

Downtown Farmersville Specific Plan

Soft Site Analysis

July 2021

Prepared by:



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Purpose: “Soft site” analyses are conducted by cities as a planning tool to better understand the inventory of space that would be most lucrative to target for infill development projects. A soft site is defined as a parcel in which the assessed value of the land exceeds the assessed value of the improvements on that parcel, making it a strong candidate for development or redevelopment. A thorough inventory of the parcels in downtown Farmersville will allow one to identify where the greatest opportunities for development are, and whether there are particular blocks or regions within the downtown Farmersville planning area that are especially conducive to development.

Methods: This analysis consists of two parts. The quantitative analysis will catalogue the Assessor Parcel Number (APN), Land Value (USD), and Improvement Value (USD), and then produce a ratio of improvement value to land value. If the resulting ratio is less than one (1), then the value of improvements is less than the value of land value, and therefore the parcel is designated a “soft site”. Next, the qualitative analysis will use the APN number to identify the soft sites using aerial imagery, and compare the existing improvements (or lack thereof) for various soft sites within the planning area. In situations where imagery is insufficient to determine the nature of existing structures, on-site observations were used to inform the qualitative analysis.

Ash Street is an east-west street that bisects Farmersville Boulevard into roughly northern and southern halves. This border is used to differentiate the blocks further into northern and southern downtown Farmersville.

For example, The first block was the northwestern-most, and represents the area south of the train tracks, and north of Front Street. Blocks on the west side of Farmersville Boulevard (Blocks 1-8) are ordered from north to south. Likewise, the parcels therein are also organized from north to south. On the east side of Farmersville Boulevard, beginning with block number 9 the subsequent blocks (and parcels therein) are ordered from south to north, opposite the direction of the west side of the street.

The result is a U-shaped order to the block and parcel numbers. Neither the blocks nor their quadrants are equal in area, they serve purely as reminders of the relative location of a given parcel. Analysis will use the resulting table to determine the quantity and location of soft sites within the planning area Downtown Farmerville Specific Plan.

Map 1: Block Numbering



Parcel Inventory: The total number of parcels within the planning area of the Farmersville Specific Plan is 68 parcels, within a total of 13 blocks, and 4 quadrants.

Q1 Northwest Quadrant: Blocks 1-4
9 Total Parcels (13.2%)

Q2 Southwest Quadrant: Blocks 5-8
18 Total Parcels (26.5%)

Q3 Southeast Quadrant: Blocks 9-10
23 Total Parcels (33.8%)

Q4 Northeast Quadrant: Blocks 11-13
16 Total Parcels (23.5%)

Data Analysis: To ensure robust analysis, one must first identify how the raw data values are defined. For example, the land value is dependent on when the land was last

purchased, as at the time of sale the assessor records the value for the purposes of property tax (due to Proposition 13 in California) this assessed value will not change unless the property is sold again, therefore the parcels with the largest land values are often those purchased relatively recently. Improvement value can be similarly deceptive, as it only considers the cumulative value of structures, not other improvements such as paved parking stalls or landscape features.

The result of these somewhat misleading figures is that certain parcels are identified as soft sites, even though they contain some of the most important resources to a thriving downtown, including healthcare offices and important parking amenities. The presence of these parcels demonstrates the necessity for qualitative soft site analysis as a follow up to quantitative analysis, because the qualitative can screen out those parcels which include resources or services desirable in a functioning downtown, and therefore ill-suited for development.

The resulting table has a number of interesting insights. There are a total of 33 soft sites within the 68 parcels of the planning area, or 48.5% of all parcels. This indicates that there are abundant opportunities for infill development within the planning area of the Downtown Farmersville Specific Plan. There are also a total of 16 parcels with no improvements whatsoever; these lots are largely vacant and represent nearly half of all soft sites in the planning area. The number of quantitative soft sites by quadrant (Percent of total soft sites) is as follows;

- Quadrant 1 - 5 (15.2%)
- Quadrant 2 - 11 (33.3%)
- Quadrant 3 - 10 (30.3%)
- Quadrant 4 - 7 (21.2%)

This indicates a greater proportion of soft sites in the southern portions of Farmersville Boulevard.

Aerial Imagery and Observation Analysis: The value in using aerial mapping in soft site analysis is the same as the value of on-site observation, to identify and evaluate the structures and features present on soft sites, that could make the parcel ill-suited to development, even if the quantitative soft site analysis indicated otherwise.

The following is a list of lots that qualified as qualitative soft sites but are ill-suited for development, and the current use that informs this result:

- 1.1.1 – Church
- 1.2.1 – Club
- 1.2.2 – Residential
- 2.5.1 – Florist
- 2.5.2 – Residential
- 2.6.2 - Parking Lot
- 2.7.1 - Used Car Dealer
- 2.8.1- Grocer
- 2.8.2 - Parking Lot
- 2.8.3 - Parking Lot
- 3.9.1 - Gas Station
- 3.9.9 – Residential
- 3.10.3 – Residential
- 3.10.4 – Residential
- 4.11.4 - Shopping Center
- 4.12.1 - Healthcare Office
- 4.12.2 - Healthcare Office
- 4.13.2 - Bodega.

In total, 18 sites were removed from the list of final soft sites, and one parcel, 3.10.2, was added to the list as it is an abandoned home. This leaves 16 final soft sites remaining, 23.5% of the total parcels in the planning area, divided by each quadrant as follows:

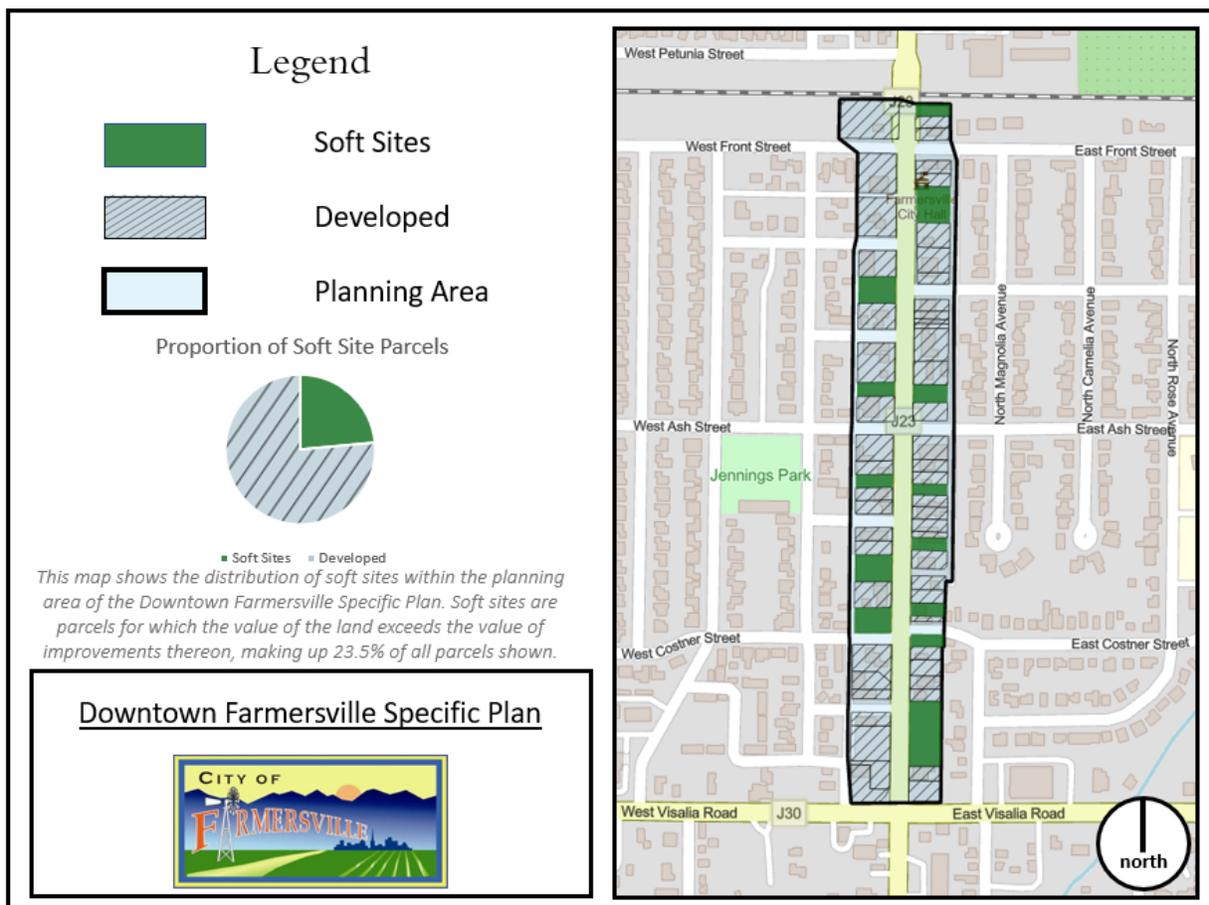
- Quadrant 1 - 2 (13%)
- Quadrant 2 - 4 (25%)
- Quadrant 3 - 7 (44%)
- Quadrant 4 - 3 (19%).

This data is consistent with the quantitative analysis finding that the south side of Farmersville boulevard has the greatest abundance of soft sites.

Summary and Conclusions: There are 68 total parcels within the planning area of the Downtown Farmersville Specific Plan. For each of these parcels, the value of the land

was compared to the improvements thereon, and those parcels for which the value of the land exceeded the value of the improvements, were identified as quantitative soft sites.

These 33 quantitative soft sites were each examined to identify their current use, and of them 16 parcels were identified to have no existing amenities or services that would disqualify them for development, or 23.5% of all parcels within the planning area. These parcels are the true soft sites within the planning area and represent those parcels which are most apt for development in the foreseeable future. The soft sites are depicted in the map below.



Recommendations: The relative abundance of soft sites of the parcels within the planning area of the Downtown Farmersville Specific Plan creates fertile ground for development projects in the near future. However the current level of vacant parcels within the downtown also depresses surrounding property value and contributes little while it is waiting to be developed.

Therefore, strategies for the downtown should encourage growth and development of these sites with all due haste. The development of these soft sites should vary in nature, providing an array of residential, commercial, and office space for which a variety of users might enjoy their different outings at various times of day, fostering a lively, bustling atmosphere. To this end, amenities such as wide sidewalks, abundant landscape features, ample parking, accessible right-of-way infrastructure, and wayfinding or historical/cultural signage can be leveraged to color the sense of place, ensure broad accessibility, and by proxy attract potential businesses to become part of the community.

Results:

TABLE I: Value of Land by Value of Improvements Thereon

Quadrant, Block, Lot	APN	Use	Improvement Ratio	Quantitative SS	Final Soft Site
1.1.1	128-057-003	Church	0.62649337	Y	N
1.2.1	128-051-001	Club	0.63635263	Y	N
1.2.2	128-051-002	Residential	0.56375387	Y	N
1.3.1	128-052-001	Gas station	8.02325525	N	N
1.3.2	128-052-002	Vacant lot	0	Y	Y
1.3.3	128-052-003	Residential	2.54286813	N	N
1.4.1	128-053-001	Salon	4.45450711	N	N
1.4.2	128-053-002	Vacant lot	0	Y	Y
1.4.3	128-053-011	Restaurant	4.57139275	N	N
2.5.1	128-061-001	Florist	0.07144529	Y	N
2.5.2	128-061-002	Residential	0.66676344	Y	N
2.5.3	128-061-003	Vacant lot	0	Y	Y
2.5.4	128-061-004	Residential	1.35009941	N	N
2.5.5	128-061-005	Restaurant	1.92267836	N	N
2.6.1	128-062-001	Salon	4.63049481	N	N
2.6.2	128-062-002	Parking lot	0	Y	N
2.6.3	128-062-003	Vacant lot	0	Y	Y
2.6.4	128-062-004	Vacant lot	0	Y	Y
2.6.5	128-062-005	Thrift / Residential	1.48874598	N	N
2.6.6	128-062-006	Vacant lot	0	Y	Y
2.7.1	128-072-010	Used car dealer	0.11833086	Y	N
2.7.2	128-072-012	Dentist	2.97054905	N	N
2.7.3	128-072-013	Restaurant	3.81521037	N	N
2.8.1	128-073-004	Grocer	0.32200434	Y	N
2.8.2	128-073-010	Parking lot	0	Y	N
2.8.3	128-073-017	Parking lot	0	Y	N
2.8.4	128-073-018	Gas station	5.43529929	N	N
3.9.1	129-103-015	Gas station	0.2777595	Y	N
3.9.2	129-103-012	Convenience Store	6.49535774	N	N

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3.9.3	129-103-008	Vacant lot	0	Y	Y
3.9.4	129-103-009	Vacant lot	0	Y	Y
3.9.5	129-103-010	Vacant lot	0	Y	Y
3.9.6	129-103-011	Residential	1.08316822	N	N
3.9.7	129-114-001	Church	3.33342255	N	N
3.9.8	129-114-002	Restaurant	3.56810487	N	N
3.9.9	129-114-003	Residential	0.24999128	Y	N
3.9.10	129-114-004	Vacant lot	0	Y	Y
3.10.1	129-111-001	Residential	1.1833582	N	N
3.10.2	129-111-002	Vacant Residential	1.5999241	N	Y*
3.10.3	129-111-003	Residential	0.38296257	Y	N
3.10.4	129-111-004	Residential	0.40003088	Y	N
3.10.5	129-121-008	USPS	3.859673567	N	N
3.10.6	129-121-045	Vacant	0	Y	Y
3.10.7	129-121-044	Ice cream Shop	5.83339563	N	N
3.10.8	129-121-047	Barber	1.64474516	N	N
3.10.9	129-121-046	Salon	2.12313243	N	N
3.10.10	129-121-004	Telecom Retail	4.30005549	N	N
3.10.11	129-121-003	Vacant Residential	0.05002348	Y	Y
3.10.12	129-121-002	Restaurant	1.63872936	N	N
3.10.13	129-121-007	Restaurant	5.10595174	N	N
3.10.14	129-121-006	Furniture Retail	4.125	N	N
4.11.1	129-131-013	Restaurant	2.000013	N	N
4.11.2	129-131-014	Vacant	0	Y	Y
4.11.3	129-131-015	Carwash	2.06848541	N	N
4.11.4	129-131-018	Shopping Center	0.59998835	Y	N
4.11.5	129-131-001	Barber	4.71530418	N	N
4.11.6	129-131-002	Realtor	3.49991119	N	N
4.11.7	129-131-003	Auto Parts Retail	3.73692129	N	N
4.11.8	129-131-004	Financial Office	4.99694565	N	N
4.12.1	129-146-004	Healthcare Office	0.57579285	Y	N
4.12.2	129-146-005	Healthcare Office	0.63937622	Y	N
4.12.3	129-146-006	Restaurant	1.23898391	N	N
4.12.4	129-146-007	Vacant Structure	0.14999584	Y	Y
4.12.5	129-146-008	Pawn Shop	1.93089553	N	N
4.12.6	129-146-009	Insurance / Party Supply	24.5337656	N	N
4.13.1	129-141-001	Farm Supply	1.545457523	N	N
4.13.2	129-141-002	Bodega	0.636356193	Y	N
4.13.3	129-010-068	Vacant	0	Y	Y