, or other means of ventilation shall be provided per Chapter 12 Section 1205 of the Building Code.

Source: State of California General Plan Guidelines, 2003.