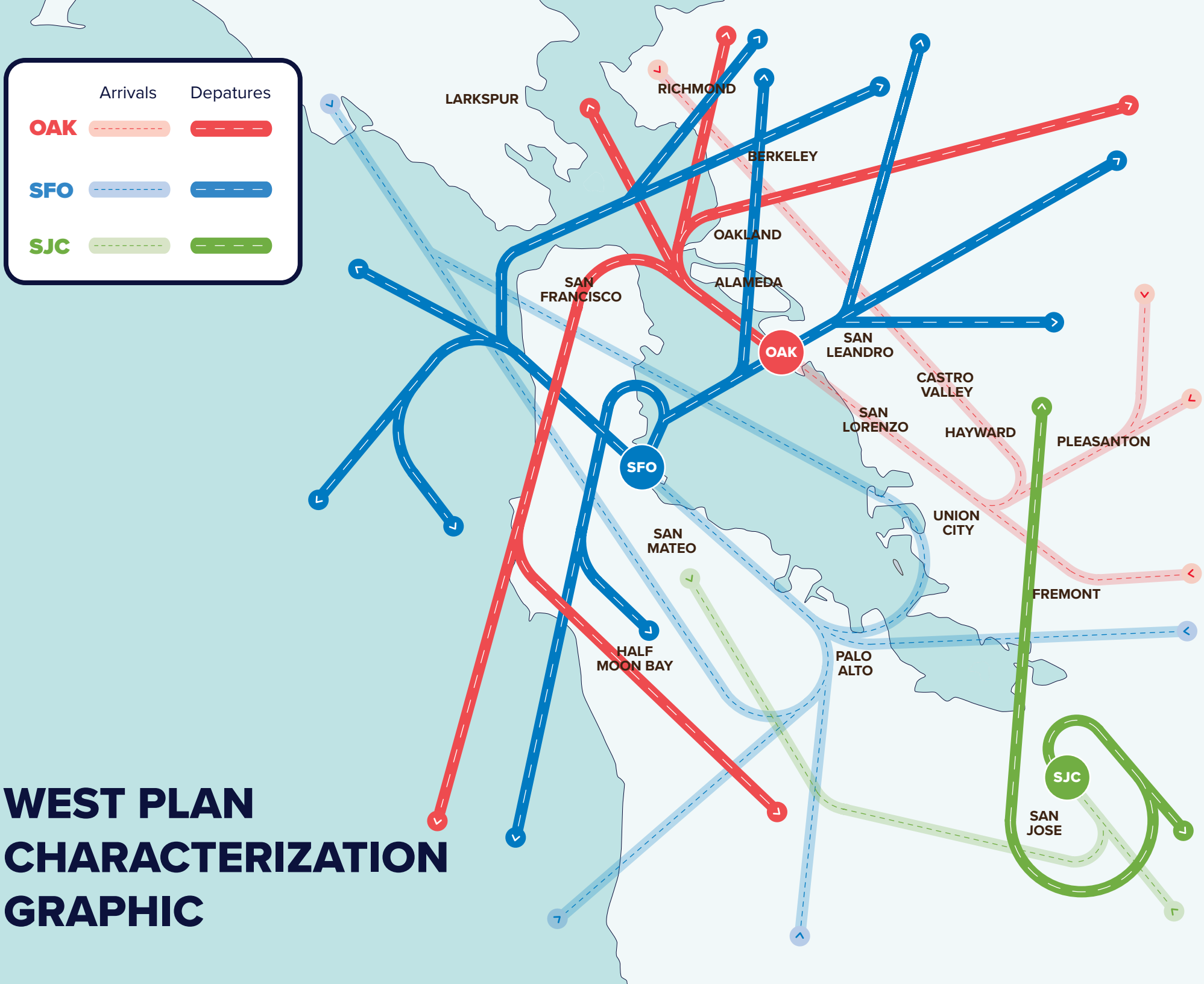
Bay Area Aircraft Arrival and Departure Route Information

Winds in the Bay Area predominantly blow from west to east. As aircraft generally depart and arrive into the wind, during these times, the “West Plan” is in effect. When wind direction in the Bay Area reverses and is from the southeast, which most often occurs during stormy weather, the”southeast Plan” is in effect. Historical data collected by the Airport Noise Management Office demonstrates that 91.5 percent of all arrivals and departures occur when the Airport is operating in the West Plan, which generally involves arrivals from the southeast and departures to the northwest. During summer months, when there is little storm activity, nearly all operations are on the West Plan.

Because arrival and departure patterns differ under the two plans, noise related to aircraft events is experienced differently depending on which plan is in effect. Under West Plan conditions, areas to the north of the Airport experience noise related to departing aircraft, whereas areas to the south experience aircraft arrival noise. Under the Southeast Plan, the opposite effects occur. During the night, from 10:00 p.m. to 7:00 a.m., there is a lower amount of air traffic, which permits the usage of specific procedures, such as overwater operations, that are less disruptive to nearby residents. In all conditions, FAA has established flight procedures that are intended to keep aircraft safely separated.

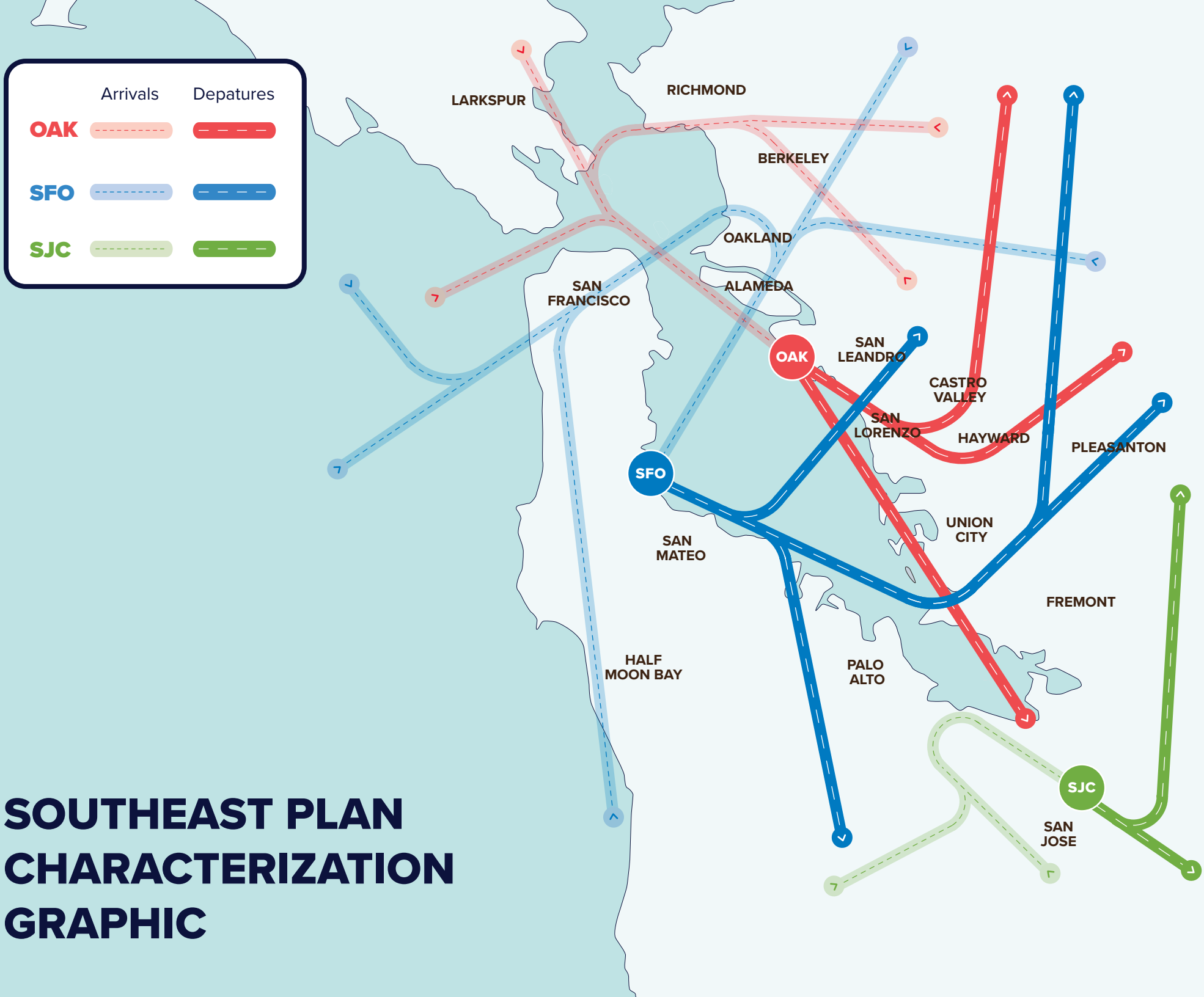
Below, are flight track maps displaying Bay Area air traffic patterns associated with Oakland Airport (OAK), San Francisco International Airport (SFO), and Mineta San Jose International Airport (SJC) during the West Plan, the Southeast Plan, and nighttime operations.

I ✈ OAK



WEST PLAN CHARACTERIZATION GRAPHIC

WEST NIGHTTIME PLAN CHARACTERIZATION GRAPHIC



SOUTHEAST PLAN CHARACTERIZATION GRAPHIC