

# Farmersville General Plan Update

- Land Use Element
- Circulation Element
- Open Space, Conservation,  
Parks and Recreation Element



*Prepared by*

**COLLINS & SCHOETTLER**  
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# Farmersville General Plan

## Part I

### Land Use Element Circulation Element Conservation/Open Space, Parks and Recreation Element

*Adopted by the Farmersville City Council  
Resolution 2002-64, on November 6, 2002*

*Approved by the Farmersville Planning Commission  
Resolution 2002-03 on September 10, 2002*

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**PART I:**  
**LAND USE, CIRCULATION,  
OPEN SPACE/CONSERVATION ELEMENTS**

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## CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

### Farmersville

Farmersville is located in Tulare County in the central-southern portion of the San Joaquin Valley. It is located on the south side of State Route 198, a major east/west highway that serves central California. The City is bisected by Farmersville Boulevard, a north/south roadway, and Visalia Road, a major Tulare County east/west roadway.

Farmersville is five miles east of Visalia, the county seat of Tulare County, and two and one-half miles west of Exeter and ten miles northwest of Lindsay (see Map 1-1).



### The General Plan

In an effort to insure that land and resources within the State of California are properly managed and developed and that the health, safety and welfare of its citizens are protected, each California city and county is required to prepare a long-term, comprehensive planning that details how the city will physically develop. This document - the General Plan - contains seven mandated elements - land use, circulation, housing, open space, conservation, safety and noise.

Farmersville's first general plan was prepared by the County of Tulare in 1964. Subsequently, the County, which provided planning services to the city, updated the general plan in 1986. The County also prepared and adopted the Urban Boundaries Element for the city of Farmersville in 1974. This document established 20-year and ultimate growth lines around the city.

This document will serve to update four of Farmersville's general plan elements:

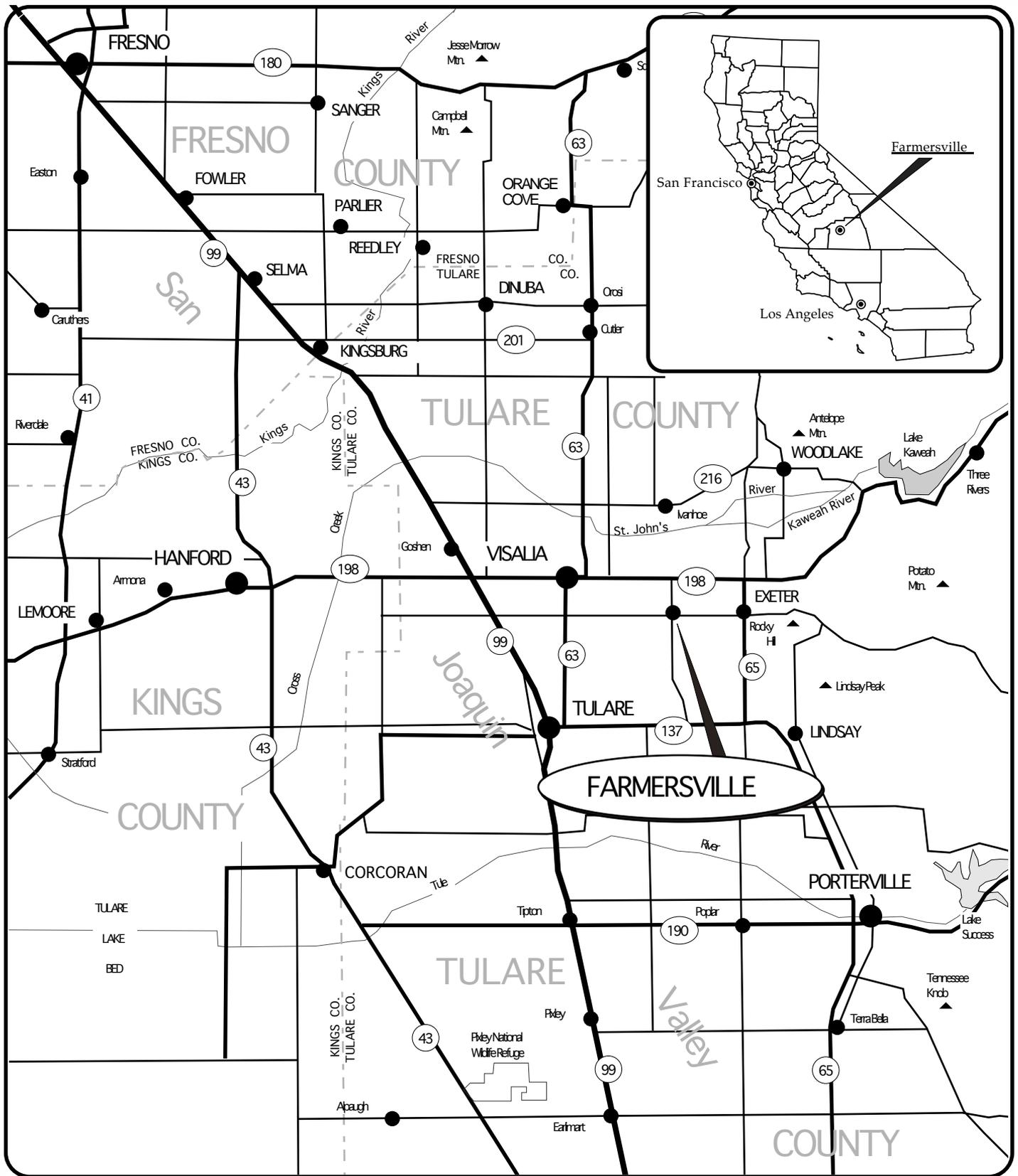
- Land use
- Circulation
- Open Space
- Conservation

**F.Y.I.** | The California State Legislature first required California cities and counties to prepare a general plan in 1927

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*Farmersville's first general plan was prepared by the County of Tulare in 1964*

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City of Farmersville

Regional  
Location

map 1-1

For purposes of clarity the Open Space and Conservation elements will be combined into one chapter - the Open Space/Conservation/Parks Element. In that sense, Farmersville will have three updated elements of the General Plan

Farmersville has already updated its Housing Element in 1992. The Safety Element (1975) and Noise Element (1976) are adequate in regards to policy direction and do not need updating at this time.

Farmersville's vision and expectations for its future are best expressed through its General Plan. The General Plan may be viewed as a community "blueprint" for the future. Specifically, Farmersville's residents have expressed their vision and expectations for the future in the goals, policies and action programs contained in the General Plan. In addition, the land use and circulation maps included in the General Plan provide a visual display of how land uses and roadways will be arranged in Farmersville.

The principals and ideas reflected in the goals, policies, action programs and land use and circulation maps resulted from community surveys and workshops, study sessions and public hearings.

The primary goal of the General Plan is to facilitate a well-planned community. Farmersville's success in fulfilling this goal will depend on how well the City adheres to the General Plan. In this regard, the General Plan can:

- guide the Planning Commission and City Council on land use, circulation, and capital improvement decisions;
- inform the public where certain types of development will occur in the community;
- educate the public on how Farmersville's resources will be managed; and
- provide the private sector with a document upon which it can base investment decisions.

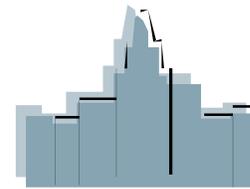
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*Farmersville's vision and expectations for its future are best expressed through its General Plan.*

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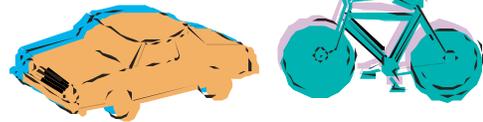
This document updates four elements of Farmersville's General Plan:

### **Land**



*The land use element details how future land uses will be arranged and what form they will take.*

### **Circulation**



*The circulation element shows where future roadways will travel and what kinds of traffic roadways will likely carry. Other modes of transportation, like bicycles, walking and transit are also considered.*

### **Open Space & Conservation**



*The open space/parks and conservation element plans for recreational needs and also sets forth policies to conserve resources, such as agricultural land and air quality.*

**The Farmersville Planning Area**

The Farmersville planning area is located within Farmersville’s Urban Area Boundary (UAB) line. Within the UAB line there are other planning lines, including the Urban Development Boundary (UDB) line and the city limit line. The UAB line is defined by the county’s Urban Boundaries Element as:

*“ ... the areas where land uses are presumed to have an impact on the adjacent incorporated city, and within which the cities’ concerns are to be given serious consideration as part of the land use review process. The urban area is considered to be the next logical area in which urban development may occur and the area within which Urban Development Boundaries may ultimately be expanded.”*

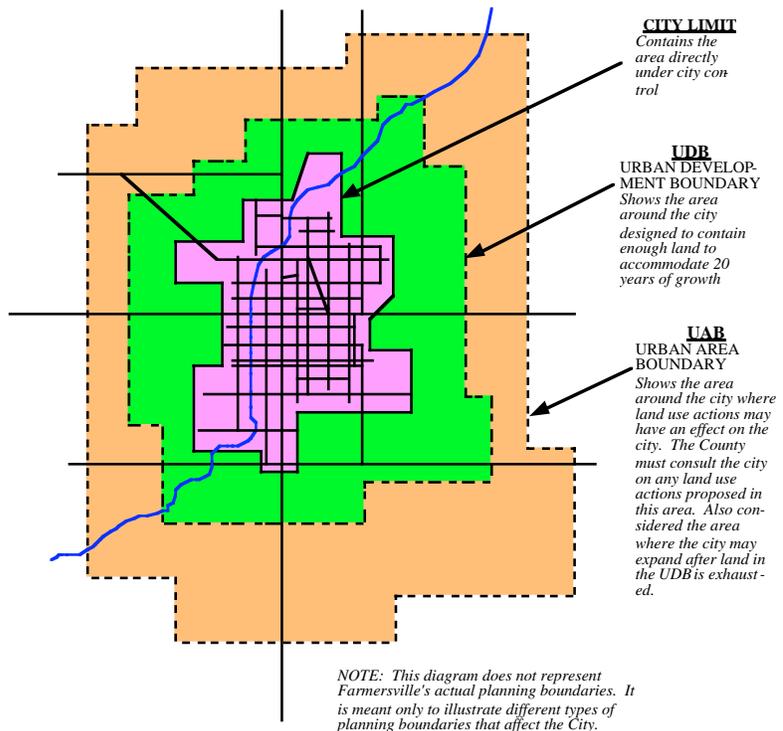
The UDB line is defined as:

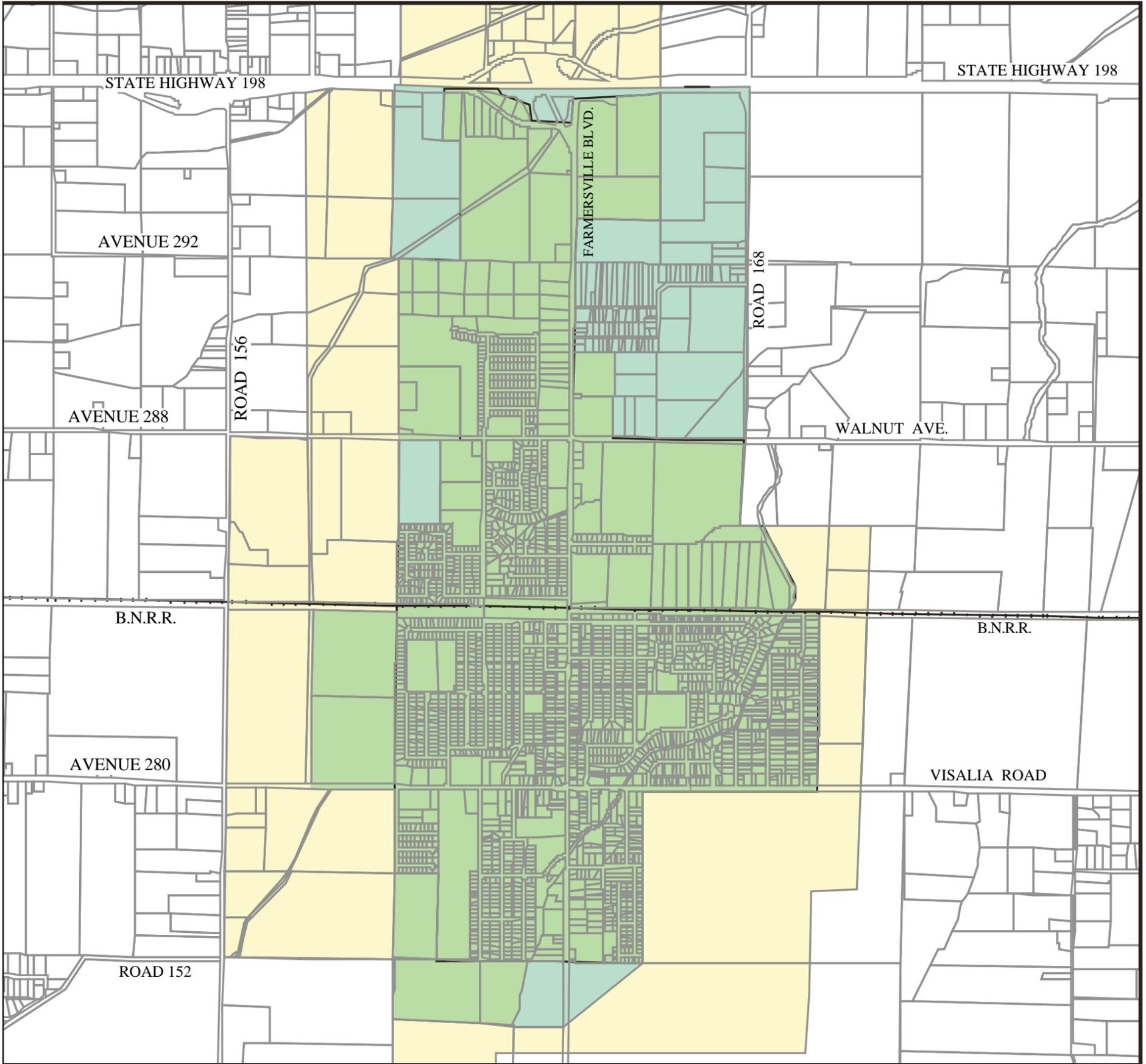
*“... a 20-year planning boundary within which urban development is expected to occur over the plan period.”*

The UAB and UDB lines were adopted by the city in 1999 and by the county in 2000. The UAB line contains 4.8 square miles (3,075 acres); the UDB line, 2.9 square miles (1,846 acres); and the city limits line, 1.8 square miles (1,155 acres). (Map 1-2).

The planning area contains the urbanized portion of Farmersville, the Tulare County subdivision known as Cameron Creek Colony, Linnell Camp - a Tulare County Housing Authority community, rural residential development, scattered industrial developments and agricultural lands. The dominant agricultural crop is walnut orchards.

*A definition of planning boundaries in Tulare County*





# Planning Area Boundaries

(as of 12/18/06)

- City Limits
- Urban Development Boundary
- Urban Area Boundary
- Avenue 288 Streets
- Parcels
- +++++ Railroads

City of Farmersville

Map 1-2



500 0 500 1,000 Feet



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**Planning Period**

The Farmersville General Plan update will be a 23-year plan, 2002 - 2025. Every five years, it should be reviewed and updated to insure that it is reflective of changes in community attitudes and market forces.

State planning law permits the mandatory elements of the General Plan to be amended as often as four times per year. This provision in State law allows the city to "fine-tune" its General Plan; however, since the General Plan is a "public" document, any amendment should have the broad support of the public.

**General Plan Objectives**

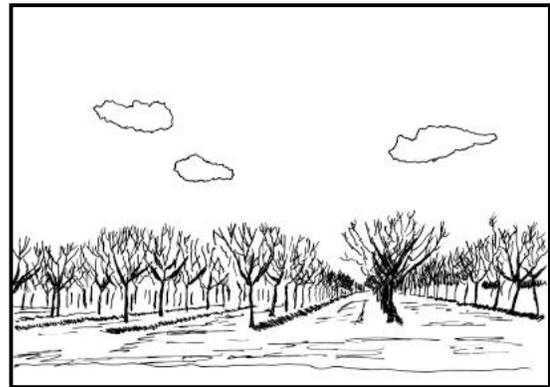
The objectives of the Farmersville General Plan are to:

- project Farmersville’s future growth and make provisions for this growth through the General Plan;
- create a unique and attractive city by investing in projects that will enhance Farmersville’s appearance and marketability;
- provide a safe and pleasant environment and enhance property values throughout the community by avoiding and eliminating land use conflicts;
- promote increased sales tax revenue in Farmersville by providing sufficient land for a wide range of commercial uses.
- Protect and preserve natural resources, such as farmland, air and water quality and native vegetation, while facilitating growth of the community.
- provide for a greater variety of housing choices and shopping opportunities;
- ensure that there are adequate public facilities to serve Farmersville in the future;
- ensure that Farmersville’s infrastructure system can effectively serve the land use framework;

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***The General Plan update is intended to guide Farmersville’s planning for a twenty-three year period, from the year 2002 to 2025.***

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*Farmersville’s economy is supported by agriculture. The need to grow while preserving agricultural land presents a challenge for the future.*

- enhance the character of Farmersville by creating an improved and revitalized downtown area;
- promote economic development and enhanced employment opportunities in Farmersville by designating sufficient land for industrial uses, retail stores, and office parks;
- recognize the changing conditions and trends in the planning area and market place and make appropriate amendments to the General Plan;
- recognize past land use approval actions and adopted land use policies;



*Promote economic development and enhanced employment opportunities in Farmersville*

**What is the legal background for the General Plan?**

Planners and decision-makers have likened the General Plan to the U.S. Constitution in that decisions regarding land use, circulation, housing and capital improvements must be consistent with the goals, objectives and policies of this document. In *City of Santa Ana v. City of Garden Grove*, 100 Cal. App. 3d 521, 532 (1979), the court of appeal, in explaining California's general plan legislation in 1971, stated it has:

*" . . . transformed the general plan from just an "interesting study" to the basic land use charter governing the direction of future land use in the local jurisdiction . . . . As a result, general plans now embody fundamental land use decisions that guide the future growth and development of cities."*

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*The General Plan has been called the equivalent of the U.S. Constitution for cities.*

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**All Actions of a City Must be Consistent with the General Plan**

City decisions that are not consistent with the General Plan place that community in a legally tenuous position and subject to legal challenge. In *Friends of "B" Street . et. al. v. City of Hayward, et. al.*, 106 Cal. App. 3d 988 (1980), the court concluded that construction of public improvements (e.g. street projects, sewer lines, etc.) must be consistent with the General Plan. Further, the court stated that the General Plan essentially is the constitution for all future development within the city.

A General Plan, which is internally inconsistent, lacks one or more of the mandatory elements, or is lacking required information, can potentially prevent a city from issuing land use approvals, including building permits, zone changes, and subdivisions, if the Court finds that any one of the aforementioned conditions exist (Sierra Club v. Kern County, 126 Cal. App. 3d 698, 704 (1981); Resource Defense Fund v. County of Santa Cruz, 133 Cal. App. 3d 800, 803 (1982); Camp v. Mendocino, 123 Cal. App. 3d 334 (1981)).

For example, the Farmersville Housing Element may include a policy that states that the city provide adequate sites for a range of housing types, including multi-family residential uses. The Land Use Element would have to be consistent with this policy by designating sufficient land area for this type of development.

Another example of inter-element consistency involves the use of population projections, which is the basis for future land needs for housing units and other types of land uses. The Land Use and Housing Elements should use the same population projections in their needs analysis to avoid inter-element inconsistencies.

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*The courts have enacted a building moratorium in cities that have violated their general plans, or that have not updated their plans.*

---

**How is this document organized?**

The Farmersville General Plan and accompanying environmental impact report are combined into one document. Part 1 contains four of the seven state-mandated elements of the General Plan. These elements are: land use, circulation, and two elements that have been combined, the open space/conservation element. Each element is generally formatted as follows:

**PART 1: GENERAL PLAN ELEMENTS**

- I. Introduction
- II. Existing Conditions
- III. Projections
- IV. Goals
- V. The Plan
  - A. Issue
  - B. Policy
  - C. Action Program

Part 2 contains existing conditions (background information) on the City of Farmersville. It is support information for the three general plan elements found in Part 1 and serves as the existing conditions section of the environmental impact report (EIR) contained in Part 3. It is formatted as follows:

**Part 2: Existing Conditions**

- I. Human Environment
  - A. Population
  - B. Socio-economic Conditions
  - C. Housing Characteristics
  - D. Services
  - E. Land Use
  - F. Infrastructure
- II. Physical Environment
  - A. Climate
  - B. Topography

Farmersville's General Plan update is organized into three main parts:

**1. General Plan elements**

*Consisting of four elements:*

- Land Use
- Circulation
- Open Space
- Conservation

**2. Existing Conditions**

*A discussion of existing conditions in the planning area*

**3. Environmental Impact Report**

*An analysis of environmental effects that will result from the General Plan*

- C. Soils
- D. Geology

### III. Resources

- A. Scenic
- B. Agricultural
- C. Cultural
- D. Biotic
- E. Air Quality
- F. Water Quality

### IV. Risk of Upset

- A. Flooding
- B. Noise
- C. Seismic

Part 3 of this document contains the Environmental Impact Report (EIR) prepared for the Farmersville General Plan. This part of the document discusses the environmental impacts associated with the implementation of the General Plan. In addition, it lists mitigation measures and discusses plan alternatives that can reduce the General Plan's impact on the environment. The EIR is organized as follows:

#### **Part 3: Environmental Impact Report**

- I. Executive Summary
- II. Introduction
- III. Project Description
- IV. Environmental Setting (see Part 2)
- V. Environmental Impact Analysis
- VI. Unavoidable Adverse Environmental Impacts
- VII. Alternatives to the Proposed Actions
- VIII. Growth-Inducing Impacts
- IX. Long-Term Implications of the Proposed Project
- X. Cumulative Impacts
- XI. Effects Found Not to be Significant
- XII. Persons and Agencies Consulted

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*Preparation of the General Plan also requires Farmersville to undertake an Environmental Impact Report. This is because the growth that is accommodated by the General Plan will have significant impacts on the environment.*

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## CHAPTER 2: LAND USE ELEMENT

### Introduction

The Land Use Element is the most prominent of the seven mandatory elements of the General Plan. It, more so than the other elements, has the most significant impact on existing and future Farmersville residents. It is the element that determines the general location of residential, commercial, industrial, public and open space uses and it discloses building intensities and population densities for the planning area.

In planning circles, the land use and circulation elements of the General Plan have been termed the “blueprints” for the development of a city. The goals, policies, and implementation measures of the elements are considered to be the “instructions” for the blueprints.

The Farmersville Land Use Element contains seven sections:

- 1) existing land use patterns and population trends;
- 2) population and land use projections;
- 3) land use designations and population densities;
- 4) planning issues and land use goals;
- 5) land use policies and actions (implementation measures);
- 6) land use designation/zoning district matrix; and a
- 7) land use map.

### Existing Land Use Patterns and Population Trends

Farmersville’s urban area is generally centered along Farmersville Boulevard, the city’s major north/south roadway. The city’s downtown commercial area is situated along Farmersville Boulevard generally between Visalia Road and Front Street. Additional commercial areas are located on Visalia Road, east and west of Farmersville Boulevard and on Farmersville Blvd., north of Front Street and south of Visalia Road.

Residential neighborhoods are situated in all quadrants of the community. The oldest neighborhoods are located around the intersection of Farmersville Blvd. and Visalia

Road. Newer residential development is occurring in the northwest portion of the community, north and south of Walnut Avenue. The community has a very limited amount of industrial development. A nut/fruit drying facility is located in the center of the urban area, on the east side of Farmersville Boulevard, north of the railroad. There is a cement mixing operation in the city’s only industrial park on Terry Avenue, on the west side of Farmersville Boulevard.

Prominent public uses in Farmersville include the five campuses operated by Farmersville Unified School District. These include Farmersville High School on Walnut Avenue, west of Farmersville Boulevard, Farmersville Junior High School on Virginia Avenue and Ash Street, Hester Elementary School on Ash Street and Rose Avenue, and Snowden Elementary School and the continuation high school on Farmersville Boulevard , south of Visalia Road. Major city-owned facilities include six neighborhood parks, the Farmersville Civic Center on Visalia Road and Virginia Avenue, Public Works yard on Farmersville Boulevard, south of Tulare Street, two city-operated child-care centers and the city’s wastewater treatment plant, located southwest of the urban area.

As of the year 2002, Farmersville’s city limits contained 1,205 acres, approximately 1.9 square miles. The Urban Development Boundary contains 1,726 acres and the Urban Area Boundary contains approximately 2,952 acres. Table 2-1 shows the makeup of land uses within the city limits, UDB and UAB.

**Table 2-1**  
*Existing Land Use Acreages*

	City Limits	Urban Development Boundary	Urban Area Boundary	Total
Single Family Residential	416	76	35	527
Multi-Family Residential	21.8	0.9	63.7	86
General Commercial	27.5	2.3	0	30
Service Commercial	16.1	0.4	1.4	18
Industrial	32.4	0	41.8	74
Agricultural	193.5	357	924	1,474
Parks	14.4	0	0	14
Public/Quasi-Public	62.5	31	35.9	129
Schools	76.9	0	5.2	82
Waterways	7.4	0	16.4	24
Vacant	185.8	13.8	14.9	215
Right-of-Way	151	150	283	
Total	1,205	631	1,421	
Total acreage in Planning Boundary	1,205	1,686	2,957	

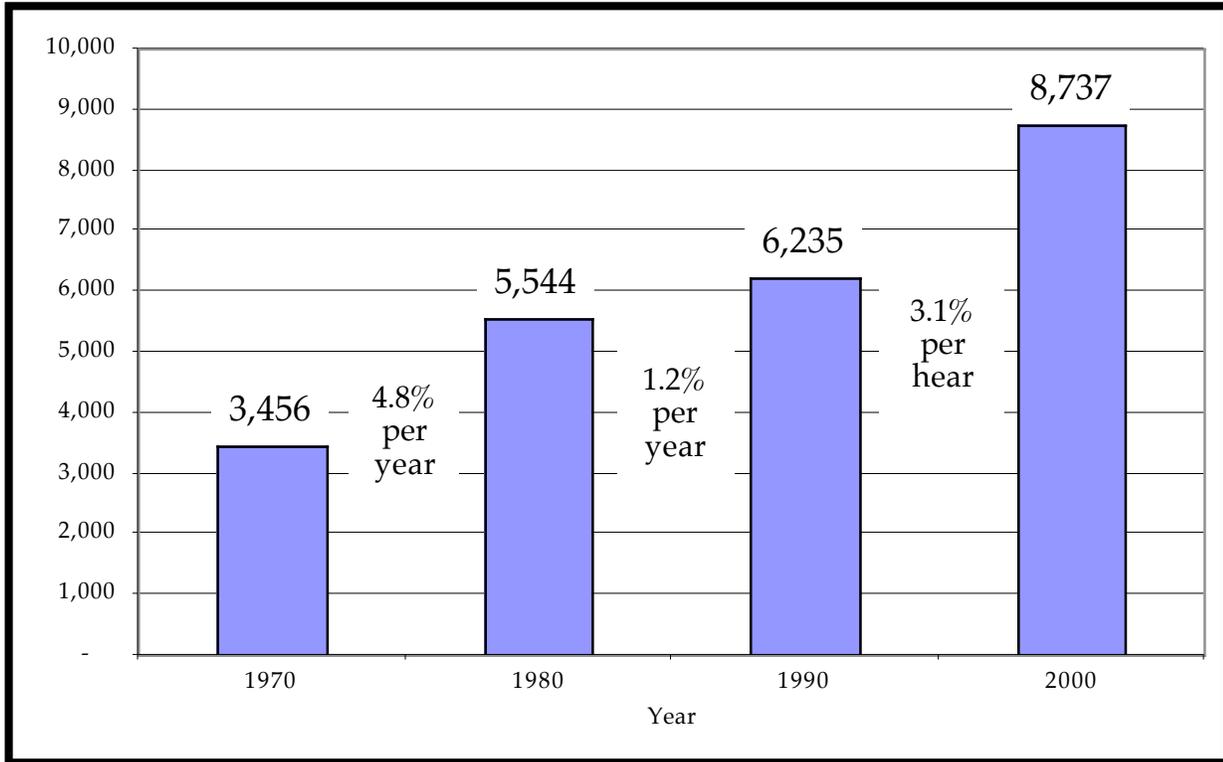
Since 1990, Farmersville has been averaging 35 new single family and 7 multiple family residential units per year.

**Population**

From 1990 to 2000, Farmersville’s population growth during this time period has been about 3.4% per year. This ranks highest of Tulare County’s eight incorporated cities. Exeter experienced a rate of 2.3% per year, Visalia, 1.9%, Lindsay, 2.1% and Woodlake 1.6%. Farmersville’s population growth of 3.4% per year averages out to about 250 persons per year.

Chart 2-1 display’s Farmersville’s historic growth since 1970.

**Chart 2-1**  
*Population Growth*  
*1970 - 2000*



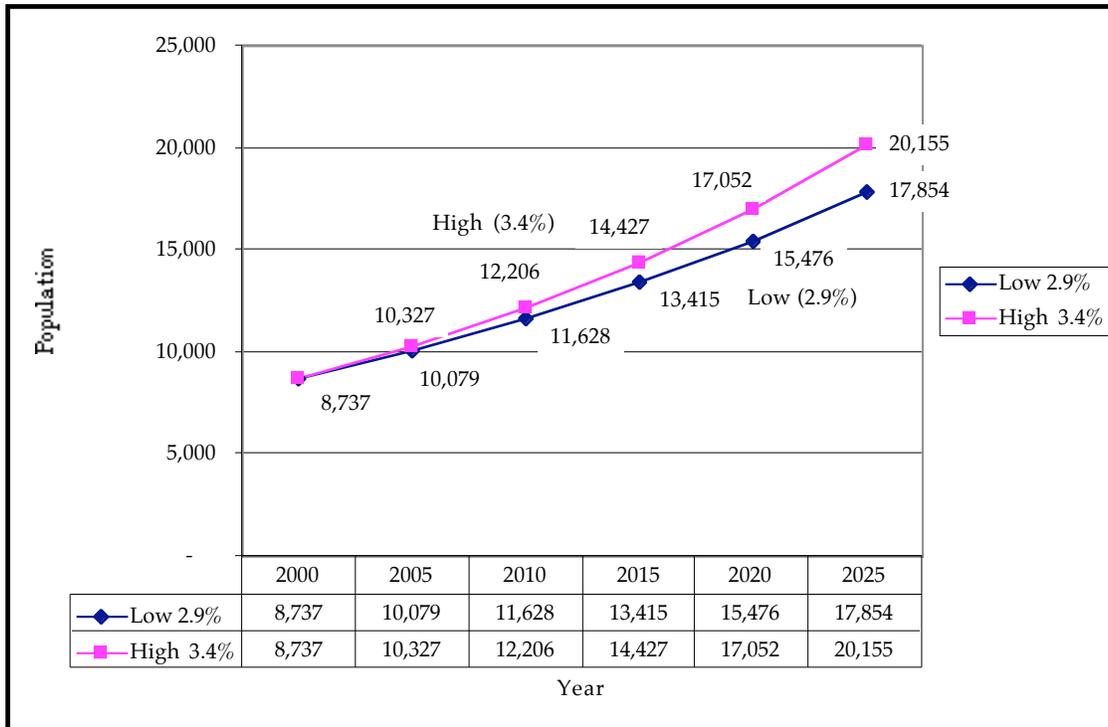
**Population and Land Use Projections**

**Population Projections**

In order to determine the amount of land needed for urban development in Farmersville over the next 23 years, 2002 to 2025, population projections are required. Two population projection scenarios (low and high) are provided in the Plan.

These population figures are projections from the base year of 2000, provided by the U.S. Census Bureau. The Plan's "low" population projection is based on Farmersville's average annual growth rate from 1980 to 2000 (2.9 percent); its "high" population projection is based on the average annual growth rate from 1990 to 2000 (3.4 percent).

**Chart 2-2**  
**Population Projections**



Source: U.S. Census Bureau; State Department of Finance;  
 Collins & Schoettler, 2000

**How Much Land Will Farmersville Need to Accommodate Expected Growth?**

This section provides projections of land that will be needed to accommodate expected growth of Farmersville through the year 2025. These land use projections are based on the previously discussed population projections and land use statistics.

Additional data factored into the land use projections include persons per dwelling unit, acres of parkland per 1,000 persons, residential densities, size of school sites, etc.

**RESIDENTIAL LAND DEMAND, 2025**

**Residential land demand assumptions**

- The number of persons per residential unit will be 3.66 persons (California Department of Finance, 2000).
- Future dwelling types will fall into the following categories:
  - 84% will be single family dwellings,
  - 12% will be multiple family units,
  - 4% will be mobile homes (Source: 2000 Department of Finance).
  - Single family dwellings will occur on 7,000 square foot (average) parcels
  - Multiple family development will be allowed at an average density of one unit per 2,500 square feet.
  - Mobile homes will typically be developed in mobile home parks on 3,000 square foot individual parcels.
- The residential land demands for single family housing development will be increased by a factor of 25 percent to account for land consumed by street rights-of-way, and will be increased by 15 percent for multiple family and mobile home developments.
- Farmersville has about 80 acres of existing vacant land zoned R-1 and 3.95 acres of existing vacant land zoned R-M.

2,774 residential units x 12 percent multi-family units = **333 units**

2,774 residential units x 4 percent mobile home units = **111 units**

Single Family Residential:

2,330 x 7,000 square feet x 1.25 (right-of-way factor) = 468 acres - 80 existing vacant R-1 acres =

**388 acres needed**

Multiple Family Residential:

333 units x 2,500 square feet x 1.15 (right-of-way factor) = 22 acres - 4 existing vacant R-M acres =

**18 acres needed**

Mobile Homes:

111 mobile home units x 3,000 square feet x 1.15 (right-of-way factor) =

**9 acres**

**Total Residential Acreage Needed: 415 acres**

The residential land use projections indicate that 415 acres will be needed to accommodate residential growth through the year 2025.

**Residential Land Demand, 2025**

Population Growth:

17,854 (2025 projected population) - 7,701 (2000 population) =

10,153 persons

Housing Units Needed:

10,153 persons / 3.66 persons per residential unit =

**2,774 residential units**

Expected Housing Types:

2,774 residential units x 84 percent single family units = **2,330 units**

**COMMERCIAL LAND DEMAND, 2025**

**Commercial land demand assumptions**

- Retail commercial/office uses will continue to be intermixed
- The bulk of new commercial/office developments will be one-story buildings.
- Farmersville has 44 acres of existing commercial development.
- Farmersville has 22 acres of existing vacant land zoned C-G (“General Commercial), and 12 acres of existing vacant land zoned C-S (Service Commercial).
- Compared to other Tulare County cities, Farmersville is presently grossly “underserved” by commercial development.

**Commercial/office land demand, 2025**

Existing Commercial “Need”:

7,701 (2000 population)/44 acres of existing commercial/office development =

**1 acre commercial/office per 175 persons**

Future Commercial Need

1 acre commercial/office space per 175 persons / 10,153 (additional 2025 population) =

**58 acres needed through the year 2025.**

58 acres - 34 acres of vacant/undeveloped land zoned “Commercial” =

**24 acres of commercial/office land needed through 2025.**

Farmersville has a need for 24 acres of additional commercial development through the year 2025. If the city’s commercial development level was on a par with other Tulare County cities, this total could be significantly higher.

**INDUSTRIAL LAND DEMAND, 2025**

**Industrial land demand assumptions**

- Industrial uses do not require the high visibility that retail commercial/office uses require.
- Farmersville has approximately 32 acres of industrial land (2000)
- Farmersville has 82 vacant acres zoned for industrial uses.
- Compared to other Tulare County cities, Farmersville is grossly “underserved” by industrial development.
- Some of Farmersville’s vacant industrial land is located within a flood plain and is therefore difficult to market and develop.

**Industrial land demand, 2025**

Existing Industrial “Need”:

7,701 (2000 population)/32 acres of existing industrial lands (2000) =

**1 acre industrial use per 240 persons.**

Future Industrial Need:

1 acre of industrial per 240 persons / 10,153 (additional 2020 population) =

**42 acres industrial land needed.**

42 acres industrial lands needed - 82 acres existing industrial uses =

**-65 acres needed for industrial uses.**

No additional land needed for industrial uses by 2020. However, Farmersville is very “under-developed” in the category of industrial uses. Therefore, the projected need is expected to be under-estimated.

**PARK LAND DEMAND, 2025**

**Parkland demand assumptions**

- The City of Farmersville has a standard of developing three acres of parkland for every 1,000 persons. The current (2000) population of 8,737 should be served by 23.1 acres of park land. The existing total of developed park land in 2000 is 13 acres. Therefore, Farmersville is presently deficient on park acreage by 10 acres.
- Open space on school sites will not be counted as parkland.

**Parkland Demand, 2025**

Three acres of parkland per 1,000 persons x 10,153 (additional 2025 population) =

**30.5 additional acres of parkland needed through the year 2025.**

Farmersville presently is short ten acres on parkland. Therefore, 30.5 + 10 = 40.5 acres.

**40.5 acres of parkland needed by 2025**

**SCHOOL LAND DEMAND, 2025**

**School land demand assumptions**

- This study assumes a general standard for elementary schools that provides for an enrollment of 600 to 700 students and a school site ranging from 10 to 12 acres. The standard for middle schools shall provide an enrollment of 750 to 900 students and a school site ranging from 18 to 20 acres. The standard for high schools shall provide an enrollment of 1,500 to 2,000 students and a school site of 40 acres or more.

**School land demand, 2025**

The school district has indicated a need for an additional elementary campus in the next several years.

There are currently 52 acres of land reserved for future school development, south of the existing high school. It is assumed that this land will accommodate Farmersville’s school needs through the year 2025.

**CONCLUSIONS**

The above analysis shows that Farmersville will need the following amount of land through the year 2025.

**Residential:** 415 acres

**Commercial:** 24 acres (there are presently 33 acres commercially-zoned undeveloped land)

**Industrial:** 17 acres (there are presently 82 acres of agricultural and vacant land)

**Parks:** 41 acres

**Schools:** 12 acres (52 vacant acres of land designated for schools exist)

**Total:** 456 acres - existing vacant/ag zoned land (commercial, industrial, schools) = 190 acres - existing zoned land (commercial, industrial, schools) = 289 acres needed

The projections above indicate that a total of approximately 456 acres of “undeveloped” land will be needed to accommodate expected urban growth in Farmersville through the year 2025. Because there is already sufficient “undeveloped” land in the commercial, industrial and schools categories, the actual land demand is about 290 acres.

In order to ensure that the real estate market does not become overly restricted (artificially forcing up land prices), the land demand figure (290 acres) shall be increased by 40 percent as follows:

$290 \times 40\% = 116 \text{ acres. } 290 + 116 = 406 \text{ acres.}$

Farmersville’s current city limits (not including the wastewater treatment plant) contain 1,181 acres. Adding 406 acres results in a total area of 1,587 acres. The existing city Urban Development Boundary contains 1,726 acres.

Therefore, this analysis indicates that there is more than enough land within the Urban Development Boundary

needed to accommodate growth to the year 2025. As noted previously, however, city officials consider Farmersville to be grossly under-developed with commercial and industrial development, as compared

other Tulare County cities. As such, the land demand projections should be tempered by this realization.

**Land Use Designations and Population Densities**

The following land use categories are established to implement the policies of the Farmersville General Plan.

These land use categories pertain to six typical land use activities:

- Residential;
- Commercial;
- Industrial;
- Public;
- Open space and
- Agricultural/Urban Reserve.

These categories are further refined into more specific designations below. For example, the plan establishes three residential categories - these are based on the density of development, such as single family, multi-family residential, and so forth.

For residential land use designations, maximum population densities are provided, as required by State law.

**Residential**

**Low Density** - a maximum of 5 dwelling units per gross acre, or 14 persons per acre. Development in this category shall be required to install curbs, gutters, sidewalks and street lights, and connect to the city's sewer, storm drain and water systems.



This designation shall be reserved for those lands that are appropriate for single family residential developments. Uses that are typically associated with single family neighborhoods, such as churches, day-care centers, community centers, parks, and schools, shall also be permitted, subject to appropriate permits. These lands shall generally be located in areas of the community that are free from conflicting land uses, such as industrial and service commercial uses.

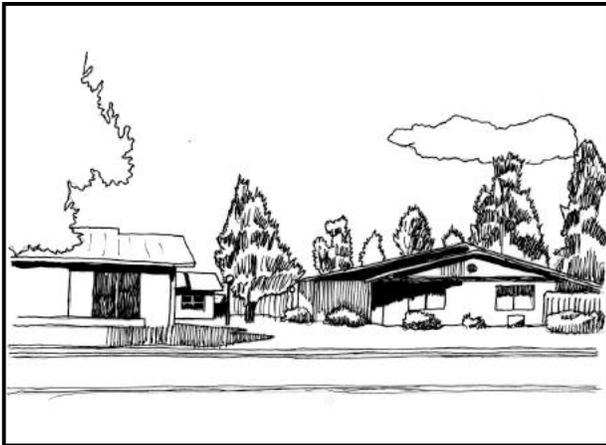
**Medium Density** - a maximum of 15 dwelling units per gross acre, or 42 persons per acre. Development in this category shall be required to install all the same improvements that are required in the low density residential designation.



Medium density development could encompass a mix of single family and multi-family uses, including duplex, tri-plex, four-plex units and mobile home parks.

These lands shall generally be located in areas of the community that are free from conflicting land uses, such as industrial and service commercial uses.

**Medium-High Density** - a maximum of 29 dwelling units per gross acre, or 84 persons per acre. Development in this category could encompass apartment complexes, senior citizen projects and condominiums.



These lands shall generally be located in areas of the community that are free from conflicting land uses, are located near the center of Farmersville, and are generally situated on major street corner lots, or along major streets.

**Commercial**

Farmersville’s current General Plan only provides for one commercial category. It is the intent of this General Plan to increase this number to four commercial categories:

- General Commercial;
- Central Commercial; and
- Service Commercial
- Highway Commercial

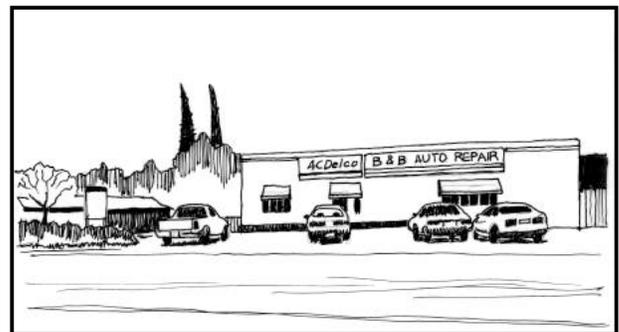
**General commercial** designations shall be reserved for properties generally located on Farmersville Blvd. and Visalia Road, outside the downtown area (which is designated Central Commercial).

This designation shall provide for shopping centers, retail uses, and offices.



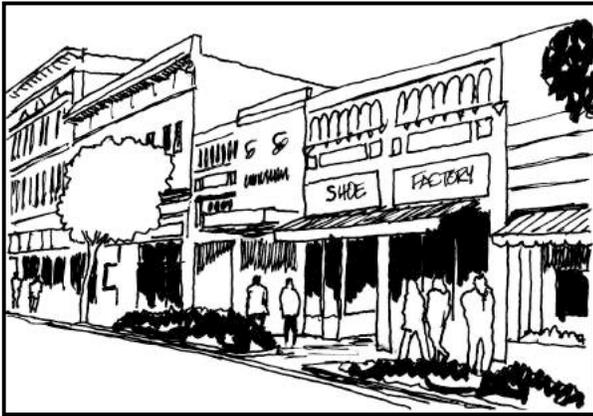
Development within this designation will have the following distinguishing features - new development will be required to be landscaped, parking shall be constructed off-street, signs shall be regulated and new uses or extensive expansion of existing uses shall require site plan review or a conditional use permit, as determined by the Farmersville Zoning Ordinance.

**Service commercial** is a new designation that provides for uses that include a mix of light industrial and “heavy” commercial uses. In particular, uses such as auto repair should be directed into this category.



Development with this designation will have the following distinguishing features - new development will have landscaping, parking shall be off-street, all visible equipment and storage areas shall be fenced and screened from public view, signs will be regulated and new uses or extensive expansion of existing uses shall require site plan review or a conditional use permit, as determined by the Farmersville Zoning Ordinance.

**Central commercial** designations shall be reserved for those properties located in the central commercial area, generally fronting along Farmersville Boulevard and Visalia Road, in the vicinity of the intersection of those two streets.



It is the goal of the General Plan to foster a downtown atmosphere of stores fronting directly on the street with display windows catering to pedestrian shopping. Parking facilities should be located to the rear or to the side of buildings.

Development with this designation will have the following distinguishing features - the buildings will generally be built to back of sidewalk, parking shall be generally located at the rear or side of the building, signs shall be regulated and shall be pedestrian-oriented, the architectural design of the building will be compatible with a downtown environment, and new uses or extensive expansion of existing uses shall require site plan review or a conditional use permit, as determined by the Farmersville Zoning Ordinance.

In order to permit design flexibility and prevent the creation of large parking lots in the downtown area (thereby eroding the pedestrian character of this area) the City should consider allowing reduced parking requirements for uses in the Central Commercial area. It is suggested that the Zoning Ordinance's parking requirements be reduced by 25% for commercial and public uses in the Central Commercial area.

**Highway Commercial**

The Highway Commercial designation is intended to provide for commercial uses that cater to the travelling public along State Route 198. Highway-oriented uses should include service stations, convenience stores, restaurants and lodging establishments.

Development within this designation be required to be landscaped, parking shall be constructed off-street, signs shall be regulated and new uses or extensive expansion of existing uses shall require site plan review or a conditional use permit, as determined by the Farmersville Zoning Ordinance.

**Mixed Use Overlay**

This designation is intended to encourage flexibility in new development by allowing for the combination of residential, office and commercial uses on one site. The designation recognizes that before the advent of modern zoning, most cities allowed combinations of these types of uses. For instance, many communities had multi-story buildings (particularly in their downtowns) that featured



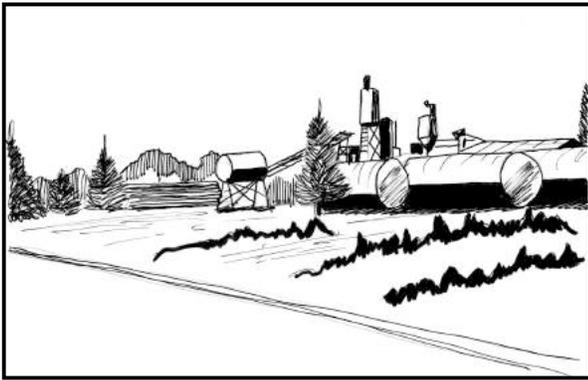
retail commercial or offices on the ground floor, and living units on upper floors. This arrangement potentially allows one to live and work in close proximity, without the need for an automobile. It also sets up a dynamic urban atmosphere where various land

uses inter-relate with one another in a unique way not possible in a typical “suburban” setting.

Projects approved with this designation shall require Conditional Use Permit approval and will be developed in accordance with a new “Mixed Use” zoning designation. This concept is further addressed in the policy section of the Land Use Element.

**Industry**

This designation will provide for uses that are involved in manufacturing, processing, warehousing, and certain service commercial uses.



Development with this designation will have the following distinguishing features - the subject site will be landscaped, parking lots will be constructed off-street and will be landscaped, storage areas shall be fenced and screened, signs shall be regulated and new uses or extensive expansion of existing uses shall require site plan review or a conditional use permit, as determined by the Farmersville Zoning Ordinance.

**Public Facilities**

This designation is reserved for facilities that are operated by public agencies, including schools, the post office, City Hall, other City-operated facilities and county offices.

New development with this designation will have the following distinguishing features - the subject site will be

landscaped, parking lots will be constructed off-street and will be landscaped, signs shall be regulated and new uses shall undergo site plan review. Schools should

receive special attention in regards to pedestrian, bike and bus circulation.



**Open Space**

This designation is applied to lands that will remain generally free of buildings. Uses that would receive this designation would include parks, playing fields, and golf courses.



**Urban Reserve (Agriculture)**

This designation is applied to lands that are being, or have the capacity to be, actively farmed but are within the planning area and proposed to be eventually developed.

Further, this designation could also be applied to lands that contain agriculturally-related uses, such as packing houses, cold storage operations or agriculturally-related businesses. The purpose of this designation is to protect agriculture from urban encroachment, maintain land in agriculture until the time is appropriate for conversion to urban uses, and to ensure that conflicts do not arise between agriculture and urban uses.



## **LAND USE GOALS, OBJECTIVES AND ACTION PLANS**

This section of the Land Use Element establishes goals, objectives and actions, to guide Farmersville’s growth through the year 2025.

Land use goals express general community values. They are the community’s vision for its future. They can refer to image and appearance, economic viability, health and safety, preservation of resources or fiscal soundness, among other issues. Goals are refined into objectives and action plans. These represent concrete actions the city will take to ensure that goals are realized. Goals, objectives and action plans are organized under topical issues, including:

- Community Image
- Growth Management
- Agricultural Land
- Residential Neighborhoods
- Commercial Development
- Industrial Development
- Downtown
- Public Facilities
- Schools
- Economic Development
- Infrastructure
- Public Safety
- Public Participation
- Special Issues
  - Cameron Creek Colony
  - Linnel Farm Labor Center
  - State Highway 198
- Appendix A: Smart Growth Primer

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*Land use goals express general community values. They are the community’s vision for its future.*

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**ISSUE ONE: Community Image**

Image is an important community asset in that it can influence how people feel about their city. If a community has a positive image, a strong sense of community and pride can result.

A community that is clean, well-maintained, visually appealing and properly planned will:

- Attract outside investment;
- Encourage people to maintain their property;
- Cause real estate values to appreciate; and
- Stimulate city revenues - tax increment, sales tax and transient occupancy (lodging) taxes.

***Goals, Objectives, Action Plans***

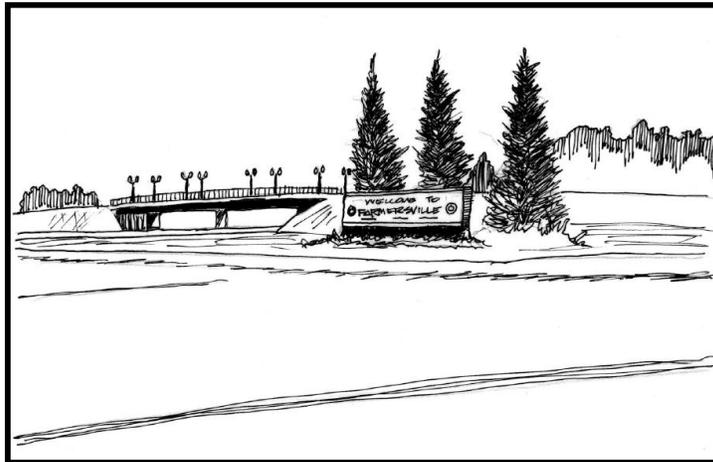
Public Improvements

**I. Foster an attractive, clean and well-maintained community.**

1. The City should design and install “Welcome to Farmersville” community identification signs at the Highway 198/Farmersville Boulevard interchange.

a. The City should hold a design contest for the design of the sign. Various funding sources should be identified, including sponsorships, donations, memorials, etc. The City must coordinate with Caltrans on the design and installation of such signs.

2. The City should explore the creation of a downtown maintenance district to pay for the cost of maintaining improvements in the downtown, such as landscaping, street furniture, parking lots and lighting.



*“Welcome to Farmersville” sign and landscaping at Hwy. 198 interchange*

3. The City should facilitate a landscaping program in appropriate locations, such as parks, future street medians and within the downtown that promotes shading, color, and aesthetically pleasing forms.
  - a. The City should seek funding to pay for landscape improvements. In addition to grant monies, the city should explore establishing a development impact fee that pays for the construction and landscaping of street medians and landscape planters.
  - b. The City should apply for an urban forestry grant to pay for the planting of trees within sidewalks along major streets, including Farmersville Boulevard, Visalia Road and Walnut Avenue.

Code Enforcement/Property Maintenance

1. The City shall ensure that street sweeping, trash pickup, and the maintenance of public grounds and buildings are completed on a regular basis.
  - a. Ensure these tasks are adequately funded and staffed. Consider adding a development impact fee to fund these activities.
2. The City shall actively enforce the State Housing Code, which provides a procedure for abating or rehabilitating unsafe, dilapidated residential structures.
  - a. The Building Inspector shall report to the City Council on an annual basis progress on rehabilitating or removing unsafe residential structures.
  - b. The Planning Department shall maintain a city map that identifies the location of unsafe residential dwellings.
  - c. The Farmersville Redevelopment Agency should explore the use of state or federal funds to promote infill residential development while concurrently facilitating the rehabilitation of substandard dwellings

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*The need for property maintenance and code enforcement was frequently mentioned by the General Plan*

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and the removal of unsafe residential structures.

3. The City shall continue to actively enforce the city’s vehicle abatement program and illegal parking on residential property.
    - a. The City should create a property maintenance brochure that addresses the most common questions about property maintenance and code enforcement issues. This brochure should be mailed to all property owners periodically. The brochure could be sent along with other regular mailings, such as utility bills.
  4. A truck-parking facility could be located at the to-be-expanded public works yard and/or within industrially-zoned areas. The facility should be fenced for security. The City could charge a small fee to recoup the cost of operating the facility.
  5. Farmersville shall continue to actively enforce the city’s sign ordinance.
    - a. The City shall review its Zoning Ordinance and if necessary, update its sign regulations.
    - b. The City shall prepare a brochure that clearly explains the sign ordinance.
    - c. The City should send the sign brochure to all businesses along with yearly business license renewals, as a reminder of the city’s sign ordinance standards.
  6. The City shall develop a standard public notice form that could be sent to persons who are violating the Farmersville Municipal Code as it relates to zoning violations, public nuisances or non-compliance under an approved site plan or conditional use permit.
- I. The City should establish community “clean up” days where residents are encouraged to spruce up their property and dispose of unwanted trash.



*The City shall explore creating a space for the overnight parking of “big rig” trucks by residents who are employed in trucking.*

This event should be held several times per year, as funds allow.

- a. Partner with local organizations like the Boy Scouts, C-SET, and other youth organizations to assist residents in clean-ups.
- b. Coordinate with Farmersville’s solid waste contractor to supply refuse bins for the clean up.

Community Character and Identity

**II. Create development that conveys a “sense of place” with architecture that reflects local history and traditions.**

- 1. The City shall prepare and adopt a set of design guidelines that specifies “good” design strategies and architectural themes that reflect Farmersville’s “sense of place”

**III. Create a community that is free of land use conflicts.**

- 1. Legal, non-conforming land uses should not be allowed to be enlarged physically or operationally (unless the expansion does not increase the degree of non-conformity).
- 2. The city shall actively enforce existing zoning and building regulations that preclude or eliminate uses of land or buildings that present conflicts for adjacent properties.
- 3. The city shall ensure that commercial uses do not operate in residential neighborhoods unless the operator of the commercial use has obtained a home occupation permit from the city.
- 4. The city should develop an urban growth strategy that minimizes the impact on urban uses on adjacent agricultural operations (see Growth Management, page 2-21).
  - a. The Land Use map shall use roadways, ditches, railroads, creeks and other physical



**BACKGROUND**

*Non-conforming uses are those that do not comply with zoning standards for the zone in which they are located. A frequent example is where a house located in a commercial zone. Because houses are not allowed in commercial zones, they are considered to be “non-conforming”.*

*The presence of numerous non-conforming uses creates problems for the planning process. Residents of the dwelling may complain about noise or traffic generated by commercial uses. Non-conforming uses can hamper the city’s ability to attract new development into the intended zone. Allowing a non-conforming use to expand only “entrenches” the use at its location, making future conversion of the site to another use even more difficult.*



features to separate urban uses from existing agricultural operations.

- b. The City shall explore implementing a development impact fee that pays for the purchase of agricultural easements outside Farmersville urban area boundary line. Such easements would be used to form a greenbelt around the community (see Growth Management, Page 2-21).

Community Pride and Public Involvement

**IV. Create a city that portrays a “sense of community”.**

- 1. The city should continue to promote public events and celebrations that bring citizens together, in its downtown and in other public places, like parks, schools and public buildings.
  - a. Promote a Farmers Market in the downtown area, possibly closing a street for the event.
  - b. Promote an Arts/Crafts Fair in the downtown.
  - c. The City should contact the Urban Tree Foundation to seek their assistance in the development of a tree planting program in the downtown and on major streets, such as Farmersville Boulevard and Visalia Road.
- 2. The City should explore creating a “Museum of the Farm Worker”. Such a museum would include exhibits and information documenting the history of farmworkers in Central California. This facility should be centrally located within the community, such as on the land adjacent to the railroad, west of Farmersville Boulevard. The facility should function as a multi-use site, with festivals, meetings and other events. Finally, the building should also make a positive architectural statement that is related to Central California’s farming heritage.



**BACKGROUND**

*The idea of establishing a Museum of the Farmworker was raised by participants during General Plan Committee meetings, as a way to key into Farmersville’s identity.*

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- a. The City, and Chamber of Commerce should establish a committee to pursue this goal.
- 3. The City shall continue to work with the Chamber of Commerce to promote community events, such as the Memorial Day Parade, and Christmas Tree Lighting Ceremony.

**V. Foster a friendly community that encourages public involvement.**

- 1. The City should form additional citizen advisory committees that report to the City Council on various topics, including beautification, recreation, circulation, etc.
  - a. The to-be-formed beautification committee should work with the Urban Tree Foundation to develop a city-wide tree planting program. The city should apply for tree grants to fund this program .
- 2. The City should convene an annual study session with Farmersville Unified School District (F.U.S.D.) to discuss planning matters that are of mutual interest.
  - a. The City Manager will coordinate with the F.U.S.D. to set a date for a joint meeting between the two agencies. The City Manager will meet with the Farmersville Schools Superintendent to prepare an agenda for the joint meeting.
- 3. The City Council and Planning Commission should hold biannual study sessions to discuss planning-related matters.
  - a. The City Manager and City Planner will set a date and formulate an agenda for these joint meetings.

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*The City should convene an annual study session with Farmersville Unified School District to discuss planning matters that are of mutual interest.*

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**VI. Create a community that portrays an image that is progressive and energetic.**

1. The City should work with other public entities and service organizations to jointly work on projects that benefit Farmersville as a whole.
  - a. The City Manager and City Council should make presentations to various community organizations to solicit their help in financing, constructing and/or maintaining public art or beautification improvements, such as statues, fountains, mini-parks, specimen trees, murals or roundabouts,

**ISSUE TWO: Growth Management**

The management of Farmersville’s growth - direction, rate, density and arrangement of land uses, can be beneficial from a fiscal, environmental and social perspective.

A community that is well-planned will be more attractive to potential residents, developers, companies and investors than one that is poorly planned, has numerous land use conflicts, urban sprawl, a non-viable downtown, poor circulation patterns and disenfranchised sections of town. Furthermore, a community that is compact and is not sprawling has more efficient, cost effective infrastructure and service delivery systems than a community without these attributes.

**Goals, Objectives, Action Plans**

Protecting Farmersville’s Boundaries

**I. Maintain Farmersville as an agriculturally-oriented city surrounded by farmland.**

1. To the extent possible, ensure that Farmersville is surrounded by agricultural land that is zoned for large parcel agriculture (e.g. AE-20 [20 acre minimum parcel size, or larger]).
  - a. The City shall notify the County of Tulare that all land that surrounds Farmersville that is not zoned Rural Residential, Commercial or Industrial, should be zoned to the AE-20 (or larger acreage) zone. Further the City shall discourage proposals for parcelization to sizes smaller than 20 acres.
  - b. Tulare County shall continue to refer applicants for urban development (subdivisions, commercial or industrial development) on lands within the Farmersville Urban Development Boundary (UDB) and Urban Area Boundary (UAB) to the City for comment and review. All development occurring within these areas must be consistent with the Farmersville General Plan.



**BACKGROUND**

*When agricultural lands around a city are split into small parcels (such as 1/2- 2- and 5-acre “ranchettes”, it erodes the viability of the land for farming. Rural residential development is also difficult to deal with when it is in the path of urban development. Rural residential residents frequently resist city efforts to grow in their direction. For these reasons, it is most advantageous for lands immediately around the city to remain in large agricultural parcels.*



**II. Keep Farmersville from physically merging with the cities of Visalia and Exeter.**

1. The City shall meet with officials from Visalia and Exeter to explore the concept of forming a greenbelt to keep the cities from growing together
2. The City should consider a development impact fee that will be used to purchase agricultural conservation easements on lands that surround Farmersville. Such a fee could also be used to leverage additional outside grant funds.
  - a. The City should work with a farmland conservation organization such as American Farmland Trust, to establish an easement program.

New Development

**III. Promote Smart Growth planning principals in order to discourage urban sprawl and the premature urbanization of agricultural land, and to create more livable neighborhoods. This issue is addressed in more detail in Appendix A: “A Smart Growth Primer”.**

1. The City shall amend its Zoning Ordinance to add a Smart Development District.
  - a. The Smart Development District shall incorporate planning principals that promote moderate increases in residential densities, narrower streets, better connectivity in and between neighborhoods and site and architectural design that emphasizes a humanized environment, as opposed to an automobile-oriented environment.
  - b. Smart Growth design techniques should be incorporated into Farmersville’s residential and commercial zone district standards, as appropriate (see Appendix A: “A Smart Growth Primer”).
2. New urban development should occur in an orderly manner with initial development

 **BACKGROUND**

*The need to keep Farmersville from growing together with Visalia in particular, and to a lesser extent Exeter, was voiced frequently during General Plan Committee meetings. The idea of a greenbelt to provide a buffer between the cities was supported by participants.*

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 **BACKGROUND**

*The concept of Smart Growth was explored extensively by the General Plan Committee. Appendix A contains additional information on this topic. Some of these concepts have already been embraced by area developers.*

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*See Appendix A: “A Smart Growth Primer”*

occurring on available undeveloped properties which are closer to the existing built-up area.

- a. The City should promote in-fill development and development of lands immediately adjacent to existing urbanized areas, before allowing development of outlying lands.
  - b. The General Plan maps designates lands further away from existing development with a “Reserve” status. Development of these lands should be delayed until land closer to the city is developed.
3. The City should promote mixed-use development where appropriate.
- a. The City shall amend its Zoning Ordinance to provide for a Mixed-Use Zone District.
  - b. The City should identify sites in the downtown core where mixed-use development would be appropriate.
4. The City shall amend its Zoning Ordinance to permit residential development in the downtown.
- a. The City shall amend the Zoning Ordinance to permit housing development in the downtown with a conditional use permit.
  - b. Housing units should be permitted in the upper stories of downtown buildings with a Conditional Use Permit.



**BACKGROUND**

*Up until the mid 1940s mixed use buildings were common in American cities. Typically, shops occupied the ground floor, and residential units were situated above. The concept of separate use zones came about as a response to deplorable conditions in eastern industrial cities where people lived next to smoke-belching factories*

*Single use zoning has set up patterns of urban sprawl where residents must drive to make any meaningful connections in their community. This has been taken to extremes in suburban areas of California, like Orange County. Successful mixed use development can address this situation by providing living and working places in close proximity to one another.*



**ISSUE THREE: Residential Neighborhoods**

The “neighborhood” is the fundamental building block of a community. The health and quality of life of a community is best measured at the neighborhood level. If a city’s neighborhoods are noisy, contain excessive traffic, unkempt, include incompatible land uses or are depreciating in value, then the community as a whole is most likely spiraling towards a condition of blight. In terms of community priorities, preservation of the neighborhood ranks as one of the its most important goals.

The ideal neighborhood should be inviting, quiet, cool in the summer, children-friendly, pedestrian oriented, achitecturally interesting and it should maintain its value over time. The neighborhood should also provide for a wide range of housing types, styles and prices.

Multi-family development (also known as apartments) is necessary in all communities. It provides housing opportunities for persons or families who do not wish to own a single family dwelling or who can not afford to rent or own one.

Improperly located, designed or maintained, multi-family development can have an adverse impact on the neighborhood and the community as a whole. To protect the health, safety and welfare of persons living adjacent to multi-family development as well as persons living in these types of units, the location, design and long-term maintenance of this type of housing must be carefully considered.

***Goals, Objectives, Action Plans***

Neighborhood Maintenance and Revitalization

**I. Take actions to keep existing neighborhoods strong and healthy.**

1. Remove substandard homes from residential neighborhoods.
  - a. The City shall abate or rehabilitate substandard residential dwellings through the process established in the State Housing Code.



- b. The Redevelopment Agency should consider the purchase of substandard housing in order to clear the property for new, low to moderate income housing.
- 2. Rehabilitate homes that have deteriorated.
  - a. The City should continue to apply for Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds to rehabilitate homes that have deteriorated.
- 3. Upgrade public improvements in blighted neighborhoods, including sidewalks, alleys, street trees, roadways, parkways and street lights.
  - a. Establish an annual objective for repairing or replacing broken curbs, gutters and sidewalks.
  - b. Replant vacant parkways with street trees.
  - c. Identify alleys that can be abandoned and initiate the process consistent with the Streets and Highways Code.
  - d. Upgrade alleys with pavement, where possible.
- 4. Encourage residential infill development in neighborhoods that are blighted.
  - a. Consider the reduction of development impact fees on residential infill projects.
  - b. Consider increasing the allowable underlying density on land that will support a residential infill project. Increased density can help make projects “pencil-out”.
- 5. Continue to enforce the city’s property maintenance ordinance.
- II. The planning and building department will work together to ensure that building and zoning code violations are corrected and/or eliminated.

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*During the past ten years, Farmersville has rehabilitated an average of 8 homes per year, working with Self-Help Enterprises.*

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- b. The city on a monthly basis will send out correction letters to persons who are in violation of planning or building code regulations.
- 6. The city will annually seek state and federal grant funds that can assist in the elimination of blight in residential neighborhoods.
  - a. The City should contract with a grant writer to obtain funding.
- 7. The Farmersville Redevelopment Agency will use its tax increment funds and low to moderate housing income funds to eliminate conditions of blight in residential neighborhoods.

New Development

**II. Promote neighborhoods that are quiet, visually pleasing, and cool.**

- 1. The City should discourage land uses that are incompatible with residential neighborhoods.
  - a. Adoption of the Land Use Element and Land Use Map will implement this policy.

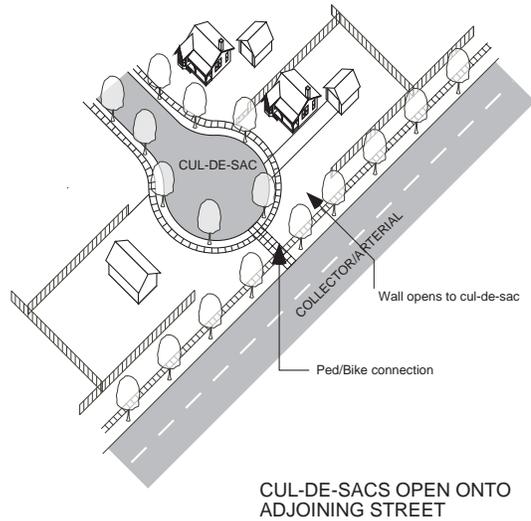
**III. Promote attractive, well-maintained and designed residential neighborhoods.**

- 1. The City should develop a Smart Development Overlay Zone which promotes:
  - Narrow, tree-lined residential streets.
  - Neighborhood parks.
  - Dwellings that are architecturally reflective of historic and traditional styles used in Farmersville and the San Joaquin Valley.
  - Common areas that are maintained by Landscaping and Lighting Districts.
- a. Appendix A: “A Smart Growth Primer”, includes recommendations for the creation of a Smart Growth development code.



*Promote neighborhoods that are quiet, visually pleasing, and cool.*

2. Encourage residential developments and adjacent land uses to be pedestrian-oriented.
  - a. All residential developments with walls should provide openings for pedestrian and bike traffic.
  - b. Land uses adjacent to residential developments should provide for pedestrian access between the two types of developments.
  - c. Permit home occupations where appropriate.
3. The City should consider promoting mixed uses in the Smart Development Overlay Zone. Examples might include a neighborhood commercial building with multi-family units next to, or above the commercial use.



**IV. Protect existing neighborhoods from incompatible land uses.**

1. Through the Site Plan Review and Conditional Use Permit process, ensure that the city’s zoning ordinance regulations do not permit uses that will be incompatible with residential neighborhoods.

*All residential developments with walls should provide openings for pedestrian and bike traffic.*

Multi-Family Development

**I. Multi-Family development shall be well-designed, well-maintained and properly sited.**

1. The City shall prepare design guidelines that provide examples of good multi-family residential design.
  - a. The Planning Director will work with the Planning Commission to create and adopt design guidelines (see Preliminary Guidelines, below)
2. Multi-family development shall be limited to a maximum of 40 units on any given site.
  - a. The Zoning Ordinance shall be amended to incorporate this standard.

➤ *The General Plan Committee viewed numerous slide photos of different types of multi-family design. The Committee agreed that good design is possible and must be required.*

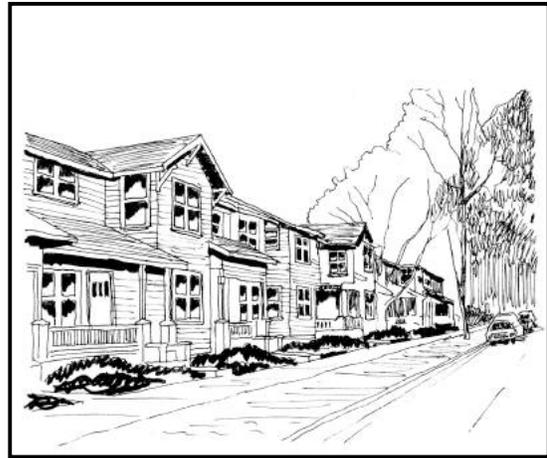
*The best designs were those that emulate the appearance of single family homes. Prominent design features include front doors and windows opening onto a useable front porch with railings. Parking should be situated to the rear of the building. The graphic on the following page was used to illustrate “good” multi-family residential design.*

3. Multi-family developments shall be required to enter into a maintenance agreement with the City, prior to occupancy. The maintenance agreement shall be reviewed and approved by the Planning Commission.
  - a. The Zoning Ordinance shall be amended to incorporate this standard.
4. The City shall explore requiring a maintenance bond be posted for new multi-family residential development.
  - a. The Community Development Director and City Attorney shall research this issue and present their findings and recommendations to the City Council.
5. All multi-family residential development shall require a Conditional Use Permit.
  - a. The Zoning Ordinance shall be amended to reflect this policy.
6. Duplex and triplex buildings may be integrated into single family residential subdivisions, on corner lots, through a Conditional Use Permit.
  - a. The Zoning Ordinance shall be amended to incorporate this standard.
7. The City shall review the Zoning Ordinance’s development standards for multi-family residential development, and amend the ordinance where deemed necessary.
  - a. The Community Development Director shall review the Zoning Ordinance with the Planning Commission, who shall forward their recommendations to the City Council.
8. A traffic study shall be required for all multi-family residential projects of twenty units or greater.
  - a. The Zoning Ordinance shall be amended to reflect this requirement.

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*The website “Affordable Housing Design Advisor” provides profiles of award-winning affordable housing projects throughout the nation, that exhibit outstanding design characteristics. Go to <http://www.designadvisor.org/> for more information. Prospective affordable housing developers should be referred to this website prior to submitting plans.*

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*Farmersville’s vision for multi-family residential housing. Units face onto the street with porches, front doors and windows. This type of design improves neighborhood security by placing more “eyes” onto the street. Parking is located to the rear.*

**ISSUE FOUR: Commercial Development**

The term “Commercial” Development generally refers to several types of land uses that feature businesses providing goods and services. These types of uses include:

**Retail commercial** - businesses whose primary activity is selling goods to the public.

**Office** - businesses whose primary activity is financial, insurance, real estate, information processing etc.

**Service** - businesses that provide a variety of physical services, such as auto repair, appliance repair, etc. These types of uses approach light industrial activities in nature and are typically encouraged to locate away from retail and office commercial activities.

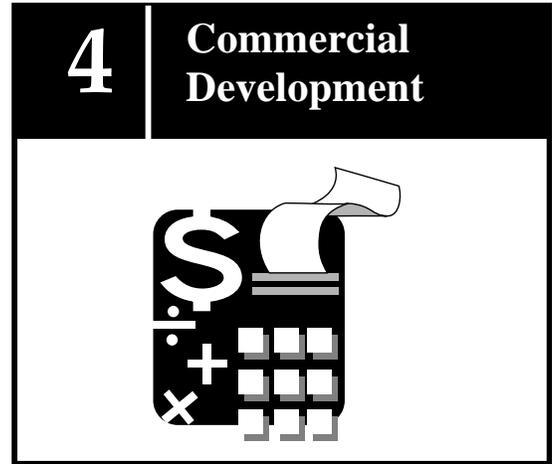
Office development is almost as important to the economic well-being of a community as industrial development. Offices support both small and large businesses, which on average, have a higher wage scale than most of the agricultural economy and some of the manufacturing/warehousing economy.

The Farmersville General Plan provides for four types of commercial land use designations:

- **Central (downtown),**
- **General**
- **Service, and**
- **Highway**

Each of these types of commercial uses is necessary if the community wishes to provide services and shopping opportunities for its citizens. Further, if a city is going to maintain its sales tax base, it is imperative that it not only retain its own shoppers but that it also attract shoppers from surrounding cities and outlying rural areas.

For each type of commercial development to be successful, it must be properly located, it must have adequate access and it should be designed so that it will attract patrons. For example, a parcel of land that is designated for general commercial uses should front onto a major roadway (with high traffic volumes), it should be designed so that it is attractive and visible from the



*See also [Issue 11: Economic Development](#)*

roadway and it should incorporate ample off-street parking.

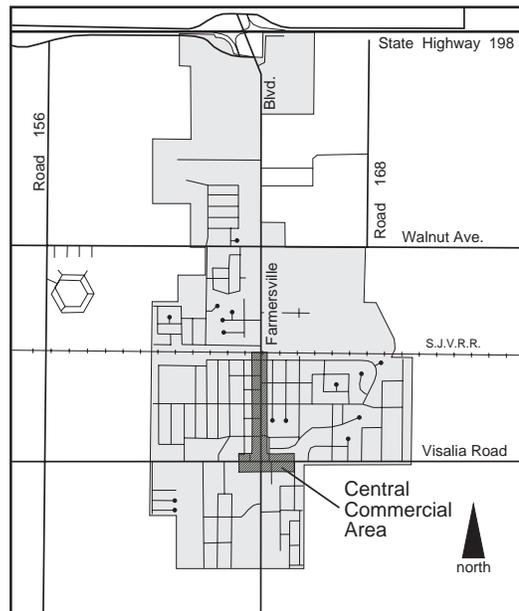
Commercial developers also have a responsibility to the community to create projects that are pleasing in appearance, are well-maintained, and which are not disruptive to surrounding properties. Indeed, it is these types of uses that will form the community’s image.

**Goals, Objectives, Action Plans:**

**I. Ensure that different types of commercial development are provided for in Farmersville.**

1. The General Plan Land Use map designates sufficient land to accommodate projected commercial development through the planning period.
2. Continue to monitor commercial land demand and accommodate requests to redesignate land for commercial development as demand warrants, subject to the following guidelines:
  - a. The site has direct access to a major street, such as Farmersville Boulevard, Visalia Road, Walnut Avenue or the Highway 198 frontage roads.
  - b. Development of the site for commercial use would not negatively impact adjacent residential uses.
2. Allow service commercial uses to be located in Farmersville’s industrial areas.
  - a. Amend Farmersville’s Zoning Ordinance to provide for service commercial uses in Farmersville’s industrial zone district.
3. Establish a “Central Commercial” zone, for lands in the downtown area (see Map 2-1).
  - a. The Zoning Ordinance should be amended to create a Central Commercial Zone. The zone should facilitate the development of a pedestrian-oriented shopping atmosphere. Buildings should be built to the back of the

**Map 2-1  
 Central Commercial Area**

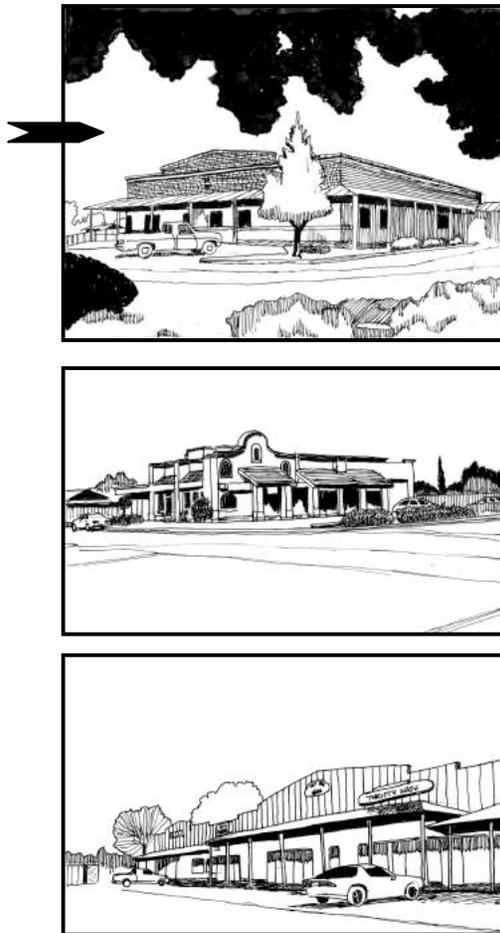


sidewalk with parking located to the rear or side of structures. Shops should feature large storefront windows and pedestrian-scaled signs. Buildings should employ historic-theme architecture that reflects design traditions of Farmersville and the San Joaquin Valley. The Design Guidelines that will be established for the Redevelopment Agency's facade-rehab program can address this issue.

**II. Promote commercial development that is aesthetically attractive.**

1. All commercial developments shall be processed through the city's site plan review process (or Conditional Use Permit process, where required by the Zoning Ordinance).
  - a. Require each commercial development to be built consistent with an architectural theme that reflects Farmersville's identity and the identity of the San Joaquin Valley.
  - b. The City should establish a set of design guidelines that show graphic examples of good design.
  - c. The Planning Department should work with the Planning Commission to develop and adopt the design guidelines. Guidelines should be advisory in nature.
  - d. All commercial parking lots shall be landscaped and shall be provided with pedestrian-oriented circulation features. The design guidelines will provide graphic examples of these types of features.
3. Promote the development of shopping centers and complementary commercial uses that enhance the city's sales tax position.
  - a. Designate adequate land for larger-scale commercial development along the northern portion of Farmersville Boulevard, and the western portion of Visalia Road.

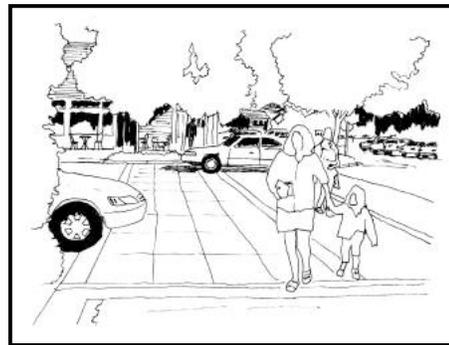
*General Plan Committee members agreed that some of Farmersville's commercial buildings set a positive tone and help to create a sense of place that is uniquely Farmersville.*



- b. Ensure that the commercial zoning applied to lands along north Farmersville Boulevard and west Visalia Road allows uses that are compatible with each other, such as shopping centers, offices and fast food operations. This zoning should not include service commercial uses like auto repair (unless conducted as a subordinate part of a larger-scale retail commercial business).

**III. Encourage commercial development to be pedestrian-oriented.**

- 1. Through design, require new commercial development to be accessible by the walking public.
  - a. During Farmersville’s site plan review process the city will insure that the design of the commercial development will be pedestrian-oriented. The previously-mentioned design guidelines will provide examples of good pedestrian-oriented design.
  - b. Encourage downtown stores to provide additional entrances to their stores from the rear.



*With careful attention to details, even “suburban” shopping centers can be designed to encourage pedestrian activity.*

**IV. Pursue a program of economic development to create new businesses, jobs and increase Farmersville’s tax revenues.**

- 1. Strategies for economic development are addressed under Issue Eleven: Economic Development, on Page 2-48.

**ISSUE FIVE: Downtown Farmersville**

One of the main goals of any community's plan is to preserve and strengthen the downtown. Just as a person depends on their heart for survival, a good city has a downtown that pumps life and vigor into the community.

Farmersville's downtown is not as well-defined as the downtowns of most other Tulare County cities. Where most cities' downtowns feature at least several blocks of commercial use in a fairly compact area, Farmersville's commercial uses are situated in strip-fashion along Farmersville Boulevard and Visalia Road. In addition, Farmersville's downtown generally lacks the historic buildings found in most communities.

Despite these circumstances, there is potential for Farmersville to strengthen the image of its downtown and fortify it as the heart of the community. Indeed, this goal was voiced perhaps more than any other during the General Plan Committee workshops.

***Downtown Farmersville Goals:*****Character and Quality of Environment****I. Enhance Farmersville's quality of life by providing a Downtown which is inviting, friendly, clean, safe and aesthetically pleasing.**

1. The Redevelopment Agency shall establish a facade improvement program whereby low- or no-interest loans are made to businesses to improve their exterior appearance. Such programs exist in Exeter and Woodlake.
  - a. The Executive Director and City Planner will work together to formulate a facade rehab program.

**II. Maintain the Downtown as the government, civic and retail/office center for the City.**

1. The City should try to locate future government facilities in the downtown area. Future school district and county facilities should also be encouraged downtown.



*See also Issue 11: Economic Development*

2. The City should implement the recommendations of the “Farmersville Boulevard Revitalization Study”, prepared by Urban Futures, Inc. in 2001. This study features a number of recommendations, listed to the right.
3. The City should prepare a Downtown Farmersville Specific Plan which outlines land use, circulation and aesthetic strategies to improve the downtown area. The City Manager will work to identify funding sources for preparation of the plan.

**III. Identify and promote Downtown as the entertainment, cultural and community activity center of Farmersville.**

1. The City should encourage downtown merchants to form an association or perhaps a property-based improvement district.

**Housing**

**I. Promote multi-family and senior citizen housing in the Downtown area, to facilitate diversity, security and to extend “life of the streets” into evening hours.**

1. The City should promote the downtown area as a location for future multi-family development
  - a. The Land Use Map identifies the downtown as a mixed use area, which permits the combination of residential and commercial land uses

**II. Protect and enhance the integrity of the residential neighborhoods adjacent to the Downtown.**

1. In the establishment of new uses, ensure that adequate screening and buffering are provided to protect adjacent neighboring uses. At the same time, work to establish good pedestrian connections between the downtown and adjacent neighborhoods.
  - a. The Site Plan Review process will focus on techniques to buffer adjacent neighborhoods

**Farmersville Boulevard Revitalization Study Recommendations**

- Coordinate with State of California Department of Trade and Commerce to market the downtown (and community as a whole)
- Host community events to bring people to the downtown.
- Establish a community outreach program.
- Create a business retention program.
- Create development information handouts.
- Establish a retail development program that involves financial participation by the City.
- Establish a building improvement loan program.
- Undertake a comprehensive planning effort for the downtown area.
- Work with property owners to understand their market.
- Install infrastructure improvements.
- Install signage and landscape improvements.
- Work with realtors to represent the downtown area.
- Establish design guidelines.

*Source: Farmersville Boulevard Revitalization Study, 2001*

from the undesirable effects of adjacent commercial development.

**Circulation**

**I. Create a safe and comfortable environment in the Downtown where pedestrians, bicyclists, vehicular traffic and parking work in harmony.**

1. The to-be-prepared Downtown Specific Plan will propose circulation improvements in the downtown area.

**II. Identify the location of the Downtown for the traveling public.**

1. The City should prepare unique and attractive directional signs that point the way to downtown.

**Parking**

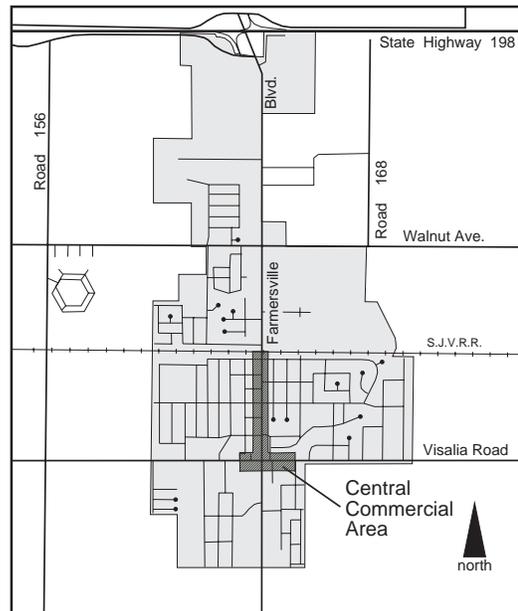
**I Provide sufficient, accessible parking for automobiles and bicycles.**

1. The proposed Downtown Specific Plan shall analyze existing parking conditions and make recommendations to increase the supply of parking both on and off street, in the downtown area.
2. The City should encourage the use of shared parking agreements in the downtown area, in order to reduce the amount of land consumed for surface parking.
  - a. Survey other cities that utilize shared parking agreements to determine the best method for doing this.

**II. Ensure parking areas are convenient, attractive and safe. At the same time, minimize the negative visual impacts of parking lots through careful placement, landscaping and screening techniques.**

**III. Balance the parking downtown so there are sufficient spaces to efficiently meet shoppers' and tenants' needs for future land requirements for new building construction.**

**Map 2-2  
 Downtown Farmersville Specific  
 Planning Area**



**IV. Provide and maintain infrastructure to meet the needs of Downtown growth.**

1. The City shall continue to monitor infrastructure needs and make repairs and upgrades as necessary. The proposed Downtown Specific Plan should identify any deficiencies in the infrastructure system and propose remedies.

**ISSUE SIX: Industrial Development**

Industrial development generally provides the economic foundation for a city in that it is a source of employment and it provides a flow of revenue into the city from outside sources - other businesses buying raw materials or finished goods from the local industry.

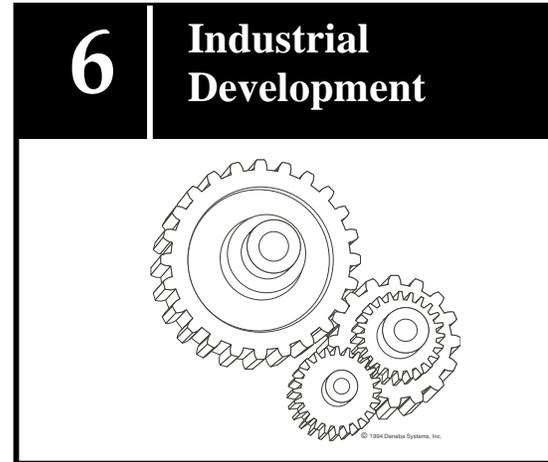
Industries are typically poor land use neighbors because they can generate large volumes of truck traffic, they can produce noise and odors, they may pose public health hazards and they can be unsightly. For these reasons, it is important that they be properly located in the community - away from land uses that are sensitive, such as schools, residential development and parks.

**Goals, Objectives, Action Plans****I. Designate sufficient land to accommodate industrial development in Farmersville.**

1. The Land Use map designates land to accommodate industrial development in Farmersville through the year 2025. When warranted, the City shall require the establishment of buffers, incorporating landscaping, walls or other effective measures.

**II. Ensure that new industrial development does not conflict with existing or planned adjacent or nearby uses.**

1. The City shall review zoning standards to ensure that adequate measures are in place to achieve this goal.
  - a. When warranted, the City shall require the establishment of buffers, incorporating landscaping, walls or other effective measures.
2. The City Engineer will review each industry that wishes to locate in Farmersville to ensure that the project will not have an adverse impact on Farmersville's sewer or water systems.
  - a. The City Engineer will require industries that generate high strength industrial



*See also Issue 11: Economic Development*

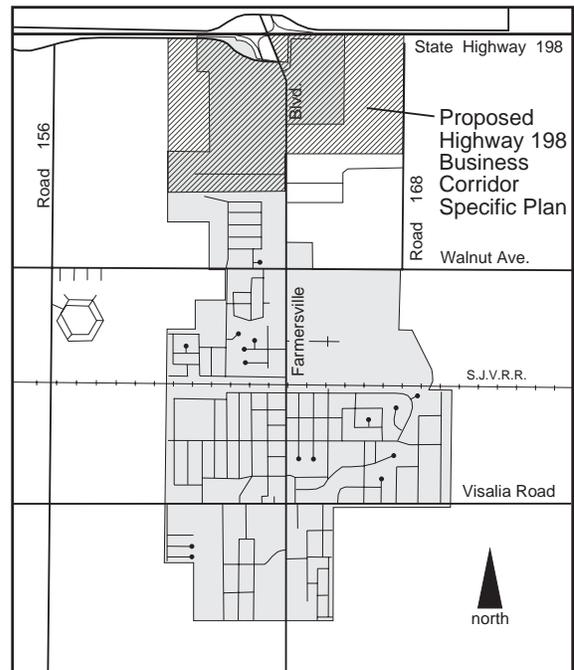
effluent to mitigate this impact by either pre-treating the effluent or by paying an appropriate wastewater impact fee to defray the city’s cost of treating the effluent.

3. New industrial uses will be processed through Farmersville’s site plan review process, or Conditional Use Permit process (as applicable) to ensure that they do not conflict with surrounding land uses or adversely impact the health and safety of the community.
  - a. The Farmersville Planning Commission will apply conditions to industrial projects that will insure that surrounding land uses and the community will not be adversely impacted.

**III. Pursue a program of economic development to create new industries, jobs and increase Farmersville’s tax revenues.**

1. Prepare a “Highway 198 Business Corridor Specific Plan for the area in north Farmersville shown on the map to the right. The Specific Plan should detail street alignments, utilities, parcelling, development standards and funding mechanisms. While emphasis should be on encouraging industrial development, complementary commercial uses should also be permitted.
1. Strategies for industrial economic development are addressed under Issue Eleven: Economic Development, on Page 2-48.

**Map 2-3**  
**Highway 198 Business Corridor**  
**Specific Planning Area**



**ISSUE SEVEN: Public Facilities**

**I. The city should pursue expansion of public facilities, as needed.**

1. Plan for expansion of the Public Works yard by acquiring adjacent properties and seeking funding for the expansion.
  - a. The Land Use map identifies expansion of the Public Works yard.
2. Consider future relocation of the Civic Center to a more centralized location in the city's downtown area.
  - a. Explore the possibility of building a new civic center in the downtown area. One possible site is the land adjacent to the railroad track, west of Farmersville Boulevard. This site could function as a multi-use facility and include the proposed Museum of the Farmworker. Given its location, an historic railroad architectural theme would be appropriate for this structure.
2. The City should work with the school district to identify building projects where the city and district could work together. These projects could include:
  - multi-purpose room
  - gymnasium
  - theater

**II. Public facilities should be located in the core of the community, when possible.**

1. As previously mentioned, the City should consider relocating City Hall to the site adjacent to the railroad, west of Farmersville Boulevard.
2. Other public facilities should be directed to locate in the downtown area. Existing downtown public facilities (such as the post office) should be encouraged to remain in the downtown.



*See also Issue 8: Schools*

III. If a public agency identifies the need to relocate, the city shall work with the agency to keep the facility in the downtown area.

**III. Public facilities should make an aesthetic statement in terms of appearance and architectural style.**

1. When new public buildings and facilities are developed, the City should take an opportunity to set the tone it expects for the community, in terms of quality design.

**IV. Where possible, public facilities should have multi-purpose uses.**

1. Construction (or) restoration of public buildings should provide for public meeting rooms.
  - a. Public meeting rooms should be equipped with modern audio-visual equipment and the room should also be wired for modern telecommunications.

**ISSUE EIGHT: Schools**

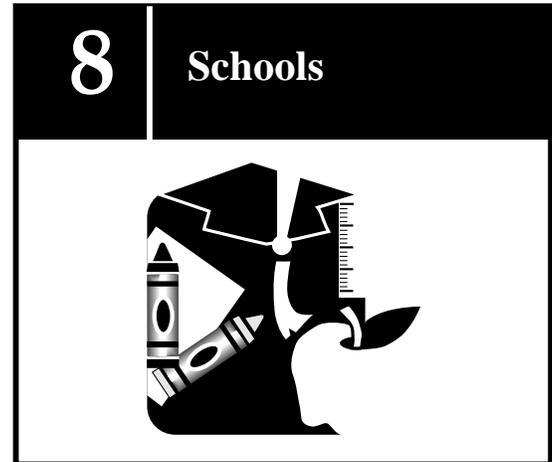
Schools are the cornerstone of any community. A good school system can provide the foundation for citizens to prosper. Equally important is a good relationship between the city and local school district. Schools are major land use features in the community. The City and school district must work together to plan for future expansion of the school system and ensure the system can respond to demands of future growth.

**Goals, Objectives, Action Plans****I. Promote community-based schools.**

1. The City, Farmersville Unified School District and the community should all be involved in the design and location of schools.
  - a. To the greatest extent possible, schools should be multi-purpose in nature.
  - b. Schools (as appropriate) should be available for use by the community during non-school hours.
  - c. Schools should be designed to accommodate some of the community's recreational needs, like playing fields, hard courts and running tracks.

**II. Work to develop schools that are easily accessible and free from land use and circulation conflicts.**

1. Schools should be located in areas of the community where they are easily accessible for school-aged students.
  - a. Schools should be designed so that they can be easily accessed from adjacent residential developments.
  - b. Schools should be designed so that students can be easily dropped off by their parents.
  - c. Bus drop-off zones should be separate from where parents drop off their children.




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*The General Plan Committee watched a presentation about the town of Gaylord, Michigan which involved the entire community to build a multi-purpose educational center open to all residents.*

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2. The location of schools should not be on roadways that attract other types of significant traffic (e.g. commuter, industrial or commercial traffic).
  - a. Elementary and middle schools should not front onto major collector or arterial roadways.
  - b. Sidewalks should be installed on all streets around a school site.
  - c. Schools should be connected to bike path systems.
3. To the best extent possible, schools should be centrally located in the neighborhoods they are expected to serve.
  - a. Existing, centrally located schools should consider acquiring adjacent property for future expansion.
  - b. The Land Use Map identifies the area south of Farmersville High School for future school development.

### **III. Encourage schools to establish partnerships with other public entities.**

1. Farmersville Unified School District should forge a working relationship with College of Sequoias as it pertains to agricultural, technical and mechanical training courses. In addition, the City could employ summer interns in a variety of positions.

### **IV. Work with educational institutions to fashion a training program that teaches skills that mirror local industrial sectors, including equipment repair, irrigation technology, food processing, nurseries, and agricultural technology.**

1. Farmersville Unified School District should develop training and vocational programs for students that wish to be employed in the above sectors.

IV. The School District should develop programs in cooperation with organizations such as Proteus Inc., C-Set, and the Tulare County Private Industry Council.

**V. Encourage college courses to be taught in the Farmersville area.**

1. Farmersville Unified School District should provide classroom space for College of Sequoias classes.
2. The School District should make its facilities available to other institutions that wish to provide instruction, training, or certification.

**VI. Work to resolve school district boundary conflicts between Farmersville Unified School District and Visalia Unified School District. Farmersville U.S.D.'s boundaries should include at least the City's Urban Area Boundary.**

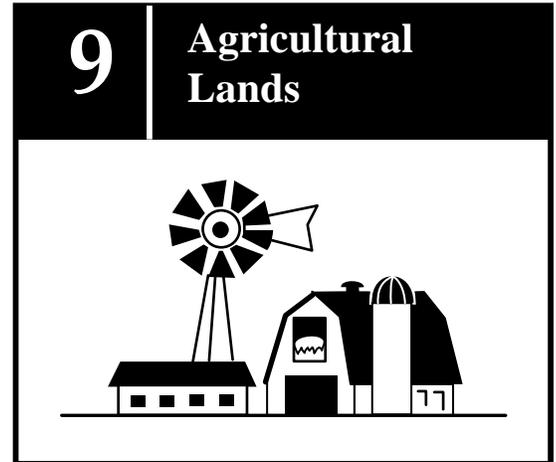
1. The two school districts should meet regularly to resolve boundary issues. A date should be set for completion of this goal. The City may wish to participate in this activity.

**ISSUE NINE: Agricultural Lands**

Agriculture is the primary industry in the Farmersville area. This basic industry employs almost 30 percent of the city's labor force. Agriculture is a relatively stable industry when compared to other industrial sectors, like manufacturing, tourism, and the transportation industries. For this reason, agriculture should be encouraged in the Farmersville area. Further, land use policies that minimize the impacts between urban and agricultural uses should be promoted.

**Goals, Objectives, Action Plans****I. Farmersville will ensure that its primary economic base (agriculture) is protected.**

1. New subdivisions shall be located no more than 1/8 mile of existing or approved urban development.
  - a. The Planning Commission and City Council shall make a finding in approving General Plan Amendments and Zone Changes, to ensure the foregoing statement is true.
2. Encourage Tulare County to maintain large-lot agricultural zoning (20 acre minimum) to land within Farmersville's Urban Area Boundary.
  - a. The City of Farmersville shall oppose any county development within its Urban Area Boundary that creates parcels of land smaller than 20 acres.
3. Moderately increase overall residential densities so that Farmersville utilizes land more efficiently.
  - a. The Smart Development zone will offer moderate increases in residential density as an incentive for developers to utilize this zone district.
3. Urban uses, to the best extent possible, should be separated from agricultural uses by streets, railroads, canals or similar man-made or natural barriers.
  - a. Adoption of the Land Use Element and Land Use Map will implement this policy.



*See also Issue 2: Growth Management*

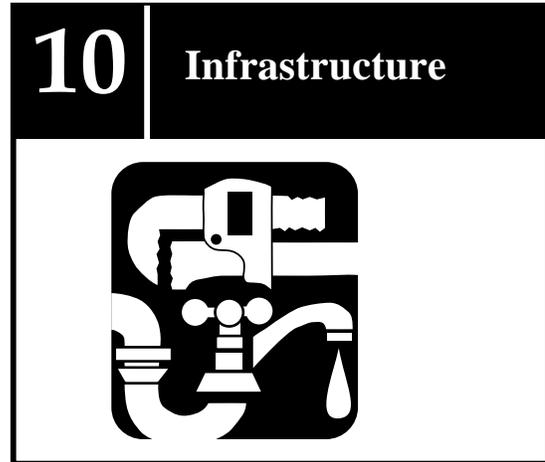
**ISSUE TEN: Infrastructure**

Infrastructure generally refers to a city's utilities - water, sewer, storm drainage, gas and electric, phone and cable television services. In Farmersville, the city operates water, sewer and storm damage systems. The other utilities are operated by private firms.

The operation and maintenance of infrastructure is of paramount importance to cities. Without these services, human health and well-being would be in jeopardy. Good infrastructure can also serve as an economic development tool. For instance, many industries require water supply, and wastewater disposal capacity. Farmersville must strive to maintain its existing infrastructure while planning for expansions to accommodate future growth and development.

**I. Adequately finance infrastructure systems.**

1. New development shall be required to install water, sewer and storm drainage improvements to serve their needs.
  - a. The City Engineer shall evaluate development projects and identify infrastructure needs, in the form of conditions of approval.
2. Farmersville's water, sewer and storm drainage master plans shall be reviewed in order to ensure that they can properly and efficiently serve future development provided for by the Land Use Element.
  - a. The City's water, sewer and storm drainage development impact fees shall be reviewed on an annual basis. This review should focus on the relationship between the amount of fees being collected for each of the accounts and the future capital needs of each system based on development trends in Farmersville.
  - b. The modification of the City's development impact fees should be consistent with Assembly Bill 1600, which requires a clear relationship between fees and their purpose.



*See also Issue 11: Economic Development*

2. The City should continue to seek state and federal grants for the upgrading and expansion of its infrastructure systems.

**II. Ensure infrastructure master plans and the general plan are consistent with one another.**

1. The Land Use Element shall identify where development will occur in Farmersville through the year 2025. The Element will be fashioned so that it is generally in concert with existing master plans.

**III. Maintain, rebuild and upgrade infrastructure systems.**

1. The City shall update its 5-Year Capital Improvement Program to ensure that its infrastructure system can accommodate the urban growth prescribed by the Land Use Element.
2. The Redevelopment Agency should prepare a 5-Year Capital Improvement Program to assist in the maintenance, rebuilding and upgrading of Farmersville's infrastructure system, within the Redevelopment Project Area.
3. The City should work with the private sector to participate in the upgrading of the infrastructure system when it is developing in the City.
  - a. From time to time, the City may wish to work with a developer to upgrade a part of the infrastructure or street system that is not part of the project being developed.

**ISSUE ELEVEN: Economic Development**

Economic development is an increasingly important issue for many cities. New and well-paying jobs must be available for residents if a community is to prosper. In addition, new development can generate revenues needed to fund local government and services. Farmersville must continue to pursue economic development to better the lives of its residents and to ensure that necessary services will be available to the community

***Goals, Objectives, Action Plans*****Land Resources****I. Ensure that adequate land exists for future commercial and industrial development**

1. The General Plan's Land Use Map designates sufficient land to accommodate commercial and industrial land demand through the planning period.
2. The City Planner shall maintain a map that shows readily-developable lands designated for commercial and industrial development.
3. Continue to monitor local market needs and amend the land use map (as appropriate) to accommodate commercial and industrial development.

**General Issues/Marketing****I. Foster a better business climate by developing communication among the business community, City Council and City administration.**

1. Schedule an annual meeting between the Chamber of Commerce and City Council, to discuss business and development issues.
2. Continue to participate in efforts to market Farmersville to outside developers through the Tulare County Economic Development Commission.



*See also*

*Issue 4: Commercial Development*

*Issue 5: Downtown*

*Issue 6: Industrial Development*

- a. The City Manager shall be responsible to maintain a relationship with the EDC.

**II. Increase the number of businesses operating in Farmersville, in order to generate more sales, property, business and transient occupancy taxes.**

1. Conduct an economic study to target development of new businesses in Farmersville.
2. The Farmersville Redevelopment Agency should financially assist, where possible, businesses wishing to locate in the Redevelopment project area. Targeted businesses should offer the “most bang for the buck” in terms of jobs created and potential tax revenues.
3. Invite a university team to conduct a project study aimed at improving Farmersville’s commercial and industrial climate.
4. Seek to have Farmersville designated as an Enterprise Zone. This type of zone provides tax incentives to businesses that locate in the community.
5. Agressively pursue grants to provide the installation of infrastructure to serve new commercial and industrial development.
6. Investigate and promote the use of the railroad as a resource for industry in Farmersville.
7. Develop a web site for the City of Farmersville. The web site could be used to market the city, as well as provide essential information for residents.
  - a. The City Council should budget general funds for the development of a web site for the City of Farmersville. The City could also consider utilizing high school students to design and maintain the website.
  - b. The site should also provide socio-economic information on the city, information on city services, and a photo essay of the community.



*The City of Lindsay was designated as an Enterprise Zone in 1996*



*As of 2001, six of Tulare County’s eight cities have a city website.*

8. Consider hiring an economic development specialist/grant writer, to pursue industry leads and grant funds. The City may wish to consider sharing this position with other neighboring communities, in order to reduce expenses.

**III. Encourage organizations to use Farmersville as a destination for meetings, conferences, and seminars.**

1. The Farmersville Chamber of Commerce should conduct an annual survey of its members to identify leads for upcoming meetings and conferences that could be held in Farmersville.
2. Opportunities for holding meetings and seminars in Farmersville should be detailed on the City's web site.
3. The City should explore opportunities to incorporate meeting space in buildings it owns. For example, meeting space could be developed at City Hall.

**Business Retention/Expansion**

**I. Assist existing industries to expand their operations and increase employment.**

1. The City and/or Chamber of Commerce should (on an annual basis) contact existing industries to determine if they have plans for expansion and if there are tasks that the city and chamber could assist them with.
2. The Farmersville Redevelopment Agency should develop an Existing Company Expansion Program where funds would be provided by the Agency to a company if they hired additional employees.
  - a. The Redevelopment Agency could use redevelopment or CDBG funds to finance an existing company expansion program.

- V. The Redevelopment Agency should develop an outreach/marketing program to publicize the expansion plan.

**Employment**

**I. Diversify Farmersville’s employment base**

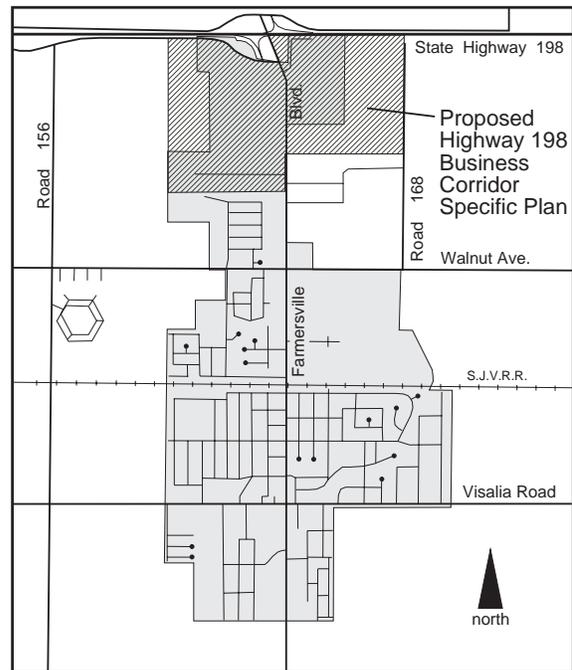
1. Prepare an Industrial Area Specific Plan for Farmersville’s northern area (see Industrial Economic Development Goals).
2. Work with local community college districts to provide technical training programs for employers and employees.
  - a. Encourage college courses to be taught in the Farmersville area.
  - b. Farmersville Unified School District, or the City could provide classroom space for college courses.
  - c. The City and school district could make meeting facilities available to other institutions that wish to provide instruction, training or certification.

**Industrial**

**I. Attract industries that are complementary to the existing work force, that do not adversely affect air quality, the city’s waste water treatment plant or the city’s water system and do not have a negative impact on the health and safety of the neighborhood or on the community as a whole.**

1. Prepare a “Highway 198 Business Corridor” Specific Plan for the area in northern Farmersville designated on Map 2-4, to the right. The Specific Plan should identify future roadway alignments, land parcellization, major utility trunk lines and specify property development standards. Once completed, the Specific Plan should be used to obtain grant monies to help develop the area.
  - a. The City Council should appropriate money and establish a time goal for completion of the Industrial Area Specific Plan.

**Map 2-4**  
**Highway 198 Business**  
**Corridor Area Specific Plan**  
**Planning Area**



2. Seek industries that compliment the local work force, such as agricultural equipment repair and manufacturing, nurseries, warehouses and packing houses, and trucking and farm management.

**II. Diversify the City's industrial base.**

1. Work with the Chamber of Commerce and Tulare EDC to attract new industries to the City.
2. Utilize redevelopment funds to financially assist new companies to locate in Farmersville.
  - a. Financial assistance should be based on the number of jobs being created by the new company and/or by the hourly wages paid by the company.

**III. Explore the possibility of expanding the local rail line to serve Farmersville's future industrial area.**

1. The City and Chamber of Commerce should work closely with the San Joaquin Valley Railroad to identify opportunities and constraints to constructing rail sidings or spur lines to serve industrial uses in Farmersville.

**Fiscal Conditions**

**I. Facilitate a strong sales tax base.**

1. The City should attempt to reverse the leakage of sales tax dollars to surrounding communities by:
  - working to attract new retail establishments to the community.
  - retaining existing businesses.
  - maintaining high standards that create an attractive business climate which is inviting to prospective new businesses.
2. The City should seek to attract moderate-sized retail stores that sell the kinds of goods presently not found in Farmersville, including appliances,

furniture, electronics, and home improvement supplies.

- a. The Land Use map shall identify adequate land reserves for future retail commercial development.
3. A sales tax audit should be prepared for the city of Farmersville.
    - a. The City should contract with a consulting firm that provides this service.
  4. Encourage an automobile dealership to locate in Farmersville.
    - a. The City and Chamber of Commerce should work to attract an automobile dealership to lands fronting State Highway 198.
    - b. Identify other types of high sales-tax generating dealerships (boats, trailers, farm equipment) that could be located in Farmersville.

**Downtown**

**I. Promote shopping in Farmersville’s downtown.**

*See also Issue 5: Downtown*

1. Continue to identify other uses that could be located in the downtown that would be compatible with existing downtown uses, like antique stores, gift shops, restaurants, and banks.
2. Continue to work with building owners in the renovation of their building facades in order to make the storefronts more attractive.
  - a. The Redevelopment Agency should establish a facade rehab program that offers financial assistance to building owners willing to upgrade the exterior of the buildings, in the downtown area.
  - b. Develop guidelines to implement the facade rehab program.

3. Identify, design and construct downtown streetscape improvements that make the downtown a more desirable place to visit and shop, including antique lighting, landscaping planters, street trees, benches paseos, signage and accent paving.
  - a. Prepare a Downtown Farmersville Specific Plan to implement the foregoing objectives.

**II. Promote the conversion of residential dwellings in the downtown area into office and/or retail uses.**

1. Amend the zoning ordinance to allow residential dwelling units in the downtown to be converted to office or retail uses. Also encourage the establishment of “live-work” units where residents live and work in the same building.
  - a. All conversions will be processed through the city’s site plan review process.
2. Promote “mixed use” development in the downtown area.
  - a. The Land Use map identifies the downtown area for mixed use development.
  - b. The Redevelopment Agency should assist developers interested in a mixed use project.

*Mixed Use Development*



*Typical mixed use: Retail commercial and offices on the ground floor, apartments above.*

**Redevelopment**

**I. Enhance tax increment revenues by encouraging development to occur in the redevelopment district.**

1. The City could consider the reduction of development impact fees in the redevelopment district in order to encourage infill development.
2. The City could consider encouraging higher residential densities in the redevelopment district in order to facilitate infill development.
3. The Redevelopment Agency should fashion a financial assistance program that promotes development within the District and that such a

program would have the Agency participating financially based on the number of new jobs and tax revenues being created.

4. The Redevelopment Agency should, on behalf of existing companies or companies interested in locating in Farmersville, apply for state or federal grants that assist the company with off-site improvements, purchase of land or equipment or training of employees.
  - a. The Agency should identify state or federal grants that are available for the above listed costs.
  - b. The Agency should send a letter to existing companies in Farmersville asking about their long-term needs in terms of expanding their operation.
  - c. The Agency should provide to the Farmersville Chamber of Commerce information regarding state and federal grants that can be used to pay for the above listed costs.

**Infrastructure/Public Services**

**I. Ensure that development impact fees pay for public improvements required by the general plan and infrastructure master plans.**

*See also Issue 10: Infrastructure*

1. Review Farmersville’s development impact fees to ensure that new uses pay their fair share of the costs of providing infrastructure and services, while remaining competitive with other communities.
  - a. A new fee schedule shall be developed for Farmersville’s development impact fees.
  - b. The City Engineer shall review Farmersville’s sewer, water and storm drainage impact fees and forward a recommendation to the City Council regarding any modification.

- c. The City Planner shall review Farmersville's park impact fees and forward a recommendation to the City Council regarding any modification.
  - d. The City Planner shall identify any new impact fees that would be appropriate for financing other public improvements delineated by the General Plan.
3. The fees for Farmersville's planning, subdivision and zoning applications should be reviewed and amended every two years, as necessary.
    - a. These fees should be developed consistent with Assembly Bill 1600, which requires a clear demonstration between the need for fees and their use.

### **Agriculture**

#### **I. Promote and encourage agriculturally-related industries.**

*See also Issue 9: Agricultural Lands*

1. The City should prepare an Industrial Area Specific Plan to establish the planning framework necessary to attract agriculturally-related industries. The Plan would apply to areas in the northern portion of Farmersville designated "Industrial" on the General Plan's Land Use Map.
2. Annually, the Farmersville Chamber of Commerce should survey existing agriculturally-related businesses in the area to gather leads on other similar businesses that might wish to locate in Farmersville.
  - a. Planning staff will assist the Chamber in the preparation of this survey form and in the preparation of a mailing list.

#### **II. Attract technologies to the Farmersville area that are related to the field crop and citrus industry, including plant breeding, nurseries, integrated pest management, and agricultural chemical companies.**

1. The Chamber working with the Tulare Economic Development Corporation (EDC) should develop and continuously update an information packet detailing the benefits of locating the above types of businesses in Farmersville.

### **III. Promote agriculturally-related tourism.**

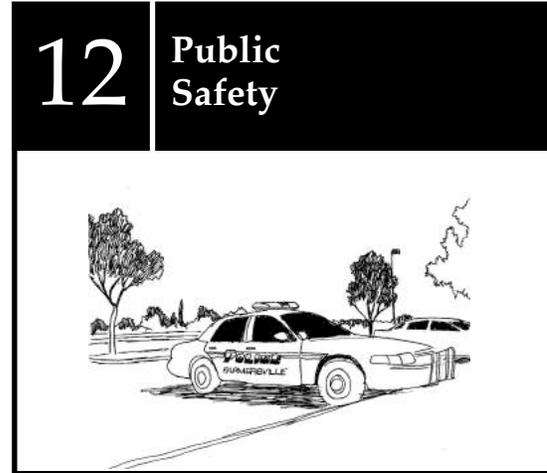
1. The City, working with the agricultural community should develop tours of various sectors of the agricultural economy, including farms, packing houses, cold storage plants and other related businesses.
  - a. The City, working with the Chamber of Commerce, should form a citizen advisory committee composed of persons knowledgeable about the local agricultural economy.
2. The Farmersville Chamber of Commerce and the City should investigate the idea of creating a “Museum of the Farmworker”.
  - a. The City, working with the Chamber of Commerce, should form a citizen advisory committee composed of local historians, farmworkers, industry leaders and persons interested in the museum to investigate the likelihood of establishing such a museum.
  - b. This group should develop a time-line, a financing plan, and a schematic plan for the museum.
  - c. The City should seek state grants, donations and foundation funding for the construction of the museum.
2. A Certified Farmers Market should be established in the downtown area once a week.
  - a. The City should work with the local Chamber of Commerce to make a farmers market a reality.
  - b. Consult with other communities who are currently holding farmers markets.

**ISSUE TWELVE: Public Safety**

These types of services are crucial to the public's health, safety and welfare. Public safety, which includes police and fire, ensures that the public and their possessions are protected from criminal elements and exposure to fire and hazardous materials; emergency medical services respond to calls for emergency medical response and potentially, the need to transport the victim to a local health care facility; and health care facilities, which include hospitals, medical clinics and other types of medical-related uses, provide to the public physical and psychological care and treatment.

**Goals, Objectives, Action Plans:****I. Promote a safe community that is free of crime and fire hazards**

1. Through the City's Site Plan Review process, new developments should be designed so that that crime and fire safety are considered in the design.
  - a. Ensure that all new uses have water available to the site and that proper water pressure is also available.
  - b. Buildings larger than 5,000 square feet in size should be equipped with sprinklers.
  - c. Ensure that all new uses are properly equipped with on-site lighting to promote safety and security. At the same time, ensure that outdoor lighting does not become a nuisance by unnecessarily illuminating adjacent properties. Involve officials from the Police and Fire Department to ensure that safety concerns are addressed in the site design process.
2. The City shall establish a Site Plan Review committee to provide early review of development projects. This goal will ensure that communication between various departments/agencies and project applicants is maximized in the development process. The



committee should be comprised of individuals representing agencies that may serve or otherwise be affected by a project, including:

- City Planner
- City Manager (as needed)
- City Engineer
- Public Works
- Fire Department
- Police Department
- Local utility companies:
- Southern California Edison
- The Gas Company
- Cable TV
- Irrigation District (as needed)
- Farmersville Unified School District (as needed)

The project applicant/agent should also attend the committee meeting.

The City Planner shall establish a procedure for the site plan review committee that should include the following:

- Set a regular daytime meeting date/time (twice a month is recommended)
  - Copies of site plans are mailed to agency representatives two weeks before the meeting.
  - Agency representatives should review plans and submit comments to the City Planner at least three days prior to Site Plan Review Committee meeting.
  - At the meeting, agency representatives can explain their comments and/or ask questions of the applicant, regarding the project.
  - After the meeting, agency representatives should formalize their comments into conditions of approval for the project.
3. The City will continue to upgrade its water system to ensure that adequate water pressure is maintained throughout the system.

**Site Plan Review Committee  
 Proposed Process**  
*Maximizing Understanding in the  
 Planning Process*

- I. Applicant submits site plan to City Planner.
- II. City Planner distributes copies of site plan to Committee members.
- III. Committee members review plans and submit comments, questions, draft conditions to City Planner at least three days before Committee meeting.
- IV. Committee meeting: Site Plan Review Committee meets with applicant and goes over the project.
- V. After meeting, committee members formalize conditions of approval and submit them to City Planner.
- VI. City Planner prepares staff report and resolution on project, incorporating conditions of approval received from committee members.
- VII. Public hearing (or staff action) on project.

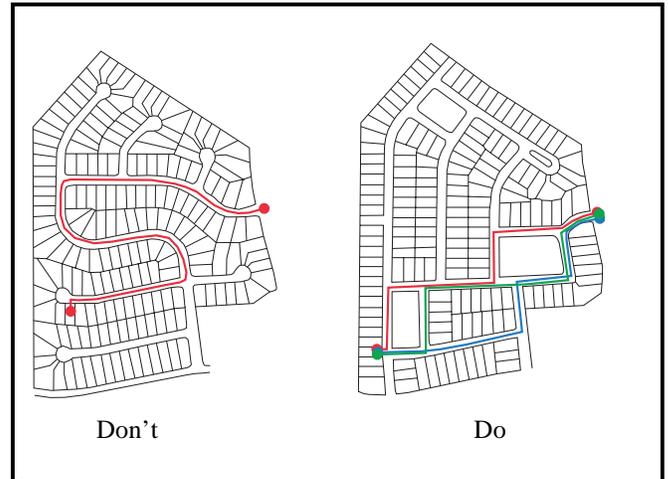
- a. The City should amend its development impact fee schedule to provide funds for replacement of old water lines.
- b. The City should amend its development impact fee schedule to provide funds for future water facilities.
- 4. Developments should be designed so that access is maximized.
  - a. The Site Plan Review process will ensure that new developments provide proper access for public safety vehicles.

**II. Ensure that public safety departments are adequately financed.**

- 1. The City should apply for state and federal grants that can provide money to supplement the city's police department revenue.
- 2. The Police Department should implement innovative programs that promote an efficient delivery system, such as:
  - A volunteer program
  - Take-home car program
  - K-9 Unit Program
- 3. The Fire Department should implement innovative programs that promote an efficient delivery system, such as:
  - a. A volunteer program
  - b. Promoting sprinklers to be installed in new commercial and industrial developments

**111. Promote a cooperative working relationship between city public safety departments and other agency public safety departments.**

- 2. The City should maintain a strong working relationship with the Tulare County Fire



*Developments should be designed to maximize access. This increases the effectiveness of crews in responding to emergencies.*

Department to ensure that a strong system of mutual aid support continues.

Health Care

**IV. Establish an efficient medical emergency delivery system**

1. The City should work and maintain communication with with the Exeter Ambulance District to insure that persons in Farmersville are well served in regards to response time by ambulances.

**V. Promote the continued operation and future expansion of health facilities within the community.**

1. The City should work with Kaweah Delta District Hospital (K.D.D.H.) and other entities that provide medical care to provide medical services to the community, especially for low-income families.
2. The City should encourage the K.D.D.H. to provide outreach programs to Farmersville.
3. The City should seek to attract a medical clinic to the community that caters to persons without medical insurance.

**ISSUE THIRTEEN: Public Participation**

For planning to be successful, citizens must be involved in plan-making. A plan created without public input will more than likely fail, as residents of the community, over time, may not support the plan’s goals and principles.

The City took an important step in public involvement by creating a citizen’s General Plan committee to work on this General Plan. The Committee met over a period of one year to educate themselves on planning issues, and then formulate goals, objectives and action plans.

The City should continue to strive to involve citizens in the planning process. A number of strategies to do this are available.

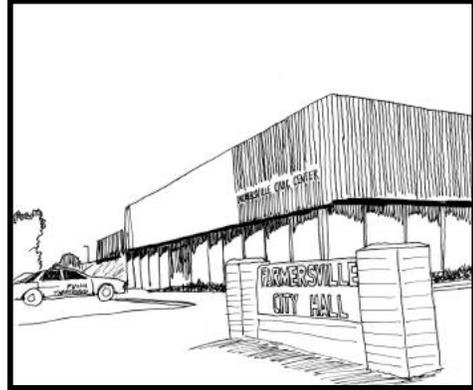
**I. Work to educate and involve Farmersville’s citizens in the city planning and development process.**

1. Convert the General Plan’s goals, objectives and action plans into display boards that will be permanently mounted in the City Council Chambers.
2. Maintain planning maps in the City Council Chambers and in the public lobby at City Hall. Maps should include the General Plan, Zoning, existing land uses, vacant lands, flood zones and agricultural preserves.
3. Establish a web site for the City. The website should include details on the city’s planning goals and procedures.
4. Develop a set of brochures to explain zoning and development standards in a user-friendly fashion.
5. Re-design planning application forms to make them more user-friendly.
6. Send staff, Planning Commissioners and City Council members to planning workshops and seminars.
  - a. The City shall ensure that funds are available to implement the foregoing



objectives. For printed materials, the city should consider creating Spanish language versions.

7. Establish a beautification awards program where property owners in Farmersville are recognized for their efforts to maintain and beautify their property or businesses. Awards could be given on an annual basis for residential, commercial, industrial and public/institutional land uses.
  - a. The City should work with the Chamber of Commerce to form a citizen's beautification committee, which will undertake an awards program.
8. Review the General Plan every five years. State planning guidelines recommend that cities review their general plans on a five year basis. This gives the community an opportunity to determine how well the plan is functioning and whether amendments may be necessary.
  - a. The Planning Director shall schedule a Planning Commission review of the General Plan, on a five year basis.
9. Require public notices be posted at development sites, announcing public hearings on the matter.
  - a. The Planning Director will require applicants to post public hearing notices at their site.



**ISSUE FOURTEEN: Special Issues**

The General Plan Committee addressed several planning issues that are unique to Farmersville. These issues include:

- Linnel Farm Labor Center
- Cameron Creek Colony
- Lands along Highway 198

The Committee decided that these issues warrant special attention for the community’s long-term planning goals.

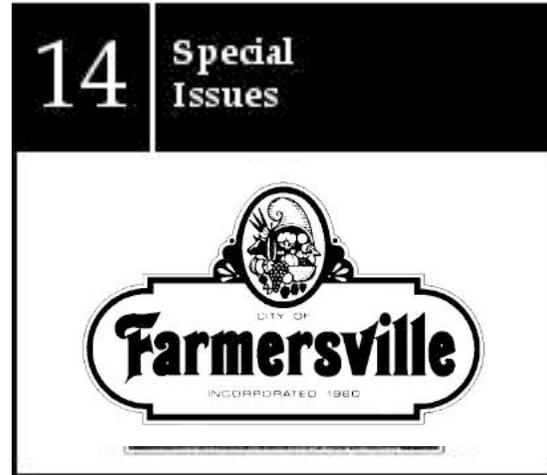
**Linnel Farm Labor Center**

Linnel Farm Labor Center is a farm labor housing development operated by the Tulare County Housing Authority, on land west of Farmersville. Linnel is situated on approximately 72 acres located on the east side of Road 156 and the south side of Walnut Avenue (Avenue 288). The site was originally developed in the 1950s and includes 191 dwelling units, a community center, day care, recreational areas and manager’s facility. Residency is limited to qualified low-income households.

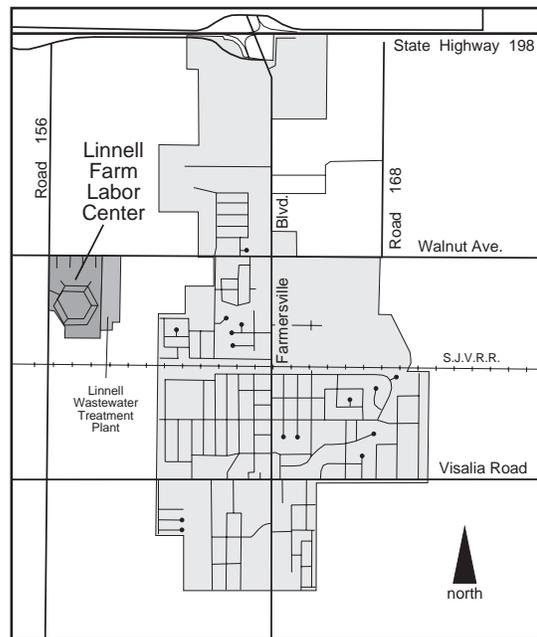
Over the years, Farmersville has been growing towards Linnel. Recent city development is now about one-quarter mile east of Linnel. Linnel has its own wastewater treatment plant, situated on fourteen acres on the east side of the site. Farmersville is down-wind from Linnel and on occasion, odors from the plant are noticeable in the community. The presence of Linnel (and in particular its wastewater treatment plant) may negatively affect Farmersville’s future growth in this area. In light of these concerns, the General Plan Committee formulated several strategies.

**I. Establish a long-term framework to allow Farmersville’s continued growth in the vicinity of Linnel Farm Labor Center.**

1. Open a dialogue between the City and Tulare County Housing Authority (TCHA) to discuss issues of mutual interest relating to Linnel Farm Labor Center.



**Map 2-5  
 Linnel Farm Labor Center**



2. Encourage TCHA to continue to upgrade and improve the appearance of Linnel, through landscaping and routine maintenance.
3. Explore the possibility of closing Linnel’s wastewater treatment plant. Identify funding to extend lines from Farmersville’s sewer system to serve Linnel, and expand Farmersville’s wastewater treatment plant.
  - a. The City Manager shall contact officials of TCHA to set a meeting between the TCHA board of directors and the Farmersville City Council to discuss these issues.

**Cameron Creek Colony**

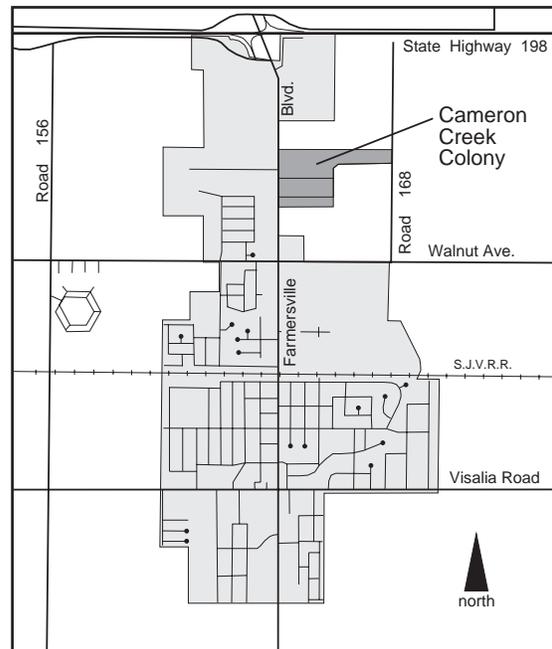
Cameron Creek Colony is a rural residential subdivision situated northeast of Farmersville, on the east side of Farmersville Boulevard, midway between Walnut Avenue and State Highway 198. Road 168 forms the eastern boundary of Cameron Creek Colony. This subdivision was developed many years ago under minimal County requirements.

Many of the dwellings are poorly maintained and appear to be substandard in terms of building and zoning codes. All of the dwellings are hooked to individual on-site septic systems and water wells. Roads are poorly maintained and were constructed without curbs, gutters, sidewalks or street lights. There are no storm drainage facilities. Some residents maintain farm animals on their property.

In 2000, Farmersville’s Urban Development Boundary was expanded to include Cameron Creek Colony. This means that although presently under the jurisdiction of Tulare County, the community is ultimately in Farmersville’s future growth area.

As Farmersville continues to grow toward Cameron Creek, it is expected that the City will eventually be required to annex the area. This brings a number of concerns to City and County administration, as well as residents of the area. It is likely that Cameron Creek would not be able to pay for public services that it requires, such as police and fire protection, code enforcement, recreation and planning and building

**Map 2-6  
 Cameron Creek Colony**



services. In addition, as previously mentioned, much of the subdivision does not appear to meet current city (or County) development standards. As Farmersville continues to grow towards Cameron Creek Colony, the City and County must coordinate on future planning for this area.

***Goals, Objectives, Action Plans***

**I. Open a dialogue between the City and Tulare County officials about the future of the Cameron Creek Colony development. Interested individuals in Cameron Creek Colony should also be involved in this effort.**

1. At some point, the City should annex Cameron Creek Colony.
  - a. Work with Tulare County to establish a redevelopment district to generate funding to bring public and private development up to code in Cameron Creek, including streets, utilities and dwellings.
  - b. The City and County should negotiate a special tax-sharing agreement that places the city in a better position to assume public services requirements for Cameron Creek.
  - c. Encourage Tulare County to contract with Self-Help Enterprises to conduct a housing rehabilitation program for willing property owners.
2. Establish land use regulations that reflect the existing rural residential lifestyle in Cameron Creek Colony.
  - a. The Land Use Map identifies most of Cameron Creek as “Rural Residential”.
  - b. The City should establish a “Rural Residential” zone to apply to Cameron Creek Colony. The zone should mirror standards contained in the County’s existing zoning for the area. This zone should not be utilized in other portions of the planning area.

**State Highway 198**

Highway 198 is Farmersville's "front door" to the world. Daily, thousands of vehicles pass by Farmersville on the highway. A number of these vehicles carry international visitors bound for the scenic wonders of Sequoia National Park.

As the city's front door, the City should try to create as attractive an image as possible. This goal is not only for aesthetic reasons but is also economic. Travelers do not want to stop at a location they perceive as unattractive or unsafe.

Likewise, business owners will not choose to locate their firms in a community that does not appeal to them. Establishing an attractive highway presence can help Farmersville bolster its economic development. The City can also take the opportunity to attract retail commercial businesses (such as an automobile dealership) that prefer a high visibility location along the highway. The sales tax benefits for the City could be significant.



*View looking east on Highway 198*

***Goals, Objectives, Action Plans*****I. The City shall take actions to establish an attractive development pattern along lands fronting State Highway 198.**

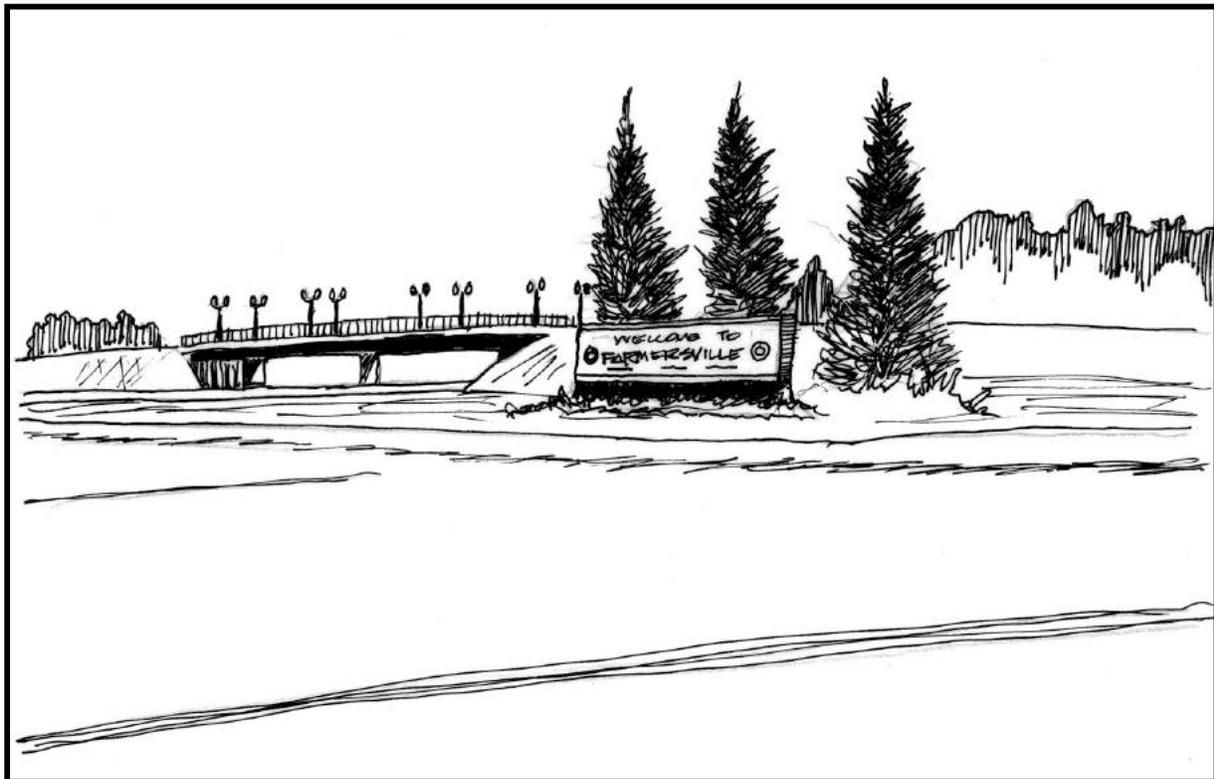
1. The Land Use Map designates a combination of Highway Commercial and Industrial land uses along the highway.
2. Require attractive landscape and building designs that will reflect positively on Farmersville.
  - a. Establish a special "Highway 198" overlay zone that incorporates special building, landscaping, screening and signage requirements.
3. Erect "Welcome to Farmersville" signs at the interchange of Highway 198 and Farmersville Boulevard.
  - a. The City, Chamber of Commerce and to-be-formed Beautification Committee should

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*Highway 198 is Farmersville's "front door" to the world. First impressions can "make or break" a community's chances of attracting new development and revenue. . .*

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- work together to design, raise funds and establish community identification signs.
4. Work with Caltrans to establish landscaping within the freeway right-of-way.
  5. Work with Caltrans to transform the Farmersville Boulevard overpass bridge into an attractive design element. Antique light poles, black wrought-iron railing and banners could be considered.
    - a. The City Manager should open a line of contact with Caltrans to pursue completion of these objectives.



*View of Highway 198/Farmersville Boulevard interchange shows “Welcome to Farmersville” sign, landscaping, and decorative light fixtures on the bridge.*

**Amendments to the Zoning Ordinance**

The General Plan includes several recommendations to amend the Farmersville Zoning Ordinance. The Ordinance is one of the city’s foremost tools for implementing and enforcing the recommendations of the Plan.

The primary recommendations are for the creation of several new zoning districts. These recommendations are as follows:

**Rural Residential Zone (R-R)**

The Plan recommends creation of this zone to apply to properties within the Cameron Creek Colony area. Presently, Farmersville does not have a Rural Residential district. The R-R zone would be applied to Cameron Creek upon its future annexation to the City. Most cities in Tulare County have a Rural Residential zone. Typical features include large lot sizes and the provision for the keeping of farm animals. Farmersville should survey other cities’ zone district and choose from the best features of each to create its Rural Residential Zone.

**Smart Development Zone (S-D)**

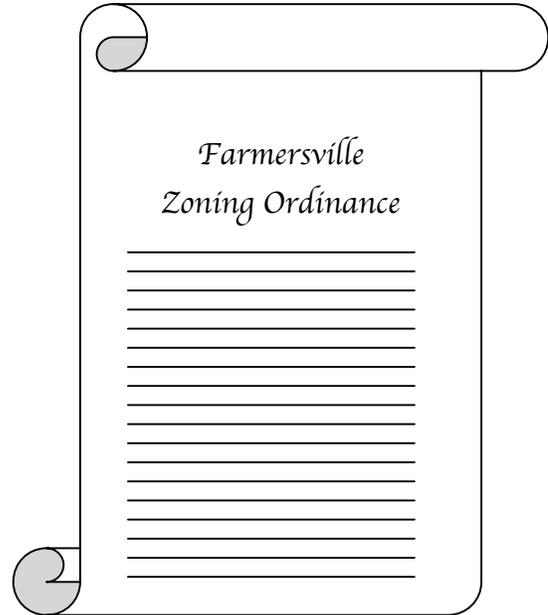
One of the General Plan’s primary recommendations is for Farmersville to create a zone to implement “Smart Growth” design techniques. The recommendations for this type of zone are detailed further in Appendix A.

**Central Commercial Zone (C-C)**

The General Plan recommends the city create a special commercial zone to apply to the downtown area. This zone is intended to help create a downtown environment where pedestrian-oriented shops front the sidewalk, and on-site parking is located to the rear or side of stores.

**Highway Commercial Overlay (H-C)**

This zone is intended to promote appropriate retail and service commercial uses that cater to the travelling public, in locations along or near State Route 198. Appropriate uses generally would include service stations, restaurants, lodging establishments, convenience stores and other complementary uses. This zone is to be applied along



Highway 198 and is intended to be an "overlay" zone. This means that the zone will be applied as an overlay to the existing zoning designation. The Highway Commercial zone will apply special standards to ensure that development along the highway occurs in an attractive manner, with attractively designed buildings, signs, landscaping, and screening, where desired.

Mixed-Use

As its name implies, the Mixed Use Zone is intended to facilitate the combination of various land uses on a single site or within a single building. An example would be a building that contains retail commercial businesses on the ground floor, and residential units on the upper floor. The mixed use zone should be targeted to appropriate areas of the community, such as the downtown. A mixed use designation could make parcels in the downtown more marketable as the possibilities for development are expanded.

Residential Multi-Family

It is recommended that the R-M zone be reconfigured so that it is consistent with other communities in Tulare County. Two density standards should be established:

RM- 2.5: One unit per 2,500 square feet of land area

RM-4.0: One unit per 4,000 square feet of land area

**Zoning Matrix**

State planning law requires that the zoning on every parcel be consistent with the General Plan land use designation for that parcel. For instance, a parcel designated “Residential” in the General Plan must be zoned for residential land uses.

Table 2-2 below is a matrix that shows which land use designations are consistent with which zone districts. Land use designations are listed in the left column of the matrix while zone districts run across the top. Shaded boxes show consistency between a land use category and a zone district. For example, a parcel designated “Medium Density Residential” would be consistent with the R-1 zone. Boxes that are unshaded denote inconsistency. Per state law, zoning must always be consistent with its General Plan land use designation.

**Table 2-2**  
*Land Use/Zoning Consistency Matrix*

Land Use Categories	Zone Districts														
	RR*	R-1	RM-4.0*	R-M-2.5*	P-D	S-D*	C-G	C-C*	C-S	HC*	M-U*	I	FP	OS	UR
Residential															
Low Density															
Medium Density															
Medium-High Density															
Commercial															
General Commercial															
Central Commercial															
Service Commercial															
Highway Commercial															
Mixed Use															
Industrial															
Public Facilities															
Open Space															
Urban Reserve															

Note: Zone districts with an asterisk indicate a new district (proposed by the General Plan) or significant revisions to an existing district.

**Land Use Map**

Map 2-7 shows the Farmersville General Plan Land Use Map. The map delineates the ultimate use of land in and around Farmersville. It is to be read in conjunction with the land use descriptions, goals, policies and action plans detailed in the text of the Land Use Element. The Land Use map shows areas intended for Farmersville's development through the year 2025.



## **CHAPTER 3: CIRCULATION ELEMENT**

### **Introduction**

The Circulation Element is second only to the Land Use Element in terms of importance to the community. It has a significant impact on the residents of Farmersville because it delineates the routes by which people will travel within and through Farmersville. Further, the Element identifies the different types of circulation routes in the community, such as roadways, bikepaths and railroads.

Section 65302 (b) of the State Government Code indicates that the Circulation Element must disclose the general location, dimensions and physical characteristics of existing and proposed major thoroughfares, transportation routes and transportation-related facilities.

The Courts have indicated that not only must a roadway improvement must be consistent with the General Plan (Friends of “B” Street et al. v. City of Hayward, et al., 106 Cal. App. 3d 988 {1980}), there must be a correlation between the circulation and land use elements. Generally, correlation is achieved by using the same population and land use projections for each element.

The Farmersville Circulation Element is composed of five sections. They are:

- 1) Existing conditions;
- 2) An evaluation of the existing circulation system;
- 3) Traffic projections and evaluations;
- 4) Circulation goals, policies and action programs;
- 5) Roadway cross-section designs; and
- 6) Circulation map.

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*The Court has indicated that in addition to the finding that a roadway improvement must be consistent with the General Plan, there must be a correlation between the circulation and land use elements.*

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**Existing Conditions**

In addition to the information contained in this chapter, additional circulation information is also provided in Part II: Existing Conditions, of this document.

Early Circulation System

Farmersville’s road system was centered around the railroad line that runs east/west through the community. As such, the community’s streets run east/west and north south. The few exceptions occurred where local waterways required a change in this pattern.

Major east west roadways include Visalia Road, Ash Street, Walnut Avenue, Highway 198 and the frontage roads that parallel the highway. Major north south roadways include Farmersville Boulevard, Road 168 and Virginia Street

Present Circulation System

Since the early 1900s, a system of roadways has been constructed in the Farmersville area that falls into one of the following categories - freeways, arterials, collectors, local streets and alleys. A profile of major roadways in the community is as follows:

**State Highway 198** is an east/west highway that serves Central California. The highway stretches from U.S. 101 in central coast region, through the coastal ranges, across the San Joaquin Valley and into the foothills and mountains of the Sierra Nevada range. The highway terminates as a state route at the entrance to Sequoia National Park but continues on as a federal roadway within the park.

In the vicinity of Farmersville, the highway features two travel lanes in each direction, a median divider, paved shoulders and unlandscaped borders. The interchange with Farmersville Boulevard features on and off-ramps for traffic in both directions. The ramps connect to the frontage roads on both sides of the highway. West of Farmersville there is an interchange at Road 156 which also features on and off ramps in both directions. East of Farmersville the highway changes from a freeway with controlled access to an expressway with cross traffic.



**Farmersville Boulevard** is an arterial roadway that runs north/south through the center of the community. The street connects Farmersville to the State Highway 198 Freeway at the north end of the City. Within most of the community, the street features two travel lanes and one parking lane in each direction. The downtown area has some diagonal parking along the east side of the street.

North of Walnut Avenue, and south of the city limits, Farmersville Boulevard tapers to one travel lane in each direction. Shoulders are unpaved. Traffic signals exist at intersections of Visalia Road and Walnut Avenue. Four-way stop signs exist two-lane, undivided collector street that runs in an east-west direction located on the north edge of Farmersville. Existing land uses consist of agricultural uses to the north and residential facing south of the roadway.

**Visalia Road** is an east/west arterial that connects Farmersville to Visalia to the west, and Exeter to the east. Within city limits, the roadway generally features two travel lanes and a parking lane in each direction. The intersection of Visalia Road and Farmersville Boulevard is controlled by a traffic signal.

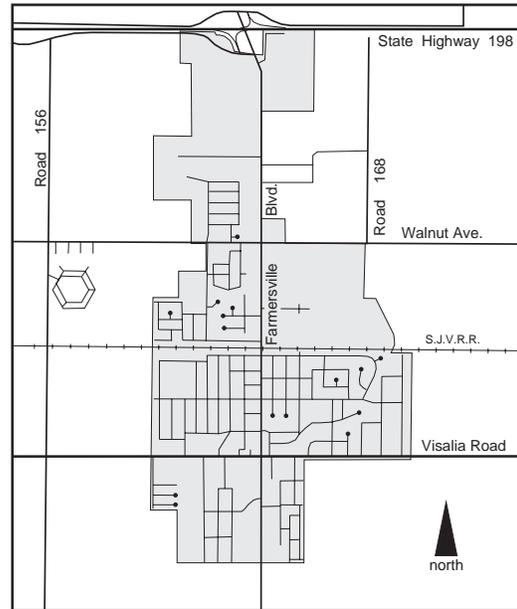
**Walnut Avenue** (Avenue 288) is an east/west collector road that runs midway between Visalia Road and State Highway 198. The roadway generally features one travel lane in each direction. Where recent development has occurred, the street features a parking lane with curbs, gutters and sidewalks. The intersection of Walnut and Farmersville Boulevard is controlled by a traffic signal.

The frontage roads along State Highway 198 feature one travel lane in each direction. Recent development along the southern frontage road has installed paveout, curbs and gutters. Otherwise, the roads feature unpaved shoulders.

Local Roadways

Local roadways provide for internal traffic movement within residential neighborhoods. Adjacent property has direct access to these types of roadways. Local roadways typically feature two travel lanes and two parking lanes. They have rights-of-way widths that range from 52 to 60 feet.

**Map 3-1**  
**Farmersville Street System**



### Alleys

Alleys provide rear access to residential dwellings in some older neighborhoods and to commercial buildings in the downtown area. Some alleys contain above- (electricity and CATV) and below-ground utilities (sewer and water lines). They also serve as a route for trash pickup. Most of the alleys are 20 feet wide and are unpaved.

### Railroads

Farmersville grew up around the San Joaquin Valley Railroad, originally constructed by the Southern Pacific Railroad. The line through Farmersville connects Visalia (and points west) with Exeter (and points south). The railroad is situated within a wide right-of-way, generally 100 feet in width. Presently, there are no uses in Farmersville that utilize the railroad for transport of goods.

### Public Transportation

Farmersville is the only city in Tulare County without a public transit service. There is a bus service provided by Orange Belt stages that provides access to other California cities.

The City should explore the merits of establishing a dial-a-ride service for the elderly, youth, handicapped, and others who may not have access to transportation.

### Air Service

Farmersville is served by the Visalia Municipal Airport, located 15 miles west of Visalia and by Fresno-Yosemite International Airport (FYI), located in Fresno, about 50 miles northwest of the city. Both airports provide regularly scheduled freight and passenger service and furnish private and company aircraft hangers and tie-downs.

### Bicycling and Walking

Presently, there are no established bike lanes in Farmersville. However, the City has been participating with the Tulare County Association of Governments in the preparation of a bike plan for Tulare County and its

cities. Within Farmersville, the plan designates bike routes on Visalia Road, Farmersville Boulevard, Walnut Avenue and the southern frontage road along State Highway 198

**Evaluation of Existing Circulation System**

Capacity Evaluation

The ability of a roadway to carry traffic is a function of many factors, including the number of travel lanes, the number of intersecting streets (and driveways), the presence of signals, and the existence of medians.

A roadway's traffic volume typically increases during "peak-hour" times - 7:00 to 8:30 a.m., (home to work/school commute) 12:00 to 1:00 p.m., (lunch hour) and 4:30 to 6:00 p.m. (work to home commute).

To measure the traffic capacity of a roadway, a Level of Service (LOS) rating system is used. An LOS of "A" signifies a roadway that has traffic that is free flowing, while a roadway with a LOS of "F" is very congested. Table No. 3-1 provides an interpretation of the various LOS ratings and, for comparison purposes, Table No. 3-2 provides traffic counts for various types of roadways that are operating at a LOS of "E" - a roadway that is experiencing extreme congestion (grid-lock). Typically, an LOS of "C" is considered acceptable by the driving public, however, in smaller cities, it may be too congested for the typical driver.

Table No. 3-3 shows existing average daily traffic volumes for selected roadways in Farmersville and a calculated Level of Service (LOS) rating for these roadways. Only Avenue 288 (Walnut Avenue) east of Farmersville Boulevard is operating at a Level of Service below "A". This is likely due to traffic generated by Farmersville High School. At present, this portion of Walnut Avenue is one lane in both directions. As the street is widened and lanes are added, the capacity of the street will increase.

Intersections

Intersection analysis have been conducted at the intersections of Visalia Road/Farmersville Boulevard, Farmersville Boulevard/Walnut Avenue, and the

**Table 3-1**  
*Level of Service Table*

LOS	Description	Volume/Capacity
A	Free flow, low volume, high operating speed, high maneuverability.	0.00-0.59
B	Stable flow, moderate volume, speed somewhat restricted by traffic conditions, high maneuverability.	0.60-0.69
C	Stable flow, high volume, speed and maneuverability determined by traffic conditions.	0.70-0.79
D	Unstable flow, high volumes, tolerable but fluctuating operating speed and maneuverability.	0.80-0.89
E	Unstable flow, high volumes approaching roadway capacity, limited speed, intermittent vehicle queuing.	0.90-0.99
F	Forced flow, volumes lower than capacity due to very low speeds; heavy queuing of vehicles, frequent stoppage.	above 1.0

Example: Farmersville Blvd. north of Visalia Road currently carries an average of 8,000 vehicles per day. Table 3-2 (next page) shows the ultimate capacity of the roadway is 24,000 vehicles per day. The Level of Service can be calculated by dividing volume (8,000) by capacity (24,000) = 0.33. The table above shows that 0.33 is a Level of Service "A".

**Table No. 3-2**  
*Daily Capacities for Roadways Operating at LOS E*

Roadway Capacity	Level of Service "E"
4 Lane Freeway	80,000 vehicles per day
4 Lane Divided Arterial	27,000
2 Lane Divided Arterial	15,000
4 Lane Undivided Arterial	24,000
2 Lane Undivided Arterial	12,000
4 Lane Divided Collector	20,000
2 Lane Divided Collector	10,000
4 Lane Undivided Collector	18,000
2 Lane Undivided Collector	9,000

interchange of State Highway 198, Farmersville Boulevard and the two frontage roads that parallel the highway.

The intersections of Farmersville Boulevard/Visalia Road and Farmersville Boulevard/Walnut Avenue are signalized and are not expected to require upgrades during the planning period (unless a large project is proposed that may adversely affect these intersections. The intersections at the Highway 198/Farmersville Boulevard interchange were analyzed for a recent development project. These intersections will require signalization at some point during the planning period. The traffic consultant has also recommended future signalization at Farmersville Boulevard and Ash Avenue and Farmersville Boulevard and Terry Avenue.

#### Connectivity

There are various neighborhoods in Farmersville that would benefit from the extension of a roadway to another part of the community. Persons living in these neighborhoods would be able to travel to other parts of the community using a direct roadway route.

The railroad is a major impediment to through traffic in Farmersville. Farmersville Boulevard is the only roadway that crosses the tracks to connect the southern and northern sections of the community. This forces residents of neighborhoods on both sides of the tracks to “funnel out” onto Farmersville Boulevard to cross the community.

Improved connectivity has the benefits of reducing traffic on over-burdened streets, reducing trip lengths, reducing air pollution and fuel consumption. Further, by enhancing connectivity through Farmersville, emergency vehicles are better able to access neighborhoods, thereby ensuring better public safety protection for residents.

#### Traffic Safety

A roadway system that is safe and efficient - free of congestion - is a primary circulation goal of all cities. This goal also promotes a roadway system that is safe for pedestrians and bicyclists, especially younger children.

The most potentially hazardous roadways in terms of traffic safety in Farmersville are Farmersville Boulevard,

Visalia Road, and the interchange at Farmersville Boulevard and State Route 198.

Driving, riding or walking along these roadways can be hazardous depending on a variety of factors, including volume and speed of traffic, the width of the roadway, cross traffic (vehicles entering and exiting the roadway) the number of trucks or the number of pedestrians/bicyclists traveling along the roadway.

### **Traffic Projections and Evaluations**

The traffic consultant has projected traffic volumes for roadway segments and certain intersections in the planning area. These projections are based on the following assumptions:

1. Traffic volumes on local and State roadway systems will generally increase at a rate similar to population growth rates within the planning area.
2. Persons living and working in Farmersville will continue to use cars as their primary mode of transportation.
3. Uses that generate abnormally high volumes of traffic are not expected to locate in the planning area during the planning period.
4. Current traffic flow patterns in the planning area will not change significantly.

### **Roadway Segment Projections**

Increases in traffic volumes over the planning period for local and State roadways is going to be generated by the development of the land uses in the Farmersville area and by increases in population and development in surrounding communities.

Traffic volume projections for 2025 for selected roadways in Farmersville are delineated in Table No. 3-3. These projections are based on data from the Tulare County Association of Government's traffic model for Tulare County and for the Farmersville area.

The projections in Table 3-3 indicate that Visalia Road will be most impacted by increases in traffic. Even with

**Table No. 3-3**  
**Existing Traffic Volumes**  
**and Level of Service**

two travel lanes in each direction, the roadway will be operating at Level of Service “F”. It is likely that these significant traffic loads will be as much a result of regional growth (Visalia, Exeter, etc.) as growth in Farmersville. It is possible that as new roads are developed in Farmersville, and north/south connectivity is improved, some of the traffic load could be taken off of Visalia Road.

Those roadway segments are projected for LOS levels of D, E or F during the planning period will be listed in Farmersville’s Capital Improvement Program (CIP). Improvements on these roadways, which will facilitate a more acceptable LOS rating - “C” or better - will be financed by gas tax and transportation funds, redevelopment funds and development impact fees.

Existing Roadway Segment	Year 2025 Traffic Volume	Capacity	Volume / Capacity	Level of Service Rating
<u>Visalia Road</u>				
west of Farmersville Blvd.	12,000	24,000	0.5	A
east of Farmersville Blvd.	9,000	24,000	0.38	A
<u>Avenue 288 (Walnut Avenue)</u>				
west of Farmersville Blvd.	4,000	10,000	0.4	A
east of Farmersville Blvd.	7,000	10,000	0.7	C
<u>Farmersville Blvd.</u>				
south of Visalia Road	5,000	24,000	0.21	A
north of Visalia Road	8,000	24,000	0.33	A
north of Avenue 288	4,000	15,000	0.27	A

Intersection Projections

TPG Consulting, using projected traffic counts from the TCAG traffic model and roadway geometric and land use information, identified which intersections would require some type of signalization during the planning period. The intersections are: Farmersville Boulevard and Front Street, Farmersville Boulevard and Terry Avenue, Farmersville Boulevard and the frontage roads on both sides of State Route 198, Visalia Road and Steven Avenue, and Visalia Road and Oakview Avenue.

Improvements at these intersections, which will facilitate a more acceptable Level of Service rating, will be financed by gas tax and transportation funds, redevelopment funds and development impact fees.

**Table No. 3-4**  
**Year 2025 Projected Traffic Volumes**

Existing Roadway Segment	Year 2025 Traffic Volume	Capacity	Volume / Capacity	Level of Service Rating
<u>Visalia Road</u>				
west of Farmersville Blvd.	28,000	27,000	1.03	F
east of Farmersville Blvd.	23,000	27,000	0.85	D
<u>Avenue 288 (Walnut Avenue)</u>				
west of Farmersville Blvd.	11,000	18,000	0.61	B
east of Farmersville Blvd.	12,000	18,000	0.67	B
<u>Farmersville Blvd.</u>				
south of Visalia Road	10,000	24,000	0.42	A
north of Visalia Road	11,000	15,000	0.73	C
north of Avenue 288	14,000	24,000	0.58	A
south of Avenue 288	12,500	24,000	0.52	A

## **CIRCULATION GOALS, OBJECTIVES AND ACTION PLANS**

Circulation goals express general community values as they relate to travel, traffic safety, mobility and funding for maintenance, construction and reconstruction. Some of the goals listed below are the product of previously approved General Plan elements. Other goals were fashioned by Farmersville's General Plan committee, Planning Commission and City Council.

Circulation goals, objectives and action plans are organized under topical issues, including:

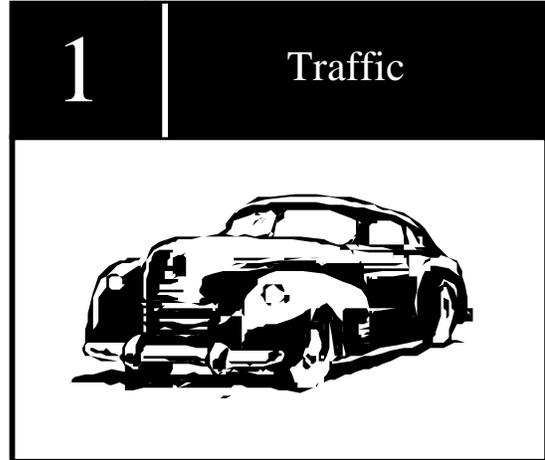
- Traffic
- Arterials
- Collectors
- Intersections
- Green Streets Program
- Connectivity
- Truck Traffic
- Parking
- Transit
- Bike Paths and Pedestrian Pathways
- School Routes

**ISSUE ONE: Traffic**

Even if a roadway is operating at a Level of Service (LOS) A, which means that traffic flows freely along the street with little or no congestion, people still complain that there is too much traffic on the street especially if it is their neighborhood street. While it is difficult to improve on a roadway that has a LOS of A, the city can embrace goals that will minimize traffic impacts on the community.

**Goals, Objectives, Action Plans**

- I. Ensure that streets in Farmersville are not congested.**
- II. Ensure that traffic on Farmersville’s streets operates in an efficient and safe manner.**
- III. Provide for long-term financing for street construction and maintenance.**
  - 1. A level of service C will be the desirable minimum service level in Farmersville at which arterial and collector segments will operate. A level of service of C will be the desirable minimum service level in Farmersville at which intersections will operate.
    - a. The City will program street improvements into its 5-year capital budget that will ensure the specified LOS is not exceeded in the city limits. Funds for these street improvement projects will come from gas tax and transportation funds.
    - b. The City should develop a traffic impact fee for new development in Farmersville. This fee shall be consistent with the requirements of AB 1600.
  - 2. Land use projects which generate large amounts of traffic shall be discouraged from channeling traffic onto local roadways.
    - a. The Planning Department shall recommend denial of discretionary land use projects to the Planning Commission and City Council that are inconsistent with this policy.



*See also Issue 7: Connectivity*

**ISSUE TWO: Arterials**

Arterial roadways carry the greatest amount of traffic in Farmersville. These roadways carry traffic that may be traveling at a high rate of speed and they may carry a significant amount of truck traffic, which can make these roadways noisy. Because of these characteristics, the design, location and types of land uses developed adjacent to these roadways must be carefully planned.

Most persons in Farmersville will travel on an arterial at least once a day. Travel efficiency on these roadways is important for two reasons: (1) congested traffic conditions cause the traveler to be late to their destination and (2) congestion creates greater amounts of air pollution, already a significant environmental problem in the Valley. Traffic that moves smoothly and efficiently along an arterial minimizes these two problems.

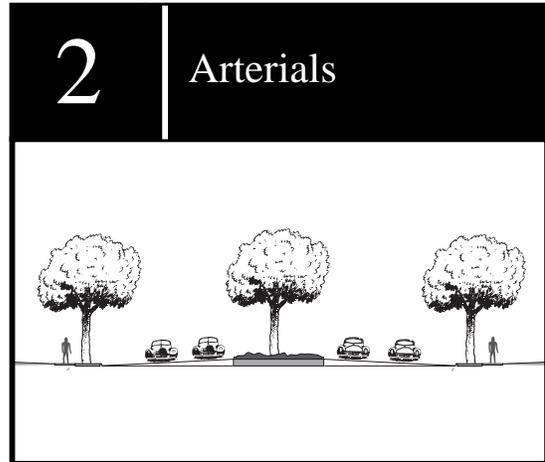
**Goals, Objectives, Policies**

**I. Establish an arterial road system that conveys traffic in an efficient and safe manner.**

- 1. The Circulation Element map identifies arterial roadways in the planning area.

**II. Arterials should be visually pleasing, and designed to accommodate other modes of transportation, such as bicycles and pedestrians.**

- 1. Study reconfiguring Farmersville Boulevard and Visalia Road to provide a landscaped medians, left-turn lanes and bike lanes.
  - a. The City should contract with a traffic consultant to prepare a preliminary road design for these two roadways, and solicit input from property owners and business people.
  - b. The City should seek state or federal funds to construct improvements along these roadways, including medians, signalization and left-turn pockets.
    - a. The City should establish a landscaped median development impact fee for new



See also Issue 6: Green Streets Program



**Background**

*Visalia Road is in the process of being upgraded during the General Plan update. This upgrade does not include landscaping. It should be a long-term objective of the city to undertake a street tree program along Visalia Road in the future.*



development. This fee shall be consistent with the requirements of AB 1600.

- d. Arterial roadways will be constructed consistent, where possible, with street cross-section illustrations contained in Figure 3-1 of the Circulation Element.
2. Driveways that intersect with arterials should be kept to a minimum and, if possible, should be reduced or eliminated when redevelopment occurs along an arterial roadway.
    - a. Through the site plan review process, the Planning and Engineering Departments will work to minimize the number of driveways that intersect arterial roadways.
  3. Left turn lanes shall be constructed on arterials where they intersect with other arterials or collectors.
    - a. The City Engineer and Public Works Department will coordinate to ensure that left turn lanes are installed as development occurs. For already-developed neighborhoods, the proposed circulation impact fee should be set to fund installation of left turn lanes.
  4. Curbing at the intersections of arterial and collector streets should be painted red at least 50 feet in all directions from the corner curb radius in order to provide sufficient sight-line for traffic pulling into the intersection.
    - a. The Public Works Department will ensure that curbing is properly painted.

► *Street design standards are shown in Figure 3-1.*

**ISSUE THREE: Collectors**

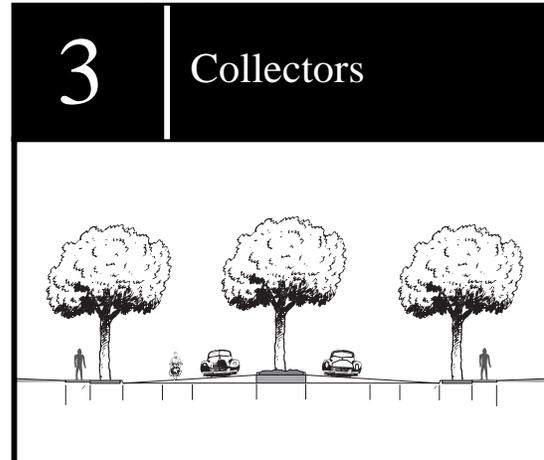
Next to arterials, collectors carry the greatest amount of traffic in a city. Unlike arterials, collectors may traverse residential neighborhoods. It is this type of roadway that “drains” traffic from a neighborhood and conveys it towards other collector or arterial roadways. Because collectors pass through neighborhoods, their effectiveness to channel traffic can be diminished by the design of land uses adjacent to the roadway. If these uses are designed so that they haphazardly funnel traffic onto the collector, the efficiency of the collector is reduced.

Collectors that accommodate truck traffic must be located where they will not have an adverse impact on existing neighborhoods and yet be able to conduct truck traffic effectively.

Collectors, due to their location, can impact a residential neighborhood. The volume of traffic, the level of noise and a collector’s appearance can influence adjacent neighborhoods. It is important to properly plan and design these roadways so that they are an asset to the community and not a detraction.

**Goals, Objectives, Policies****I. Provide efficient and safe circulation access to all parts of Farmersville.**

1. Where possible, collector roadways should contain sufficient right-of-way for two travel lanes, two bike lanes, two parking lanes and a median/turn lane; and minor collectors should have sufficient right-of-way for two travel lanes, two parking lanes, two 6-foot parkways, and two 5-foot sidewalks.
  - a. Major and minor collector roadways will be constructed consistent with street cross-section illustrations contained Figure 3-1 of the Circulation Element.
2. All street improvement projects, including widening, closing, or constructing new roadways, will be reviewed by the Planning and Engineering Departments to confirm that the



*See also*

*Issue 6: Green Streets Program*  
*Issue 8: Truck Traffic*

► *Street design standards are shown in Figure 3-1.*

project is consistent with the Circulation Element.

- a. The Planning and Engineering Departments will review development projects to determine consistency with the Circulation Element during site plan and subdivision review.
3. Left turn lanes shall be constructed on collectors where they intersect with other arterials or collectors.
    - a. Through the site plan review process, the Planning and Engineering Departments will require this design feature.
  4. Curbing at the intersections of arterial and collector streets should be painted red at least 50 feet in all directions from the corner curb radius in order to provide sufficient sight-line for traffic pulling into the intersection.
    - a. The Public Works Department will identify which curbs at the aforementioned intersections should be red-curbed.
  5. Driveways that intersect with collectors should be kept to a minimum and, if possible, should be eliminated when redevelopment occurs along this type of roadway.
    - a. Through the site plan review process, the Planning and Engineering Departments will work to eliminate unnecessary driveways.

**II. Establish a collector system that encourages truck traffic but not at the expense of the livability of the community or adjacent neighborhoods.**

*See also Issue 8: Truck Traffic*

1. Designate a system of truck routes in Farmersville that minimizes negative impacts on sensitive land uses and neighborhoods
  - a. The Circulation Map designates truck routes.

**ISSUE FOUR: Local Streets and Alleys**

Local streets (also frequently referred to as “Residential Streets” are perhaps the most important roadways in a community. These are the streets that people live on. They form the nucleus of the neighborhood. Well designed, local streets can be an asset to the neighborhood. Poorly designed local streets can become a nuisance, and worse, a safety hazard.

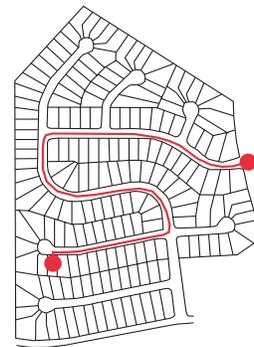
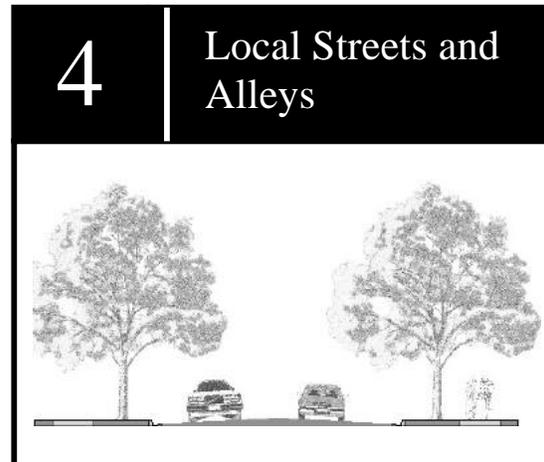
Local Street Design

Recent studies have suggested that current engineering standards are creating dangerous streets. Wide residential streets tend to encourage higher vehicle speeds, making streets less safe. Narrower streets cause drivers to slow down. In addition, current standards do not require street trees. Research indicates that heavily shaded streets further cause drivers to slow down. In addition, shaded streets generate much less heat, cooling the neighborhood. Shaded pavement also tends to last longer. Finally, studies have shown that well-maintained shady streets have higher property values.

Subdivision Street Patterns

Most new subdivisions are designed with circuitous street patterns featuring numerous dead-end roads with cul-de-sacs. The purpose of these designs is to reduce through-traffic (which in turn theoretically reduces noise and improves safety). While well intentioned, these designs usually result in circuitous travel patterns that concentrate traffic onto collector and arterial roadways as well as the entry/exit streets into individual subdivisions. The end result is cities where people are tied to the automobile to make all of their trips around a community. Walking and cycling become frustratingly inconvenient.

Older neighborhoods in the original part of towns were designed almost exclusively using a grid (or modified grid) pattern. Dead-end cul-de-sac patterns and walled subdivisions were almost unknown in city design until the 1950’s. Not coincidentally, that is about the same time that highway-based street design standards (wider streets focussed solely on moving traffic) came into wide use around the nation.



*To the extent practical, road layouts shall use a grid pattern which maximize the number of connections to the surrounding collector roadway system.*

Properly designed, subdivisions layed out with grid roadway patterns can improve connectivity by providing a variety of routes for motorists, pedestrians and bicycles. If the grid is fine enough, automobile traffic is diffused so that individual streets are not over-impacted by traffic. Requiring narrower, tree-lined streets can work to further slow vehicle speeds. Other mechanisms such as shorter block lengths, roundabouts, bulb-outs and stop signs can further tame neighborhood traffic.

*See also Appendix A: A Smart Growth Primer, in the Land Use Element*

***Goals, Objectives, Action Plans***

**I. Revise local street standards to ensure residential streets are safe and effective.**

1. Single family residential subdivisions may have local streets that have a minimum right-of-way width of 60 feet, 36 feet paved width. Tree-lined parkways shall be installed in this right-of-way. The parkway shall have a width of 7 feet; and the sidewalk 5 feet (see Figure 3-1).

Single family residential subdivisions with streets on blocks shorter than 600 feet may have a minimum right-of-way width of 58 feet, 34 feet paved width. Tree-line parkways shall be installed in this right-of-way. The parkway shall have a width of 7 feet; the sidewalk 5 feet (see Figure 3-1).

Subdivisions with all lot larger than 8,000 square feet are not required to install parkways.

Parkways and street trees shall be maintained by a landscape and lighting district.

3. Alleys are permitted within residential subdivisions. Alleys shall have a rights-of-way of 24 feet and a paved width of 20 feet. A concrete vee gutter is required in the middle of the alley. The non-paved portion of the right-of-way shall be landscaped and provided with irrigation. Garbage pickup shall not be permitted in the alleys.

**II. Require subdivision designs that utilize grid street patterns, reserving cul-de-sacs only where necessary.**

1. Subdivisions shall be designed to maximize connectivity, favoring grid street patterns over cul-de-sac heavy street patterns. The use of cul-de-sacs shall be kept to a minimum unless needed to allow more efficient utilization of oddly shaped or “leftover” portions of the parent subdivision parcel.



*Farmersville’s vision for residential streets: shady, cool, and narrow to slow traffic.*

- a. This requirement shall be implemented by the City Planner and City Engineer during project review.



*Future residential streets in Farmersville should be cool and shady, as well as narrower – to tame traffic.*

**ISSUE FIVE: Intersections**

Circulation at busy roadway intersections can be improved with a variety of methods. Signallization is an effective, but very expensive way to improve traffic flow. Simpler methods like adding turn lanes or stop signs can work well in a small community like Farmersville. However, signals do become necessary when traffic conditions warrant.

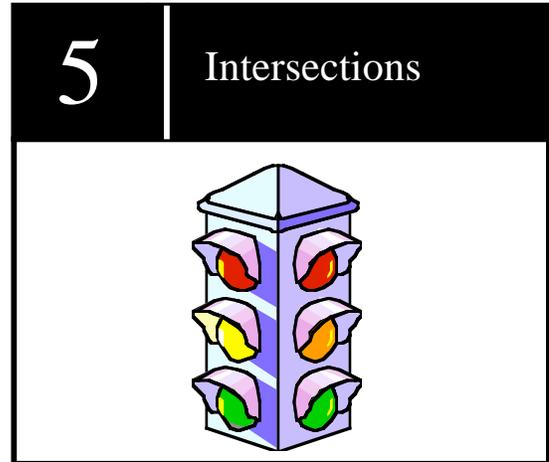
Another way of controlling intersections is the roundabout. For hundreds of years Europe and Mexico have used roundabouts to control traffic at intersecting streets. In addition, the interior portion of the roundabout often contains a visual feature, like landscaping, trees or even a fountain or statue. The Walnut Woods subdivision being developed in the northwest portion of the community is utilizing roundabouts. The City should encourage the use of additional roundabouts, particularly at the intersection of local streets within new development.

**Goals, Objectives, Action Plans**

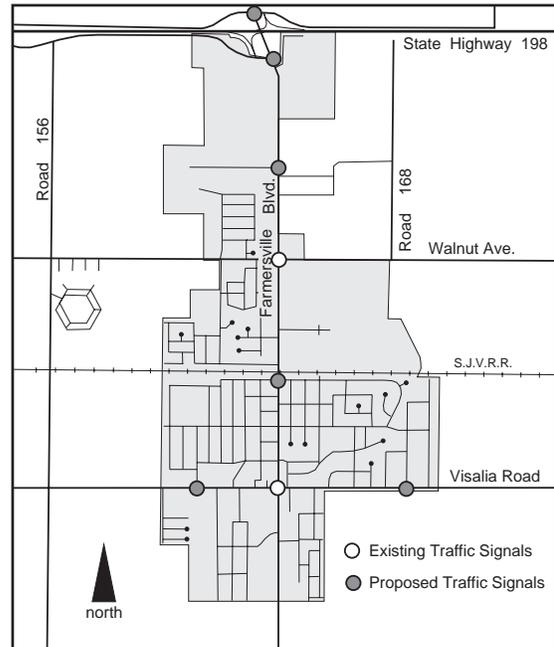
**I. Ensure that busy intersections are properly designed, thereby ensuring safe and effective traffic maneuvers.**

**II. Seek innovative methods of controlling traffic at busy intersections within the Farmersville planning area.**

1. Future signals are designated at the following intersections (see Map 3-2):
  - Farmersville Boulevard and Front Street
  - Farmersville Boulevard and Terry Avenue
  - Farmersville Boulevard and the frontage roads on both sides of State Route 198
  - Visalia Road and Steven Avenue
  - Visalia Road and Oakview Avenue
2. The City shall adopt a development impact fee that finances signalization and the proper design of intersections.
  - a. The City will calculate and implement development impact fees that are consistent



**Map 3-2**  
*Proposed Traffic Signals*



with the Circulation Element map and Assembly Bill 1600 (legislation that requires a nexus, or connection, between the fee being required and the improvement to be installed).

- b. The City will periodically review the levels of service ratings at major intersections in Farmersville to determine when improvements should be installed.
2. The City should consider allowing roundabouts within new development.
- a. The Engineering and Planning Departments will prepare the design plan for these roundabouts.
  - b. The City shall seek public input in regards to the interior landscape treatment of the roundabouts.



*Example of a modern roundabout.*

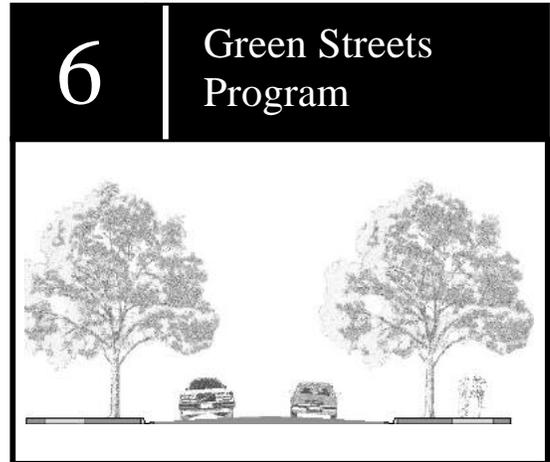
**ISSUE SIX: Green Streets Program**

Some of the great streets in the world are graced by landscaped medians or a boulevard of street trees. These features “soften” the appearance of the street, provide shade for pedestrians and establish a memorable, positive image.

Studies have shown that lands along tree-shaded streets frequently enjoy higher property values. While the cost of installing and maintaining trees is a concern, proper selection of trees can reduce long term maintenance costs. Non-profit organizations like the Urban Tree Foundation can assist Farmersville in establishing a green streets program.

**I. The City should explore establishing landscaped medians and tree lined parkways on Farmersville Boulevard, Visalia Road and Walnut Avenue.**

1. The City shall have prepared a streetscape design plan that will establish a 20-year improvement program for the construction of landscaped medians for Farmersville Boulevard and Visalia Road. This Plan should include details for lighting, landscaping and signing.
  - a. The Engineering and Planning Departments will prepare the streetscape design plan. Funds will come from tax increment, gas tax, transportation funds and the state grant programs.
  - b. The City shall apply for urban forestry grants to assist in the funding of landscaped medians.
2. Existing parkways that do not contain trees should be planted with trees.
  - a. The City should apply for an urban forestry grant to pay for the cost of installing street trees.
3. Parkway with trees that have broken or lifted adjacent sidewalk shall be removed and replaced with more appropriate street trees.



*Visalia Road before (above) and after (below) conversion to a “Green Street.”*



4. Parkways that have been filled with pavement shall be opened up and planted with appropriate street trees.



*Farmersville Boulevard before (left, inset) and after (below) planting street trees.*



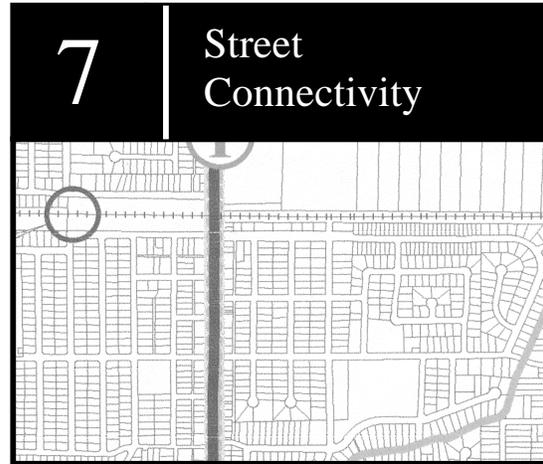
**ISSUE SEVEN: Street Connectivity**

Good connectivity is important for an effective street system. A well connected pattern of collectors and arterials ensures that no one individual street is overburdened with traffic. Good connectivity also helps to reduce air pollution and fuel consumption, by reducing trip lengths and delays.

Connectivity in Farmersville is hampered by the railroad. Farmersville Boulevard is the only street in the entire city that crosses the tracks. This requires motorists to rely solely on Farmersville Boulevard to travel north/south through the community. In order to alleviate this situation, it is recommended that additional railroad crossings be established.

**Goals, Objectives, Action Plans****I. Improve connectivity in Farmersville's street system**

1. Establish a new railroad crossing on Ventura Avenue
  1. The City shall seek funding to establish a railroad crossing at Ventura Avenue.
  2. Coordinate with the San Joaquin Valley Railroad in the design and timing of the crossing.
2. Explore establishing a railroad crossing east of Farmersville Boulevard. Possible crossings could be established at Rose Avenue or Brundage Avenue. Alternately, the City could explore creating a new collector street east of the existing city limit line that connects Visalia Road to Walnut Avenue.
  - a. The City Manager and City Engineer shall prepare a report on this matter for presentation to the City Council.

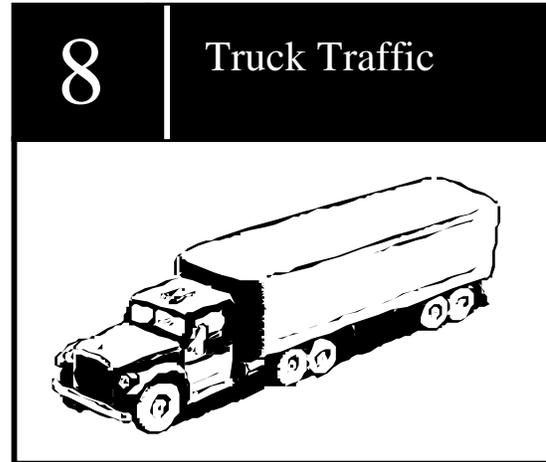


**ISSUE EIGHT: Truck Traffic**

Truck traffic can adversely affect a community (and specifically residential neighborhoods) because of the noise and vibrations they generate. Further, heavy trucks can damage local roadways because of their weight. However, trucks are an essential ingredient for the local economy in terms of employment and movement of goods and products. In Farmersville, the local economy would collapse if local industrial and commercial businesses could not receive trucks at their locations.

**Goals, Objectives, Action Plans**

- I. Establish truck routes through Farmersville that are safe and not disruptive to residential neighborhoods, schools and businesses.**
- II. Facilitate the movement of truck traffic through and around Farmersville.**
  1. Identify truck routes on the Farmersville Circulation Element map.
  2. Prohibit through-truck traffic on streets that are not identified as truck routes.
    - a. Direct truck traffic away from residential areas and other sensitive land uses.
    - b. The Public Works Department shall install truck route signage.
    - c. Consider using county roads to divert truck traffic through or around Farmersville to avoid sensitive land uses.



*See also Land Use Element – Issue 1: Community Image, for policies on truck parking.*

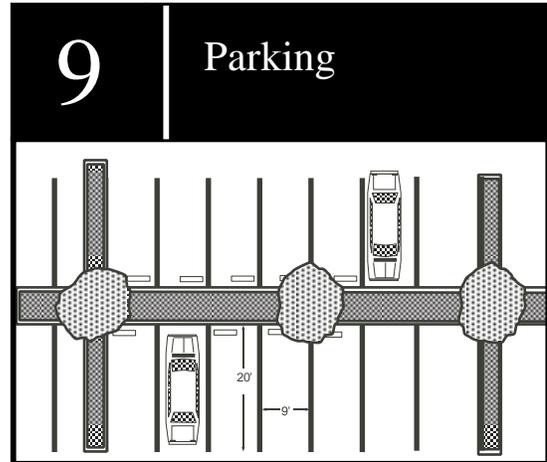
**ISSUE NINE: Parking**

The success of commercial businesses is often dependent upon parking. Parking must be in close proximity to the business, it must be safe, and should well designed - good lighting, adequate stalls, shaded, and easy access.

For other uses, such as public facilities, churches, apartments and industries, good parking design is important so as to ensure that surrounding land uses are not adversely impacted by individuals parking their vehicles in front of other establishments or residences.

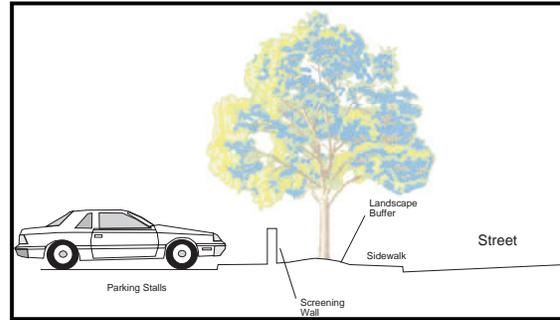
**Goals, Objectives, Action Plans**

- I. Insure that adequate off-street parking is provided by new development.**
- II. Encourage the joint use of parking lots.**
- III. Design parking lots that are safe, visually pleasing and convenient.**
- IV. Provide adequate public parking in the downtown.**
  - 1. Parking lots for new uses shall include landscaping, proper lighting and shall be properly designed to ensure maneuverability of vehicles and pedestrians.
    - a. Through the site plan review process, the Planning and Engineering Departments will ensure that the design of new parking lots contain these features.
    - b. The Zoning Ordinance shall be amended to include parking lot design standards, including a requirement for 50 percent shading within a ten-year time frame. Rows of parking stalls shall be interrupted with tree planters.
  - 1. Pedestrian pathways through parking lots shall be clearly delineated using improvements such as landscaping, lighting, trellises and special pavement material, such as textured/colored concrete.



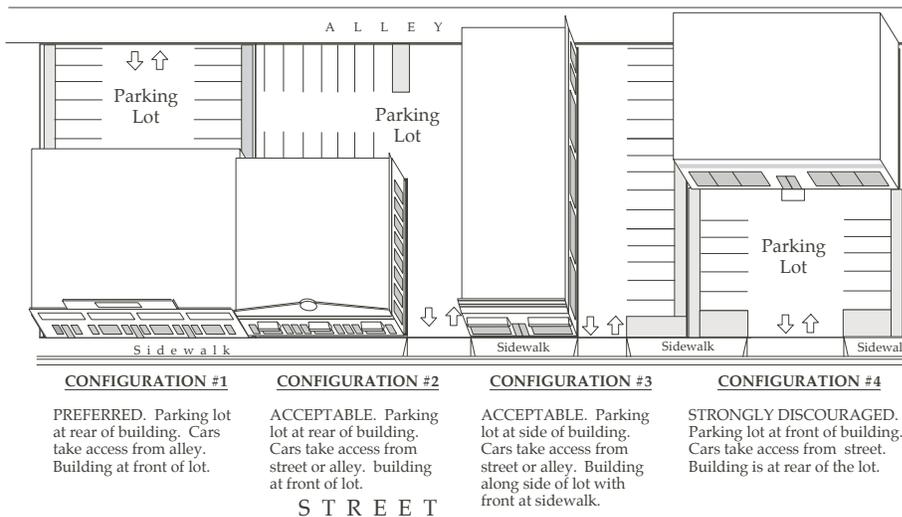
*Parking lot landscaping*

- a. This standard shall be implemented during the site plan review process.
- 3. Parking lots located adjacent to streets shall be screened by a low wall, berm, hedge or combination of these (see diagram to the right).
  - a. The Zoning Ordinance should be amended to add this standard.
- 4. New parking lots along Farmersville Boulevard and Visalia Road should be designed so that the parking lot does not occupy the entire frontage of the site.
  - a. Through the site plan review process, the Planning Department will ensure that the design of new parking lots will be consistent with this policy.
- 5. Off-street parking in the downtown should be located on the side or at the rear of the building(s). The City should also pursue re-designing Farmersville Boulevard to add additional diagonal parking on-street.
  - a. The City and/or the Farmersville Redevelopment Agency should consider the purchase of land in the downtown for use as a public parking lot.



➔ **BACKGROUND**

*The downtown environment of most communities is one of pedestrian shopping where buildings come right up to the sidewalk. Storefronts feature large display windows that allow window shopping and a view of what's available. Pedestrians are able to window shop by walking past numerous businesses in a short distance. This pattern can be destroyed when a parking lot replaces a store front. For this reason, many cities require parking in the downtown area to be screened - either to the rear or to the side of a building.*



←  
*The three buildings on the left have at least some street frontage. The building on the right has no street frontage and disrupts the pattern of sidewalk storefronts in the downtown district.*

**ISSUE TEN: Transit**

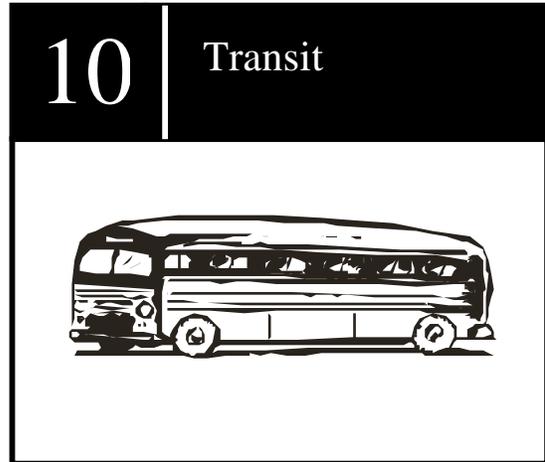
Alternative modes of transportation are important to different groups of people for different reasons. For low-income, handicapped or non-driving age persons, public transit may be the only means of travel. For a person who is concerned about polluting the air, riding a bus or bike may be their way of minimizing an impact on the environment.

Farmersville is presently the only city in Tulare County that does not have some type of transit system. As the community grows, the City should explore adding at least a dial-a-ride type service. This would be a particularly valuable addition for individuals who do not have access to other modes of transportation

**Goals, Objectives, Action Plans**

**I. Promote opportunities for residents to increase mobility within Farmersville.**

1. Farmersville should explore the concept of establishing a local transit service, such as a dial-a-ride system
  - a. The City should coordinate with the Tulare County Association of Governments to consider and operating structure and funding mechanisms necessary to establish a dial-a-ride system. Also, coordinate with neighboring communities that do operate transit service.



**ISSUE ELEVEN: Bike Paths and Pedestrian Pathways**

Bicycling is an important form of transportation. In a small community like Farmersville, bicycling can provide a realistic way to make meaningful trips around the community.

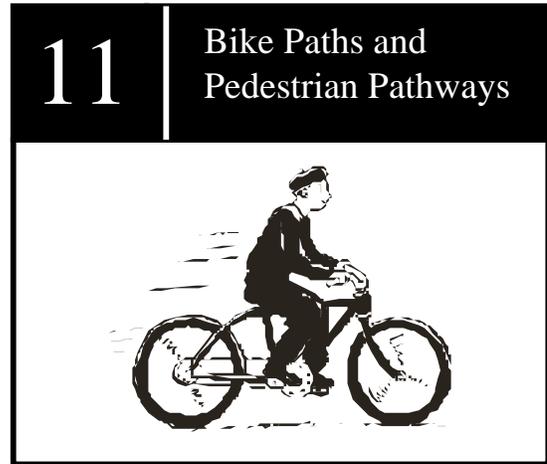
When added to the local bike traffic generated by school-aged children, it is important to properly locate and design Farmersville’s bikepath system.

By encouraging persons to walk in Farmersville, personal contact is promoted. This interaction makes for a more close-knit community in addition to promoting a more healthy lifestyle.

Farmersville has been participating with the Tulare County Association of Governments in developing a county-wide bicycle route plan. As of this writing the plan is in the draft stage. The draft plan identifies four future bicycle routes in Farmersville, including Visalia Road, Farmersville Boulevard, Walnut Avenue and Avenue 296 (the frontage road along the north side of State Route 198).

**Goals, Objectives, Action Plans**

- I. Encourage persons to ride bikes for good health as well as for environmental reasons.**
- II. Ensure that Farmersville’s bikepath system is consistent with the Tulare County Association of Government’s Countywide Bicycle Transportation Plan.**
- III. Encourage residents to walk in Farmersville.**
  - 1. Develop a bike path plan for the City of Farmersville. Consider other routes in addition to those identified in the regional bike plan.
    - a. Design the Plan so that some of the bike path segments are not along surface streets but along the railroad right-of-way, parks and creek/canal easements.



- b. Apply for state and federal funds to finance the construction of the bikepath system.
  - c. Ensure that subdivisions are designed so that persons riding bikes can access adjacent properties from the neighborhood.
  - d. Cooperate with the County of Tulare to ensure that Farmersville's Plan is linked to the County's regional bikeway network.
  - e. Consider implementing traffic calming designs where bike paths cross surface streets.
  - f. Bikepaths will be constructed consistent with the bikepath cross-section illustrated in Appendix A of the Circulation Element.
2. Provide safe and convenient pedestrian access to all areas of the city, including between neighborhoods.
- a. Maintain and repair sidewalks to make them safe for pedestrians.
  - b. Plant existing parkways that lack trees to make the walking experience more comfortable and enjoyable.
  - c. Provide signage for walking paths.
  - d. Investigate the use of creek and canal easements for walking paths.



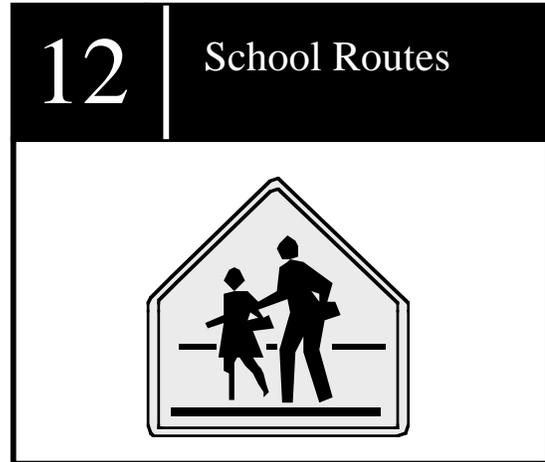
*Investigate the use of creek and canal easements for walking paths*

**ISSUE TWELVE: School Routes**

School-aged children walking or riding to school should be provided with a safe route to school. There are a number of roadways in Farmersville that are used extensively by children traveling to and from school. Sidewalks should always be constructed along both sides of roadways leading to schools in Farmersville.

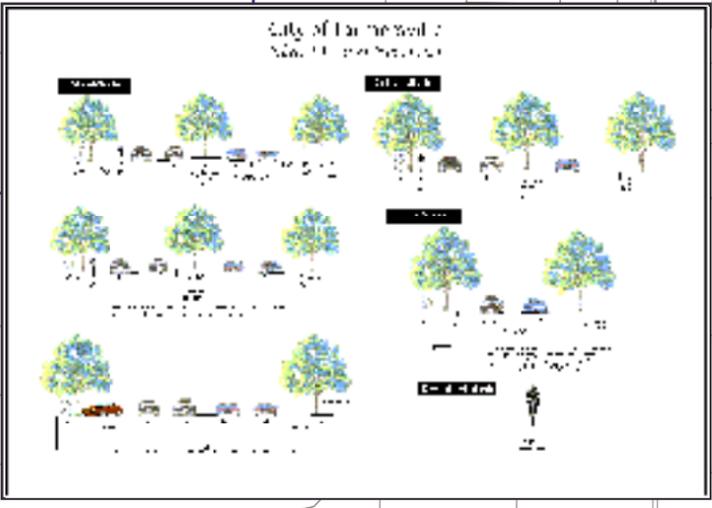
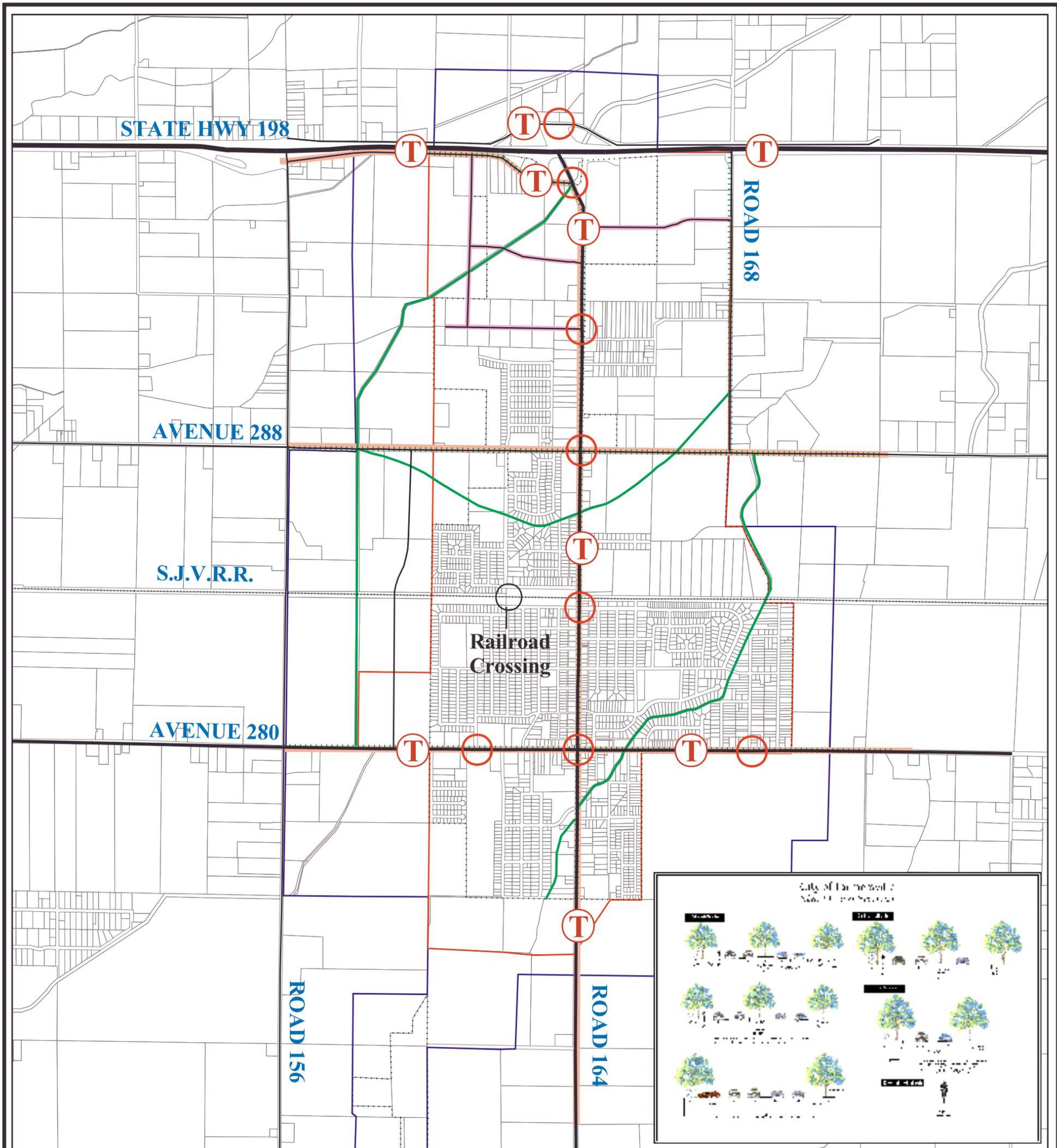
**Goals, Objectives, Action Plans****I. Ensure that children have safe walking and bicycling routes to school.**

1. Require new development to install sidewalks.
  - a. The City Planner and City Engineer will ensure that sidewalks are installed as a requirement of development.
2. Seek funding to establish sidewalks in existing neighborhoods without them.
  - a. The City should seek grant monies to establish sidewalks in critical locations.
3. Coordinate with Farmersville Unified School District (F.U.S.D.) to establish sidewalks along their campuses.
  - a. City staff will work with F.U.S.D. to ensure sidewalks are established around school campuses.



**CIRCULATION MAP**

Map 3-3 delineates the different types of roadway types and routes of other types of transportation in the Farmersville planning area.



## General Plan Circulation Designations

### Legend

- City Limits
- Urban Development Boundary
- Urban Area Boundary
- Parcels
- Railroads
- Ave 180 Streets

- Collector
- Arterial
- Freeway
- Green Street
- Pedestrian Path
- Bike Route
- Industrial Collector

- Designated Truck Route
- Traffic Signal



Farmersville General Plan

Map No. 3-3



Base data provided by Tulare County. Created on 4/22/01 by Benjamin A. Kimball. For reference only. Not drawn to engineering standards.

## CHAPTER 4 • CONSERVATION, OPEN SPACE, PARKS AND RECREATION ELEMENT

### Introduction

Open space, parks, and recreation facilities enhance the quality of life in a community. The conservation of these types of resources is an integral part of providing for the needs and welfare of a community.

Conservation of open space takes planning for the future. If these areas are not planned for at this time and set aside for the future, a city runs the risk of losing them to development.

Open space lands are undeveloped areas that provide a low density perception in an urban area, define the edge of a community, and provide the sight lines that allow long distance vistas to the Sierra Nevada, agriculture fields, or other local view-points. Most people think of open space as park areas, but a large portion of a city's open space is provided by residential yard areas and right-of-way along streets.

A park is an open area that provides an assortment of recreation and leisure opportunities for a community. A park can include community recreation parks, school playgrounds, community centers, and other publicly-owned outdoor recreation areas. Parks can supply active as well as passive recreation. Activities can range from family picnics to organized sporting events.

One of the primary purposes of parks is to contribute to Farmersville's quality of life. The City accomplishes this through the provision of convenient, well-equipped and maintained sites and facilities, conservation of natural resources, and a comprehensive and quality program of recreational activities and services for all citizens of the community.

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*Conservation of open space takes planning for the future. If these areas are not planned for at this time and set aside for the future, a city runs the risk of losing them to development.*

---

**The Element**

The open space portion of this Element identifies lands that are appropriate for open space and parks acquisition as well as the development of recreation programs on these lands. The Element establishes goals, policies, action programs and standards for the conservation and treatment of open space.

Government Code Section 65560 et seq. defines **open space** as land that can be used for any of the following uses:

- Conservation of natural resources
- Managed production of resources
- Outdoor recreation
- Preservation of lands for the purpose of protecting the public's health and safety

Specific requirements of the **conservation** portion of the Element are identified in Government Code Section 65302 (d). This portion of the element includes "the conservation, development and utilization of natural resources, including water, forests, soils, rivers and other waters, wildlife, and other natural resources." Items that are addressed in this category include the conservation of:

- Agricultural lands
- Soils
- Air and water quality
- Mineral resources
- Wildlife habitat
- View opportunities

The Parks and Recreation Element is an optional element of the General Plan. This Element identifies existing and potential recreational opportunities within the community. Since it is closely related to the City's open space system, integration of the three documents into one element makes good planning sense.



**Existing Conditions**

Part II of the General Plan contains an in-depth profile of conditions in the Farmersville planning area. A brief summary of these conditions is provided below, as they pertain to particular topics addressed by the Element.

**Air Quality**

Farmersville has a moderate climate with warm summers and generally mild winters. The City is located within the San Joaquin Valley Air Basin. The closest air monitoring station is located in Visalia, where Ozone and PM-10 (Particulate Matter-10 microns or less) are measured. The San Joaquin Valley, including Farmersville, has failed to achieve state and federal standards for these pollutants and is therefore designated as a non-attainment area. There are several factors which cause this to occur. They are:

1. The topography of the valley as a basin surrounded by mountains has the effect of trapping stagnant or polluted air.
2. The local climate (abundant sunshine and high atmospheric pressure) is favorable for the formation of smog.
3. The primary factor is the growth of population in the Valley. With more and more people moving to the valley, smog is produced by fossil fuel burning and emissions from factories and other combustion processes.

**Water Resources**

Farmersville currently obtains its water from underground supplies. The aquifer underlying the City is a good supply of water although the relative shallowness of the water table can make the supply susceptible to surface contaminants. In recent years, the water table has been as shallow as 20 feet below ground level. In order to reduce the possibility of contamination, the city's well system draws water from 240 to 400 feet below ground level.

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*The San Joaquin Valley, including Farmersville, has failed to achieve state and federal standards for ozone and PM-10 and is therefore designated as a non-attainment area*

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The water table is recharged primarily by water moving downhill from the watersheds of Sierra Nevada streams, particularly the Kaweah River and its distributary system, which includes Deep Creek. Irrigation waters also help to recharge the water table. Rainfall in the Farmersville area provides only a small amount of groundwater recharge.

Deep Creek is a natural waterway which has been trenched and channelized since the arrival of European settlers. However, portions of the channel retain some “native” vegetation such as oak trees, willows and vines. The presence of these relatively undisturbed stream sections represents an important natural resource. These types of riparian areas can function as a protective travel corridor for wildlife through an otherwise “sterile” area.

In addition to Deep Creek there are other irrigation facilities in the planning area. These include channels maintained by Tulare Irrigation District (TID) and People’s Ditch Company.

In 2000, the Tulare Irrigation District (TID) canal that runs along the west side of Farmersville was the subject of a proposal by TID to line the channel with concrete, in order to reduce the loss of water to percolation. Controversy centered over the loss of groundwater recharge from what was historically a natural stream channel, and also the loss of numerous large Valley Oak trees along the banks of the ditch.

The project was cancelled when an agreement was reached between TID, Kaweah Water Conservation District and the City of Visalia that set forth a mechanism whereby TID would receive payments for water lost to percolation.

### **Agricultural Resources**

Farmersville is surrounded by thousands of acres of producing cropland. Agricultural lands have provided a strong economic base for the community as well as a rural landscape and open space “system” that surrounds the City. As Farmersville continues to grow, surrounding agricultural lands are taken out of production to accommodate residential, commercial, and industrial growth.



In 1965, California adopted the Williamson Act to address the loss of agricultural lands due to urbanization. The Williamson Act provides property owners with a reduction in their property tax if they agree to maintain their land in agriculture for a ten-year period. This ensures, at least for the near-future, that agricultural lands will remain undeveloped, thereby continuing agricultural production and enhancing the sense of open space around Farmersville. Map 4-1 shows properties within the Farmersville planning area that have a Williamson Act contract. Approximately 60 acres within Farmersville's Urban Development Boundary are in agricultural preserves under Williamson Act contracts

### **Mineral Resources**

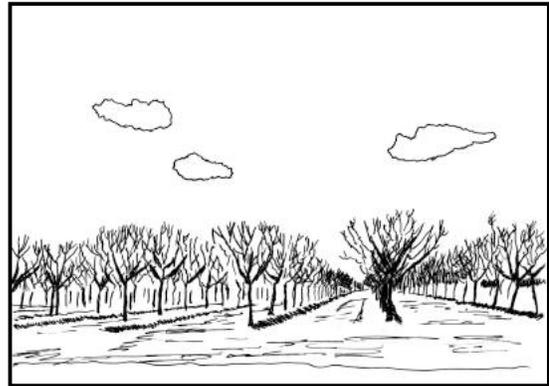
There are no known mineral resources within the planning area and no known mining of mineral resources has occurred in the planning area. The closest significant mineral resources consist of sand and gravel deposits along the Kaweah River northeast of Farmersville, near the Sierra Nevada foothills. Several open-pit sand and gravel mines operate along the river. Recent applications to expand these operations have generated controversy over their potential environmental impacts.

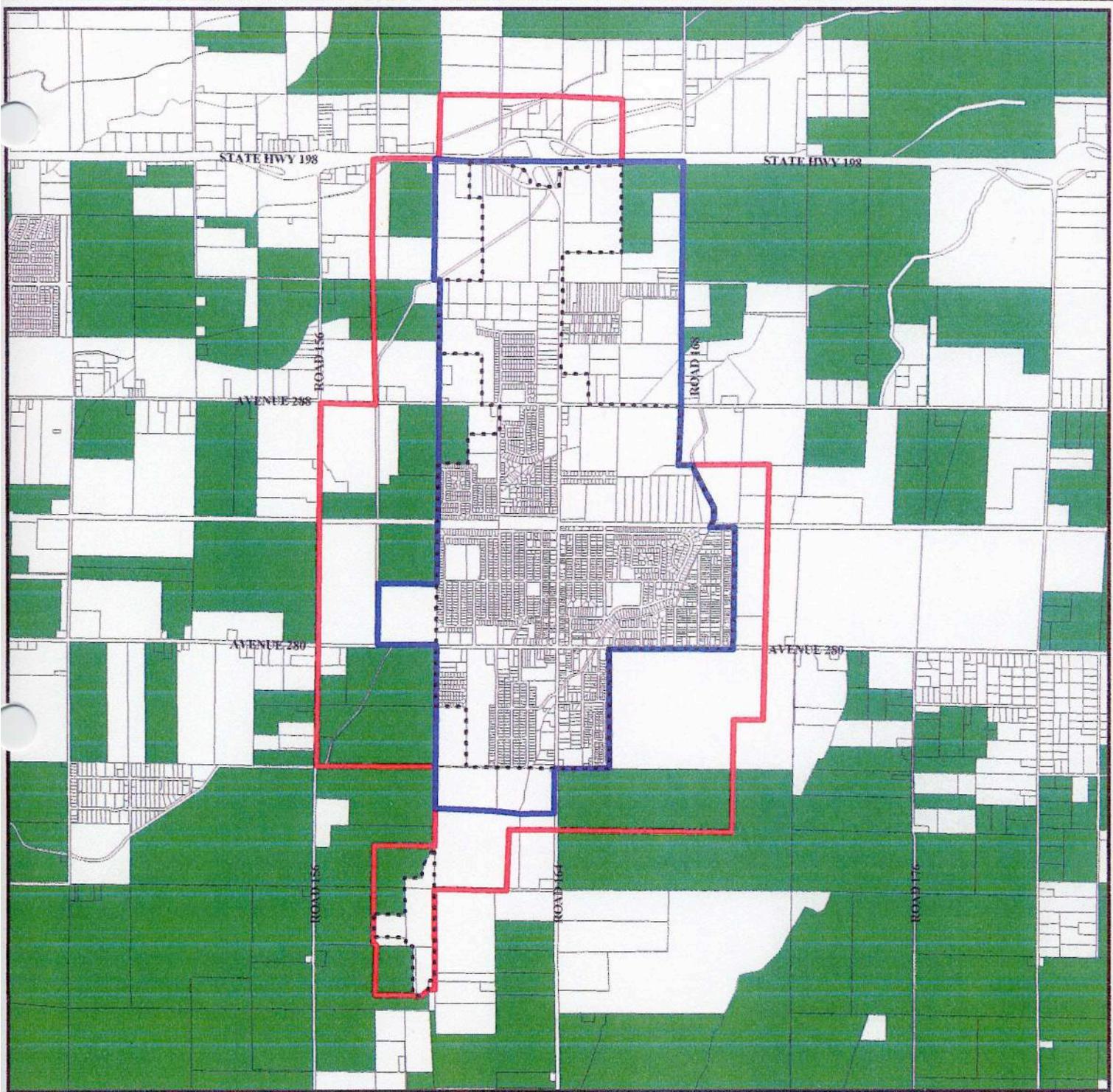
### **Soil Resources**

Soils are discussed in detail in Part II: Resources. The soils in the Farmersville area are described by the Soil Survey of Central Tulare County, prepared by the Soil Conservation Service, Department of Agriculture (see Map 2-2 in Part II: Community Profile). The Soil Survey identifies three specific soils in the planning area. They are

- Grangeville sandy loam, drained, 0 - 2 % slopes;
- Nord fine sandy loam, 0 - 2% slopes;
- Tagus loam, 0 - 2% slopes.

According to the survey, these soils have few limitations for urban development. At the same time, they are considered to be prime agricultural soils.





# Williamson Act Agricultural Preserve Areas

# Farmersville General Plan

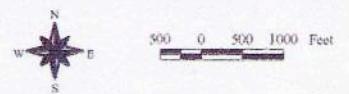
## Legend

## Map # 4-1

-  City Limits
-  Urban Development Boundary
-  Urban Area Boundary
-  Ave 180 Major Roads

Parcels Identified with a Williamson Act Number and Classified as an Agricultural Preserve.

-  Ag Preserve Parcels
-  Non Ag Preserve Parcels



**Collins & Schoettler**  
 PLANNING CONSULTANTS  
 1002 West Main Street • Visalia, CA • 93291

Base data provided by Tulare County. Created on 2/11/02 by Benjamin A. Kimball. For reference only. Not drawn to engineering standards.

**Biotic Resources**

The Conservation Element is required to discuss the presence of native plants and animals and in particular, native species regarded as rare, threatened, or endangered. In addition to inventorying these species, the element must plan for their preservation. Additional information on biotic resources may be found in Part II: Chapter 3: Resources.

For the Farmersville area a list of sensitive species was developed based upon the list of species identified by a search of the Exeter Quadrangle in the California Natural Diversity Database, and discussions with local wildlife experts familiar with the area. A list of the plant and wildlife species addressed by field surveys is presented in Table 4-1. A total of 8 special status animal species could potentially occur in the Farmersville area. Two of the 8 species are listed as threatened or endangered by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service or the California Department of Fish and Game. The remaining 6 species are candidates for federal listing or listed species of special concern by the State of California. No special status plant species are likely to occur in the planning area.

A biotic survey prepared for the General Plan update indicated that the overwhelming bulk of the planning area has been severely disturbed from its natural state by urbanization and agricultural activities. The survey did note the presence of some minor areas that appear to be less disturbed including scattered grasslands and riparian areas along Deep Creek. The survey indicated that the grasslands have a very low likelihood of supporting native rare, threatened or endangered (RTE) animal species.

The riparian areas along Deep Creek near the railroad were noted as having a higher value for habitat. These sections of waterway should be carefully considered for protection from development.

**Table 4-1**  
*Sensitive Species Potentially Occurring  
 in the Farmersville Area*

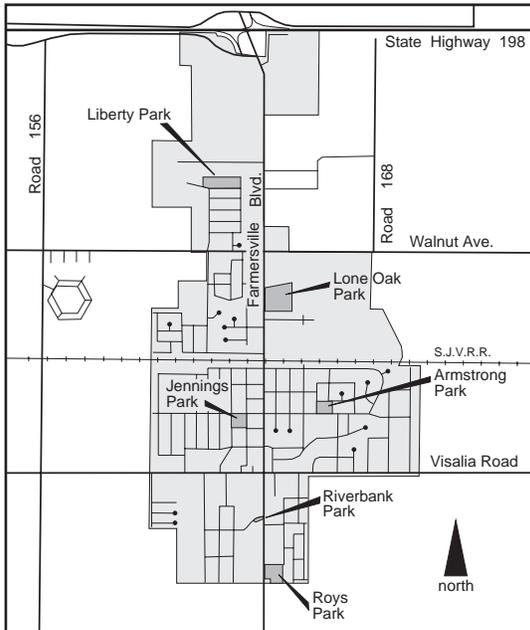
		Listing Status	
Common Name	Scientific Name	Federal	State
<u>Mammals</u>			
San Joaquin Kit Fox	<i>Vulpes macrotis mutica</i>	E	
<u>Birds</u>			
Cooper's Hawk	<i>Accipiter cooperi</i>	-	CSC
Sharp-shinned Hawk	<i>Accipiter striatus</i>	-	CSC
Great Blue Heron	<i>Ardea herodias</i>	-	CSC
Burrowing Owl	<i>Athene cunicularia</i>	-	CSC
Great Egret	<i>Casmerodius albus</i>	-	CSC
Black-shouldered kite	<i>Elanus caeruleus</i>	-	CSC
<u>Invertebrates</u>			
Valley Elderberry	<i>Desmocerus californicus</i>		
Longhorn Beetle	<i>dimorphus</i>	T	

- Notes:
- E Federal/State endangered;
  - T Federal/State threatened;
  - R Federal/State rare
  - C1 Federal candidate (sufficient data to support listing)
  - C2 Federal candidate (insufficient data to support listing)
  - CSC California Species of Special Concern

**Park and Recreation Resources**

The City of Farmersville currently has five developed parksites and one undeveloped (city-owned) parksite (see Table 4-2 and Map 4-2

**Map 4-2  
 Existing Parks**



In addition to these existing parks the City owns a five-acre parcel on the north edge of the Sierra Woods subdivision. This site will be developed into a park featuring lawn, trees and picnic tables.

In addition to the city's parks, the athletic fields on the campuses of Farmersville Unified School District provide recreational opportunities after school hours. At this time, the City and School District do not have an official agreement for joint-use of district facilities.

**Sports Programs**

At this time, the City does not have an established recreation program. However, there are an organized little league, pee wee softball and pop warner football for children. Youths interested in soccer participate in

*Table 4-2 • Existing Parks*

- Jennings Park (2.1 acres)
  - Grass field
  - Baseball diamond
  - Handball Court
- Lone Oak Park (4.2 acres)
  - Grass field
  - Baseball Diamonds
  - Picnic tables
  - Barbecues
- Roy's Park (4.5 acres)
  - Grass field
  - Playground
  - Picnic tables
  - Barbecues
- Ash Street Park (2.2 acres)
  - Grass field
  - Soccer Field
  - Jungle gym
  - Picnic tables
- Riverbank Park (1/2 acre)
  - Grassy area on bank of Deep Creek
  - Picnic table
- Liberty Park (6 acres)
  - Picnic tables
  - Grassy play area
  - Play equipment

Visalia AYSO (American Youth Soccer League) programs. Most recently, the city has been seeking funding for after school programs.

### **Regional Parks Facilities**

There are several regional parks that are within driving distance to Farmersville. Generally speaking, at a maximum, most people are willing to travel thirty minutes to get to a regional park facility, and possibly one hour if there was some type of event scheduled there, such as a church gathering, family reunion, or school function.

Farmersville has two regional parks operated by Tulare County within 15 minutes driving time. Cutler Park is a regional park located about 5 miles north of Farmersville. The park is situated on 50 acres along the bank of the St. Johns River and features grassy areas shaded by towering oak trees. Facilities include picnic tables and barbecues, walking paths, restrooms and passive play areas.

Mooney's Grove is a regional park located about five miles west of Farmersville, on the south side of Visalia. This park covers some 140 acres and preserves a large area of native valley oak trees. The park features a historical museum, picnic tables, restrooms and play areas, ponds, and creeks.

About two miles northeast of Farmersville is Kaweah Oaks Preserve. This 324-acre property contains the largest protected example of Great Valley valley oak riparian forest anywhere within the Kaweah River Delta. About half the property at the Preserve is an equally rare habitat called alkali meadow where bunchgrasses and other alkali-loving native plants thrive. The Preserve is frequently used as an educational resource by local school classes.

Kaweah Oaks Preserve was originally operated by the Nature Conservancy but is now owned and operated by the Sierra Los Tulares Land Trust. The trust also operates the Herbert Wetland Prairie Preserve on 725 acres about six miles south of Farmersville. This site features vernal pools scattered amid extensive grassland and is a rare example of the valley landscape before widespread agricultural and urban development.

**Future Needs**

A primary objective of this Element is the establishment of criteria that will guide the acquisition and development of future open space areas. These standards should be realistic and represent the actual amount of area and facilities necessary to meet the needs and desires of the community. These open spaces can be provided in a variety of ways, and do not necessarily need to be under the control of the City to meet Farmersville's needs.

State Government Code Section 66477 (b) requires a minimum of three acres of open space for every one thousand residents. Each jurisdiction can require that a maximum of five acres of open space be set aside per one thousand residents if the community feels that current standards are not meeting demands.

Presently, Farmersville has a total of 19.5 acres of developed parkland. With a year 2000 population of 8,737 persons, Farmersville only has 1.95 acres of park land per one thousand residents. At a rate of three acres per 1,000 residents, the City should have about 26 acres of parks. As such, Farmersville is currently "short" by about 6.7 acres.

Projections of a community's open space and park needs involves many factors. Population, income, education, accessibility, and age must all be considered in determining the correct amount of open space/parks for a community.

Park acquisition must strike a balance between use and the maintenance available to sustain the park. Generally speaking, city parks cost approximately \$3,500 to \$4,000 per acre per year to maintain.

A city may have 10 acres of open space per 1,000 persons; however, if this acreage is not maintained properly, its value as usable open space will be greatly diminished. As Farmersville acquires more parkland, it must also dedicate the resources to adequately maintain that land.

Americans today are spending more of their time in recreation leisure activities than ever before. This emphasis has created a much higher demand than ever for

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*Presently, Farmersville has a total of 19.5 acres of developed parkland. With a year 2000 population of 8,737 persons, Farmersville only has 1.95 acres of park land per one thousand residents. At a rate of three acres per 1,000 residents, the City should have about 26 acres of parks. As such, Farmersville is currently "short" by about 6.7 acres.*

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quality open space, parks and recreation facilities. In response to this, cities must designate areas for such uses, before development occurs.

**Parkland**

In order to determine the type, location and amount of parkland that will be required by Farmersville within the 23-year planning period, population projections are required. Two population projections (low and high) are displayed in Table 4-3. The table shows that as population increases, so does the need for park acreage.

Table 4-3 shows that Farmersville is currently “short” 6.7 acres on park land - using the standard of 3 acres per 1,000 residents. By the year 2025, the City would need to add about 34 acres to meet the standard (using an annual growth rate of 2.9% per year. Using the “high” growth rate of 3.4% per year, the City would need to add 41 acres of parkland.

**Table 4-3**  
*Parkland Demand Projections*

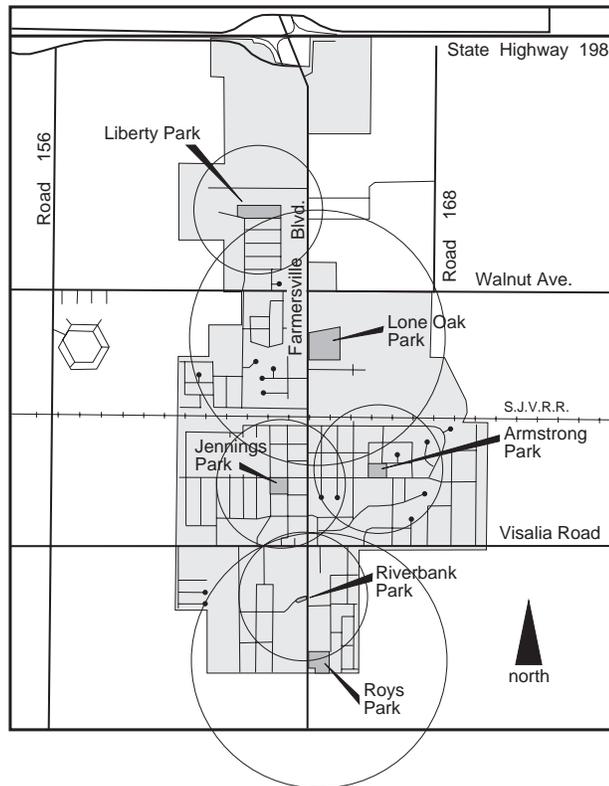
	Low Population Projection			High Population Projection		
	Population Projection (2.9% per year)	Park land need at 3 acres per 1,000 residents	Difference between existing park acreage and projected need	Population Projection (3.4% per year)	Park land need at 3 acres per 1,000 residents	Difference between existing park acreage and projected need
2000	8,737	26.2 acres	6.7 acres	8,737	26.2 acres	6.7 acres
2005	10,079	30.2	10.7	10,327	31	11.5
2010	11,628	34.9	15.4	12,206	36.6	17.1
2015	13,415	40.2	20.7	14,427	43.3	23.8
2020	15,476	46.4	26.9	17,052	51.2	31.7
2025	17,854	53.6	34.1	20,155	60.5	41

Accessibility

Another important factor in the planning of future parks is to insure that parks are accessible to all citizens of the community. For instance, although a city may currently meet the standards regarding the amount of parkland required; the existing park sites may not be easily accessible from all areas of the community.

Map 4-3 shows the location of existing City-owned park facilities and their service areas. Service area dimensions are those provided by the National Parks and Recreation Association. Generally, a community park will have a one-half mile service area, and a neighborhood park has a one-quarter mile service area. In general Farmersville has been successful in establishing a good distribution of parks throughout the community. The community will need to continue planning for park needs as new neighborhoods are developed.

**Map 4-3**  
**Park Service Areas**



## **GOALS, OBJECTIVES AND ACTION PLANS**

This portion of the Element establishes goals, objectives and action plans to guide to the future development of parks and recreation facilities as well as the preservation of Farmersville's natural resources.

Goals, objectives and action plans are organized under topical issues, including:

- Designation of Park Facilities
- Parks Location and Design
- Acquisition and Funding
- Urban Boundaries and Farmland Protection
- Air and Water Quality
- Energy Conservation
- Biotic Resources
- Historic/Cultural Resources

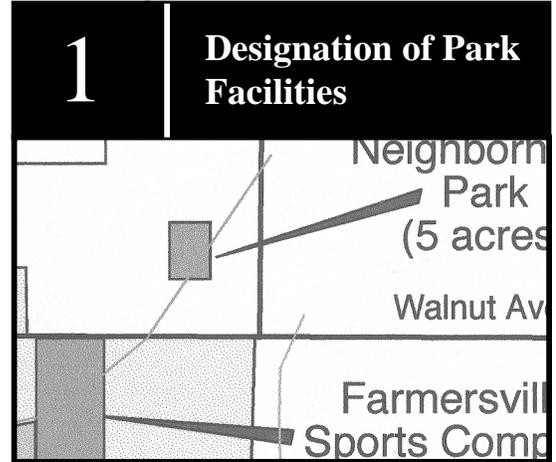
**ISSUE ONE: Designation of Park Facilities**

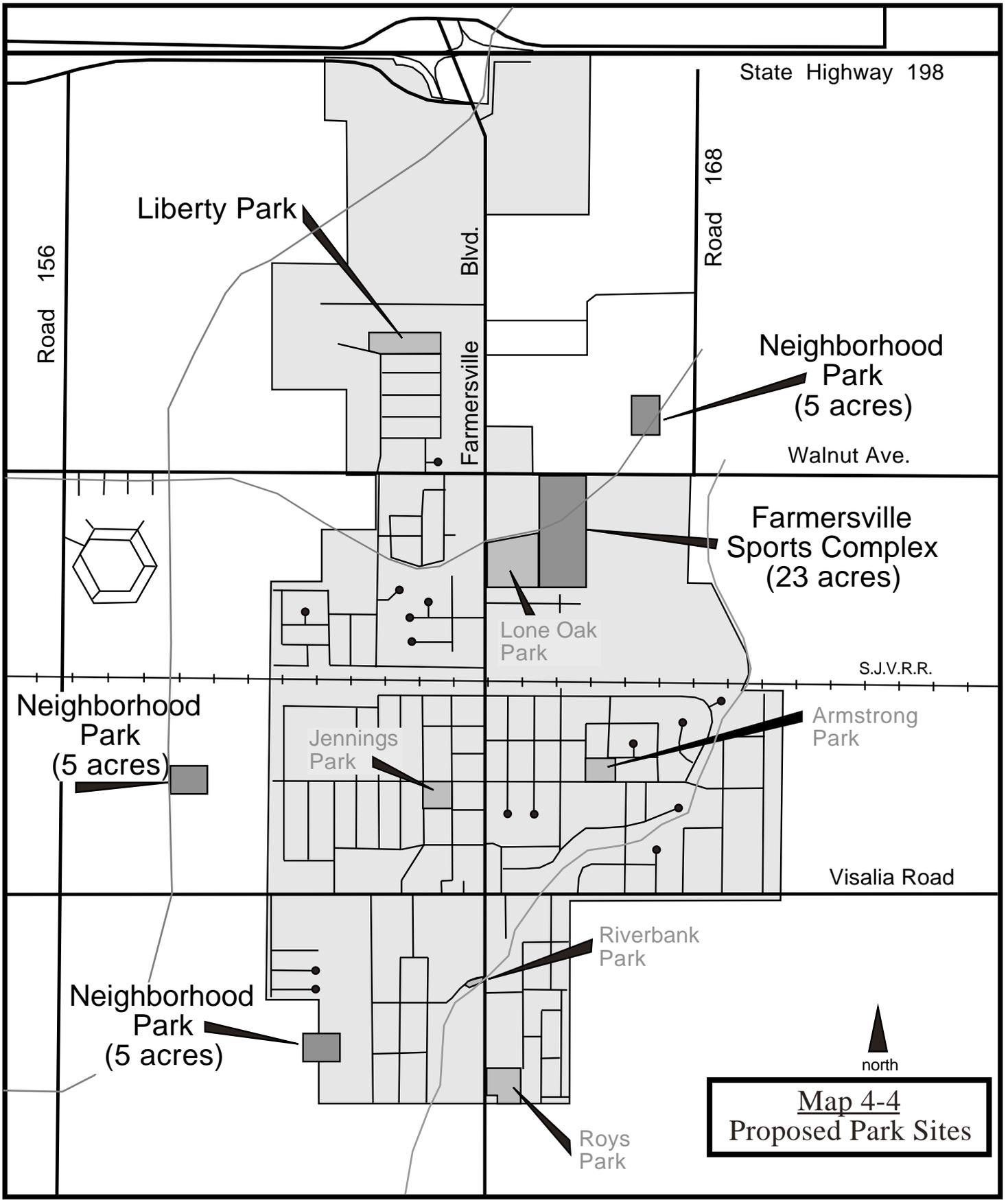
The City's General Plan must designate adequate recreational facilities for future development. The Land Use Element and this Element must provide locations for the future development of conservation, open space, parks and recreation facilities. If adequate sites are not designated in advance, the City will continue to grow with no property set aside for these uses.

**Goals, Objectives, Action Plans**

**I. Plan for adequate park and recreation facilities to meet existing and future needs in Farmersville.**

1. Maintain compliance with adopted City park standards now, and as the City grows.
  - a. The City shall review and, if necessary, increase its park impact fees in order to ensure that it maintains its ratio of at least 3 acres of parkland per 1,000 people.
2. Provide a variety of park sites and recreational facilities to accommodate the City's diverse population.
  - a. Future park sites are identified on Map 4-4
3. Plan for the acquisition of parks prior to urban growth and development. These lands may be acquired and left vacant until funding for development is available.
  - a. Adoption of this Element and the Land Use Element will provide implementation of this item.
4. Encourage private or commercial development of recreational opportunities such as racquetball courts, golf, commercial softball, etc., that are available to the public.
  - a. The City will encourage the development of private recreation facilities.





5. Add at least 35 acres of conservation, open space and parks and recreation area by the year 2025. This figure is based on a 2025 population of 17,854 and a standard of three acres of parkland per 1,000 residents. Farmersville currently has 18 acres of public parks.
  - a. This element and the Land Use Element identify future park locations in the planning area. City Planning and Engineering Departments must ensure that developers are assessed park impact fees.
6. Creeks and canals in the planning area shall be investigated for use as public open space features, with landscaped pathways and landscaping adjacent to the waterway.
  - a. Farmersville will work with local canal and irrigation districts to develop standards to incorporate local waterways as open space features. The City could require developers of adjacent lands to install a pathway and landscaping within canal easements. This could satisfy the developer's open space dedication obligation.



*Investigate the use of creeks and canals for use as public open space features, with landscaped pathways and landscaping adjacent to the waterway.*

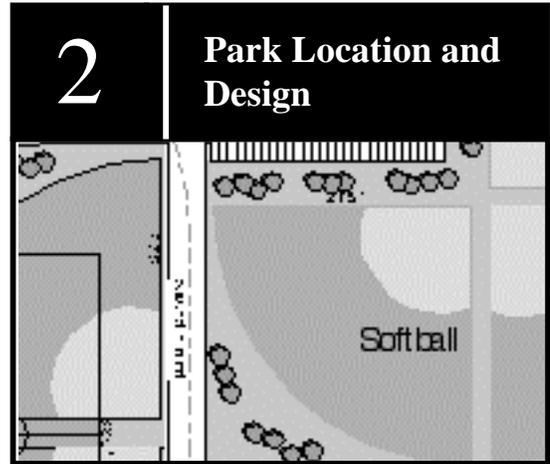
**ISSUE TWO: Park Location and Design**

The City of Farmersville must work to ensure there is an adequate distribution of park and open space facilities throughout the City. Active park sites and passive open space areas should be accessible to all segments of the community.

**Goals, Objectives, Action Plans**

**I. Establish parks in appropriate locations and ensure their design caters to the needs of the community.**

1. Design park sites that fulfill the open space, passive and active recreational needs of all the citizens of Farmersville.
  - a. Prior to the design of each new park, the City and Recreation Commission shall conduct public workshops to receive input from citizens regarding the design of the park.
2. Locate future parks in such a way as to be accessible and available to all the citizens of Farmersville.
  - a. Adoption of this Element and the Land Use Map and its policies will provide implementation of this policy. The City must observe this policy when considering the location of new parks.
3. Locate park and recreational facilities so that they do not conflict with adjacent land uses.
  - a. Adoption of this Element and its policies will provide implementation of this policy. Factors to consider include avoiding streets with high traffic, industrial uses, and noise sensitive uses.
4. Consider the design of parks that double as stormwater retention/detention facilities.



- a. The Planning Department and City Engineer shall explore the feasibility of designing future parks to act as dual use facilities, incorporating recreation and storm drainage.
5. All parks shall be designed to meet the needs of the handicapped.
  - a. The Building Department shall review plans for proposed facilities for compliance with handicap/accessibility requirements of the Uniform Building Code.
6. Create a new Smart Development zone district that will require new subdivisions of forty acres or more to incorporate a neighborhood subdivision park into the project. In turn for development of the park, the city could allow a moderate increase in residential density within the subdivision.
  - a. The Planning Department shall develop a new zone which incorporates the above-referenced standards.
7. Parks and other facilities that may require a significant amount of night lighting, such as ball parks and tennis courts, should be designed in such a way as to minimize the impacts of lighting on the surrounding neighborhood.
  - a. The Planning Department shall review lighting schemes for all projects.
8. Park design may incorporate the use of berms and small hills where appropriate to provide relief to the otherwise flat terrain of Farmersville.
  - a. Grading plans for all park sites should include areas of berms and mounding, as appropriate. Earth moved from ponding basins or other construction projects can provide a ready source for berms and hills.

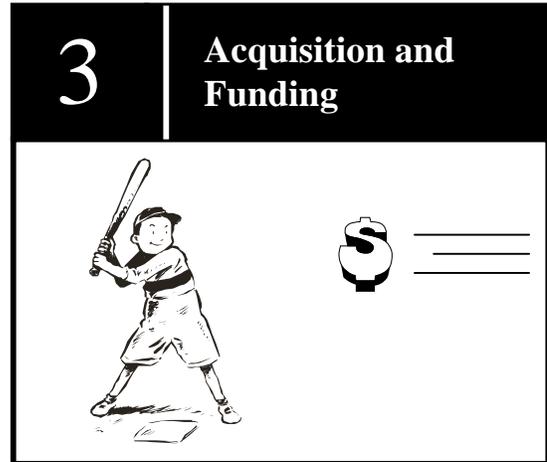
**ISSUE THREE: Acquisition and Funding**

Adequate funding is the key to establishing and maintaining a quality parks and recreation program. Numerous sources of funding exist, however it is not always easy to tap these sources. To be successful, the City should evaluate a variety of funding methods and sources. Strategies for doing this are provided in the following goals, objectives and action plans.

**Goals, Objectives, Action Plans**

**I. Create and preserve open space in the Farmersville area to meet the needs of the community now, and in the future.**

1. Farmersville shall continue to require developers to pay park impact fees (Quimby fees) or dedicate land in lieu thereof. The State of California adopted Section 11546 of the Business and Professional Code, which allows a jurisdiction to require the dedication of parkland by a subdivider, or in-lieu-of dedication, to pay a fee of equivalent value.
  - a. The City shall annually review its fees for recreational programs, park lands and rentals to insure that they are sufficient to finance future park needs. Areas that could be considered for review include:
    - Increasing the park land dedication standard from 3 acres per 1,000 residents. State law allows cities to require up to 5 acres per 1,000 residents
    - Charging user fees for use of a facility or participation in an activity,
    - Entrance fees for admission to a large park or other developed recreation area,
    - Charging rental fees for the use of recreation equipment or property, and
    - Admission fees can be charged for special events, exhibits, or rallies.



2. Ensure that the City of Farmersville receives its full share of federal and state grant funds including matching and competitive grants. The City shall also seek out available charitable contributions for parks and open space facilities.
  - a. The City shall apply for available state and federal grants as they become available. Contracting with an established grant writer should be considered.
  - b. Farmersville should explore securing gifts from foundations and individuals to support special interest recreation programs or park projects.
3. Farmersville should explore the financing of park and recreational facilities through the use of tax-increment funds, generated by the sale of tax-allocation bonds.
  - a. The City should conduct a feasibility study of financing park and recreation facilities by the sale of tax-allocation bonds.
4. Farmersville should explore the opportunities to enter into joint powers agreements with other agencies to share the costs of park and recreation facilities development and maintenance.
  - a. The City should consider approaching the Farmersville Unified School District and Tulare County Parks Department to discuss a joint powers agreement for the sharing of park and recreation facilities.
5. Farmersville should utilize, where appropriate, landscape and lighting districts to maintain parkways, landscaped medians and neighborhood parks.
  - a. Where appropriate, the City shall require proposed subdivisions to

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*Ensure that the City of  
Farmersville receives its full  
share of federal and state grant  
funds including matching and  
competitive grants.*

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establish landscape and lighting districts to maintain open space areas.

8. Develop an "adopt a park" program throughout the City.
  - a. The City should implement an "adopt a park" program in which private citizens or organizations (ie; service clubs, churches, scouting groups, etc.) help with the maintenance of open space, parks, and recreation facilities. The City should contact other communities who are successfully operating similar programs.
9. Encourage donations of land and/or money towards the acquisition, development or maintenance of parks and recreational facilities.
  - a. The City shall seek out donations of land or money towards park facilities. The City may announce these efforts in recreation schedules, telephone book schedules, plaques or notices at existing parks, etc.
10. Coordinate efforts to acquire and develop park and recreational facilities with the Farmersville Unified School District to ensure that there is no unnecessary duplication of facilities or programs.
  - a. The City of Farmersville shall coordinate the development of recreation facilities with the Farmersville Unified School District.

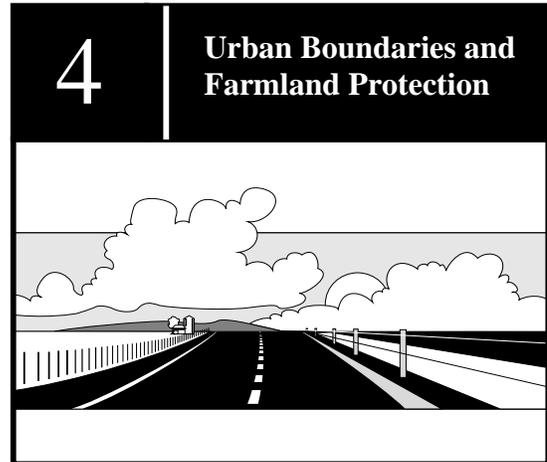
**ISSUE FOUR: Urban Boundaries and Farmland Protection**

The City of Farmersville and its surroundings have locally significant natural resources that must be preserved. Chief among these natural resources are the surrounding agricultural lands. As the city grows, increased pressure to develop these areas can result in conflicts, which may lead to the permanent loss of these resources. The City will adopt policies so that these precious resources can be conserved.

**Goals, Objectives, Action Plans**

**I. Establish policies to reduce the impact of urbanization on agricultural lands, while allowing the City to grow.**

1. Preserve and protect agricultural lands as a means for providing open space and for the managed production of resources.
  - a. The City shall strive to ensure that new development is designed in a manner that uses land efficiently and reduces the need to expand the urban area outward onto prime agricultural lands.
  - b. The Planning Department shall conduct an annual review of cancelled Williamson Act contracts and development proposals on agricultural land within the City Limits and Sphere of Influence.
2. Develop buffers and transition areas between urban uses and agricultural land to reduce incompatibility issues that are associated with cultivation, pest control and harvesting of crops.
  - a. Adoption of the Land Use Element and Land Use map will provide the implementation of this policy.
  - b. Work with the Cities of Visalia, Exeter and Tulare County to establish an agricultural preservation area to keep Farmersville,



- Visalia, and Exeter from physically growing together.
4. Promote infilling and moderately increase overall residential densities in the City of Farmersville to reduce the rate of urbanization of surrounding agricultural lands.
    - a. Strive to create an overall community-wide residential density of five units per acre. All unit types (single and multi-family residential) shall be counted in calculating community-wide density.
  5. Establish and maintain "hard edges" around Farmersville that define where urbanization stops and agricultural open space begins.
    - a. In order to discourage sprawl and leapfrog development, require the Planning Commission and City Council to make a finding that new development is within 1/8 mile of existing or approved development when approving new residential, commercial, industrial or quasi-public construction projects.
    - b. Where appropriate, the City will discourage zoning requests in the Sphere of Influence and surrounding County areas to permit further parcelization for development of large lot residential purposes ie; ranchettes.

**ISSUE FIVE: Air and Water Quality**

The City of Farmersville exceeds two important air pollution standards - ozone and particulate matter. As growth occurs, more smog is produced by fossil fuel burning and emissions from factories. The City must encourage development that will minimize vehicular emissions by providing an adequate circulation system.

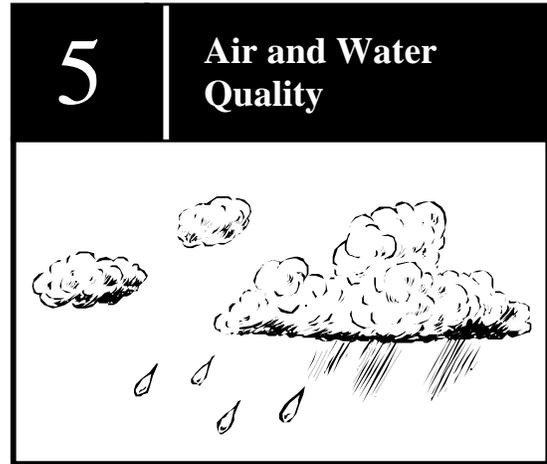
The City of Farmersville obtains its water supply from a vast aquifer underlying the San Joaquin Valley. The quantity and quality of water appears to be adequate, however, in the future, Farmersville must provide for long-range community water needs and protect water quality and quantity. It must also maximize the efficient use and conservation of the community's water resources.

**Goals, Objectives, Action Plans**

**I. Protect air and water quality from negative impacts.**

Air Quality

1. Participate in the regional planning efforts to meet air quality goals by working to improve air quality for the entire planning area.
  - a. The Planning Department will send proposed development plans to the San Joaquin Valley Unified Air Pollution Control District for review of potential air pollution impacts.
2. Consider traffic flow in the planning of residential, commercial and industrial developments.
  - a. The Planning and Engineering departments will review all new projects to ensure that efficient traffic flow maintained, thereby minimizing vehicle-related air emissions.
3. Maintain adequate roadway levels of service (LOS) to avoid congestion which contributes to the air pollution problem.



- a. The Planning and Engineering departments will review all proposed development projects to ensure that roadway service levels do not fall below Level C for arterials, collectors and intersections. The City will utilize gas tax and transportation funds to maintain these transportation standards.
4. Develop an organized and efficient circulation system to reduce vehicle trips in the planning area, idling time, intersection delays, and other emissions-producing activities.
  - a. The Circulation Element establishes policies that will encourage increased connectivity in the City's street patterns.
5. The City shall encourage residents to use alternative modes of transportation.
  - a. The City will seek funds to implement the bike path system, consistent with the Circulation Element map.

Water Quality

1. Promote a community awareness program that will educate the community in water-saving methodologies at the home and the work place.
  - a. The Public Works department will provide the community with information brochures containing water-saving techniques. Further the department should prepare a Water Conservation Ordinance for adoption by the City Council.
2. Promote the use of native and drought-tolerant new landscaping in existing and future parks.
  - a. The City's to-be-prepared Water Conservation Ordinance shall stress the use of native and drought-tolerant species.
3. Allow for adequate groundwater recharge by developing storm ponding and retention basins where feasible. In some areas these ponds or

basins can be incorporated into a recreational area or used as wildlife habitat area.

- a. The Engineering Department shall implement the policies of this Element with regard to locations of future park/pond basins.

**ISSUE SIX: Energy Conservation**

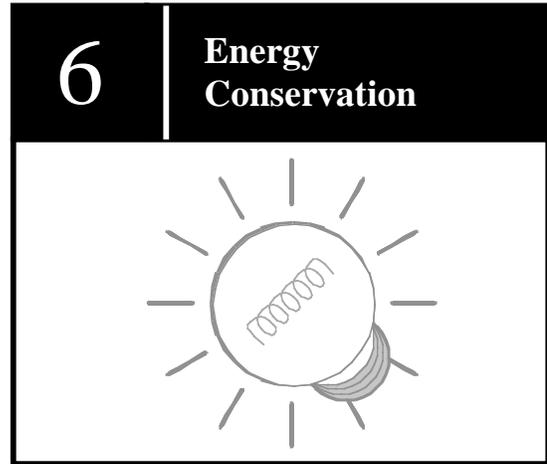
Energy conservation is a topic of increasing importance. The State of California has experienced recent power shortages that have threatened to cripple the local economy. It is becoming increasingly difficult to tap new sources of energy, from a fiscal, political and environmental perspective. At the same time, the state continues to grow at a rapid pace.

Local governments can take a number of actions to ensure that new (and existing) development is as energy-efficient as possible. Strategies for Farmersville are outlined below.

**Goals, Objectives, Action Plans**

**I. Consider energy conservation in the planning and design of new and existing development in Farmersville.**

1. Development in the planning area shall be designed in a fashion that maximizes energy efficiency.
  - a. Street standards shall be revised to increase shading along all future streets. Residential street widths for future streets shall be narrowed, thereby reducing the amount of pavement area - reducing heat buildup. Shade trees will also help to reduce heat buildup. For more information, see the Circulation Element.
  - b. The City shall work with subdividers to design subdivisions so that a majority of dwelling units are properly oriented with respect to the sun, to take advantage of passive solar heating and cooling opportunities.
  - c. The City shall work with developers to maximize the planting of deciduous shade trees around buildings and in paved areas.



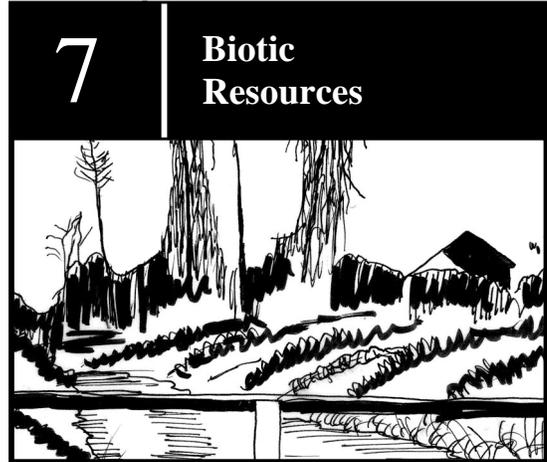
**ISSUE SEVEN: Biotic Resources**

Conservation of biotic resources generally refers to the protection of plant and animal species that have been determined to be rare, threatened or endangered. A biotic survey prepared for the General Plan did not indicate the presence of any listed species in the planning area. The survey did note several locations in the planning area that could serve as habitat for species of concern, particularly the riparian habitat along Deep Creek along the east side of the community. While development proposed under the General Plan is not expected to have a significant impact on biotic resources, the community should do what it can to minimize these impacts.

**Goals, Objectives, Action Plans**

**I. Minimize the impact of new development on biotic resources in the planning area.**

1. Explore establishing the banks of local waterways as an open space resource.
  - a. The Planning Department shall conduct an analysis of this proposal and prepare a plan of action.
2. The City shall review any attempts to line or pipe local waterways. This policy recognizes the value of local waterways as historical sources of groundwater recharge and wildlife habitat.
  - a. The City shall remain vigilant in monitoring activities of local canal and irrigation districts and shall forward comments regarding lining or piping canals.
3. Protect areas that may serve as habitat from impacts of development.
  - a. Where warranted, the City Planner shall require a biotic assessment for projects that may impact habitat areas.



4. Investigate establishment of a recreational trail along Deep Creek between Farmersville and the Kaweah Oaks Preserve.
  - a. The City should coordinate with Sierra Los Tulares Land Trust, Tulare County and intervening property owners to explore this concept.

**ISSUE EIGHT: Historic/Cultural Resources**

Although the City of Farmersville does not have any structures designated as "historic" by the Tulare County Historical Society, there are some architecturally significant structures that enhance Farmersville's identity. Several buildings along Farmersville Boulevard and Visalia Road, in the central area display an interesting architectural character that create a sense of place. Spanish and western style architecture is used prominently, helping to give the community identity.

Conservation of cultural resources generally refers to the protection of historic and pre-historic artifacts. In the arena of city planning, this often pertains to buried objects (such as human remains, arrowheads, tools, and other objects left behind by previous cultures. State law requires the protection of these objects. The City is responsible for implementing these preservation laws.

**Goals, Objectives, Action Plans****I. Take actions to promote Farmersville's historic identity and protect cultural resources.**

1. Work with developers and architects in creating new buildings and renovating old buildings in a manner that is sensitive to the architectural character of Farmersville and the San Joaquin Valley.
  - a. The City shall adopt design guidelines that promote good architectural design that reinforces Farmersville's identity and sense of place.
2. Protect cultural resources that may be impacted by new development.
  - a. The Planning Department may require preparation of a cultural resources analysis where warranted. Areas along waterways are of particular concern. When cultural resources are uncovered during construction projects, all work in the vicinity of the "find" must be stopped and a qualified cultural resources expert consulted to determine appropriate protective measures.

