Downtown Farmersville Specific Plan

Parking Study

July 2021

Prepared by:

Collins & Schoettler Planning Consultants
1002 W. Main Street,
Visalia, CA 93291
(559) 734-8767

Purpose: Many cities experience parking issues in downtown areas - inconvenient parking lot locations, cost prohibitive parking, lack of adequate stalls both standard and handicapped, or unsafe parking lots. While cities may recognize a lack of empty parking stalls downtown as a sign of prosperity, it amounts to a poor metric for success, and neglects the needs of a dynamic and growing downtown district like that of the City of Farmersville.

This study attempts to determine:

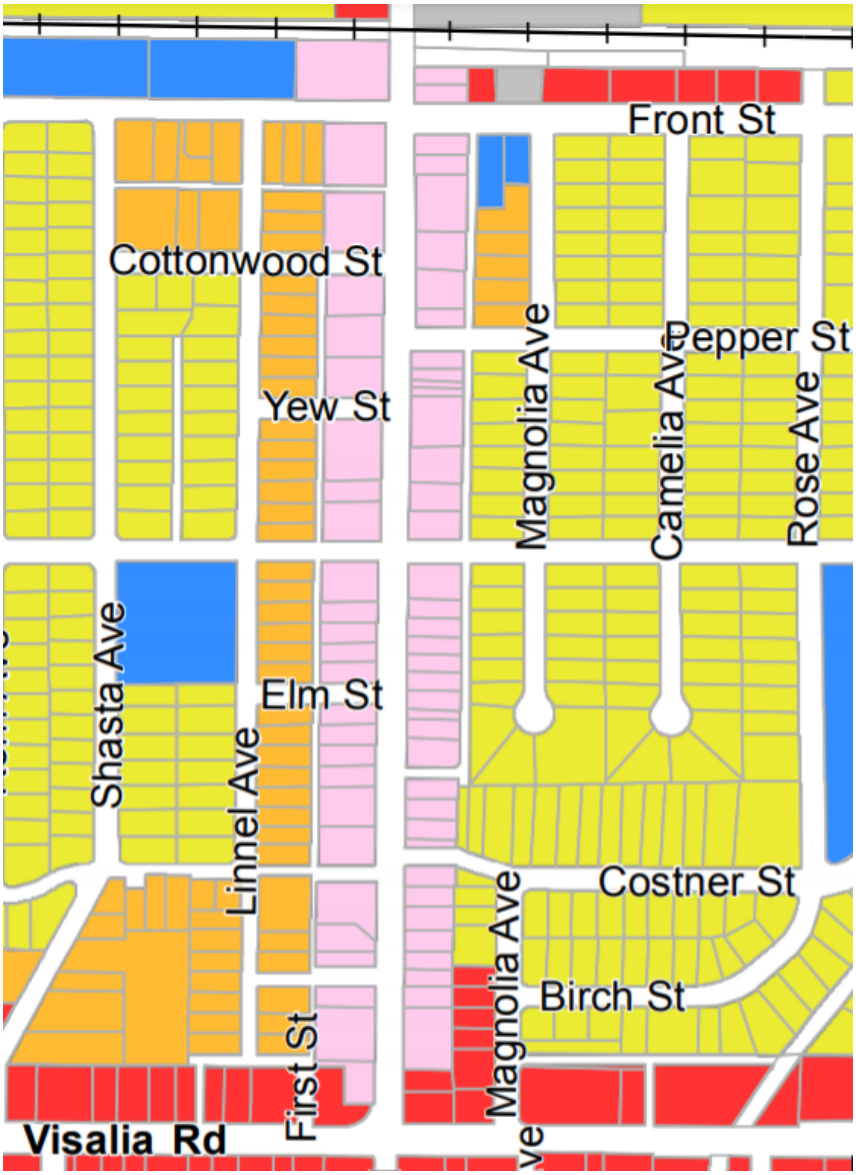
- Whether downtown Farmersville has parking problems.
- What potential parking solutions could the City consider to address current and preempt future parking problems.
- How best to implement parking solutions.
- How best to finance the City's implementation of parking solutions.

Plan Area for Parking Study: The Study Area (see Exhibit A) encompasses approximately 14 acres along historic Farmersville Boulevard, which is most of Farmersville's traditional downtown. This area consists of approximately 13 blocks following the north-south street, although street patterns are somewhat irregular making block distinctions uneven. There are 28 total private parking lots with 317 total stalls, and every block has at least one private parking lot. The area is dominated by retail, eating and drinking establishments, and a few professional offices. Other uses include services such as the salon, post office, grocer, churches, and some residential and vacant land.

Exhibit A: Site Base Map with Blocks Labeled by Number

Most of the land in the Study Area is zoned to the central commercial (CC) district, which permits a wide variety of uses ranging from retail to offices. The southernmost portion of the Study Area is zoned for general commercial (GC), which permits a similarity wide array of uses, including some uses like auto repair and service stations that are not permitted in the central commercial district (See Exhibit B).

Exhibit B: Downtown Farmersville Zoning



The majority of the Study Area has on-street parking; there are no parking meters or fee schedules for limits on parking hours. Most of the stalls on streets along the west side of Farmersville Boulevard are angled parallel to the street, while on the east side of the street is dominated by stalls angled diagonally to the street. Farmersville Boulevard varies slightly in width, averaging approximately 75 feet curb to curb with four lanes of vehicle traffic along much of the street.

There are also city-maintained alleys (generally 12’ to 15’ wide) running parallel to Farmersville Boulevard to the east and west for the majority of the blocks in the Study Area. These alleys are both paved and unpaved, and sometimes provide access to private parking lots behind the establishments that line the main street.

Methods: The study will consist of a quantitative assessment of the presence and availability of parking stalls within the study area based on data gathered from direct observation at five times of day (9:00 am, 11:00 am, 1:00 pm, 3:00 pm, and 5:00 pm) once during the weekend (Saturday, July 31) and once during the week (Thursday, July 15). This data will be further detailed by whether stalls are public or private, on- or off-street, part of a particular block and lot, and then condensed into a table format for analysis.

Block numbers were assigned in the order that they were counted, as were the parking lots therein. 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 lots therein are also organized from north to south (i.e lot 3.1 is north of lot 3.2). On the east side of Farmersville Boulevard, beginning with block number 9 the subsequent blocks (and lots 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 numbers, that reflects the order in which stalls were counted.

Analysis will use the resulting table to assess the relative abundance or absence of stalls of particular kinds at different times and places throughout the day. The peaks and troughs of the data will be used to determine peak hours of stall occupancy, excess parking demand by time and location, and whether these factors (in tandem with amenities such as tree shading, signage, safety, and walkability) constitute a parking problem now or in the foreseeable future in downtown Farmersville.

Parking Supply Inventory: In order to compile data on the parking conditions of the aforementioned planning area, an inventory of existing parking stalls must first be conducted to establish a baseline for analysis of parking supply. The inventory consisted of travelling down each street, alley, and parking lot within the Study Area and counting the total number of parking lots and stalls therein. As stalls were counted they were

assigned to a particular category, either public on-street, public off-street, and private off-street, the last of which was further broken down to parking lot numbers. In total, there were 479 parking spaces in the Study Area, organized by two factors, ownership and street position:

Total On-Street - 155 (32.4%)
Total Off-Street - 324 (67.6%)
Total Public - 162 (33.8%)
Total Private - 317 (66.2%)
Total Public On-Street - 148 (30.9%)
Total Public Off-Street - 7 (1.5%)
Total Private On-Street - 0 (0%)
Total Private Off Street - 317 (66.2%)

These stalls were further differentiated by the relative position of their block within the downtown and number of private lots and stalls therein for each block. Thirteen total blocks were identified, twenty-eight total lots were identified, ranging between one and four lots per block, with lots ranging between two and twenty-nine stalls per lot. Blocks were numbered in the order that they were counted in the study, and are not all the same length or area.

Parking Supply Findings:

Results – Thursday, July 15 – Sample I - A careful review of the parking inventory spreadsheets for Thursday, July 15th showed that peak stall occupancy rates occurred at two different times. The overall weighted average occupancy rate of all stalls for the entire day was approximately 25%, or about 120 of 479 stalls occupied. This rate corresponds to the hourly rates as well, because the overall occupancy rates throughout the day exhibited low variability. The highest rate of total occupancy by hour was 25.3%, and occurred at both 11:00 AM and 5:00 PM, the lowest rate of total occupancy by hour was 23.2% occurring at 3:00 PM. Likewise, the use of public on-street stalls compared to the use of private off-street stalls appears in the data to be fairly level. This consistent use of stalls overall at a low rate implies that weekdays are fairly predictable and that there are ample stalls to service the communities needs at the times of the survey.

The differences in use over time becomes more evident by breaking the data up by relative geographic quadrants, that is, north, south, east, and west. The northwestern

quadrant consists of blocks 1 - 4, the southwestern quadrant blocks 5 - 8, the southeastern quadrant blocks 9-10, and the northeastern quadrant blocks 11 - 13. When analyzed along quadrants the data clearly shows that higher occupancy rates are present in stalls to the east (32% average occupied stalls for day), especially northeast (34 % average occupied stalls for day), almost 10% higher than the average occupancy rate for all stalls. Likewise, the lowest occupancy rates are in the west stalls (28% average occupied stalls for day), primarily in the northwest stalls (>10% average occupied stalls for day), which is over 15% less than the average occupancy rate of all stalls. Over the course of the day, the northwestern quadrant had the lowest variability, and the southwestern had the highest, which suggests uses that there are uses associated with particular times of day in the southwestern quadrant (i.e. coffee shops).

Results – Saturday July 31 – Sample II - The data collected on Saturday was consistent with the data on from sample I, however there are a few noteworthy distinctions in the data from sample II. The overall weighted occupancy rate of all stalls for the entire day was 18%, down 7% from the weekday sample. The highest rate of total occupancy for all hours counted was 24.0% and occurred at 11:00 AM, the lowest rate of total occupancy for all hours counted was 18.6% and occurred at 3:00 PM. Both samples had occupancy rates peak at 11:00 AM, however the relative abundance of occupied stalls was more evident in the weekend sample.

The data comparing on-street and off-street as well as public and private stalls was also consistent with the sample I data, which suggests that while the rates of occupancy are somewhat similar, there appears to be a slightly higher rate of occupancy in public, on-street parking stalls over their private off-street counterparts, perhaps owing in part to the versatility of the public on-street stalls. The overall rates of occupancy by type and time suggest that weekends have slightly greater variability in stall occupancy with lesser overall occupancy rates, while still providing ample stalls to users who need them.

The difference over time is made more evident by breaking the data up by relative geographic quadrants, that is, north, south, east, and west. The northwestern quadrant consists of blocks 1-4, the southwestern quadrant blocks 5-8, the southeastern quadrant blocks 9-10, and the northeastern blocks 11-13.

When analyzed along quadrants the data clearly shows that higher occupancy rates are present in the southwestern quadrant (28%), while lower occupancy rates are consistently present in the northwestern quadrant (6.2%). This is likely attributable to the dominant

uses in each quadrant, with more robust commercial activities abundant to the south, where Farmersville Boulevard intersects with Visalia Road, creating a mercantile crossroads. Likewise, the number of on-street public stalls on the east side of Farmersville Boulevard (103) nearly doubles the number of on street public stalls on the west side (52), in part because on the east side diagonal stalls are utilized to fit more stalls along the same length of road than the west side can with parallel parking stalls. This demonstrates how the community values these public, on-street stalls, whether because they are diagonally oriented for ease of access, pleasantly shaded by street trees, or perhaps just within walking distance of the many businesses one might visit.

TABLE I: Parking Count 1 – Thursday July 15, 2021

Occupied Stalls by Location and Time

Blocks	Total Spaces	9:00 AM	11:00 AM	1:00 PM	3:00 PM	5:00 PM
Quadrant 1 - Northwest - Total Stalls - 135						
Block 1	31	0	0	0	0	0
Lot 1.1	27	0	0	0	0	0
On Street	4	0	0	0	0	0
Off Street Public	0	0	0	0	0	0
Off Street Private	27	0	0	0	0	0
Block 2	40	2	1	1	0	2
Lot 2.1	29	0	0	1	0	0
On Street	11	2	1	0	0	2
Off Street Public	0	0	0	0	0	0
Off Street Private	29	0	0	1	0	0
Block 3	22	5	5	3	3	4
Lot 3.1	9	5	5	3	3	4
Lot 3.2	8	0	0	0	0	0
On Street	5	0	0	0	0	0
Off Street Public	0	0	0	0	0	0
Off Street Private	17	5	5	3	3	4
Block 4	42	7	8	7	7	9
Lot 4.1	19	4	4	3	3	3
Lot 4.2	13	2	3	3	3	5
On Street	10	1	1	1	1	1

Off Street Public	0	0	0	0	0	0
Off Street Private	32	6	7	6	6	8
Quadrant 2 - Southwest - Total Stalls - 137						
Block 5	33	4	8	8	4	6
Lot 5.1	15	0	2	2	1	1
Lot 5.2	8	0	1	1	0	1
On Street	10	4	5	5	3	4
Off Street Public	0	0	0	0	0	0
Off Street Private	23	0	3	3	1	2
Block 6	22	13	13	13	10	8
Lot 6.1	13	11	12	11	9	7
Lot 6.2	5	1	0	0	0	1
On Street	4	1	1	2	1	0
Off Street Public	0	0	0	0	0	0
Off Street Private	18	12	12	11	9	8
Block 7	31	9	16	4	1	0
Lot 7.1	10	0	0	0	0	0
Lot 7.2	16	9	13	4	0	0
On Street	5	0	3	0	1	0
Off Street Public	0	0	0	0	0	0
Off Street Private	26	9	13	4	0	0
Block 8	51	13	16	15	9	12
Lot 8.1	8	2	2	3	2	3
Lot 8.2	26	8	10	10	7	8
Lot 8.3	14	1	1	1	0	1
On Street	3	2	3	1	0	0
Off Street Public	0	0	0	0	0	0
Off Street Private	48	11	13	14	9	12
Quadrant 3 - Southeast - Total Stalls - 86						
Block 9	33	2	4	4	8	8
Lot 9.1	10	1	2	2	5	4
Lot 9.2	10	0	1	1	2	2
On Street	6	1	1	1	1	2
Off Street Public	7	0	0	0	0	0

Off Street Private	20	1	3	3	7	6
Block 10	53	24	22	17	23	25
Lot 10.1	7	7	7	4	5	2
Lot 10.2	2	1	1	1	1	1
Lot 10.3	3	2	2	2	2	2
Lot 10.4	8	4	0	0	0	0
On Street	33	10	12	10	15	20
Off Street Public	0	0	0	0	0	0
Off Street Private	20	14	10	7	8	5
Quadrant 4 - Northeast - Total Stalls - 121						
Block 11	51	2	9	12	10	18
Lot 11.1	6	0	0	1	3	4
Lot 11.2	11	0	1	1	0	0
On Street	34	2	8	10	7	14
Off Street Public	0	0	0	0	0	0
Off Street Private	17	0	1	2	3	4
Block 12	58	29	17	30	33	28
Lot 12.1	5	3	2	3	2	3
Lot 12.2	15	7	2	10	9	10
Lot 12.3	10	8	1	8	6	8
On Street	28	11	12	9	16	7
Off Street Public	0	0	0	0	0	0
Off Street Private	30	18	5	21	17	21
Block 13	12	6	2	3	3	1
Lot 13.1	3	1	1	1	2	0
Lot 13.2	7	3	1	1	1	1
On Street	2	2	0	1	0	0
Off Street Public	0	0	0	0	0	0
Off Street Private	10	4	2	2	3	1

Total Stalls	479
Total On-Street	155
Total Off-Street	324
Total Public	162
Total Private	317
Total Weighted Average Occupied	25%

Parking Stall Occupancy by Type and Time (Ratio of Occupied Stalls to Total Stalls of the Same Type)						
	9:00 AM	11:00 AM	1:00 PM	3:00 PM	5:00 PM	Average
Private	80 (25.2%)	74 (23.3%)	74 (23.3%)	63 (19.9%)	71 (22.4%)	73.6 (22.7%)
Public	36 (22.2%)	47 (29.0%)	40 (24.7%)	45 (27.8%)	50 (30.8%)	43.6 (26.9%)
On-Street	36 (23.2%)	47 (30.3%)	40 (25.8%)	45 (29.0%)	50 (32.3%)	43.6 (28.1%)
Off-Street	80 (24.7%)	74 (22.8%)	77 (23.8%)	66 (20.4%)	71 (22.4%)	73.6 (22.7%)
Total	116 (24.2%)	121 (25.3%)	117 (24.4%)	111 (23.2%)	121 (25.3%)	117.2 (24.5%)

Parking Stall Occupancy by Geographic Quadrant and Time (Ratio of Occupied Stalls to Total Stalls in the Same Quadrant)						
	9:00 AM	11:00 AM	1:00 PM	3:00 PM	5:00 PM	Average
Q1 (NW)	14 (10.4%)	14 (10.4%)	11 (8.2%)	10 (7.4%)	15 (11.1%)	12.8 (9.5%)
Q2 (SW)	39 (28.5%)	53 (38.7%)	47 (34.3%)	24 (17.5%)	26 (19.0%)	37.8 (27.6%)
Q3 (SE)	26 (30.2%)	26 (30.2%)	21 (24.4%)	31 (36.1%)	33 (38.4%)	27.4 (31.9%)
Q4 (NE)	37 (30.6%)	28 (23.1%)	45 (37.2%)	46 (38.0%)	47 (38.8%)	40.6 (33.6%)
Total	116 (24.2%)	121 (25.3%)	117 (24.4%)	111 (23.2%)	121 (25.3%)	117.2(24.5%)

TABLE II: Parking Count 2 – Saturday July 31, 2021

Occupied Stalls by Location and Time

Blocks	Total Spaces	9:00 AM	11:00 AM	1:00 PM	3:00 PM	5:00 PM
Quadrant 1 - Northwest - Total Stalls - 135						

Block 1	31	0	0	0	0	0
Lot 1.1	27	0	0	0	0	0
On Street	4	0	0	0	0	0
Off Street Public	0	0	0	0	0	0
Off Street Private	27	0	0	0	0	0
Block 2	40	1	0	0	1	1
Lot 2.1	29	1	0	0	0	0
On Street	11	0	0	0	1	1
Off Street Public	0	0	0	0	0	0
Off Street Private	29	1	0	0	0	0
Block 3	22	7	2	2	2	5
Lot 3.1	9	2	2	2	1	2
Lot 3.2	8	5	0	0	0	0
On Street	5	0	0	0	1	3
Off Street Public	0	0	0	0	0	0
Off Street Private	17	7	2	2	1	2
Block 4	42	2	6	5	3	5
Lot 4.1	19	1	2	2	2	1
Lot 4.2	13	1	4	3	0	4
On Street	10	0	0	0	1	0
Off Street Public	0	0	0	0	0	0
Off Street Private	32	2	6	5	2	5
Quadrant 2 - Southwest - Total Stalls - 137						
Block 5	33	7	8	7	3	6
Lot 5.1	15	1	1	1	1	0
Lot 5.2	8	0	3	1	0	2
On Street	10	6	4	5	2	4
Off Street Public	0	0	0	0	0	0
Off Street Private	23	1	4	2	1	2
Block 6	22	6	10	13	14	8
Lot 6.1	13	6	7	8	2	7
Lot 6.2	5	0	0	2	10	1
On Street	4	0	3	3	2	0
Off Street Public	0	0	0	0	0	0

Off Street Private	18	6	7	10	12	8
Block 7	31	18	14	5	2	1
Lot 7.1	10	1	2	0	0	0
Lot 7.2	16	14	9	3	0	1
On Street	5	3	3	2	1	0
Off Street Public	0	0	0	0	0	0
Off Street Private	26	15	11	3	1	1
Block 8	51	18	16	14	19	16
Lot 8.1	8	5	3	2	7	3
Lot 8.2	26	11	12	10	11	11
Lot 8.3	14	1	1	1	1	2
On Street	3	1	0	1	0	0
Off Street Public	0	0	0	0	0	0
Off Street Private	48	17	16	13	19	16
Quadrant 3 - Southeast - Total Stalls - 86						
Block 9	33	8	10	8	6	10
Lot 9.1	10	4	4	3	2	4
Lot 9.2	10	0	2	2	2	3
On Street	6	4	4	3	2	3
Off Street Public	7	0	0	0	0	0
Off Street Private	20	4	6	5	4	7
Block 10	53	19	21	18	20	17
Lot 10.1	7	2	2	1	1	0
Lot 10.2	2	1	1	1	1	1
Lot 10.3	3	2	2	1	2	1
Lot 10.4	8	0	1	1	1	1
On Street	33	14	15	14	15	14
Off Street Public	0	0	0	0	0	0
Off Street Private	20	5	6	4	5	3
Quadrant 4 - Northeast - Total Stalls - 121						
Block 11	51	6	10	17	9	11
Lot 11.1	6	2	4	4	3	3
Lot 11.2	11	0	0	0	0	0
On Street	34	4	6	13	6	8
Off Street Public	0	0	0	0	0	0

Off Street Private	17	2	4	4	3	3
Block 12	58	15	15	10	10	8
Lot 12.1	5	3	2	1	2	2
Lot 12.2	15	5	3	4	3	3
Lot 12.3	10	1	4	2	3	2
On Street	28	6	6	3	2	1
Off Street Public	0	0	0	0	0	0
Off Street Private	30	9	9	7	8	7
Block 13	12	2	1	2	0	2
Lot 13.1	3	1	0	1	0	1
Lot 13.2	7	0	0	0	0	0
On Street	2	1	1	1	0	1
Off Street Public	0	0	0	0	0	0
Off Street Private	10	1	0	1	0	1

Total Stalls	479
Total On-Street	155
Total Off-Street	324
Total Public	162
Total Private	317
Total Weighted Average Occupied	18%

Parking Stall Occupancy by Type and Time (Ratio of Occupied Stalls to Total Stalls of the Same Type)						
	9:00 AM	11:00 AM	1:00 PM	3:00 PM	5:00 PM	Average
Private	70 (22.1%)	71 (22.4%)	56 (17.6%)	56 (17.7%)	55 (17.4%)	62.6 (19.8%)
Public	39 (24.1%)	42 (25.9%)	45 (27.8%)	33 (20.4%)	35 (21.6%)	38.8 (24.0%)
On-Street	39 (25.2%)	42 (27.1%)	45 (29.0%)	33 (21.3%)	35 (22.6%)	38.8 (25.0%)
Off-Street	70 (21.6%)	71 (21.9%)	56 (17.3%)	56 (17.3%)	55 (17.0%)	62.6 (19.3%)
Total	109 (22.8%	113 (24.0%	101 (22.1%)	89 (18.6%)	90 (18.8%)	100.4(21.0%)

Parking Stall Occupancy by Geographic Quadrant and Time (Ratio of Occupied Stalls to Total Stalls in the Same Quadrant)						
	9:00 AM	11:00 AM	1:00 PM	3:00 PM	5:00 PM	Average
Q1 (NW)	10 (7.4%)	8 (6.0%)	7 (5.2%)	6 (4.4%)	11 (8.2%)	8.4 (6.2%)
Q2 (SW)	49 (35.8%)	41 (29.9%)	33 (24.1%)	38 (27.7%)	31 (22.6%)	38.4 (28.0%)
Q3 (SE)	27 (31.4%)	31 (36.1%)	26 (30.2%)	26 (30.2%)	27 (31.4%)	27.4 (31.9%)
Q4 (NE)	23 (19.0%)	26 (21.5%)	29 (24.0%)	19 (15.7%)	21 (17.4%)	23.6 (19.5%)
Total	109 (22.8%)	113 (24.0%)	101 (21.1%)	89 (18.6%)	90 (18.8%)	100.4 (21.0%)

Parking Environment: The land used for parking vehicles downtown, while deemed beneficial by the public (especially when seeking a vacant stall) can often adversely impact the environment in a number of ways. These impacts range from changes to the human environment and usability of the space, to factors that impact resources or environmental balances that are valuable to the public.

Perhaps the most impactful effect of an abundance of impermeable paving is what is colloquially known as the "urban heat island" effect. The dark surface of the asphalt parking stalls (asphalt is more commonly used than concrete as it tends to be cheaper) has very low albedo (a measure of reflection of incident radiation), and thus absorbs a large proportion of the heat radiated by the sun, trapping this heat and releasing it slowly as infrared radiation. This effect not only causes an unpleasant microclimate, but also increases energy costs, deteriorates air quality, and contributes to heat related illness and subsequent mortality. As Valley residents innately know well, the heat produced is a function of the intensity and angle of incident light received by the paved, low-albedo surfaces. This emphasizes the importance of street trees and other landscaping measures to provide shade and by proxy respite along downtown areas if they are to be pedestrian friendly and tolerably temperate.

Additionally, the environmental consequences of land use dedicated to parking extends to the water systems of Farmerville. The expanded impermeable asphalt surface created by paved parking stalls leads to increased stormwater runoff volumes, increased risk of

flooding conditions, and by proxy increased capital costs of providing adequately maintained stormwater runoff systems. Also, impermeable surfaces that can create sheetwash, which increases soil erosion and over time contributes to reduction of recharge rates of the city's underlying aquifer, which is the only water supply source for residents of the City.

The planting of trees along downtown parkways and frontages, as well as the presence of parks and green spaces, accomplishes three major benefits - Shading and evapotranspiration to reduce the urban heat effect, trapping and holding rainwater to reduce the impacts of impermeable surfaces on aquifer recharge, and providing habitat for wildlife and more desirable parking stalls for people.

Parking Strategies: There are many tools that can be leveraged to enhance the parking environment for all users in downtown Farmersville. The following lists some of those tools, as well as a short discussion about how each is or may be applied in the downtown area.

- Zone Code Regulations – Much of Farmersville's zoning ordinance is typical of many cities throughout California, including the parking regulations that have been tailored to accommodate vehicle parking in strip commercial developments and shopping centers. However for the downtown, Farmersville has adopted a Central Commercial zone that offers up to a 25% reduction in on-site parking requirements. Farmersville's downtown is also fortunate to have a modified grid design, which accommodates ample on-street parking. Further, in some parts of the east and west sides parallel to Farmersville Boulevard the block is bisected by an alley, which could allow for stalls and lots to be located behind buildings just off the alley. Farmersville may want to examine how well the 25% reduction strategy has been working and make adjustments as appropriate.
- Shared Parking - The practice of shared parking is a technique designed to utilize existing private parking lots and stalls more efficiently. For example, bank parking lots are utilized during banking hours, but remain vacant during the weekends and evenings. A nearby microbrewery could hypothetically use the parking lot outside of the banking business hours, reducing the amount of land dedicated to paved stalls, and by proxy the burden on business owners to provide parking. This strategy is contingent on shared parking agreements being reached between private businesses, however there are benefits for both parties as well as for the city and people using the space.

- Use Private Off-Street Parking as Public Off-Street Parking - The analysis of the parking data shows that the public off-street parking is more scarce than private off-street parking. If a private developer is willing to offer their off-street parking for public use, then as compensation there could be a reduction in the number of required parking stalls for the given development, facilitated using a credit system. This strategy would require a development agreement between the city and the property owner to preempt any potential liability issues.
- Waivers - Parking waivers are used to accommodate intensification of uses within existing buildings, without imposing the additional parking required by the new use. For example, in many cities if a business owner wanted to convert a building from a retail use to a restaurant, they would typically be expected to develop additional parking. However, if the building is built and there is no space for additional parking, and if the existing parking can be reasonably expected to accommodate the bulk of the parking needs of the restaurant, then the City can issue a waiver to allow for the intensification of the use, typically accompanied by some kind of parking study to support the assertion that nearby parking will meet anticipated increases in parking demand. Although no such ordinance exists currently in Farmersville, should one manifest in the future, waivers can be leveraged to allow greater freedom to change use for business owners in the downtown district.
- In-Lieu Fees - In some cases it is advantageous both for the city and the private developer to pay an in-lieu parking fee instead of providing the required parking on-site. This joint benefit is especially evident when the site may not have readily available off-street parking and nearby public parking is already available. Under very specific circumstances, the use of in-lieu fees may improve parking outcomes in the downtown Farmersville area, although they should only be used sparingly, so as not to disincentivize development. This is because the fees would provide earmarked funds that could be used to establish additional public parking opportunities and improve the parking environment in the downtown district.

  Specifically, this pool of funds could finance projects ranging from installing shade trees, permeable parking surfaces, and accessible wayfinding signage to development of land as public parking, restriping stalls, or lease of private lots. This recommendation is supported by the analysis of the parking study data, which suggests that there is ample and high demand on-street parking, however private lots especially located off of alleys have off-street fewer stalls available, lower occupancy rates, and limited options for spaces that could be developed into

parking. Rather than limiting these properties with parking requirements, in-lieu fees may offer a mutually beneficial way of allocating sufficient public parking and allowing more flexibility for downtown businesses.

Downtown Parking Recommendations: The policies set forth from this study must be based upon the reality of Farmersville's downtown, not a hypothetical version of the city or one that may occur someday in the future. To this end, the most important factors to the vitality and resilience of downtown Farmersville is the success of its businesses and the growth of the associated tax base.

There are two types of issues associated with downtown parking that impact the aforementioned factors. The first and most simple is the fundamental issue of supply of physical space for parking stalls, limited by geographic and fiscal realities. The second is the perception of the resulting availability, or lack thereof, limited by the design, placement, and predictability of the stalls used to service the community. Each of these issues should be reviewed at minimum every five years, with the applicable policies and ordinances updated accordingly.

The following recommendations are derived from such an assessment, and serve as attainable goals for the community to strive for as the downtown develops and grows:

1. Utilize efficiencies of alley access when providing off-street parking for new development. For example, the alley can be used for backup space in alley-loaded parking stalls, allowing a marked reduction in the square footage required to produce the same number of parking stalls, because the alley itself can be used as the additional space needed to back up vehicles when exiting the lot. Where parking lots can be situated to the back of structures facing the downtown they should, as it provides a more interesting visual character and maintain walkability along Farmersville Boulevard.
2. Examine the current parking requirements contained in the Farmersville Zoning Ordinance, specifically the 25% reduction allowed by the CC zone.
3. Facilitate and implement shared parking agreements between an existing development and a new development in circumstances where the timing of parking stall use is compatible with shared parking.

4. Adopt issuance of parking waivers for those property owners that wish to intensify existing uses, for whom the requisite public parking already exists in the immediate vicinity.
5. When off-street parking is created as the result of new development, the developer should be offered a credit for additional parking spaces if the stalls that are created are allowed to be used by the public.
6. Develop an in-lieu parking fee and codify it into the Municipal Code, to be used sparingly at the discretion of the city.

Financing Solutions ~ Long Term and Short-Term Projects: The implementation and financing of these parking strategies requires careful planning of resources and can benefit from categorizing the strategies into long and short-term projects to distinguish and prioritize them. In the short and medium-term, revenue generated by the increased tax base and the possible in lieu fees could be used to provide financing for wayfinding signage and lighting features in the downtown area, as well as to restripe on-street parking from the current parallel to diagonal stalls. The fees could also generate funds for landscape features in the public right-of-way, including planters with trees by sidewalks where there are not already trees. Adopt-a-planter or other nontraditional financing structures could be explored for ongoing maintenance costs of landscape features in the downtown right-of-way. This would provide a shadier, more pleasant environment, desirable for pedestrian use. The funds could also be used for hardscape features such as stamped or pervious concrete crosswalks and sidewalks to reduce surface heat gain and hydrological impacts and improve the aesthetic character.

Other short term solutions and strategies may include the addition of more bicycle racks and bike lanes to encourage alternative transportation and parking as well as the use of parking districts or unbundled parking (the practice of selling the parking stalls of a property separately from its residential or commercial use), although these strategies are not necessarily recommended based on the findings of this study, they are tools that can be considered by Farmersville as the downtown develops over time.

Alternatively, in the long term, the revenue from in-lieu fees could be used to expand and improve the alley running parallel to Farmersville Boulevard, improving access to alley-loaded stalls. These alleys are one of the most lucrative underutilized resources for improving parking in the downtown, however, represents a significant investment in infrastructure, which is why it is considered a longer-term solution.

Alternatively, this revenue could be used to purchase land for new public off-street parking lots, although the data suggests that there are ample existing parking facilities for the foreseeable future. The acquisition of new lots is not recommended as a high priority because the study data suggests that stall occupancy rates are not high enough to justify investing in a new lot. If stall occupancy rates in any given quadrant, block, or group of lots regularly exceeded 70% capacity, then it may serve the city to consider investing in a new public lot.