



Land Use and Character

Chapter 3

Williams is expected to grow to a population of around 9,822 persons by the Year 2030.¹ This represents an increase of about 4,535 persons reflecting an overall growth of 185 percent of the City’s current population. This is significant for a community of this size. With this amount and rate of growth, the community may expect the challenges of the added infrastructure requirements (new streets, sidewalks and utility and drainage lines), provisions for increased services and the corresponding facilities and personnel (police, fire, EMS, code enforcement, etc.), and heightened demands for civic spaces and quality of life amenities (parks, trails, community and recreation centers, cultural and entertainment venues). All these will be expected while also protecting and improving the value and integrity of existing neighborhoods and aiming to preserve the community’s identity and small-town atmosphere.

The forthcoming growth also provides a great opportunity for the City and its residents to cast a vision through this General Plan, and then put in place the policies, practices, and regulatory instruments to facilitate its successful implementation. In this context, this chapter assumes essential importance. This is so as the policies and strategies outlined here, together with the revision of the zoning ordinance (and subsequent, warranted revisions to the land development regulations), will guide the type, pattern, and character of future development. The decisions that are made through this plan will have long-lasting and significant effects on the quality and sustainability of the community and its development.

¹ The methods of projection outlined in Chapter Two, Background Analysis, place Williams 2030 population in a range between 7,664 and 12,048 persons, with a midpoint estimate of 9,822 persons. The midpoint was chosen by consensus of the Comprehensive Plan Advisory Committee at their meeting on June 14, 2010.

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Planning Considerations and Purpose

Residents of Williams were instrumental in facilitating the development of the vision, goals, and recommendations of this chapter. Specifically, they articulated their pride in this community and its many accomplishments, among them: the preservation and reuse of Old Williams High School as the Sacramento Valley Museum, attraction of Woodland Community College, sustaining the integrity downtown, a quality school district, and pro-activeness in their plans for business and industrial expansion. At the same time, they cited the needed areas of improvement and what they would like to accomplish. As related to this chapter, those participating in the early involvement meetings identified the following as future planning considerations:²

- The desire to build out the new business park, with noted success in attracting the college as well as other promising inquiries;
- The presence and importance of agriculture to the local economy and the community's heritage;
- Opportunities for future improvement of Old Highway 20, creating new opportunities for increased regional mobility and economic development;
- Study of alternatives and plans to alleviate flooding problems and contain the limits of the 100-year floodplain and thereby alleviate both property and structural flooding;
- Protection of the integrity of the original town neighborhoods, including preservation of its unique character.
- Desire for the integration of common open space and provision of parks and trails in new development;
- Redevelopment and improvement of the commercial corridors along 6th and 7th Streets stretching from the City limits on the north and south, and particularly including the community's gateways and key entrance corridors;
- Rehabilitation and reuse of empty downtown buildings along with further expansion of downtown to retain it as the commercial center and strengthen it as a local and regional destination;
- Growing in a well planned and fiscally responsible manner and in line with an orderly extension of facilities and services; and
- Opportunity to expand the sphere of influence to protect the City's interests with respect to peripheral development.

Given the above, the purpose of this chapter is to establish the necessary policy guidance that will enable the City to plan effectively for future growth and development, while keeping in mind the existing land use context. Sound and continuous planning is essential to ensure that Williams is not only prepared for serving the anticipated infrastructure needs, but also preserving and enhancing its community character.

² Key person and small group interviews were conducted by the consultant team in February 2010.



The policies and guidance of this chapter, together with the Future Land Use and Growth Plan, will aid the decisions of the Planning and Zoning Commission and City Council. To ensure the outcomes envisioned and expressed by this General Plan, it is important to follow the guiding principles and policies set forth in this and the remaining elements of the plan. Significant land use decisions may include those that affect the boundaries of the corporate limits or sphere of influence, the consistency of zone change requests with the land use plan (and corresponding zoning map), requests for service or infrastructure extensions either outside of the City limits or in an area not contemplated for development by this plan, review of tentative maps, or amendments to the implementing regulations, among many others.

Lastly, the purpose of this chapter is to fulfill the requirements of the California Government Code, which requires “land use” among the mandatory general plan elements.³ The law requires a land use element that designates the general distribution, location, and extent of the uses of land for housing, business, industry, open space (including agriculture, natural resources, recreation, and enjoyment of scenic beauty), education, public buildings and grounds, solid and liquid waste disposal facilities, and other public and private uses. The element also must identify areas that are subject to flooding. Each of these are addressed in this chapter.

Context and Environs

It is important to first understand the community context before establishing a plan for the future. This section recognizes Williams’s place and role in the larger region, together with the assets and constraints of its natural and built environments. These are described in further detail below.

THE REGION

The City of Williams is settled in the Sacramento Valley between the first foothills of the Coast Range on the west and the Colusa Basin on the east. It is a free-standing community, meaning that it is surrounded by open, agricultural lands with the nearest communities of Maxwell, Colusa, and Arbuckle being eight miles north, 11 miles east, and 12 miles south, respectively. The community has generally maintained a compact urban form as development has mostly occurred in a contiguous manner. While unincorporated South Williams has developed, to date, with a countryside character, the most recent tentative maps (including Mayberry Ranch, McCarl Ranch, and George Estates) continue a similar pattern to that of the original town area. Each of the proposed developments is within or directly abutting the City limits.



By way of its informal arrangement of larger lots and small acreages that are intermixed with orchards and small pastures, South Williams reflects a “countryside” character.

³ Section 65302, California Government Code

As defined by the U.S. department of Housing and Urban Development (HD), **Low Impact Development (LID)** is an approach to land development that uses various land planning and design practices and technologies to simultaneously conserve and protect natural resource systems and reduce infrastructure costs. LID still allows land to be developed, but in a cost effective manner that helps mitigate potential environmental impacts. A primary goal of LID is to mimic pre-development site hydrology by using site design techniques that store, infiltrate, evaporate, and detain runoff. These techniques help to address runoff volume and frequency and water quality issues to receiving waters and to ensure groundwater recharge.

As the community grows during the 20-year horizon of this plan it will become increasingly important for development to occur in a well-planned and fiscally responsible manner. This is for the purposes of efficient infrastructure and municipal service provision, continuity of the street and pedestrian system, and preservation of small-town character and a well defined community identity. Haphazard development would strain the City's fiscal resources and ability to provide utility services while deteriorating its highly regarded small-town atmosphere. For this reason, the City must make good and sound decisions regarding the pattern and timing of development, and its quality, sustainable character.

THE NATURAL ENVIRONS

William's topography is relatively flat with gradient averages between 0.05 and 0.50 percent. As a result, there is limited means of alleviating flooding during high volume storm events. The 100-year floodplain inundates the whole undeveloped northern portion of the City limits and sphere of influence, extending into town in a few low-lying "finger" areas. The tributaries of the Freshwater Creek Basin include the City's most significant natural drainage corridor, Salt Creek, together with Spring Creek and Freshwater Creek that both merge into Salt Creek. (Refer to *Figure 2.15, Storm Drainage System* in Chapter 2, Background Studies)

The future land use pattern and the character of development will influence stormwater flows. With good planning and improved development standards, the design of future developments may help alleviate existing flooding conditions. As an example, an area designated as Suburban Residential requires more open space, with increasing percentages depending on the development type. This open space may facilitate low impact development (LID) and/or the use of detention (or retention) to meet pre-development runoff conditions. While this will require detailed engineering it is important to consider the land use plan (and corresponding zoning) in this context.

DEVELOPMENT PATTERN

The pattern of development is oriented along the major corridors, including mostly industrial and limited commercial development adjacent to I-5 and the CFNR alignments downtown retail/office and public uses along 7th Street both north and south of E Street, and street-oriented commercial uses along E Street extending from 11th Street across I-5 to the Glenn-Colusa Irrigation Canal. There are industrial and ag-industrial uses to the southeast along Husted Road. The community is surrounded by agricultural lands. The remaining areas of the community are residentially developed with mostly single family detached dwellings, together with a few attached and multiple family dwellings (including duplexes, senior living, migrant housing, and apartments).

The developed pattern is broadly bound by Old Highway 20 on the north, Husted Road on the east, Davis Road on the west, and Theatre Road (as extended



westward) on the south. The community is divided by the I-5 and CFNR corridors, which act as barriers for both vehicular travel and particularly, pedestrian foot-traffic. Old Highway 20 and the extents of the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) floodplain create significant barriers to the north, forming an artificial development boundary for the foreseeable future. Although to a much lesser extent, E Street forms a pedestrian barrier due to its relative traffic volumes and speeds. To date, the Glenn-Colusa Irrigation Canal has formed an edge to development, although development is expected in the forthcoming business park and a tentative map⁴ has been received for the triangular area bound by the canal, E Street, and Husted Road. Lastly, portions of South Williams create a barrier to development given the existing ownership and land use patterns. As development occurs, it is important to acknowledge and plan accordingly for these natural and artificial barriers, which, together, define the areas that are most suitable for future growth.

While the general patterns of use are fairly well defined by the street and block system, there are many instances where residential and nonresidential uses abut one another or are in close proximity. Depending on the nature of the use and its scale and intensity this may present a nuisance for the use of lesser intensity. In these current situations, there is no form of separation or buffering to protect against adjacent incompatible uses. Since these uses must address one another at certain locations, the means by which the abutting uses are designed and buffered is important to protect the value and enjoyment of individual properties. This may be accomplished by way of building and site design standards (e.g. locations of building and parking, access, and service areas; lighting and noise standards, building height and scale limitations, etc.), bufferyard treatments, or through provisions of open space and separation.



The treatment between adjacent incompatible uses is an important land use and regulatory consideration.

Land Use

The City currently uses a conventional land use system whereby the land use designations relate to the general use of land and broad definitions of density/intensity. For instance, the designations include agricultural exclusive; rural residential; residential low and medium density; residential multi-family; residential-professional; retail, heavy, and highway commercial; light and heavy manufacturing; open space; public use; and urban reserve. Similarly, the zoning ordinance is largely based on use types, such as residential one-family, two-family, and multiple-family. With a focus on the use of land there are few or no provisions in either the plan or development regulations that affect the character of development. (Refer below to “Character of the Built Environment” for a definition of character and an explanation of how it differs from land use.)

⁴ A tentative map for Valley Ranch Unit 3 has been submitted to the City.

The existing land use inventory is displayed in *Figure 2.12, Existing Land Use*, located in Chapter 2, Background Studies. The land use designations relate to the use of property within the City limits and SOI and, to the extent discernible, the existing character of development. The existing land use categories are described as follows:

- **Agriculture** refers to the peripheral areas that are used for agricultural purposes, where residences and farm buildings are clearly an accessory to the principal farm operations. By their purpose and nature the character of the agricultural areas is rural.
- **Traditional residential** describes the original town neighborhoods. This area is uniquely defined because, while the use is single family, its character is distinguishable and wholly different from the more recently developed Nicolaus Estates and Valley Ranch. As a result, this area must be handled in a way that will preserve its character. (see **Illustrative 3.1:** Similar Uses in Different Character Settings on Page 3.7)
- **Auto-urban residential** refers to the balance of the residential areas,

Character Continuum



Agriculture



Traditional Residential



Auto-Urban Residential



Attached AU Residential



Auto-Urban Commercial



Urban Commercial



Auto-Urban Industrial

- including Valley Ranch and Nicolaus Estates. These contemporary neighborhoods are patterned and characterized by consistent lot frontages and building setbacks, a regular pattern of driveways, greater proportions of floor area to lot area, and a more uniform home design and scale.
- **Auto-urban residential, attached** is used to describe development such as the Valley West Care Center, Pinewood Court, Pinewood Manor Apartments, Williams Migrant Housing, and the duplexes along Virginia Way. Auto-urban areas are characterized by an auto orientation (e.g. a relative higher percentage of site imperviousness), higher density, reduced setbacks, and tighter spacing between units.
- **Auto-urban commercial** describes the retail and office uses along 6th and 7th Streets and along E Street between 11th Street and Vann Street. These properties are oriented to the auto with expansive on-site parking and broader setbacks from the street frontage.
- **Urban commercial** refers to the immediate downtown area along 7th Street from just south of F Street north to D Street. It also extends west along E Street between 6th Street and 8th Street. These areas are urban in character by reason of their build-to frontage conditions, zero side yard setbacks, and enclosure of the street environment.
- **Auto-urban industrial** describes all the industrial properties by reason of their design to accommodate on-site parking and circulation, storage and display of materials and equipment, and outdoor activity areas.



- **Public and semi-public uses** include government and other public and semi-public uses such as City buildings (City Hall and Fire Station, Police Headquarters, and Public Works Department and Corporation Yard), buildings and facilities of the Williams Unified School District, Sacramento Valley Museum and Old Gym, and California Highway Patrol.
- **Parks and open space** include the community's parks and public open spaces that are devoted to public use, including wetlands and storm detention areas and the streams and canals.

Illustrative 3.1 | Similar Uses in Different Character Settings


The above photographs exemplify the difference in character between the traditional town neighborhoods (left) and the more recently developed Valley Ranch neighborhood (right). The land use designation as Residential Low Density describes the general use but does not relate to the character of each neighborhood. To achieve quality and intentional outcomes in the future, the land use plan must be more descriptive and deliberate.

Character of the Built Environment

Community character is a system for evaluating the features of development that both individually and collectively contribute to the micro-character of a neighborhood or district, and, in turn, influence the macro-character of the whole community. The components that distinguish the character of development include more than its land use (as depicted in *Illustrative 1: Similar Uses in Different Character Settings*), including the amount and use of open space and vegetation, the amount of imperviousness, the spacing and orientation of buildings and parking areas, and the relationship of buildings (scale and bulk) to the site, adjacent sites, and the street frontage.

As a land use system, community character goes beyond typical categorization of the functional use of land to account for the physical traits and design attributes that contribute to its “look and feel”. A character-based land use system focuses on development intensity, which encompasses the density and layout of residential development; the scale and form of non-residential development; and the amount of building and pavement coverage (impervious cover) relative to the extent of open space and natural vegetation or landscaping. This applies both on individual development sites and across entire areas.

It is a combination of the functional land use and its design characteristics that more accurately determines the compatibility and quality of development. Often, aesthetic enhancements are perceived an integral to the definition of community character. The elements of building architecture, landscaping, signage, and other site amenities serve to enhance the development aesthetic, per se, but do not influence community character, as used in this context of land use planning and design. Instead, community character focuses on the relative relationship among the land areas that are used for buildings, landscaping, and paving. Rather than emphasizing the separation of uses into different districts, a character-based land use system relies upon a mix of open space and intensity controls to ensure that development within each district has a predictable character.

Community character is the distinctive identity of a particular place that results from the interaction of many factors; in the context of this chapter, the built form, landscape, and areas of impervious cover, together with the perceptions of history, people and their activities. Development that respects and supports character can:

- attract highly-skilled workers and high-tech businesses;
- help in the promotion and branding of cities and regions;
- potentially add a premium to the value of housing;
- reinforce a sense of identity among residents, and encourage them to help actively manage their neighborhood;
- offer people meaningful choices between very distinctive places, whose differences they value; and
- encourage the conservation and responsible use of non-renewable resources.

Source: Ministry for the Environment; modified by Kendig Keast Collaborative

In relation to Williams, what is designated as Traditional Residential in *Map 2.2, Existing Land Use* represents the original town area. These neighborhoods have a grid street pattern, a broad variety of home styles, varying lot sizes and setbacks, and different building orientations and means of property access. This represents a traditional form of development that is wholly different in character than the contemporary, more recently developed neighborhoods. Valley Ranch, for instance, is highly patterned in its street and lot layouts and has consistent setbacks, uniform building scale, regular placement of driveways, and generally higher building coverage and floor area ratios. (see **Illustrative 3.2** | Differentiation of Character on the following page)

The foundation of this chapter is a character-based land use system, which has the following benefits:

- The land use plan deliberately specifies the intended character of future development, which is realized through implementation of new zoning standards. The land use plan and zoning districts are reconciled, meaning that the plan and implementing regulations are consistent.⁵
- The outcomes of future development are determined by the community and its leaders through formulation and adoption of the Future Land Use and Growth Plan. In this way, the character of development is determined

according to the values and expectations of the community.

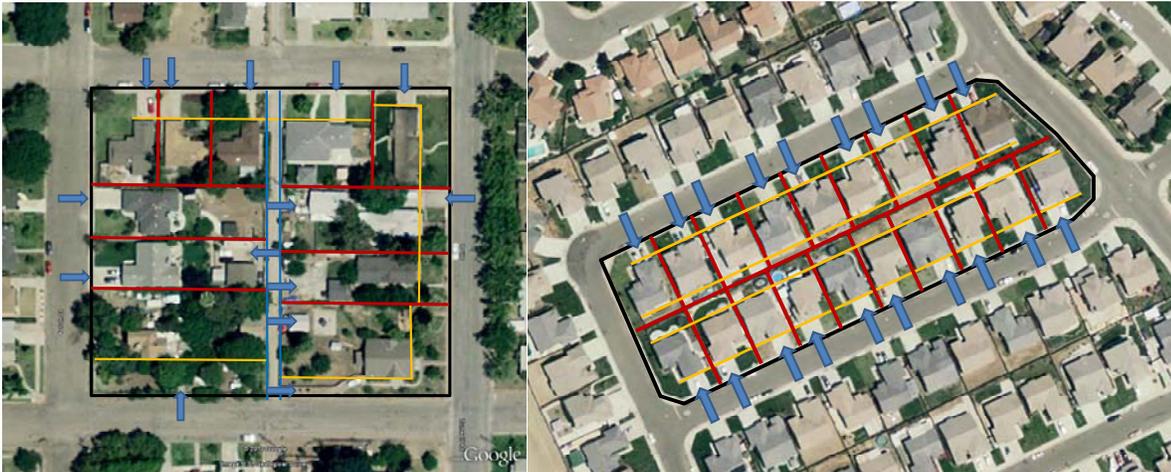
Community Character

- **Key Features:** Development yield is driven by density or intensity controls and open space, landscaping, and resource protection requirements.
- **Advantages:** Relatively easy to administer, provides great flexibility with respect to site design and development types, and enhances opportunities for open space protection due to as-of right clustering. Also, development outcomes are known and there are increased certainties in the development process.
- **Application:** A character-based system works well for new development and built environments where flexibility is valued (e.g., to preserve open space, provide for on-site drainage, and/or allow for variations in lot sizes and housing types to combat monotony and meet local housing needs.

⁵ The land use designations of the 1988 General Plan and the zoning districts of Title 17 are inconsistent, meaning that more than one zoning district may be allowed within a single land use designation. This may allow great variation in the types of uses and allowable densities permitted, in effect, permitting incompatibility.



- There may be improved compatibility within and between districts through separation and bufferyard standards that are commensurate with the intensities of adjacent developments.
- The market is supported by allowing sufficient flexibility to facilitate good design in lieu of developing in accord with broad or poor standards.
- The availability of alternative development types allows incentives to be integrated to promote outcomes that mirror community values, such as increased open space, protection of resources or sensitive areas, and provision of storm drainage amenities.
- By reason of having greater flexibility within individual districts there are fewer general plan and zoning map amendments warranted thereby streamlining the development process.
- The zoning standards are expressed in a deliberate manner meaning that development that conforms to the standards have an increased certainty of approval.

Illustrative 3.2 | Differentiation of Character


The above images clearly distinguish the considerable differences in the design – and character - of the traditional (left) and contemporary (right) neighborhoods – even though the single family use is the same. In the original town area, there are variations in the sizes and orientation of lots and homes, which relates to the spacing and locations of driveways. The use of an alley significantly contributes to these variations by allowing rear access and both driveways and garages oriented to the alley rather than the street. The variation in lots also allows greater separation between dwelling units and offers additional on-lot, private green space. On the right is a contemporary subdivision. While providing a livable neighborhood environment, its character is wholly different by way of its conventional lot pattern, consistent building setbacks, regular spacing of driveways, and uniformity in building scale and design. Through this General Plan the City may choose a deliberate character - and quality - of future development.

VISION

The land use vision is as follows:

Williams will be a community noted for its good planning made evident by the quality and sustainability of development, preservation of open space, protection of its agricultural and environmental resources, and conservation of its original town area and neighborhoods. It has a

wealth of housing choices settled in highly livable neighborhoods that are walkable, well connected, and accessible to community parks and trails. A revitalized downtown is the hub of civic pride and cultural and entertainment activities for residents and visitors alike. The economy is strong and stable through the City's foresight in planning for its business and industrial expansion.

Realization

While the vision and policies will help guide land use decisions they are incomplete without a specific implementation framework. The purpose of this section is to translate the vision in the form of key recommended actions. Given the values and expectations of the community, these steps are advisable and necessary to preserve and enhance neighborhood character, revitalize downtown, improve corridor design, and achieve a quality community character.

PRESERVING AND ENHANCING NEIGHBORHOOD CHARACTER

Through community dialogue, residents voiced the importance of preserving the character and integrity of existing neighborhoods, while also providing for quality, livable neighborhood environments. In particular, the uniqueness of the original town neighborhoods warrants standards that permit new investment and reinvestment in ways that embrace its genuine, traditional character. In other words, building additions or infill construction must be cohesive in their scale and design so as not to disrupt the neighborhood fabric. At the same time, the vitality of the well established areas must be stabilized and strengthened to sustain their economic and historic values. In the same way, structural alterations and use conversions must occur in a sensitive, compatible manner, or not occur at all. This may be handled through the development of applicable standards and then, effective administration and enforcement.

There are notable differences in the character of the traditional and more contemporary neighborhoods. Both provide nice, livable environments that offer choice in neighborhood settings and home styles, sizes, prices, and amenities. With the impending growth that has the potential to greatly affect, if not transform, the future community character, the City has a window of opportunity to determine the type and quality of new development. This may be achieved through the general plan policies and more specifically, by new or revised standards of the zoning and land development ordinances. This is particularly important as the City is already considering tentative maps for 238 new lots.⁶ This equates to approximately 881 new residents⁷, which is 19.4 percent of the additional 4,585 people expected in Williams by 2030. Therefore, without a proactive stance the quality of development will be left to market decisions that may not mirror the City's expectations.

Among the considerations in the design of new neighborhoods is the following:

- Their location relative to existing development. This relates to the continuity

⁶ The tentative maps include: Nicolas Estates, George Estates, McCarl Ranch, Mayberry Ranch, Meadowlands, and Valley Ranch Unit 3.

⁷ This assumes a 3.7 persons per household, based on the 2000 U.S. Census.



of the street and pedestrian system as means for achieving a walkable community environment, as well as the character transition and the means of compatibility within and between developments.

- The style and form of development, meaning the patterns and arrangement of streets and lots, the amount and treatment of open space, the mixture of uses and housing types, and the sizes and variations in lots and home sites.
- The layout of individual lots (widths and depths) and block frontages with respect to the placement and patterns of driveways, the location(s) of garages (front/side loaded, attached/detached, and street/alley access), handling of on- and off-street parking, and the setbacks and spacing between homes.
- The design of individual homes concerning their heights, rooflines, facade treatments, and mixture of material types.
- The aesthetic treatments relating to the street and pedestrian environments, common and private landscaping, design and materials of fences and screening walls, and the integration of amenities (parks, civic and open spaces, wetlands, trails and greenways, lakes, etc.)

While each of these contribute to the character and appearance of neighborhoods, the standards for realizing them must be cognizant of market conditions and therefore, be both suitable and reasonable for Williams. It is the purpose of this plan to emphasize the community's consensus for realizing quality development, with the appropriate standards to be determined during the plan implementation phase.

Policies

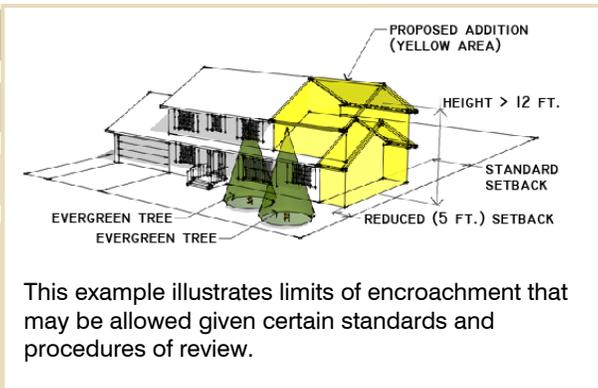
- 3.1. The integrity of the original town neighborhoods will be protected and enhanced through conservation measures and allowances for improvement and reinvestment.
- 3.2. Unique standards will be prepared for the original town neighborhoods to retain the existing patterns and forms of development and to avoid inappropriate infill development or use conversions.
- 3.3. New neighborhood development standards will be created to ensure livable and sustainable living environments. Such standards will prevent monotony and promote innovation and quality.
- 3.4. Neighborhood conservation standards will be used to ensure a conforming status of all existing neighborhoods and to regulate new construction or property improvements in a manner consistent with the existing character.
- 3.5. New development that occurs within or immediately adjacent to the boundaries of the Traditional Residential land use district must be cohesive in their design and suitably transitioned.
- 3.6. Any structural alterations of use conversions within any neighborhood must be consistent with the intent of the neighborhood conservation standards.
- 3.7. The City will continue to facilitate developments that offer a variety of living options and environments provided they contribute positively to

the intended community character.

- 3.8. Existing neighborhoods will be stabilized through proactive code enforcement and strengthened through neighborhood planning and empowerment.
- 3.9. The quality of infrastructure within the well established neighborhoods will be improved through capital reinvestment projects.

Actions

- 3.a. Adopt and incorporate into the zoning ordinance a neighborhood conservation district for the area delineated in *Figure 2.2, Existing Land Use*, as Traditional Residential. The purpose of this district is to set standards for redevelopment, new development, and expansion of existing single family homes such that they embody the unique characteristics of the neighborhood. Within the district would be sub-districts to account for the districts and standards at the time of development, with noted allowances that are acceptable within the character context. This district would alleviate the need for variances as all properties would remain conforming.



- 3.b. Amend the standards of the residential districts to include an average rather than minimum lot size. This allows variability in the lot frontages resulting in different home sizes, floor plans and price ranges.
- 3.c. Adopt and integrate into the zoning ordinance anti-monotony standards requiring sufficient variability in the design of individual homes within a specified distance of one another. The standards would provide for variations in roof lines, façade treatments, and building materials.
- 3.d. Adjust the setbacks in the residential districts according to its character narrowing setbacks in the Urban Residential district and increasing them in the Auto-Urban Residential and Suburban Residential districts. Furthermore, require variations in the front setbacks to create a more interesting street environment.
- 3.e. Embed floor area ratios (FAR) within the housing palette to better control the scale and spacing of homes commensurate with the intended character.
- 3.f. Prepare a neighborhood improvement plan for the original town neighborhoods to organize and coordinate with neighborhood representatives to identify improvement projects, regulatory adjustments, enforcement targets, and needed amenities. The plan should be backed by grants and seed funding for individual property improvements and a capital budget for street, sidewalk, utility, drainage, lighting, and park projects.



DOWNTOWN REVITALIZATION

Among the first commercial buildings constructed in Williams were those adjacent to the railroad and in Downtown. By reason of the times, before the emergence of the auto and the resulting transformation of contemporary development patterns, buildings were constructed in a dense pattern with their fronts addressing the street and abutting one another to each side. The town's center of commerce was immediately flanked by plots of home sites. What was then a matter of necessity, or even convenience, may now serve as a defining principle to guide how Williams develops in the coming years. This is to say that downtown may – and should – continue as the heart of the City; a focal point for civic functions and institutions, local and niche businesses, and culture and entertainment. However, as the community grows and faces development pressure along I-5 and on its fringes, the City must be both deliberate and resolute in its commitment to preserve the character and economic vitality of downtown.

Downtown has done well to maintain its identity. It is strategically located and immediately accessible to the interstate. While there are needed improvements to infill vacant parcels, rehabilitate and reuse empty buildings, and better define the limits of the downtown district, it has maintained its historic, small-town genuineness. Preserving this special character will be vital as the community initiates the redevelopment process. Doing so warrants a downtown master plan as a guiding policy and strategy document that is complimented by a robust implementation framework outlining public investments, private redevelopment projects, and a realistic financing plan.

To preserve the urban character of downtown a new zoning district is warranted. Presently, downtown is guided by the same uses and height and area regulations as the commercial frontage on E Street. The character of these areas is much different, and must remain so if downtown is to maintain its urban fabric. As is, some of the permitted uses are not suitable to downtown and the minimum setbacks may conflict with the intended urban form.

Redevelopment is ordinarily facilitated by public action. The City's initiative of the recent blight study is a positive first step toward establishing a redevelopment district. Such district will allow increased authority through a non-profit downtown development entity to acquire and assemble properties, solicit developer interest in private or public-private investment projects, initiate public improvements, and aid business and property owners in business development, expansion, and entrepreneurship. There are many ripe properties for both redevelopment and new development in and immediately adjacent to downtown. However, these must happen in the context of a broader downtown master plan if it is to reach its economic potential.

Policies

- 3.10. Preserve the historic significance of downtown through development and employment of preservation guidelines for alterations to existing

buildings. Utilize the guidelines also to ensure the architectural appropriateness of newly constructed buildings.

- 3.11. Retain the urban character of the existing buildings along 7th and 8th Streets and establish new standards to guide new development to occur in an urban context.
- 3.12. Downtown will be the center of the City's public and civic life by retaining its important public institutions, such as the library and City Hall, and by adding new ones that will strengthen its vitality over time. The City will consider the impact of new commercial development on the competitiveness and economic vitality of downtown.
- 3.13. A downtown master plan will provide the policies and implementation framework to guide the redevelopment and future development of downtown.
- 3.14. Redevelopment priority will be given to the rehabilitation and reuse of empty buildings before new buildings are constructed, provided its warrant and feasibility.
- 3.15. All reasonable and feasible avenues will be explored to save and reuse historic buildings.
- 3.16. Vacant parcels will be developed in a manner that embraces the urban fabric of downtown.
- 3.17. Parking will be provided on-street with sufficient off-street parking provided in convenient and appropriately placed locations.
- 3.18. The uses and height and area standards will be adapted to preserve the downtown environment.

Actions

- 3.g. Amend the zoning ordinance to include a new Downtown district. This district is necessary by reason of the unique, urban character and its intended use and building types. The standards should include:
 - Zero front and side yard setbacks to preserve the existing block frontage and to re-establish it in other areas of the district.
 - A minimum rather than maximum building height to create two (or more) story buildings. This encloses the street and reinforces the urban fabric. Given market conditions, two-story buildings should accommodate upper floor office and residential uses.
 - Uses that are suitable within a downtown environment and include those with building typologies that contribute to an urban context and pedestrian orientation.
 - Provisions for on-street and common (public and/or private) parking, including allowance for first floor (under building) parking, particularly for retirement housing.
 - Building design standards to embrace a pedestrian streetscape environment, with distinction between floors and fenestration of doors and windows.
- 3.h. Amend the zoning map to delineate the boundaries of a Downtown district, as exhibited in **Map 3.2, Downtown District**.



- 3.i. Amend Chapter 17.11, Signs, to create a new section for “Signs in the Downtown District.” The permitted signs in this district should include projecting signs and provisions for awning, overhang, and window signage. The allowances and limitations regarding sign area should be modified according to the urban context.
- 3.j. Revise the purpose statement of the C-2 district to clearly distinguish its intent from that of the downtown district. Generally, this district is intended for larger-scale, independent sites and centers that are appropriate along I-5 and other defined corridors.
- 3.k. Prepare a downtown master plan to guide the strategies and improvement projects necessary to support the formation of a redevelopment district. The master plan should entail the type and character of future land use, specific use and building types, street and sidewalk improvements, streetscape enhancements, and infrastructure requirements, together with strategies for creating partnerships, assembling and marketing land deals, and recruiting developer interest. Lastly, the plan should evaluate market conditions and likely absorption rates and subsequently, identify funding sources and a general financing plan.
- 3.l. Coordinated with the master plan, conduct an infrastructure assessment and prepare a capital improvement plan. The purpose of this plan is to outline the phasing and timing of capital infrastructure projects, including drainage improvements, utility upgrades and line replacement, street redesign and reconstruction, and streetscape enhancements (lighting, landscaping, and pedestrian amenities).
- 3.m. Identify public investment in the streetscape, public space, and public buildings, coupled with outreach to property and business owners to improve the appearance of their properties and to support business investment and entrepreneurship.
- 3.n. Relocate the farmer’s market to the immediately downtown area, possibly either on the corner of 7th Street and E Street or F Street. Design the site as a civic park/plaza amenity, that has permanent improvements to support the market, including shade structures, electrical connections, lighting, and design amenities (e.g. pavilion or performance stage, public art installations, fountains, gardens, etc.)
- 3.o. Form a downtown partnership committee of land and property owners, tenants, and other interests to maintain and open dialogue and facilitate downtown improvement and redevelopment.
- 3.p. Certify downtown as a historic district and adopt historic preservation standards. Such standards would protect the historic architecture and ensure appropriate updates and new building construction.
- 3.q. Earmark funds to create a façade improvement grant program and to offer business development loans for code compliance. Consider a revolving loan fund to help with business start-ups and expansions.
- 3.r. Begin investigation of possible properties within the downtown district for a municipal complex that would house and consolidate the administrative offices of the City.

IMPROVING CORRIDOR DESIGN

The entryways and corridors establish the first – and lasting – impressions of Williams. For this reason, it is important for the community to “put its best foot forward.” By this is meant that increased focus should be devoted to the appearance and revitalization of the properties and businesses at the gateways and along the City’s major arteries. The highly visible I-5 frontage is of essential importance to cast a positive image in the eyes of passers-by. Fortunately, much of this corridor frontage is yet to be developed yielding opportunity to better define the character and quality appearance of new development. Also, the interchanges at E Street and Old Highway 20, and to a lesser extent at Husted Road, are the community’s front doors, followed by the entrance corridors along North and South 7th Street and other points of access to the community.

The City has a significant near-term opportunity to enhance its appearance along I-5, including the type and quality of development in the new business park, and along the commercial frontage of Valley Ranch. The appearance of these developments will signal the City’s values and expectations for its community

character. This will relate to the types of uses permitted and the site and building design of new development. Existing uses along this frontage (and elsewhere) may also be enhanced over time with improved standards, proactive code enforcement, and both public and private investment.

Development fronting on E Street and 7th Street outside of downtown is of an auto-urban character. This is due to their auto-orientation whereby parking covers as much or more than 50 percent of the site. This is largely due to the nature of uses, but also responsible is the use of minimum front yard setbacks in the C-1, C-2, and C-H zoning districts. Given the need and requirements for parking, the building placement is left to the individual site design, which commonly exceeds the minimum front setback. Instead, site design should be controlled by the intended character of development, with more deliberate and explicit standards.

Perhaps the greatest challenge confronting the community is the types of uses and the development standards (or lack thereof) of the properties along North and South 6th Street and 7th Street. These corridors have developed with a mix of commercial and industrial uses of varying intensities. Outdoor display and storage is visually prevalent and the conditions of the buildings and grounds are “tired”, if not blighted. This circumstance requires a long-term strategy, together with both short and mid-term regulatory changes, an advocacy program for code enforcement, and improvement plans. The City may choose to be passive or proactive with the outcomes weighing on the approach taken.

Keys to Auto-Urban Character:

- More horizontal development (mostly one- to two-story buildings).
- Buildings set back from streets, often to accommodate surface parking at the front.
- A very open environment, with streets and other public spaces not framed by buildings or vegetation.
- Significant portions of commercial and industrial development sites devoted to access drives, circulation routes, and surface parking and loading/delivery areas, making pavement the most prominent visual feature.
- Smaller, narrow single-family lots dominated by driveways and front-loading garages, reducing yard and landscaping areas.
- Extent of impervious surface leads to increased storm water runoff.
- Auto urban commercial often not conducive for pedestrian circulation.
- Structured parking generally not feasible or practical.

Policies

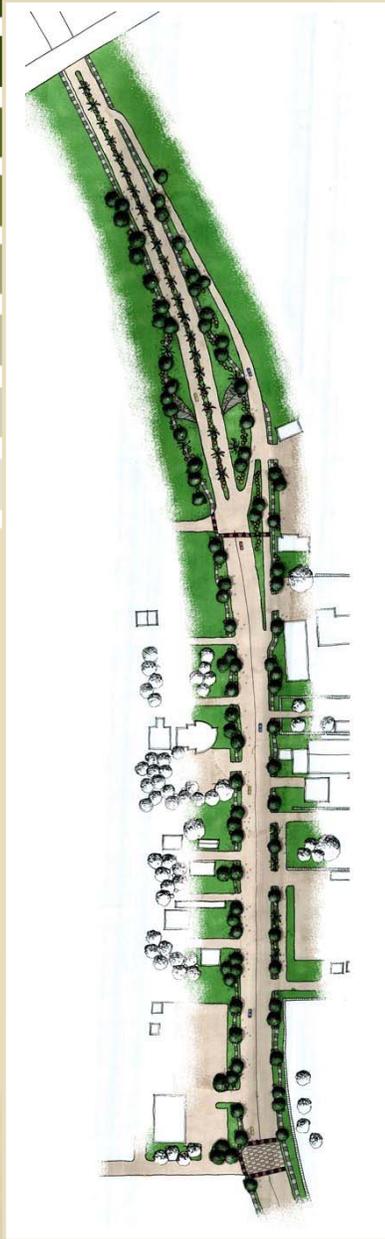
- 3.19. The City will manage the appearance of its gateways and corridors through proactive planning, stepped-up enforcement, and public investment.
- 3.20. New standards will be developed to achieve quality design and development outcomes along I-5 and each of the major corridors.
- 3.21. The new business park will exemplify the City's commitment to quality development in a campus-like setting.
- 3.22. Suburban Commercial development will be used in locations in close proximity to neighborhoods and along commercial frontage to enhance the development character through increased building and site development standards.
- 3.23. The City's Auto-Urban areas will be improved by better standards for the arrangement of buildings and parking, site landscaping and screening, and sign control, among others.
- 3.24. Site improvement standards will be developed and applied to the blighted corridors to facilitate reinvestment and regulatory compliance.



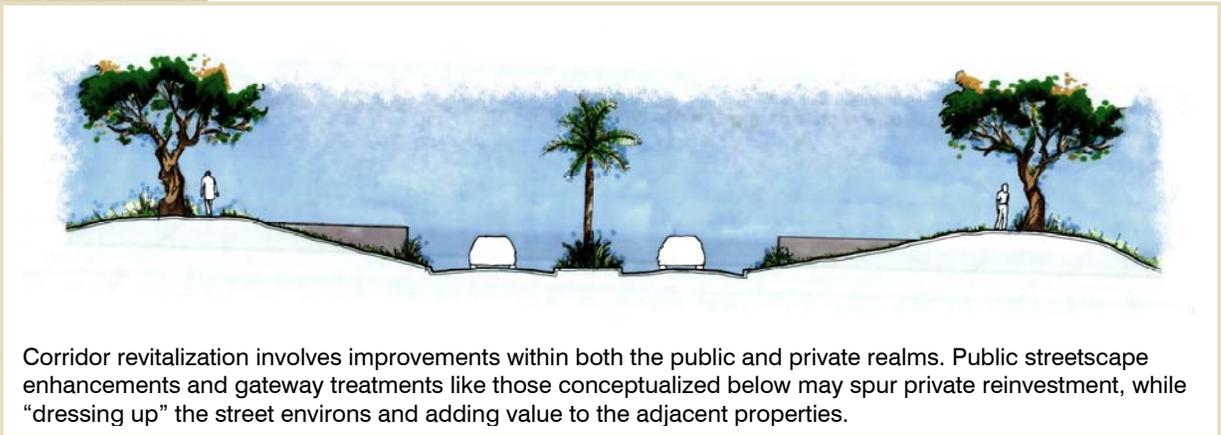
Suburban Commercial development is designed in a manner to reflect a residential appearance, including a broad streetscape bufferyard, a higher landscape surface area, an increased landscape volume, and other site design standards relating to site access and circulation, parking and loading, buffering, lighting, and building design.

Actions

- 3.s. Amend the zoning ordinance to include a Business Park district. This district should cover all or at least the frontage of I-5 and E Street (east of I-5) for the City's new business park development. The standards of this district should include improved site and building standards, an increased landscape surface ratio, better landscaping and screening requirements, and new signage standards to result in a campus-like business setting. This is important to enhance the I-5 frontage and also to compliment the campus of Woodland Community College.
- 3.t. Restructure the C-1 district to reflect a Suburban Commercial standard. This district would include better standards to compliment and to be compatible with adjacent neighborhoods. Standards would require development to be "residential in appearance" with a similar scale and height, pitched roofs of similar composition, more green space and landscaping, and provisions for lighting, signage, and site design.
- 3.u. Develop a gateway and landscape plan along I-5 beginning with entry monuments along the northbound and southbound frontage at the E Street interchange, and phased to extend north and south to the City limits. The City should coordinate with CalTrans to secure use of the right-of-way for these improvements, with an agreement as to maintenance and liability. In lieu of right-of-way enhancement, the City should acquire landscape easements from the adjacent property owners and through the course of new development.



- 3.v. Acquire easements at the I-5/Old Highway 20 and Husted Road interchanges, and at the eastern and western City limits along Old Highway 20 to construct gateway monuments and landscape and lighting treatments.
- 3.w. Prepare a corridor revitalization plan for 7th Street, extending from Old Highway 20 to the south City limits (excluding the segment with the downtown district). The plan should document the physical elements that contribute to its appearance (including use types and activities, outdoor storage and display, pavement and other surface types, fencing and screening, landscaping, building scales and setbacks, signage, etc.), together with a strategy and regulatory approach. The plan should establish a basis for drafting new site development standards for which compliance would be required either at the time of an occupancy change, a building permit, or in given time increments.
- 3.x. Prepare an overlay district with new use and site development standards for the properties on either side of 6th Street and 7th Street and extending a distance of 150 feet or more.
- 3.y. Amend the zoning ordinance to consolidate the C-2 and C-H districts into a new Auto-Urban Commercial district. This district should include the following:
 - Site design standards requiring parking to the side and rear of buildings (rather than in front). On sites where this is infeasible by way of its size or orientation the standards should include a broader streetscape bufferyard with increased landscaping and parking lot landscaping.
 - A built-to-line (in place of a minimum setback).
 - Increased side and rear setbacks and bufferyard standards to separate and screen adjacent properties.
 - Building design standards relating to building scale and articulation, façade and roofline standards, and building orientation.
 - A minimum landscape surface ratio.
- 3.z. Establish landscaping standards to compliment and replace those outlined in Section 17.13.110, Off-Street parking – Landscaping. The new standards should include provisions for the following:
 - Street trees adjacent to all street right-of-way, based on a ratio of trees



Corridor revitalization involves improvements within both the public and private realms. Public streetscape enhancements and gateway treatments like those conceptualized below may spur private reinvestment, while “dressing up” the street environs and adding value to the adjacent properties.



per linear feet of frontage (typically one shade tree per 25 or 30 feet of frontage).

- On-lot landscaping requiring trees (deciduous and evergreen) and shrubs within the side and rear setbacks and other required on-site green spaces.
- Screening in the form of shrubs and/or earthen berms adjacent to all parking and vehicular use areas.
- Landscaping within parking lots that is based on a ratio of islands per parking spaces, instead of five percent of the interior of a parking lot as now required. This will allow a better distribution of landscaping to provide a landscape aesthetic while also reducing the heat island effect of the paving area.

- 3.aa. Amend Chapter 17.108, Design Review, to include more definitive and explicit standards relating to the height and scale of buildings adjacent to residential areas, architectural forms and details, solar panel installations, outdoor lighting levels and dark-sky provisions, building and neighborhood monotony, building shapes and materials, and landscaping, screening, and fencing.

ACHIEVING A QUALITY COMMUNITY CHARACTER

The term “land use” literally relates to the use of land. However, it is the design of individual uses, districts, and neighborhoods that influence the “look and feel” (character) of development. Therefore, the character of an area is more distinctly defined by the intensity of development, the arrangement of buildings and parking areas, the preservation and use of open space, and other site and building design features.

It is a combination of land use and design that determine the compatibility and quality of development. Aesthetic enhancements, such as attention to building detail, abundant landscaping and screening, sign control, and site amenities, also contribute to the appeal of a neighborhood or commercial area. It is each of these considerations that are collectively responsible for William’s character and the impressions left on visitors and passers-by.

Mixing character types is usually disruptive. For instance, constructing a standalone store or office building with on-site parking in the midst of a downtown block may damage the fabric of that block by breaking the storefront façade and creating an undesirable gap for pedestrians. Conversely, siting a larger brick home amidst the traditional, original town neighborhood may disrupt the uniqueness and disturb the historic character of the area. Plans, policies, and regulations must be mindful of the context in which development or redevelopment occurs.

The City’s current land use plan and zoning ordinance are both based on the use of land, without any provisions that relate to their character. The City’s design review standards address compatibility broadly and aesthetics very generally, without much substantive detail. Instead, site design is left to very broad standards of the

respective zoning district. By way of example, the minimum lot area, width, and minimum yards are the same in the C-2 district as those in the C-1 district, even though the intent of these districts is much different. Furthermore, there is overlap in the permitted uses of the two districts without any differentiation in scale or site design.

As the City approaches its expected future development it must be acknowledged that this is the time and opportunity to be more intentional as to quality development outcomes. For this reason, this land use element is based on a community character land use system, which translates to an equivalent zoning structure. This will allow the community to be deliberate as to the type, pattern, and character of future development. (see **Illustrative 3.3** | The Rationale of Character-Based Land Use Districts)

Illustrative 3.3 | The Rationale of Character-Based Land Use Districts



A character-based system differs from the City's current use-based system in that each of the above developments may be permitted in the same land use (or zoning) district. A use-based land use and zoning system would require each of these to be in separate districts even though their relative densities and thus, impacts (e.g. traffic, utility demands, etc.) are the same. In this way, while the form of development or type of house may be different the character remains the same. This is so as a character-based system uses density and open space measures to control – and ensure – the intended character. The density and open space controls may hold the density constant (density neutral) or may allow a bonus as means to provide incentive to preserve open space and resources or to achieve other community objectives.

Policies

- 3.25. The land use plan and zoning districts will address for the character of development, which accounts for the design/intensity of development, the arrangement of buildings and parking areas, and the preservation of open space.
- 3.26. The design review standards will be revised to better define and illustrate explicit site and building standards.
- 3.27. The character of existing areas will be protected by requiring development of a compatible character or adequately transitioning and buffering areas of different character.
- 3.28. Specific plans shall express the site and building design standards of the subject development through design illustrations and/or a pattern book.
- 3.29. The uses and height and area standards of each zoning district will differ according to its intended character.



Actions

- 3.bb. Rewrite the zoning ordinance to replace the current districts with those based on development character. These districts are reconciled with the Future Land Use and Growth Plan and include those exhibited in **Table 3.2, Land Use Districts**, and described below in the section entitled, “Future Land Use and Growth Plan”.
- 3.cc. Integrate a housing palette into the zoning ordinance. The palette provides for different housing types and establishes the dimensional standards for each. This is applicable within the planned development option of the Suburban Residential and Urban Residential districts. In these districts, different variations or combinations of housing is permitted, which is balanced by a proportional amount of open space. Additionally, each district has a maximum allowed density to control the character, together with other performance standards (e.g. bufferyards). The standards of the palette control the scale and spacing of dwelling units, which is essential to preserve the intended character.
- 3.dd. Add provisions to the zoning ordinance for bufferyards. Different from the conventional means of screening adjacent uses, bufferyards vary according to the context of adjacent uses. The standards are based on a relative opacity, which may be met through combinations of buffer width, plant type and density, and structural elements (fences and earthen berms).
- 3.ee. Establish minimum open space standards within each district, which may be used for storm water detention, resource protection (e.g. riparian buffers along streams), bufferyards, and/or parks, trails, and open space. The amount of private or common open space relates to the character of development. For instance, in the Agriculture and Estate Residential districts, there is a high proportion of private open space whereas the Suburban Residential and Urban Residential districts have increasing percentages of common (public or semi-public) open space.
- 3.ff. Adopt scale standards to better manage the character of development. For instance, scale is a controlling factor in the Suburban Commercial district to ensure compatibility with adjacent or nearby neighborhoods. This is particularly important given similar use types between this and the more intensive Auto-Urban Commercial district. The scale standards should include a floor area ratio as well as a maximum square footage and height.
- 3.gg. Incorporate development options within each zoning district. Different lot sizes and percentages of open space maintain the district character while allowing market flexibility and adjustment to site conditions. In other words, a smaller lot may be used and clustered to set aside adequate open space to preserve agricultural resources, such as the orchards, or to fulfill the City’s storm water management objectives. A comparable density and character is achieved.
- 3.hh. Utilize density bonuses as an incentive for promoting open space preservation, more efficient, clustered development, and housing choice.

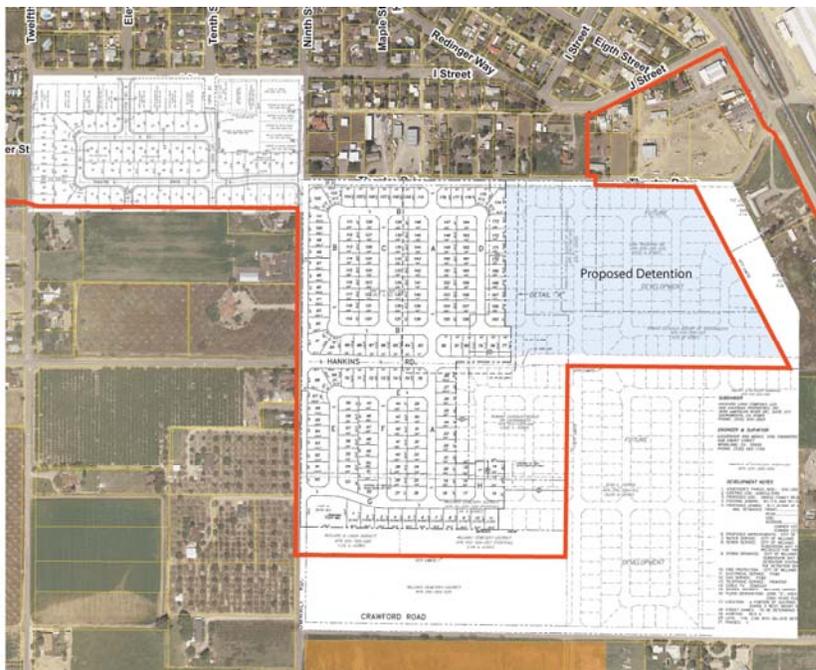
Future Land Use and Growth Plan

The Future Land Use and Growth Plan is an important planning tool for the City to manage the type, pattern, and scale of future development, as well as the location and timing of annexation and sphere of influence adjustments. The plan is to be used to guide decisions relating to zone change requests and annexations and sphere of influence adjustments. The plan will also be used to determine the requisite transportation improvements (through any necessary amendments of the Citywide Circulation Study), together with the capacity requirements for the water and wastewater systems and other public facility and service provisions.

The land use designations reflected on the plan directly correspond with the districts of the new zoning ordinance. In this way, the intended character of development that is expressed by this plan will be directly implemented by the zoning ordinance. This assures quality, sustainable development that is compatible with the existing adjacent uses.

Through the course of General Plan development, three alternative scenarios were analyzed relative to different assumptions of population growth. These scenarios are shown in **Map 3.1, Scenario A – Low Growth**; **Map 3.2, Scenario B – Moderate Growth**; and **Map 3.3, Scenario 3 – High Growth**. The alternatives delineate the future land use and character of development and the planned future growth areas within the City limits and a part of the sphere of influence that is planned to accommodate future development. Scenario B – Moderate Growth, was chosen as the preferred land use and growth plan, which subsequently, was amended to account for community input. The outcome of this scenario planning exercise is **Map 3.4, Future Land Use and Growth Plan**, which is the basis of this plan and the requisite provision of facilities and infrastructure.

Illustrative 3.4 | Proposed Tentative Maps



The land use scenarios relate to the use of land (e.g. residential, commercial, industrial), but also reflect the intended character of development. This approach observes the use of land with an added focus on the relative relationship among the land areas that are used for buildings, landscaping, and vehicular use areas. Rather than emphasizing the separation of uses into different districts, a character-based system relies upon a mix of open space and intensity



controls to ensure that development within each district has a predictable character. In this way, by using these measurable controls, a site may

Illustrative 3.5 | Alternative Development

Image to be inserted at a later date.

Displayed above are the proposed tentative maps (Illustrative 3.4) exhibiting a typical street and lot pattern with no provision for open space or on-site storm water management. An alternative (Illustrative 3.5) would utilize different lot sizes and housing types to maintain an equivalent density while setting aside open space to preserve rows of the existing orchards and to provide for on-site detention. The latter is more sustainable as it promotes urban agriculture, provides housing choice, and offers increased amenities.

accommodate different types of housing or forms of development while preserving the intended character (see inset for more information). This will help Williams’ meet its requisite housing requirements, protect against monotonous subdivisions (versus neighborhoods), and achieve desirable outcomes.

The plan is based on the following assumptions:

- A Year 2030 population of 9,822 persons, reflecting an increase of 4,535 persons or 186 percent over the 2009 estimate of 5,287 persons.
- An average number of persons per household of 3.7 persons, consistent with the 2000 U.S. Census.⁸

⁸ This varies from the population density factor of 3.03 persons per residential dwelling unit used in Chapter 16.36, Parks and Recreation Facilities Dedication/Fee. Final determination of this factor is yet to occur.

- Assumed density ranges and average densities as follows:

<u>District</u> <u>Density</u>	<u>Density Range</u>	<u>Average</u>
Agriculture	0.00 to 0.08	0.08
Estate Residential	0.35 to 0.50	0.43
Suburban Residential	1.35 to 3.25	2.13
Urban Residential	4.17 to 5.00 ⁹	3.48

The acreages of land use types and corresponding populations for the preferred scenario are shown in **Table 3.1, District Acreages and Corresponding Populations**, as follows:

Table 3.1, District Acreages and Corresponding Populations¹⁰

Population Estimates and Projections		Population	Actual Change
2009 Estimate		5,287	--
Year 2030 Low		7,667	2,380
Year 2030 Mid		9,822	4,535
Year 2030 High		12,048	6,761

Growth Scenarios	Variables	Residential District			Subtotal	Total
		Estate	Suburban	Urban		
Scenario B	% Residential Land Use	36.1%	17.9%	46.0%	100.0%	
	Acres	204.00	101.00	260.00	565.00	565.00
	Density (Units/Acre)	0.43	2.13	3.48		
	Persons per Household	3.70	3.70	3.70		
(Density) x (PPH) x (Acres) =	Total Persons	325	796	3,348	4,468	9,755

Land Use Designations

The land use designations reflected in *Map 3.4, Future Land Use and Growth Plan* are further detailed in **Table 3.2, Land Use Districts**. The table reflects the districts and the allowable development types within each district, together with the lot sizes, percentages of open space, and densities for the residential districts; and the heights, percentage of green space, and floor area ratios for the nonresidential districts. A description of the individual districts, how they relate to existing development, and the purpose of each district is described below.

Agriculture – The character of the surrounding rural area is dominated by agricultural fields, pasturelands, and orchards, where homes are customarily an accessory to the principal agricultural use. The landscape is accented by a few farmsteads, outbuildings, and mostly an unbroken, flat horizon leading westward to the mountain range and state game refuge.

The purpose of the Agriculture district is to preserve the rural, agricultural character and by doing so, managing a contiguous and efficient pattern of urban development. This also helps to preserve a

⁹ The density for multiple-family is excluded from the average density of the Urban Residential district so as not to unreasonably skew the average upward. The added population resulting from multiple family development is accounted for in the Downtown district.

¹⁰ Acreage values for Scenario B were in the process of being updated at the time of this draft due to recent changes to the scenario. Values for this table will be updated.



definitive edge to the community and protect its freestanding state. To achieve the intended rural character, the district is designed with 90 percent open space and a one acre minimum lot size. Any residential development would be clustered to maintain an open viewshed. This preserves agricultural productivity and minimizes land use conflicts.

Table 3.2, Land Use Districts

District	Development Type	Lot Size	Open Space	Density
Agriculture	Cluster	1 ac.	90%	0.08
Estate Residential	Single Family	2.5 ac.	10%	0.35
	Cluster	1.0 ac.	35%	0.50
Suburban Residential	Single Family	20,000 sf.	15%	1.35
	Cluster	10,000 sf.	35%	1.80
	Planned (with mixed housing types)	4,000 sf.	50%	3.25
Urban Residential	Single Family	6,000 s.f.	15%	4.17
	Cluster	4,000 sf.	25%	4.75
	Planned (with mixed housing types)	2,500 sf.	35%	5.00
	Multiple Family (2-story)	2,500 sf.	45%	9.00
District	Development Type	Height	Green Space	Floor Area
Commercial	Retail	1-story	10%	0.34
	Office		12%	0.61
	Retail	2-story	12%	0.45
	Office		15%	1.00
Downtown	Residential, Elderly	up to 4-story	10%	1.20
	Residential		5%	2.70
	Mixed Use		5%	1.90
Business Park	Office and Warehousing	up to 3 story	20%	0.88
Industrial	Manufacturing and Warehousing	1 story	10%	0.77

Estate Residential – South Williams resembles an estate residential character by reason of its larger lots and small acreages, together with intermixed expanses of open space in the form of pastures and orchards. The result of this pattern is a visual openness. Due to larger tracts and an increased separation between properties the buildings are visually apparent yet secondary to the open landscape.

The purpose of the Estate Residential district is to provide a rural lifestyle within a municipal setting and with access to public utilities. The existing large lot development is informal, meaning that it has occurred on an individual lot basis rather than within an estate development. The district allows 2.5 acre single family tracts, which is a common size among what presently exists. A minimum 10 percent open space is required with an estate development for storm drainage, buffering, and recreation purposes. Alternatively, and

particularly where development occurs proximate to an established orchard, a clustered development of one acre lots and 35 percent open space is also permitted. Clustered would offer a 43 percent density bonus while also preserving open space and the natural landscape.

Suburban Residential – The distinguishing factors of the Suburban Residential character is increased open space, both on larger individual home sites or cumulatively throughout a development, together with preserved open space within and between buildings and developments. Open space and vegetative cover are essential for creating a balance between building mass and “green mass”. Suburban development may be in the form of small acreages or large lots, or clustered around common open space.

The Suburban Residential district affords three development types. A single family development may have near half-acre, 20,000 square foot lots with 15 percent open space. The use of 10,000 square foot clustered single family lots with 35 percent open space offers a 33 percent density bonus. An additional 81 percent bonus is afforded for a planned development, which requires a minimum open space 50 percent. This development type is suitable to accommodate regional storm drainage improvements, to preserve established orchards or agricultural operations, or simply to integrate passive open space and/or recreational facilities. A planned development would require more than one housing type to achieve maximum densities.

Urban Residential – An urban residential character is reflective of the City’s more recent neighborhoods, particularly including Valley Ranch and Nicolaus Estates. These developments are characterized by smaller lots, reduced dimensions around and between homes, and high building coverage and impervious ratios. Developments of this character type are usually highly patterned, meaning that they have uniform setbacks and similar building mass and scale. The home orientation and garage access are also near identical from lot-to-lot.

The Urban Residential district includes four development types ranging from single to multiple-family with options for clustered and planned development. As the lot size decreases the density correspondingly increases, with increasing percentages of open space to preserve the intended character. The single family development type includes 6,000 square foot lots, similar to the current single- and two-family zoning districts.¹¹ It requires 15 percent open space, which will accommodate the City’s park and recreation facilities dedication requirement, together with provisions for bufferyards within and between adjacent developments.¹² A cluster development may reduce the *average* lot size to 4,000 square feet per dwelling unit with 25 percent open space allowing a 14 percent density bonus. A planned development with a variety of dwelling unit types and hence, an average lot size of 2,500 square feet per unit requires 35 percent open space. A two-story multiple family development requires a

¹¹ This includes the Residential One Family (R-1) and Residential Two Family (R-2) districts.

¹² Chapter 16.36, Park and Recreation Facility Dedication/Fee



comparable 2,500 square feet per dwelling unit and a minimum 45 percent open space, which accommodates common open space and provisions for adequate bufferyards.

Neighborhood Conservation – The Neighborhood Conservation district envelopes all existing neighborhoods, plus those for which a tentative map has been submitted to the City. The purpose of this district is to establish unique standards that match the circumstances at the time of development and presently. It also prevents creation of nonconforming uses and situations caused by the application of new or different standards. Essentially, standards may then be established that are commensurate with the built environment, including certain allowances and waivers to allow building additions and improvements.

There are no standards outlined for this district in *Table 1, Land Use Districts*, above. These standards will be written concurrently with the zoning ordinance rewrite.

Commercial – The Commercial district is for office, retail, and related businesses outside of the defined Downtown district. These commercial districts include single or multi-tenant buildings on individual sites, which are characterized by on-site parking. Their character will be differentiated by way of scale limitations and design and siting standards. For instance, in the context of an abutting neighborhood, a commercial development would be limited in building mass and height, together with other performance and site design standards (e.g. access, circulation, parking and loading, lighting, noise, etc.) to ensure compatibility.

The development types include one and two-story buildings, with the difference in floor areas attributable to building height and required parking. The percentage of green space is increased for offices and two-story buildings to accommodate public space and buffering from adjacent uses.

Downtown – The Downtown district is for the immediate downtown core along Seventh Street south of E Street, as well as on both sides of E Street stretching from Sixth Street to Eighth Street. Downtown is intended to have an urban character, which is a result of building enclosure due to narrow or no setbacks, preferably a minimum two-story building height, high building coverage and floor area ratios, and on-street or off-site parking.

Downtown is intended for commercial office and retail uses, as well as high density residential use. The floor area ratios are calibrated for (minimum) two to four story buildings, which may be for any individual use or a mixture of allowable uses. A floor area ratio is used in place of density to allow maximum flexibility as to residential unit size thereby accommodating both small and large units. The two residential development types allow for on-site parking beneath the structure for elderly housing and off-site parking for all other residential unit types. A higher percentage of green space is required for elderly housing to accommodate outdoor space (e.g. gardens, plazas, etc.). The

mixed use arrangement may include any combination of uses with provision for on- and off-street parking.

Business Park – The Business Park district is intended for the Valley Ranch nonresidential development, as well as other highly visible areas with I-5 frontage. The purpose of this district is to result in a planned environment with a higher standard of development. It may include uses that are traditionally designated as “light” industrial including offices and warehousing where operational activities occur mostly indoors, or where provisions are made for a heightened appearance and quality development standard.

The Business Park district allows up to three-story buildings with 20 percent set-aside for common green space. A higher percentage of green space is to create a campus-like setting with ample land for public space, landscaping, and buffering between sites and around the perimeter of the development. A floor area ratio of 0.88 would allow a building of approximately 172,500 square feet on a 4.5 acre site, for instance.

Industrial – This land use designation is to accommodate larger-scale and/or more intensive industrial uses, which may include manufacturing uses and those with outdoor operations and storage. This will accommodate the existing uses along the railroad as well as the long-standing industrial area in Southeast Williams.

This district is designed to accommodate a broad assortment of one-story industrial developments. A minimum 10 percent green space is to allow adequate provision for perimeter bufferyard treatments. Bufferyard and other site design standards will be established dependent upon visibility and proximity.

Land Use Policies

The following policies may be used to guide the implementation of the Future Land Use and Growth Plan.

Growth Pattern

- 3.30. The City will grow contiguously to manage the efficiency of public services and municipal infrastructure provision, to maintain a compact and well defined community form, and to oblige its fiscal responsibility.
- 3.31. Priority in the form of infrastructure and other capital improvements will be given to the redevelopment of blighted structures or properties and infill development of vacant parcels or underutilized tracts.
- 3.32. Development will occur first within the existing corporate limits where the infrastructure and services are readily available.
- 3.33. Annexation will occur in strict adherence with the Future Land Use and Growth Plan. Requests for annexation in areas not shown in this plan will warrant further study, a showing of cause to support the request, and require a general plan amendment.



- 3.34. The sphere of influence will be expanded concurrent with the plan for the expansion of the corporate limits to exert influence and protect the City's long-term planning interests.

Service Provision

- 3.35. Decisions to provide municipal infrastructure and public services will include, among others, the location of subject development relative to:
- existing development; and
 - the area of existing utility service; and
 - the City limits; and
 - existing sphere of influence.
- 3.36. Development or individual uses outside the corporate limits will not be prematurely provided municipal infrastructure until annexation is warranted and executed, subject to conformance with the Future Land Use and Growth Plan. Services will be provided to these areas through mutual aid and other agreements and mandates.
- 3.37. Development and future annexation will occur in areas that are most suitable for the extension of services and infrastructure, e.g. proximity and capacity of roads and utilities, fire and police response sites, etc.
- 3.38. Infrastructure and public services will be brought to a sufficient, quality standard within the developed area, requisite with needs.
- 3.39. The City's land use pattern should focus new development and significant redevelopment where adequate public services and utility capacity are already in place or projected for improvement, including streets, water, wastewater, and drainage infrastructure.
- 3.40. Adequate public facilities and services are required concurrent with annexation and development.

Environmental Sensitivity and Resource Protection

- 3.41. Future development and redevelopment should be planned and implemented with appreciation for the physical environment and natural features of the community and with recognition of potential physical constraints to ensure appropriate siting of various types of development.
- 3.42. Development will occur in a manner that is compatible with the existing agricultural resources, including agricultural cropland, orchards, and ranchlands).
- 3.43. Sensitive resources, including floodplains, wetlands, riparian buffer areas along stream channels, and valued view sheds, will be protected and preserved.
- 3.44. The agricultural use and rural character of the City's perimeter should be maintained through the strict enforcement of zoning, as applicable, and influence exerted by the City within its sphere of influence.
- 3.45. Agricultural resources will be observed so as not to unnecessarily encroach upon their operations or create nuisance conditions.
- 3.46. Resources will be protected and integrated as amenities into development.

Conservation and Compatibility

- 3.47. The original town neighborhoods will be conserved through regulatory

provisions and proactive planning measures.

- 3.48. New development will be compatible with existing and well established neighborhoods through appropriate use and design transitioning and cohesive types and patterns of development.
- 3.49. Development patterns should provide for transitions and buffering between various land use intensities. Where land uses of incompatible intensities abut, there should be adequate bufferyards to separate them.
- 3.50. The overall development pattern will transition from urban to suburban to rural with increased distance from the City center.
- 3.51. The traditional street and lot pattern will be respected in the design of new areas adjacent to the original town area.
- 3.52. Potential adverse impacts on adjacent land use types should be considered in the City's development review process (including factors such as noise, odor, pollution, excessive light, traffic, etc.).
- 3.53. New development or redevelopment on "in-fill" parcels in developed areas should maintain compatibility with existing uses and the prevailing land use pattern in the area.
- 3.54. Land uses with unusual characteristics or a higher likelihood of raising compatibility issues should be subject to more focused review and approval through a special approval process. Reasonable conditions or permit provisions should be applied to mitigate potential adverse impacts on nearby properties and uses.

Redevelopment and Revitalization

- 3.55. Downtown will continue to serve as the center of civic uses and activities and as a venue for culture and entertainment.
- 3.56. Reuse and redevelopment of existing property will strictly adhere to the policies and principles of this general plan and the provisions of the development ordinances.
- 3.57. An increased focus will be devoted to corridor revitalization and enhancement.

Community Design

- 3.58. Walkability and good connectivity will be promoted through continuity of the street and pedestrian system, together with a compact community form.
- 3.59. Development along I-5 and the City's primary arteries will be designed with an increased standard of quality and appearance.

Land Use

- 3.60. Residential development should be oriented away from I-5 and other primary streets without adequate transitioning standards and situated within the roadway network and relative to other land uses so as to minimize high volumes of through traffic.
- 3.61. Residential areas should not be situated next to intense nonresidential uses without provisions for increased separation and bufferyards. Less intense nonresidential development may be appropriate next to residential development with performance standards to mitigate adverse impacts.
- 3.62. Medium to high-density housing should be developed at a density and scale



that is compatible with the surrounding neighborhood and available utilities and roadway capacity. Larger multi-family developments should be located on sites with adequate space for off-street parking, accessory structures, and recreational activity, and toward the edge of single-family residential areas where higher traffic generation and taller building heights can be better accommodated.

- 3.63. Smaller-scale commercial development should be accommodated at selected locations within or at the edge of residential neighborhoods to address retail and personal service needs of nearby residents in a convenient and accessible manner, subject to restrictions and performance standards to ensure a compatible character.
- 3.64. Schools, parks, golf courses, and community facilities should be located close to or within residential neighborhoods for accessibility and to provide a focal point for effective and cohesive neighborhood design.
- 3.65. Uses that commonly have moderate- to large-scale assemblies of people such as churches, funeral homes, membership organizations, and other institutions, should be appropriately located on adequate size parcels with sufficient space to accommodate the off-street parking and accessory needs. Such uses should be located so as to minimize any adverse or undue significant burden on adjacent or adjoining land uses, as well as that portion of the street network.
- 3.66. Smaller-scale suburban commercial retail and service uses should be located at intersections of collector or arterial streets and at the edge of logical neighborhood areas – or within neighborhoods where suitable sites exist and conditions are appropriate to balance compatibility with convenience.

Civic Spaces and Amenities

- 3.67. Parks and open spaces will be well distributed and conveniently accessible to all neighborhoods, including provisions for pedestrian connectivity.
- 3.68. Downtown will be the hub of civic activity through provision of public spaces and amenities.

Housing

- 3.69. An assortment of housing types will be provided to meet community and regional housing needs and to fulfill objectives of choice and affordability.
- 3.70. Appropriate locations for low- and high-density residential development should be provided based on accessibility, site suitability, utility availability, and environmental factors.
- 3.71. Portions of the community should be reserved for uniform development of a specific housing type (e.g., detached single-family dwellings, duplexes, townhomes, patio homes, apartments, and manufactured homes), while blending of residential uses should be allowed in other areas to suit the differing tastes of housing consumers, but with reasonable development standards to ensure compatibility.