



## REPORT TO COUNCIL City of Sacramento

915 I Street, Sacramento, CA 95814-2604  
www. CityofSacramento.org

Staff Report  
October 30, 2007

Honorable Mayor and  
Members of the City Council

**Title:** Report Back: Results of Form Based Codes Public Pre-Test Program

**Location/Council District:** Districts 1, 3 and 5

**Recommendation:** Review and comment.

**Contact:** William Crouch, Urban Design Manager (916) 808-8013; David Kwong, Current Planning Manager (916) 808-2691

**Presenters:** William Crouch, Urban Design Manager, accompanied by the Consulting Team of EDAW Inc. in association with Mogavero Notestine Associates.

**Department:** Development Services

**Division:** Current Planning

**Organization No:** 4885

### Description/Analysis

**Issue:** Whereas traditional Planning Codes focus on land use patterns, in contrast, Form Based Codes shift their primary focus to architectural form, massing and positioning of buildings onto lots subjugating land use to lesser importance, incentivizing mixed use buildings.

As a planning tool, Form Based Codes are attractive in situations where the eventual three dimensional form of the final built community needs to be predictable and clearly understood as to its final aesthetic and form before construction occurs.

Many communities across the country have shown heightened interest in the adoption of Form Based Codes over traditional Planning Codes in an effort to protect neighborhood distinctiveness, secure predictability and reinforce particular architectural forms valued by those communities.

In response to local expressions of interest in the possibility of adopting a Form



Based Code in Sacramento the City Council issued a Request for Proposals (RFP) on May 19, 2006, inviting consultants to submit proposals to undertake a Public Pre-Test for the possibility of the introduction of Form Based Code(s) in three participating pilot areas, namely East Sacramento, Oak Park and Alkali Flat.

Following interviews, the submittal from EDAW Inc., in association with Mogavero Notestine Associates, was successful in being awarded the contract for this study. The consultants subsequently worked with focus groups to conduct Community Workshops in all three areas before tabulating comments received and formulating their final report. Their concluding recommendation is that the introduction of a Form Based code in either East Sacramento or Oak Park is not warranted given the limited opportunity for development other than infill and that existing planning mechanisms such as design districts, architectural guidelines and historic districts can be utilized and enhanced to address community concern with regard to protection of neighborhood character. The consultants also find that of the three communities studied the Alkali Flat – Mansion Flats area would most benefit from the introduction of a Form Based Code.

Given the transitional location of the Alkali Flat – Mansion Flats neighborhoods sandwiched between the CBD to the south and the Railyards Development to the north, the precise planning advantages offered to this area by a Form Based Code is highly desirable given mounting development pressures, the opportunity to intensify development along existing transit corridors, the need to protect and enhance distinctive architectural styles and streetscapes, and the desirability of predictability with regard to the eventual form, mass and architectural patterns to be employed by future development as characteristic and appropriate to this strategic area.

It is also very timely and fortunate that staff have recently been approached by SACOG to work cooperatively with them in a regional program to adopt the Alkali Flat - Mansion Flats area as a test case for the development of a Form Based Code Production Manual suitable for our use and by other SACOG jurisdictions who may also want to produce a Form Based Code in an Inner City Area. As a first step SACOG staff will be conducting a Community Workshop 6pm December 10 at the Alkali Flat Boys and Girls Club to introduce their Form Based Code Program to the Community.

Additionally, upon completion of the SACOG Form Based Code Manual, City staff will have the opportunity to utilize this template to bring forward a Form Based Code to City Council for the Alkali Flat - Mansion Flats area in consultation with the Community.

**Policy Considerations:** The proposed Public Pre-Test for Form Based Codes is consistent with the City's Strategic Plan Focus Area to achieve sustainability and livability in the City of Sacramento.

**Committee/Commission Action:** None

**Environmental Considerations:** None

**Rationale for Recommendation:** Following the successful completion of the Form Based Codes Public Pre-Test Program in selected areas of East Sacramento, Oak Park and Alkali Flat / Mansion Flats the Consulting Team of EDAW Inc. in association with Mogavero Notestine Associates brought forward the recommendation that of the three communities considered for the adoption of a Form Based Code, the Alkali Flat - Mansion Flats area was the most appropriate community for the adoption of a Form Based Code to address community concerns with regard to the protection of Neighborhood Form.

The Consultant Team also recommended that City Staff continue to work with East Sacramento and Oak Park Communities to address concerns related to the protection of Neighborhood Form through the adoption of alternative regulative tools such as Design Guidelines with associated Pattern Books of Architectural Style, and the survey of potential Historic Districts.

**Financial Considerations:** This project has no fiscal considerations, unless follow-up steps are taken by the City Council after this report back to recommend augmentation of City staff for additional Design Review functions.

**Emerging Small Business Development (ESBD):** No goods or services are being purchased under this report.

Respectfully Submitted by:   
David Kwong  
Planning Manager

Approved by:   
William Thomas  
Director of Development Services

Recommendation Approved:

  
Ray Kerridge  
City Manager

**Table of Contents:**

Report	Pg	1
<b>Attachments</b>		
1 Background	Pg	5
2 Sacramento Form Based Codes Pre-Test, Final Report by Consulting Team of EDAW Inc. in association with Mogavero Notestine Associates.	Pg	6
3 DRAFT Annotated Outline of the SACOG Form Based Code Handbook	Pg	66

Attachment 1 – Background

The Six Key Tasks which comprised this Study are as follows:

- **Task One: Project Start Up**

Representatives of EDAW and Mogavero Notestine Associates met with City staff to review and finalize the work scope and schedule, to identify available data, GIS files, and to clearly identify the various pre-test project area boundaries.

- **Task Two: Neighborhood Reconnaissance**

Based on 'Base Maps' prepared from available GIS data representatives of EDAW and Mogavero Notestine Associates conducted field reconnaissance of existing conditions in each survey area.

- **Task Three: Focus Groups and Community Forums**

The Consultant Team conducted Focus Group Meetings and Community Forums in each Pre-Test Area to identify community concerns, goals, objectives and expected outcomes.

- **Task Four: Form Based Code Templates**

Representatives of EDAW and Mogavero Notestine Associates with the assistance of the Local Government Commission provided examples of different approaches to form-based codes in an effort to 'tailor' specific regulatory approaches for appropriateness in the pre-test areas.

- **Task Five: Post Community Forum Recommendations**

The Consultant Team provided a comparative report to describe the data, process and end products necessary to achieve community goals identified in Task 3 for each of the participating study areas. The final report included recommendations for changes to existing City processes considered appropriate as a result of findings and conclusions.

- **Task Six: Pre-Test Wrap Up and Recommendations for Next Steps**

Based on the results of Task 3 through 5, the Consultant Team prepared a final recommendation for a possible form-based code candidate area for participation in a program(s) to be developed as part of a subsequent process outside the scope of this pre-test.

# Attachment 2

## **Sacramento Form-Based Codes Pretest** **Portions of Oak Park, Alkali Flat, and East Sacramento**

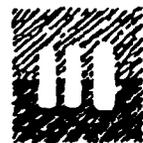
**October 2007**



***City of Sacramento***

EDAW | AECOM

***EDAW***



***Mogavero Notestine Associates***



# Table of Contents

Introduction.....	5
The Sacramento Form-Based Codes Pretest Program .....	5
Potential Planning Tools .....	6
Neighborhood Reports .....	15
Oak Park .....	16
Pretest Area Location and Description .....	18
Existing Policy Context.....	18
Stakeholder and Neighborhood Meetings .....	18
Potential Policy Approaches .....	20
Alkali Flat .....	24
Pretest Area Location and Description .....	24
Existing Policy Context.....	25
Stakeholder and Neighborhood Meetings .....	28
Potential Policy Approaches .....	29
East Sacramento .....	32
Location .....	32
Existing Policy Context.....	32
Stakeholder and Neighborhood Meetings .....	35
Potential Policy Approaches .....	38
Conclusion.....	41

## Figures

Figure 1, from the Regulating Code for the Central Hercules Plan.....	7
Figure 2, from the Northwest Crossing Prototype Handbook Courtesy of West Bend Property Co. LLC .....	8
Figure 3, from the Northwest Crossing Prototype Handbook Courtesy of West Bend Property Co. LLC .....	9
Figure 4 from the City of Sacramento’s Oak Park Design Standards and Guidelines .....	11
Figure 5, City of Sacramento Historic District and Survey Areas Map .....	12
Figure 6, from the City of Eugene, Oregon Advisory Design Guidelines for Historic Residential Properties .....	14
Figure 7, Oak Park Pretest Area and Redevelopment Area .....	17
Figure 8, Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard Master Plan Concept Plan .....	19
Figure 9, Alkali Flat Pretest Area and Redevelopment Area .....	24
Figure 10, East Sacramento Pretest Area .....	32
Figure 11, East Sacramento Design Review Ordinance Triggers .....	34
Figure 12, 65th Street/University Transit Village Urban Design Concept Plan .....	35

## **Appendices**

- A Meeting Notes, Oak Park Neighborhood Meeting, Sacramento Form-Based Codes Pretest (January 18, 2007)
- B Meeting Notes, Alkali Flat Neighborhood Meeting, Sacramento Form-Based Codes Pretest (February 15, 2007)
- C Comment Card Responses, Alkali Flat Neighborhood Meeting, Sacramento Form-Based Codes Pretest (February 15, 2007)
- D Meeting Notes, East Sacramento Neighborhood Meeting, Sacramento Form-Based Codes Pretest (June 4, 2007)

# Introduction

## **The Sacramento Form-Based Codes Pretest Program**

Sacramento includes many neighborhoods that display their own unique established character. Elements such as similar architectural massing, form, and styles; the relationship of buildings to the street; and the presence of mature landscaping contribute to the recognizable qualities that are associated with each neighborhood. Many residents value the established character of their neighborhoods, considering them assets that contribute to the desirability and overall quality of life experienced there. However, as an established neighborhood experiences change (ranging from renovations of and/or additions to existing buildings to reuse of existing buildings or new infill development), the established character may be modified. The extent to which these modifications to the existing neighborhood fabric are acceptable to residents varies greatly, as will be seen in the neighborhoods reviewed in this report.

The Sacramento Form-Based Codes Pretest Program (Pretest Program) was devised by the City of Sacramento (City) to encourage neighborhoods experiencing change to identify and develop their own vision for retaining local character. The Pretest Program was specifically intended to gauge local interest in using form-based codes as a planning technique that could define desired neighborhood character, while also identifying desirable modifications through renovations and infill development.

Three neighborhoods applied for and were accepted into the Pretest Program: Oak Park, Alkali Flat, and East Sacramento. The City distributed Pretest Program applications to neighborhood residents in spring 2006. Each group of neighborhood applicants was required to provide:

- a map defining the proposed pretest area;
- a detailed description of the neighborhood and the concerns that residents hoped would be addressed by the Pretest Program; and
- a petition signed by residents displaying local support for the Pretest Program.

To further explore the concerns and goals of the Pretest Program applicants, the City retained EDAW and Mogavero Notestine Associates (MNA), two planning consulting firms, to hold stakeholder and neighborhood meetings and develop this advisory report. EDAW and MNA conducted focused stakeholder meetings in each of the neighborhoods, followed by broader neighborhood meetings open to all neighborhood residents. It was anticipated that the Pretest Program's public outreach process would be used to determine the unique circumstances of each participating neighborhood, and to discuss the suitability of various planning tools, including form-based codes.

This report therefore provides an overview of the circumstances experienced by each participating neighborhood and suggests planning tools and alternatives that could be tailored to address these conditions. Suggested planning alternatives are outlined in the conclusion. It should be noted that the Pretest Program was

designed to be advisory. The next step in applying planning techniques to the Pretest Program neighborhoods would be approval of a follow-on implementation program and the provision of funding by the City.

## **Potential Planning Tools**

This report reviews potential policy tools for each neighborhood on a case-by-case basis. As suggested by the title of the Form-Based Codes Pretest Program form-based codes are among the policy tools considered in this report. However, to fully address the needs of the Oak Park, Alkali Flat, and East Sacramento neighborhoods, other options are also considered, including use of design guidelines and creation of historic districts. Although each technique may be applied as a stand-alone tool, many work best in combination, as a "hybrid" approach. The tools that could be of greatest value to the Pretest applicant neighborhoods are briefly summarized below.

### ***Form-Based Codes***

Form-based codes focus on the desired structure and appearance of the built environment, rather than on restricted uses (the focus for more conventional planning tools). Form-based codes typically address the exterior form, massing, and site design of buildings and their relationship to the site and "public realm" (streets, parks, or other public spaces). They often combine text with extensive graphics to create documents that are easier to comprehend than conventional planning documents.

Form-based codes are particularly effective at addressing the relationship between buildings and the public realm, using illustrations to show the preferred building envelope; the design of architectural elements such as signage, porches, and balconies; and the location of landscaping features in a clear and easily understood manner. For example, Figure 1 on the following page, from the *Regulating Code for the Central Hercules Plan*, provides a good example of how form-based codes can address the relationship of buildings to the street. However, such standards do not address land use types, and they may need to be supplemented by additional standards defining permitted uses.

In addition, form-based codes can guide the form and appearance of new development through the use of such techniques as pattern books, which identify existing characteristics such as architectural style and elements that residents value. For example, Figures 2 and 3 are sample pages from the *Northwest Crossing Prototype Handbook*, (shown on pages 7 and 8) displaying one form that such a pattern book can take, with prototypical building forms and site plans. Such a pattern book can encourage infill development and renovations of and additions to existing buildings to take inspiration from the existing context without mimicking it. To apply such a pattern book to Oak Park, Alkali Flat, or East Sacramento, residents must identify features that could serve as models for new development.

# 4. Town Center Street

Parallel parking and wide sidewalks on both sides of the Town Center Street create a safe inviting place for both pedestrians and motorists. 12' wide sidewalks with tree wells are preferred, but 6' sidewalks with 6' green strips are also acceptable.

### A. Building Placement:

Build-to-line location: 0 ft. from Property line  
(Typical)

Space Between Buildings: 0 ft. if attached  
6-10 ft. if detached

### B. Building Volume:

Bldg. Width: 16 ft. minimum  
160 ft. maximum

Bldg. Depth: 125 ft. maximum

Bldg. Height: 2 stories minimum  
4 stories maximum  
55 ft. Maximum  
The first floor shall be a minimum of twelve (12) feet in height

### C. Notes:

1. Appurtenances may extend beyond the height limit.
2. Building fronts are required to provide shelter to the sidewalk by means of at least one of the following: arcade, colonnade, marquee, awning, or second floor balcony.
3. The alignment of floor-to-floor heights of abutting buildings is encouraged to allow for shared use of elevators.

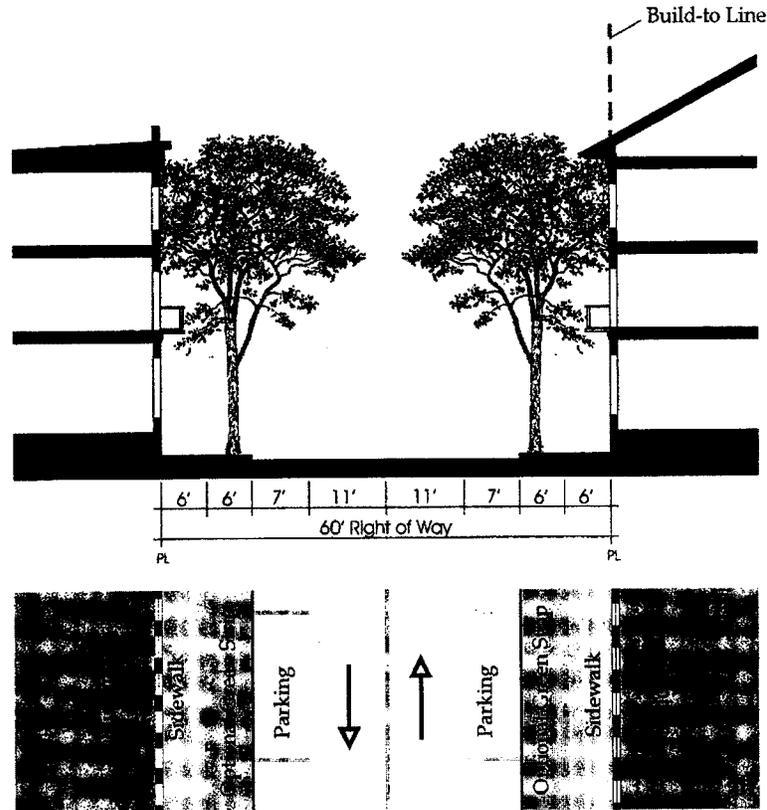
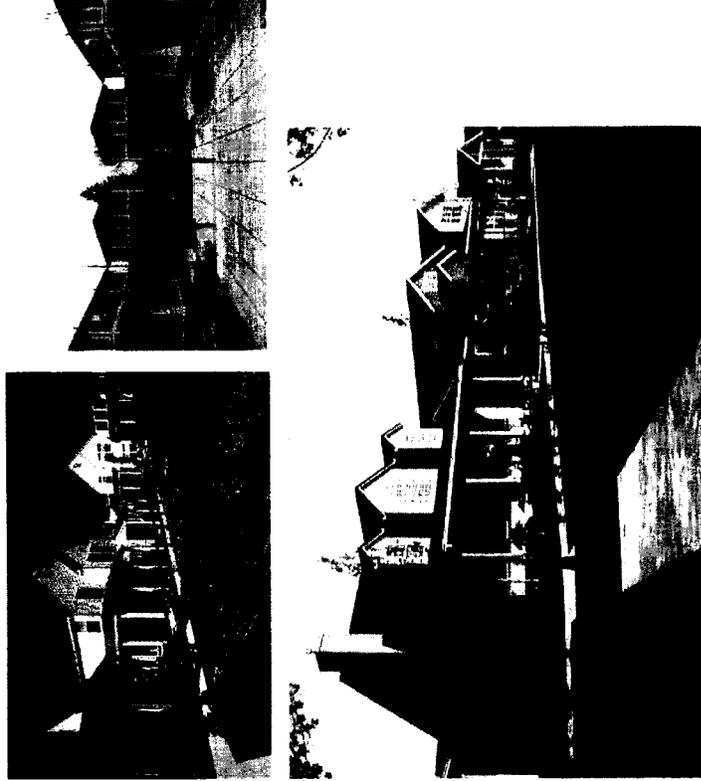


Figure 1, from the Regulating Code for the Central Hercules Plan

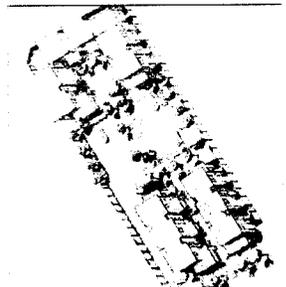


- **Dwelling units per acre / .3 maximum:**
- **Accessory dwelling unit:** Not allowed.
- **Height:** 30 foot maximum height, higher with City of Bend conditional use permit.
- **Lot size:** Varies. Generally 230' deep blocks with 20 foot wide alley right of way.
- **Lot Coverage:** No maximum.
- **Setbacks:**
  - **Front setback:** Minimum: 10 feet. Maximum: 20 feet. Preferred: 10 feet.
  - **Side setback:** 5 feet, except when abutting a residential zone, then the side setback shall be increased 1/2 foot for each foot by which the building exceeds 15 feet.
  - **Rear setback:** Minimum: 5 feet. When abutting a residential zone, setback shall be increased 1/2 foot for each foot by which the building exceeds 15 feet.
  - **Rear garage setback if abutting an alley:** 7.5 feet from rear lot line.
- **Parking and Garages:**
  - **General:** Parking and garages shall be located off of the alleys or in the interior of the site. Exceptions to allow parking at the side shall be conditional based on review and approval of the Northwest Crossing Architectural Review Committee.
  - **Off-street:** Parking spaces required: 2 per dwelling unit.
  - **Encroachments:** Within the front setback, porches, covered stairs, stairs, screens, bay windows, etc., are encouraged. At the second level of buildings, encroachments in the form of balconies and bay windows are encouraged, but shall not exceed 5 feet or the depth of the setback.
- **Landscaping:** See Residential Rules & Design Guidelines.
- **Lighting:** See Residential Rules & Design Guidelines.
- **Signage:** Not allowed.
- **Base Zone:** Urban Standard Residential (RS).
- **Overlay District:** None.

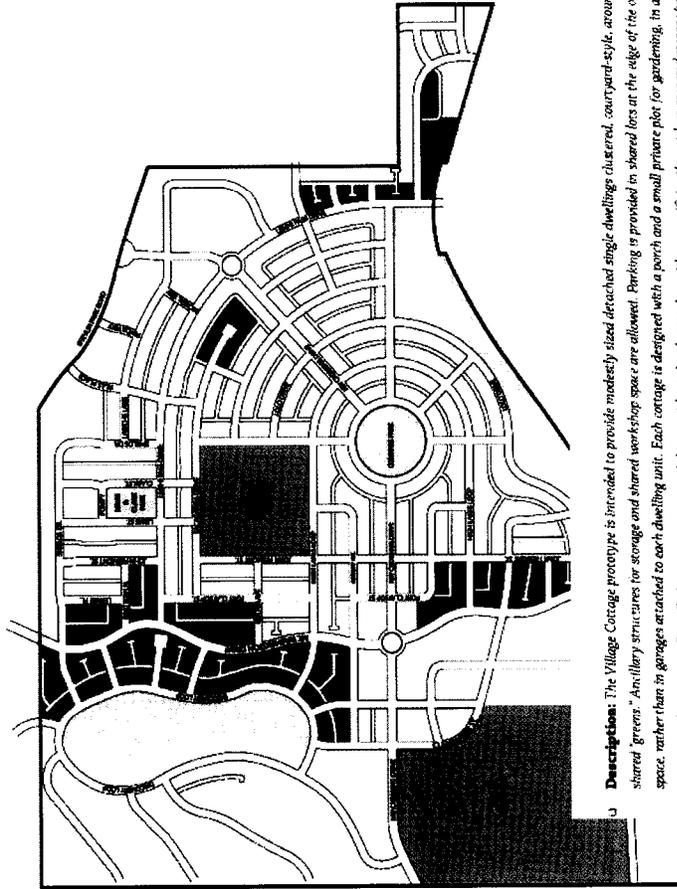
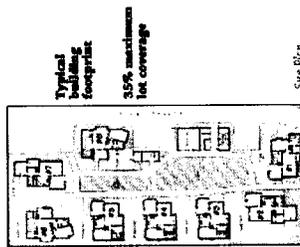
**VILLAGE COTTAGE - SPECIFICATIONS**

**Village Prototypes**

Figure 2, from the Northwest Crossing Prototype Handbook (Courtesy of West Bend Property Co. LLC)



Aerial view of typical building



**Description:** The Village Cottage prototype is intended to provide modestly sized detached single dwellings clustered, courtyard-style, around shared "green." Ancillary structures for storage and shared workshop space are allowed. Parking is provided in shared lots at the edge of the open space, rather than in garages attached to each dwelling unit. Each cottage is designed with a porch and a small private plot for gardening. In addition to the shared open space. Overall, this prototype is intended to provide modest homes, but without sacrificing the outdoor area and storage/work space that homeowners expect, and that typically represents an advancement over apartment living. This prototype is designed for areas where block size and configuration is not the typical 250' deep block with a 20' alley, and more unusual building arrangements are necessary. Because the open space, driveways and parking areas are shared, most of these buildings may be developed as condominiums.

**Use:** Residential.

**VILLAGE COTTAGE. KEY MAP**  
**Village Prototypes**

Figure 3, from the Northwest Crossing Prototype Handbook  
(Courtesy of West Bend Property Co. LLC)

Areas lacking sufficient established character (such as a new suburban subdivision) or lacking in sufficient desirable existing development (blighted areas) must define the desired character by reference to examples that are not within the neighborhood itself. In this case, care should be taken to avoid creating an overly planned, "Disneyesque" environment. Of the three neighborhoods discussed in this report, this concern is most likely to arise in Alkali Flat, where the large light industrial properties becoming available for redevelopment may or may not have buildings suitable for renovation or replication in new infill. In this case, neighborhood residents should work with the City to determine what types and form of development would best complement the desired existing neighborhood character. As part of the Alkali Flat workshop, participants were asked to identify their preferred building type and form for different parts of the neighborhood. This community input could be refined in subsequent working sessions to further identify preferred form, mass, architectural elements, etc.

### ***Design Guidelines***

Design guidelines provide detailed guidance for the appearance of such features as architectural elements (roofs, porches, doors, lighting); site design (relationship to the street, location of accessory structures); landscape elements (trees, irrigation, public art); and streetscape improvements. They are typically intended to encourage good design while allowing for some flexible interpretation to avoid repetitive and monotonous structures. Design guidelines can cover a broad range of topics to the desired level of specificity, with sections potentially addressing such topics as green building design, universal access, and low-water landscaping techniques. As with form-based codes, strong graphics should supplement the text portion of the guidelines.

A portion of the Oak Park pretest area falls within the Oak Park Redevelopment Area and is subject to the *Oak Park Design Standards and Guidelines* (available for viewing at <http://cityofsacramento.org/dsd/forms/design-guidelines/oak-park/>). Figure 4, on the following page, is a sample page from the standards and guidelines which shows the design principle for entry features, applicable to all development, followed by the rationale, which explains the application of the principle, and specific design standards and guidelines. (The *Oak Park Design Standards and Guidelines* are discussed in more detail in the Oak Park section of this report.)

### ***Historic Districts***

Historic districts are areas intended to protect the identified historic resources within them, and in the case of neighborhoods, the integrity of overall district character. These resources may include not only historic buildings, but landmarks, signage, open space and parks, streets and roads (such as an emigrant trail), or other features of identified historic value. The City's Historic Preservation Department uses the U.S. Secretary of the Interior's *Standards for Rehabilitation and Guidelines for Rehabilitating Historic Buildings* to identify historic resources within the city. Most historic districts in the city include both "contributing" resources (historic resources) and "noncontributing" resources (newer infill structures or older structures that are not deemed historic). Of the city's many existing historic districts and survey areas, five are in Alkali Flat (see Figure 5, "City of Sacramento Historic District and Survey Areas," on page 11).

## Single-family Residential

### 8 Entry Features

#### Design Principle

Infill homes and additions to the front facade of the home shall have an entry feature such as a porch or stoop that faces the street side.

#### Rationale

Entry features accent the front facade of a home and add visual interest. Entry features and their components, such as columns and steps, should be proportional to the overall scale of the home.

Porches and other entry features are a common architectural element in homes in the Residential Character Area. Porch elements in these older homes differ greatly, ranging from the solid, square columns of Craftsman homes to the delicate turned balusters in Queen Anne homes. Entry features on infill homes should be consistent in design and scale with the new home and the predominant style on the block.

#### General Design Standards and Guidelines

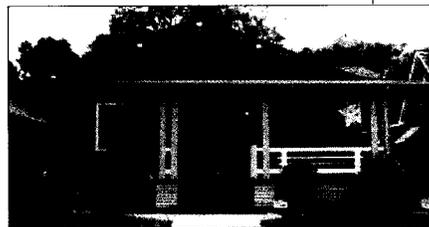
- 8-1 Entry features are encouraged on all new infill homes, and are a recommended renovation for existing homes, where feasible.
- 8-2 Entry porches and porticoes in two-story homes should be one story to minimize the appearance of bulk.
- 8-3 Entry features should be built to a depth of 6 feet from the front of the entry feature to the front facade of the home; however, shallower entry features will be considered on a case-by-case basis.
- 8-4 The scale and style of porch and portico elements should be consistent with the scale and style of the home, and should strive to respect the scale and style of porch and portico elements in the other homes on the block.
- 8-5 Porch and portico columns should be given some form of detailing, such as a defined plinth and capital.
- 8-6 Porch columns and railings should be constructed of high-quality materials that complement the materials used in the overall exterior of the home.



*This full-front porch in the Residential Character Area shows Craftsman influences.*



*The porch on this infill home is similar to other porches in the neighborhood, without being identical.*



*This entry feature adds dynamic interest to an older home in the Residential Character Area.*

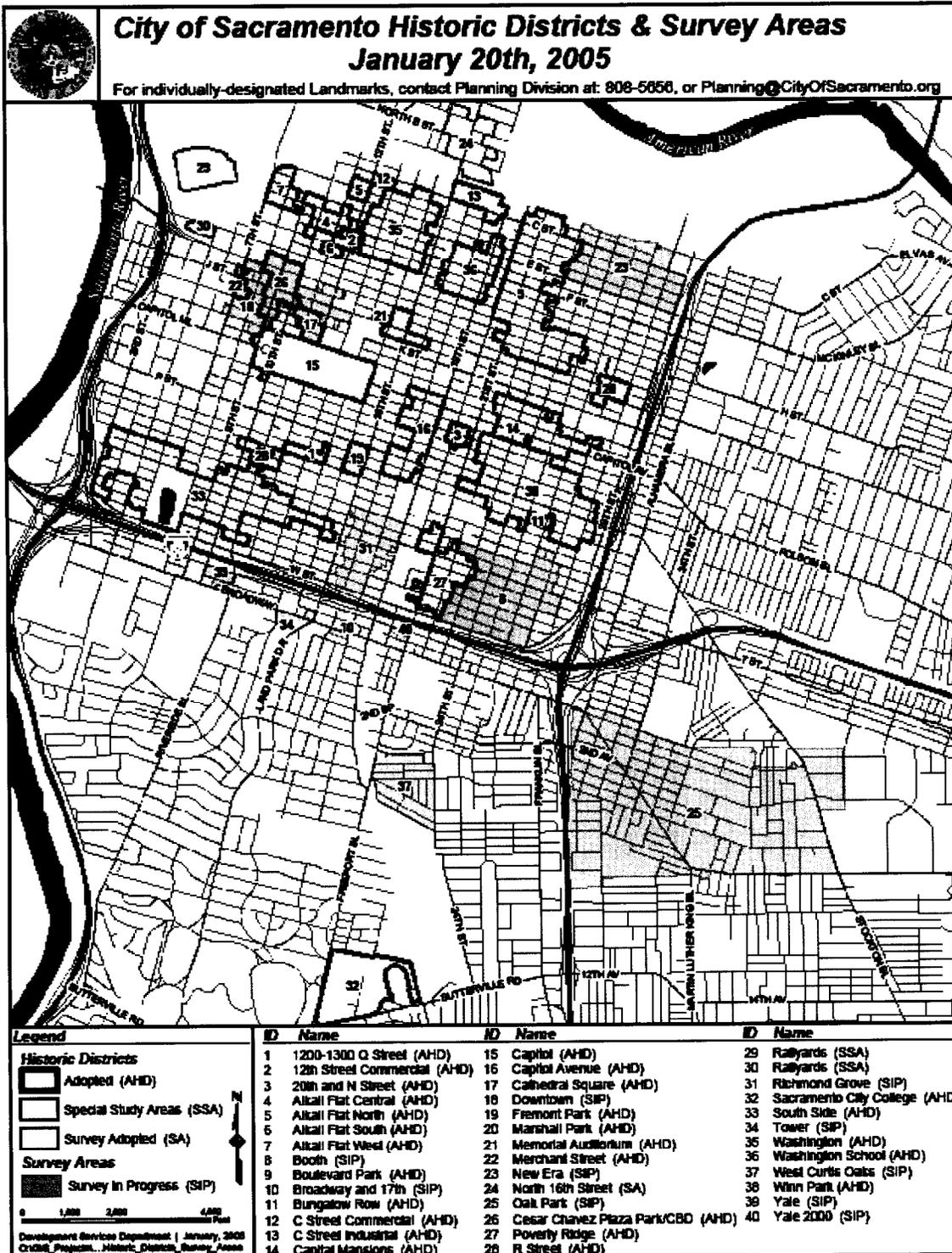


Figure 5, City of Sacramento Historic District and Survey Areas  
 (Map Courtesy of City of Sacramento)

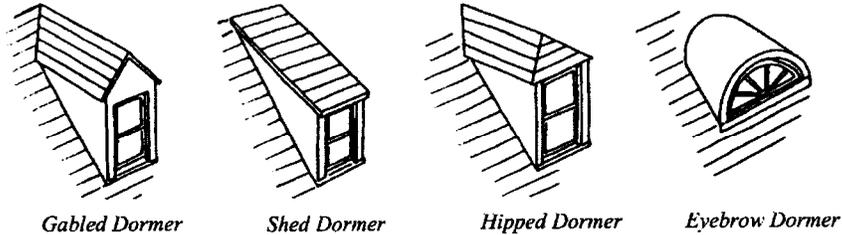
Once historic resources have been defined and historic districts established, any modifications to the resources within their boundaries are subject to review by the City's Historic Preservation staff, with potential review by the Preservation Commission.

Some cities use stringent renovation standards and/or design guidelines to ensure that renovations and additions faithfully preserve the integrity of the original structure. As shown in Figure 6 on page 13, which depicts a page from the Eugene, Oregon, *Advisory Design Guidelines for Historic Residential Properties*, preservation design guidelines can provide detailed guidance for preserving the form, materials, color, and construction of architectural elements. Such design guidelines must be based on a comprehensive survey of the resources within a historic district, and must address a wide variety of structural features.

Of the planning policy alternatives reviewed in this report, historic districts are a rigorous option, potentially providing extensive protection for older buildings within their boundaries. Among the drawbacks of a historic district is diminished flexibility for building owners who must select architectural styles, elements, materials, and colors that support the existing fabric of the neighborhood, and must bear the added expense of ensuring that renovations are faithful to the original structure. Additional City staff time would also be required to review applications for renovations to existing buildings. If residents strongly support adding new historic districts or applying more stringent guidelines to existing districts, the City would have to weigh the value of historic preservation against these mitigating factors.

## Rehabilitation & Alterations

---



Dormers open up a second floor or an unused attic space to create another room, and provide much needed light. They must be designed in proportion to the roof area and to other windows in the house. Dormers that did not exist historically should be kept to the rear of the house and out of view from the public right-of-way whenever possible.

**Protection:** Regular maintenance and repair of flashing, gutters, siding, and caulking in joints and seams is vital. Anchor roof material adequately to prevent wind and rain damage. Do not allow a leaking roof to go unrepaired, as it accelerates the deterioration of a structure.

**Alterations:** Do not install roof features that never existed or that create a false historical appearance. This can include cupolas, cresting, or ornate and corbeled chimneys. Dormers, skylights, roof vents, plumbing vents, wood stove flues, mechanical systems and roof decks need to be inconspicuous from the public right-of-way. Avoid damaging distinctive architectural features when making these installations.

### Exterior Siding & Details

***Wherever possible, original siding should be retained or restored, and maintained rather than be replaced.***

In Eugene, wood was the predominant building material used for residential architecture. It was abundant, cheap, and easily worked to produce siding, moldings, decorative features and interior finishes. It is important to identify and protect character defining wood features on the primary facades, such as cornices, brackets, or window moldings. Destructive paint removal methods, like propane or butane torches, sandblasting, and high pressure water blasting, should not be used, as they can permanently damage historic woodwork. Keep in mind that original wood is often of higher quality than replacement products available today.

*Figure 6, from the City of Eugene, Oregon's Advisory Design Guidelines for Historic Residential Properties*

## **Neighborhood Reports**

The three Pretest Program neighborhoods addressed in this in this section - Oak Park, Alkali Flat, and East Sacramento – include a brief description of each neighborhood is followed by a summary of the results of the stakeholder meetings. Policy recommendations are detailed at the end of each section. (See the Conclusion on page 40 for a summary of these recommendations.)

# Oak Park

## Pretest Area Location and Description

Oak Park is a large neighborhood located east of State Route 99, south of Business 80, west of Stockton Boulevard, and north of Fruitridge Road. The Oak Park pretest area includes portions (approximately two blocks long or less) of San Jose Way, 41st Street, 42nd Street, Y Street, First Avenue, and Second Avenue, shown in Figure 7, "Oak Park Pretest Area and Redevelopment Area." The pretest area is a small portion of the broader Oak Park neighborhood.

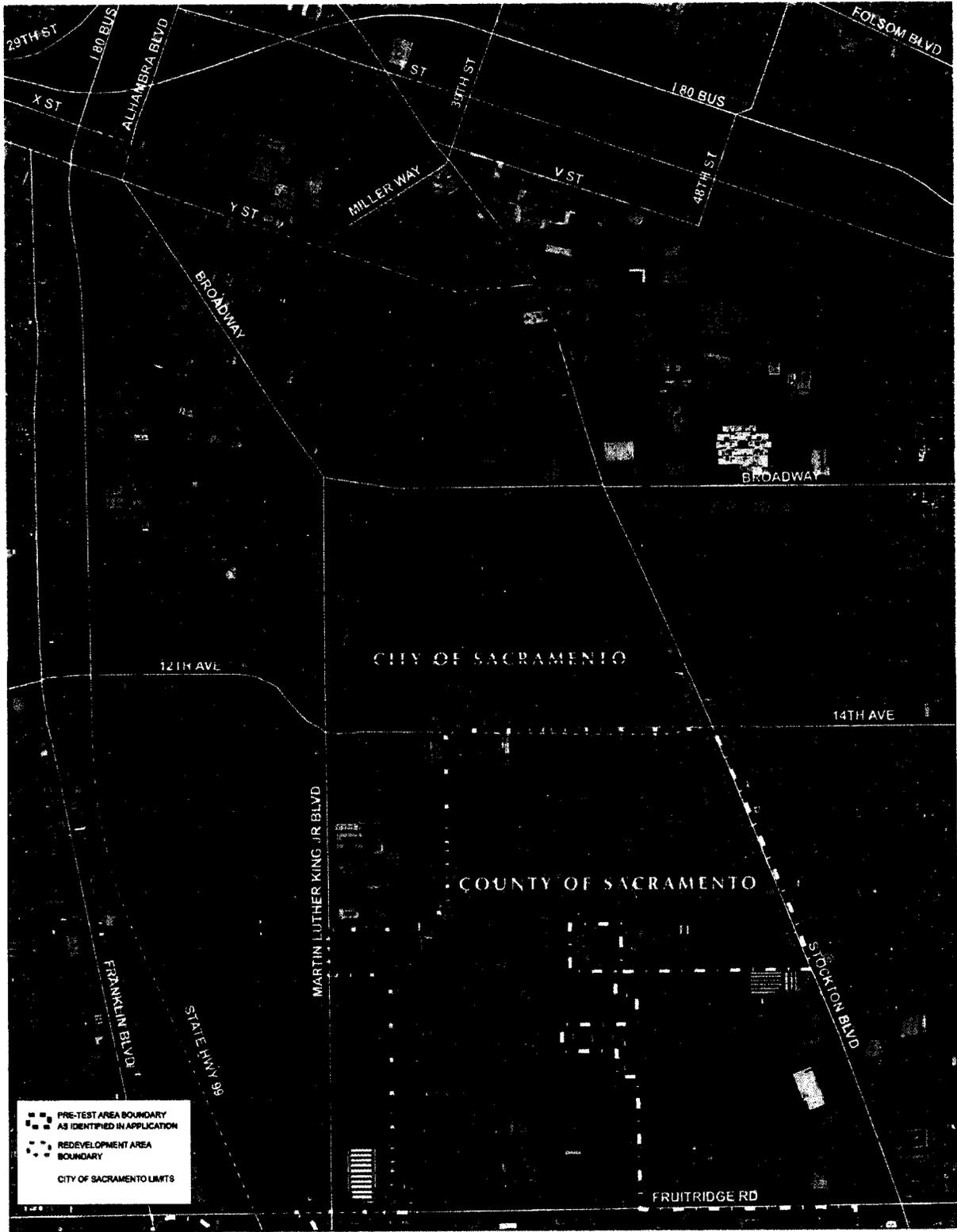
The Oak Park pretest area consists primarily of one-story single-family homes, although the area also includes a few relatively contemporary commercial buildings that front on Stockton Boulevard. Bungalows displaying Craftsman influences are common, although other architectural influences are also represented. There is some variation in materials, including brick, clapboard, and stucco, and architectural detailing.



Homes on San Jose Way  
*(Photos Courtesy of Historic Environment Consultants)*

Applicants are concerned primarily with identifying planning tools that will allow them to maintain the visual and structural integrity of existing buildings, which, as noted, consist mostly of single-family homes. Applicants expressed concern, for instance, that remodeling of some homes had resulted in modification or removal of important architectural elements such as porches, which are seen as contributing to the architectural integrity of both the affected homes and adjacent and nearby homes.

The Oak Park pretest area has apparently experienced little of the "mansionization" found in some other established communities and neighborhoods in Sacramento, although mansionization has occurred in other areas of the Oak Park neighborhood; less concern was expressed about oversized additions and new infill homes than the protection of existing homes. However, the potential for large additions to existing homes should be considered when any planning tools are adopted. In addition, the lack of vacant lots in the Oak Park pretest area has limited new infill development;



**OAK PARK**



Figure 7, Oak Park Pretest Area and Redevelopment Area

however, the area has the potential to be subject to “tear-downs” in which structurally sound older homes are demolished and replaced with new, larger residential structures.

### **Existing Policy Context**

The Oak Park pretest area falls within several planning jurisdictions, again as shown in Figure 7. Specifically, the southern portion of the Oak Park pretest area falls within the Oak Park Redevelopment Area. The Oak Park Redevelopment Area is subject to the *Oak Park Design Standards and Guidelines* (approved in 2006), which address built form, site design, and landscaping, among other topics for both commercial and residential development.

A similar portion of the Oak Park pretest area has also been subject to a historical survey carried out by Historic Environment Consultants (HEC) in 2004. The survey included a house-by-house photographic identification along San Jose Way (“Fair Park”), 41st Street (“Wright and Kimbrough #27”), 42nd Street (“Dawson Place”), and Second Avenue (“Cottages and Working Families”). To date, the survey has not been finalized or approved by the City; however, it serves as a valuable informal resource for planning efforts in the neighborhood.

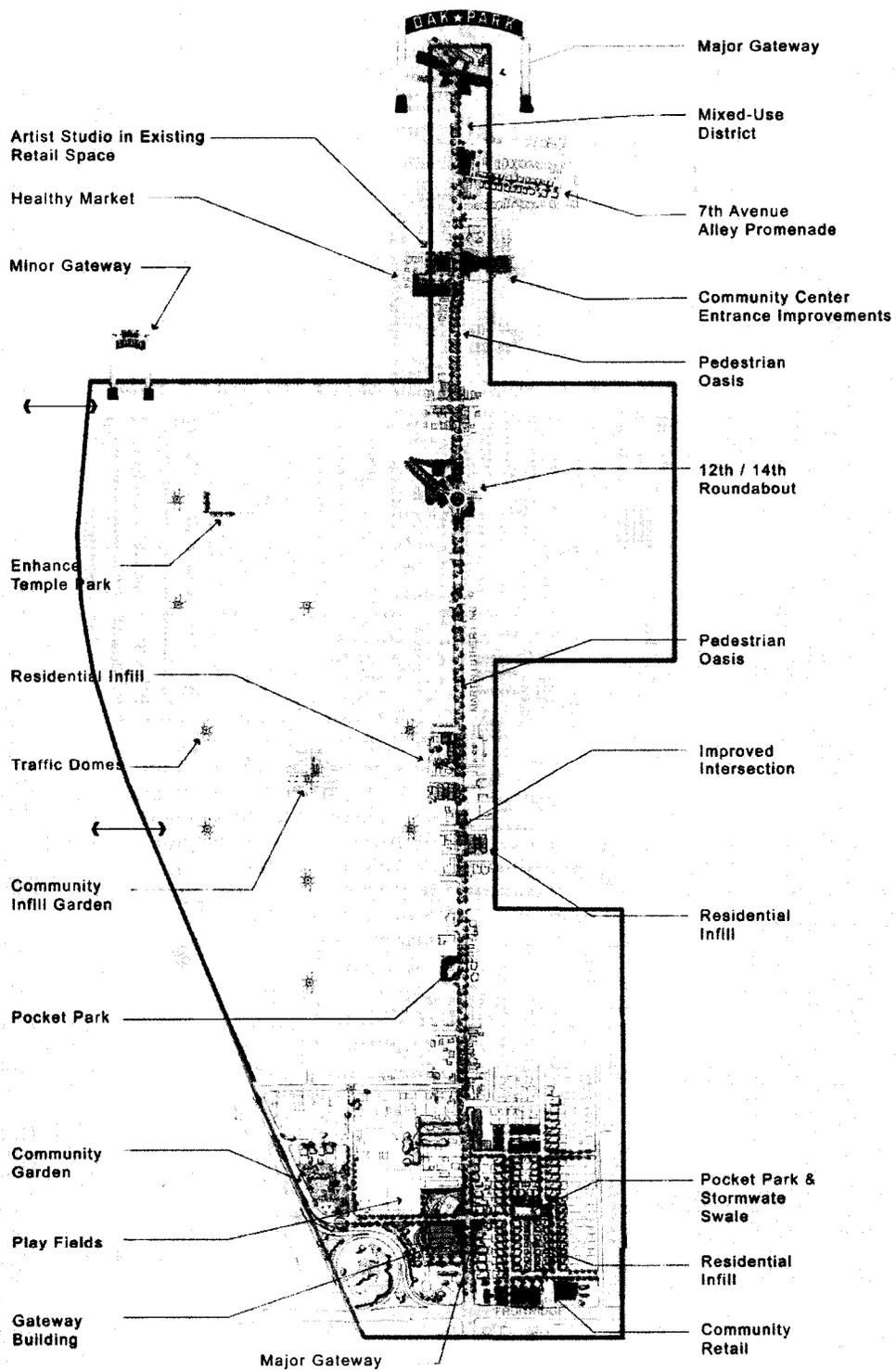
In addition to the two existing documents that could directly affect the Oak Park pretest area, segments of Broadway and Stockton Boulevard are also subject to the *Broadway/Stockton Urban Design Plan* (approved in 1998) and the *Broadway Stockton Boulevard Master Plan* (completed in 2001). These plans primarily address commercial development fronting onto these two major streets, and they include such elements as built form and streetscape enhancements.

A streetscape and urban design master plan is currently being developed by the Sacramento Housing and Redevelopment Agency for the Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard corridor; this master plan is intended to enhance the walkability, landscaping, and safety of the corridor (see Figure 8, “Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard Master Plan Concept Plan”). A neighborhood design charrette and follow-up community meeting have been completed, and the final plan will be issued in early 2008.

### **Stakeholder and Neighborhood Meetings**

Two meetings were held to identify the issues of concern to Oak Park residents, both those within the Oak Park pretest area and those within the broader Oak Park neighborhood.

A stakeholder meeting was held on November 6, 2006, that included representatives from the Oak Park pretest area, the Oak Park Redevelopment Advisory Committee, the City, and the consulting firms. It was noted during the meeting that the boundaries of the Oak Park pretest area were identified by agreement among a group of like-minded neighbors wishing to see the character of their distinctive area protected. However, other areas within Oak Park could also be suitable for form-based codes or similar planning efforts. Because there are few vacant lots within the Oak Park pretest area that could be developed with infill structures, the primary issue of concern is renovations and additions that are out of scale with established homes and lack the distinguishing architectural elements and



**Martin Luther King, Jr. Boulevard Community Workshop**



Figure 8, Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard Master Plan Concept Plan

characteristics of established older homes. However, some parts of Oak Park outside of the Oak Park pretest area have proportionally more vacant parcels, which have sometimes resulted in infill projects that, in turn, have resulted in local concerns about mansionization.

An Oak Park neighborhood meeting was held on January 18, 2007, and included representatives from the Oak Park pretest area, residents of the wider neighborhood, and representatives of the Sacramento Housing and Redevelopment Agency, the City, and the consulting firms. Participants took part in mapping exercises that encouraged them to identify valued areas as well as those needing change. A community image survey was carried out that helped to identify preferred architectural styles and elements, as well as preferred streetscape elements. A written survey was also carried out, but comments were particularly light at this neighborhood meeting. The results of the mapping exercise and meeting minutes are in Appendix A, "Meeting Notes, Oak Park Stakeholder and Neighborhood Meeting, Sacramento Form-Based Codes Pretest (January 18, 2007)."

The neighborhood assets and concerns described by residents at the neighborhood meeting reflect those of the larger area represented at the meeting.

- Appreciation was expressed for the character of older commercial and residential structures, the mature trees and landscaping, locally owned and operated commercial businesses, and the presence of detached garages along alleys.
- Concern was expressed that residential infill development, as well as renovations and additions, should be consistent with the existing context.
- A desire was indicated for attractive, walkable streetscapes, particularly along key streets such as Broadway and Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard. Residents mentioned the need for traffic calming measures, more bicycle amenities, improved crosswalks, more street trees, additional medians on Broadway, and better pedestrian access across State Route 99.
- Interest was shown in promoting mixed use and more locally owned businesses along Broadway and Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard.

### **Potential Policy Approaches**

The existing policy context noted above provides some guidance for addressing the concerns raised in the stakeholder and neighborhood meetings, including preserving the character of older buildings; providing adequate pedestrian amenities; and preserving or upgrading the quality of the public realm, including the protection of existing street trees and landscaping and adding new plantings. This section considers policy options addressing the issues originally raised by the pretest applicants-maintaining neighborhood character-as well as concerns raised during the community outreach process.

The tools appropriate for use in the Oak Park pretest area include:

- creation of a residential historic district,

- extension of the *Oak Park Design Standards and Guidelines* to cover the entire Oak Park pretest area and possibly beyond (the area north of the redevelopment project area bounded by Highway 50 on the northwest and Stockton Boulevard on the northeast),
- the creation and application of form-based codes to the Oak Park pretest area, or
- extension of the Design Guidelines, combined with form-based planning tools such as a pattern book.

It is important to keep in mind that these policy options are not mutually exclusive, but could be combined or modified to obtain the desired result. In addition, these policy options could be applied to other portions of Oak Park. For example, HEC identified a number of streets north of 12 Street (outside the pretest area) as including structures of historic value and interest that could warrant the protection a historic district might provide.

In addition to policy options that could be applied to the pretest area, the need for streetscape and pedestrian improvements along major streets such as Broadway and Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard was mentioned in the neighborhood meeting. As noted above, a master plan is under development for Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard. The City should consider whether to carry out a similar effort for the section of Broadway east of the intersection of Broadway and Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard.

### ***Creation of a Historic District***

Because a portion of the Oak Park pretest area has already been subject to a historic survey by HEC, pretest applicants could consider the possibility of working with the City to create an established historic district. A number of residential historic districts have already been created in Sacramento, some of them quite small, such as Alkali Flat South and Marshall Park.

Because only a portion of the Oak Park pretest area has been surveyed, pretest applicants would have to either redefine the boundaries of the pretest area to coincide with the survey area, or have the survey area extended to cover additional streets or sections of streets. This may or may not be cost prohibitive, depending on the number of neighborhood volunteers who could be recruited to participate in such a survey and their level of training and knowledge.

Creation of a historic district would promote the protection of the existing structures within its defined boundaries by requiring all infill construction, renovations, and additions to conform to strict standards, as defined by the City's Historic Preservation Ordinance. It should be noted that this is the most stringent option and that it has drawbacks, such as potentially higher renovation costs and limited stylistic flexibility. On the other hand, the standards have the potential to protect and enhance property values by preventing misguided rehabilitation and regulating new construction.

### ***Extension of the Oak Park Design Standards and Guidelines***

As noted in Figure 7, "Oak Park Pretest Area and Redevelopment Area," a portion of the Oak Park pretest area is within the boundaries of the Oak Park Redevelopment Area. As such, this portion is subject to the *Oak Park Design Standards and Guidelines*, which were intended to promote the construction of infill development, renovations, and additions that are context-sensitive and complement existing structures.

Pretest applicants could consider applying the design guidelines to the entire Oak Park pretest area. This is probably the simplest and least expensive option, as it would merely require the pretest applicants to coordinate with City staff to extend the administration boundaries covered by the design guidelines. In recognition of the preponderance of older buildings in the area north of 14 Avenue, the *Oak Park Design Standards and Guidelines* provide for a Residential Character Area, which has more stringent guidelines addressing architectural elements and site design. The southern portion of the pretest area is already subject to the guidelines of the Residential Character Area.

Residents could also consider creating a new character area, applicable to the pretest area, that provides for even more stringent guidelines suitable for the architectural features found there. This could be a new section, added to the *Oak Park Design Standards and Guidelines* that, again, would need to be extended to cover the entire pretest area.

### ***Application of Form-Based Codes***

Although the *Oak Park Design Standards and Guidelines* provide some information on neighborhood architectural styles, these are intended as informational only; they do not provide adequate detail to address the variety of architectural styles and elements found within the Oak Park pretest area with specificity. Form-based codes could provide additional direction by including such elements as an architectural pattern book that could provide guidance for future infill, renovations, and additions.

Pretest applicants could assist with the development of the pattern book by identifying architectural styles and elements from a comprehensive photo survey that notes the most common features. The pattern book could be used either as a separate, stand-alone tool, or in combination with the design guidelines. The latter is the preferable approach, as the design guidelines address issues that are unlikely to be fully covered by a pattern book. Whether the pattern book is used alone or in combination with the design guidelines, appropriate boundaries must be considered and extended, as necessary, to cover the identified area.

Although the pretest applicants identified a small residential area as the desired Oak Park pretest area, the use of form-based codes could be extended to other parts of Oak Park. It would be relatively straightforward to develop a pattern book representing the architectural styles found in the pretest area. However, given the wide variety of architecture found in the larger Oak Park neighborhood, which ranges from Highwater Bungalows dating from the late 19th century to contemporary infill homes, a comprehensive pattern book could potentially be time-consuming and cost prohibitive to create.

### ***Streetscape Improvements***

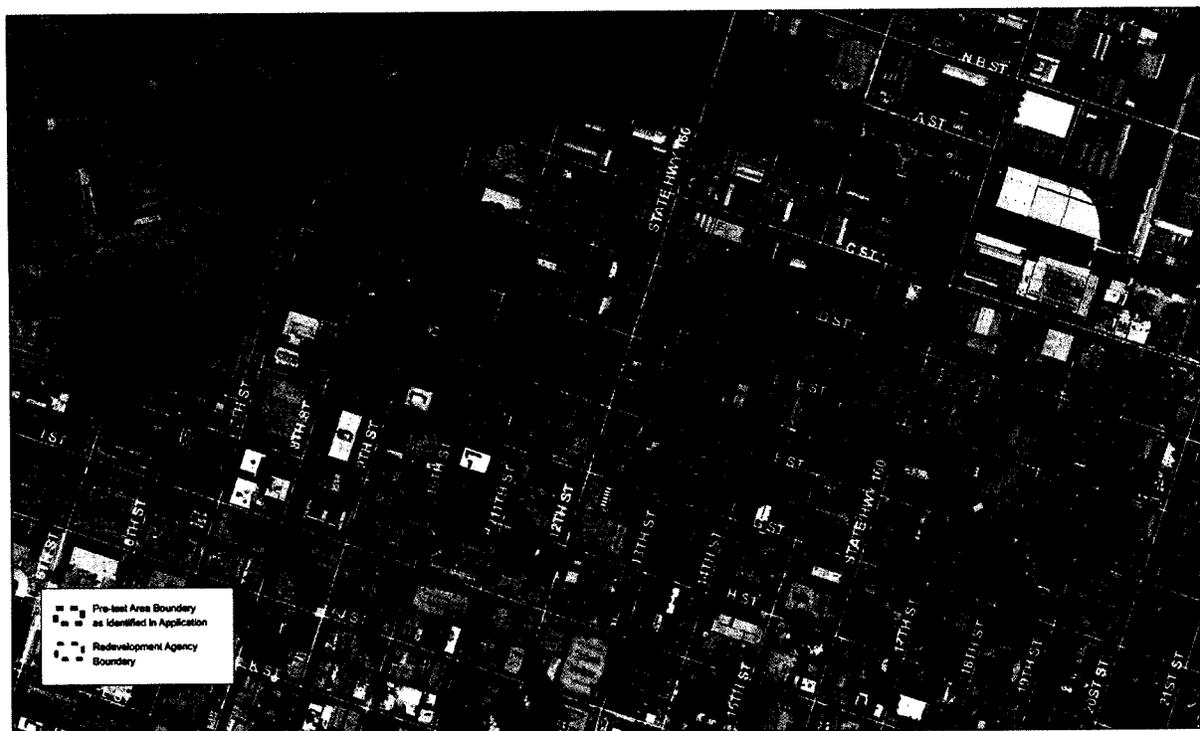
As noted in the comments on community outreach, Oak Park residents identified streetscape improvements as a chief concern, and a streetscape and urban design master plan is currently under way for Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard. Form-based codes could be incorporated into the master plan, potentially addressing the form and design of buildings along the corridor, the relationship of those buildings to the street, and the design of the streetscape itself.

The section of Broadway between Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard and Stockton Boulevard has not been addressed by previous or current planning and design efforts. The area that would most notably benefit from streetscape improvements might also benefit from the application of form-based codes that specifically address the desired built form.

# Alkali Flat

## Pretest Area Location and Description

Alkali Flat is located in the northwest portion of the Sacramento central city area. The neighborhood is bounded by the railyards to the north and west, downtown to the south, and Mansion Flats to the east. The boundary between Alkali Flat and Mansion Flats is 12<sup>th</sup> Street; however, the Alkali Flat Redevelopment Area extends to 13<sup>th</sup> Street, as shown in Figure 9, "Alkali Flat Pretest Area and Redevelopment Area," below. Alkali Flat is thus surrounded by areas with high growth potential, most notably the railyards and downtown, with 12<sup>th</sup> Street serving as an important access route into downtown and a potential location for further commercial and residential development.



## ALKALI FLAT / MANSION FLATS



Figure 9, Alkali Flat Pretest Area and Redevelopment Area

Existing structures in Alkali Flat display a wide range of architectural styles, from Victorian homes dating to the 1850s to a variety of contemporary styles and forms. The central portion of the neighborhood consists of single-family detached homes, with some multifamily infill (see photos on the next page). Commercial structures are located on 12<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> Streets, while the northern part of the neighborhood adjacent to the railyards consists primarily of industrial buildings, including the Crystal Dairy site.



Home on Seventh Street within the West Alkali Flat Historic District



Multifamily Residential Infill on F Street

Alkali Flat residents recognize the potential for redevelopment of existing properties, such as the Crystal Dairy, and for infill development. They also appreciate the established character of their neighborhood, particularly the older homes, some of which date back to the mid-19th century. Residents are concerned that development and redevelopment should be balanced with protection of the existing scale and character of the neighborhood. Particular concern was expressed about maintaining the integrity of the residential areas, which are located primarily at the center of the neighborhood along D, E, and F Streets. Greater flexibility may be possible along 12th and 16th Streets, which are major thoroughfares with the potential for additional commercial and residential development.

### **Existing Policy Context**

Figure 9 on page 23 also shows that the Alkali Flat pretest area falls within other study areas and planning jurisdictions, including the Alkali Flat Redevelopment Area. This is not a comprehensive survey of all planning documents relevant to Alkali Flat, but is intended to address the policy context that could affect the application of form-based codes to the neighborhood.

### ***Preservation Areas/Historic Districts***

Most of Alkali Flat south of D Street falls within a historic preservation area listed on the City of Sacramento Register of Historic Resources, as follows (see Figure 5 on page 11):

- Alkali Flat Central (roughly E and F Streets, between Ninth and 12th Streets)
- Alkali Flat North (11th and D Streets)
- Alkali Flat West (E, F, 7<sup>th</sup>, and 8th Streets)
- 12th Street Commercial Historic District (most of 12th Street between E and G Streets)
- Alkali Flat South (a small section of G Street)

The first three preservation districts are also listed on the National Register of Historic Places. With the exception of the 12th Street Commercial Historic District, these historic districts consist of single-family homes representing a mixture of architectural styles, including some structures that date to the early 1850s. More specific descriptions are available at the City's Web site at <http://cityofsacramento.org/dsd/forms>.

Renovations of, and additions to, contributing and noncontributing structures within the historic districts are subject to review by the City's Historic Preservation Department. City Ordinance 2006-063 (approved October 2006), which addresses historic preservation in the city and requires that historic district plans be enacted for all historic districts. District plans are intended to set goals for the preservation of historic districts and to identify the "standards and criteria to be utilized in determining the appropriateness of any development project involving a landmark contributing resource or noncontributing resource within the historic district" (Ordinance 2006-063, page 21). Because the Alkali Flat historic districts predate this ordinance, there are no district plans providing detailed guidance for Alkali Flat historic districts. Although such district plans may be developed in the future, the City's Historic Preservation Department must continue to rely on the U.S. Secretary of the Interior's standards for review of construction within the Alkali Flat historic districts.

Portions of the Alkali Flat Central and Alkali Flat West Historic Districts are within the boundaries of the Alkali Flat pretest area. Other Alkali Flat historic districts are outside the pretest application area, but in the interests of developing consistent policies for the neighborhood, they should also be considered as part of any future planning efforts that address the pretest area. Crystal Dairy, located on D Street, is not within one of the established historic districts in Alkali Flat. However, given the potential historic value of the structures, including 1013 D Street (occupied by Crystal Dairy since 1912), the City's Historic Preservation Department has retained HEC to survey the Crystal Dairy site.

### ***Alkali Flat/Mansion Flats Strategic Area Neighborhood Plan***

The *Alkali Flat/Mansion Flats Strategic Area Neighborhood Plan* (2005) cites neighborhood safety, parks and recreation, economic development, and traffic and parking as primary neighborhood concerns identified during the public outreach process. The document also notes a number of goals and action steps devised to address these concerns.

The following goals are relevant to the development and application of form-based codes:

- Goal 3.1: Increase awareness of construction standards in historic areas.
- Goal 3.3: Improve parking on 12th Street.

Although some steps have been taken to address these goals, additional attention could be given through planning tools such as form-based codes that could address standards for infill development and streetscape guidelines.

### ***Design Guidelines***

The *Alkali Flat Urban Design Guideline* [sic] were developed specifically for the Alkali Flat neighborhood in 1981, but were not approved by City governing boards, and so were never implemented. The design guidelines are notably lacking in photos and graphics that would help the user to interpret them. In addition, some of the design guidelines do not reflect current best planning practices. The document would therefore need significant updating to be of value to the neighborhood.

Alkali Flat is located within the Central City Design Review District and is covered by the *Central City Design Guidelines*. These *design guidelines* provide comprehensive principles for site and building design, with additional short sections addressing the 12th Street commercial corridor and the unique architectural characteristics of the Alkali Flat neighborhood (Section 4.C, "Alkali Flat"). The *Central City Design Guidelines* are currently used for the City's design review process. Any materials proposed by this document should be seen as supplemental to these design guidelines.

Design review is required before a building permit is issued for any new structure or alteration located within the Design Review District. Section 16 of the Sacramento Zoning Ordinance establishes the City's design review process and authority. The following types of projects will be reviewed by design review staff for compliance with the *Central City Design Guidelines*:

- new construction of any nonresidential use, including commercial, mixed use, and industrial structures;
- additions, rehabilitations, and any exterior modifications to any existing nonresidential use, including commercial, mixed use, and industrial structures;
- new construction of residential structures;
- additions, rehabilitations, and any exterior modifications to existing residential structures;
- new construction of parking lots and modifications to existing parking lots (restriping and resurfacing of existing parking lots are not subject to the guidelines, unless the proposed work [including "retrofitting"] involves changes in the existing layout, is related to exterior modifications for the site, or involves a change in use or other land use entitlement); and
- public improvements and projects in the public right-of-way.

For properties in the City's Official Register of Historic Structures and in Preservation Areas, the preservation standards shall govern. Preservation standards adopted by the City include:

- *The U.S. Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation and Guidelines for Rehabilitating Historic Buildings;*

- Listed Structures Plans (residential and nonresidential); and
- Preservation Area Plan.

### ***Sacramento Urban Design Plan Update***

The *Sacramento Urban Design Plan Update* is being prepared by WRT/Solomon-ETC for the Central City. The document focuses on the Central Business District, from R Street through the railyards and River District. Design guidelines will be developed as a part of this process; further information is necessary to determine the relationship of these design guidelines to any planning efforts that are proposed in this memorandum.

The document will be in the public forum for review and comment by early 2008. The document sets design standards for building form in the Central City and sets forth comprehensive recommendations for the design of the public realm and street design within the public way.

### **Stakeholder and Neighborhood Meetings**

Two public outreach meetings were held to identify issues of concern to Alkali Flat stakeholders and residents. The advantages and drawbacks of relevant planning tools, particularly form-based codes, were discussed at these meetings.

A stakeholder meeting was held on November 2, 2006, that included neighborhood representatives from the Alkali Flat Neighborhood Improvement Association, the Alchemist Community Development Corporation, and the Sacramento Housing and Redevelopment Agency. Neighborhood representatives noted that residents value the existing historic character of Alkali Flat and are interested in appropriately designed (with respect to scale, height, massing, setback, etc.) infill commercial and residential development, rather than replicating a particular style. Vacant, poorly maintained, and underutilized properties were of particular concern. Interest was expressed in commercial development along 12<sup>th</sup> Street supported by streetscape, parking, and pedestrian improvements. The community garden is viewed as a valued and successful addition to the neighborhood. Additional improvements to parks and open space would also be welcomed.

An Alkali Flat neighborhood meeting was held on February 15, 2007, that included Alkali Flat residents, interested residents and business owners from Midtown and Downtown, and a representative from the Sacramento Housing and Redevelopment Agency. The results of the 2006 Alkali Flat/Mansion Flats Community Workshop were reviewed by a representative from the Alchemist Community Development Corporation, a nonprofit community advocacy organization. A mapping exercise was combined with a template of prototypical buildings to determine preferred massing, densities/intensities, and land uses. A community image survey was also employed to identify preferred structural and streetscape elements within the Alkali Flat neighborhood. A comment card was distributed and resulted in extensive written responses. The results of the mapping exercise and comment cards are in Appendix B, "Meeting Notes, Alkali Flat Neighborhood Meeting" and Appendix C, "Comment Card Responses, Alkali Flat Neighborhood Meeting, Sacramento Form-Based Codes Pretest (February 15, 2007)." Results of the meeting can be summarized as follows:

- The neighborhood's existing historic character, diversity, and location are highly valued.
- Infill commercial and residential development is desirable if designed for compatibility with existing older and historic structures. Infill development displaying monotonous similarity across one or more blocks is not desirable.
- Higher density/intensity uses should be concentrated along 12th and 16th Streets. Structures that exceed three stories should be located closer to the Central Business District. Vertical mixed use was considered by many to be a good option for these corridors, although high-density residential with structured parking was also well received.
- The relationship between the overall neighborhood and large redevelopment efforts (the railyards, Crystal Dairy, Globe Mills) should be given particular attention.
- The public realm, particularly along 12th and 16th Streets, could be enhanced by better pedestrian features, more parking, and traffic calming.
- Opportunities to identify new lands for parks and open space should be considered as they arise (for example, Crystal Dairy).

## **Potential Policy Approaches**

### ***Redefining the Planning Area***

The pretest application addresses a small subarea within the Alkali Flat neighborhood focused along F Street. The results of the public outreach process suggest that the planning area boundary should be extended to include the portion of Mansion Flats east of and on both sides of 16th Street. At the very least, the planning area boundary should include parcels on both sides of 12th Street.

Extending the planning area boundary would allow for more consistent planning efforts. The proposed planning area is currently fragmented among the five historic districts in Alkali Flat, two additional historic districts in Mansion Flats, and critical areas and projects (Globe Mills, Crystal Dairy) that are outside any designated historic area. Consistent planning efforts that address the entire neighborhood would provide better results for such concerns as streetscape improvements, parks and open space, traffic, and parking. Because some architectural styles and site design features can be found in more than one historic district, it is advantageous to identify general principles that can be widely applied. These can then be supplemented by additional standards and guidelines to address specific areas and sites.

Given the strategic location of Alkali Flat, which is sandwiched between the Central Business District to the south and the railyards to the north, the City may wish to consider a neighborhood plan that would address land use, circulation, architectural and site design, and streetscape standards. A neighborhood plan should also take into consideration the preponderance of historic structures in the neighborhood,

and should provide guidelines that promote the overall coherence of the area, rather than the creation of a series of scattered, unrelated pockets.

### ***Land Use and Circulation***

As noted above, Alkali Flat has several important opportunity sites within or adjacent to the neighborhood: The Sacramento railyards, Crystal Dairy, Globe Mills, and the Sacramento County jury parking site at 8th and F Streets. Each of these sites should be considered for potential as a catalyst site that can influence adjacent and nearby development. The Alkali Flat neighborhood area should therefore be reviewed for land uses that could be appropriate for future development/ redevelopment in the neighborhood. These sites should also be reviewed for opportunities to improve automobile, bicycle, and pedestrian circulation, and for the potential to identify publicly accessible open space. For example, the Crystal Dairy site could offer bicycle/pedestrian trail connections to the railyards, and hence, to the trail system adjoining the Sacramento River.

### ***Architectural Design***

The land use plan described above could serve as the basis for a pattern book that defines infill prototypes for the variety of subareas within Alkali Flat, including the historic districts. Such a pattern book could help the neighborhood to promote desirable forms of development. Given the range of existing development patterns and architectural styles in Alkali Flat, the pattern book would need to include a number of prototypes, ranging from single-family homes appropriate to the various historic districts to vertical mixed use, office, and high-density residential suitable for the 12th and 16th Street commercial corridors.

### ***The Public Realm: Street Standards and Guidelines***

The public outreach carried out for the Alkali Flat pretest application process defined a number of concerns that are related to the design and use of the public realm. The public realm can be defined as all external space located between the front façades of buildings adjoining a public street (otherwise known as the streetscape), or publicly accessible areas such as plazas, parks, or even alleys. The Alkali Flat public outreach process identified public parking, sidewalk width, the presence of light rail as a barrier to pedestrian access, and preservation of the existing tree canopy as elements of the public realm that could be improved.

Form-based codes can address the relationship of the built environment to the public realm using a minimum of text and easily comprehensible graphics. The application of a "street hierarchy" can provide design standards defining such elements as:

- building envelopes;
- relationship of buildings to the site and to the public realm;
- the size and type of building extensions into the public realm;
- the width and location of sidewalks, parking lanes, bike lanes, and travel lanes; and
- the location of planting strips and landscaped areas.

Street hierarchies could be applied to streets in Alkali Flat such as 12th Street, 16th Street, and residential streets. Streets such as 16th Street that have different characteristics along its length might need more than one set of standards. Streets exhibiting a similar character, such as D and E Streets, could have a single set of streetscape standards.

Such standards do not address such streetscape elements as public art, street furniture, and landscaping materials. Therefore, street hierarchies could also be supplemented by design guidelines that provide text and graphics to encourage desirable streetscape design on 12th and 16th Streets.

***Additional Standards and Guidelines for the Historic Districts***

As noted above, the City Historic Preservation Department currently employs the U.S. Secretary of the Interior's standards for review of structural modifications to buildings within the historic districts. However, the Secretary of the Interior's standards address primarily architectural elements, leaving site design and landscape elements to be addressed by local ordinances. Such features as the minimal front-yard setbacks found on some streets in Alkali Flat are not addressed by the Secretary of the Interior's standards. The adoption of additional guidelines could address these site elements.

In addition, Alkali Flat possesses a wide variety of architectural styles and types, ranging from mid-19th century Victorian mansions to early 20th century workers' cottages. Although each historic district was originally subject to a survey identifying the contributing structures, these surveys are simple lists, without detailed descriptions of the architectural styles referenced. A pattern book identifying the various styles and their predominant features would be a useful tool that could provide guidance for infill development constructed in keeping with the existing context.

To summarize, of the three pretest neighborhoods, Alkali Flat would most benefit from a hybrid form-based code approach that fully addresses land use, built form, site design, and streetscape. The neighborhood's existing cultural resources and established character must be protected, while allowing for desired infill development, as that is defined by neighborhood residents and stakeholders.

# East Sacramento

## Location

East Sacramento is located east of the Capital City Freeway, south of Elvas Avenue and north of Highway 50. A small part of the northwest part of the neighborhood was identified by residents for the form-based codes pretest (see Figure 10, "East Sacramento Pretest Area").

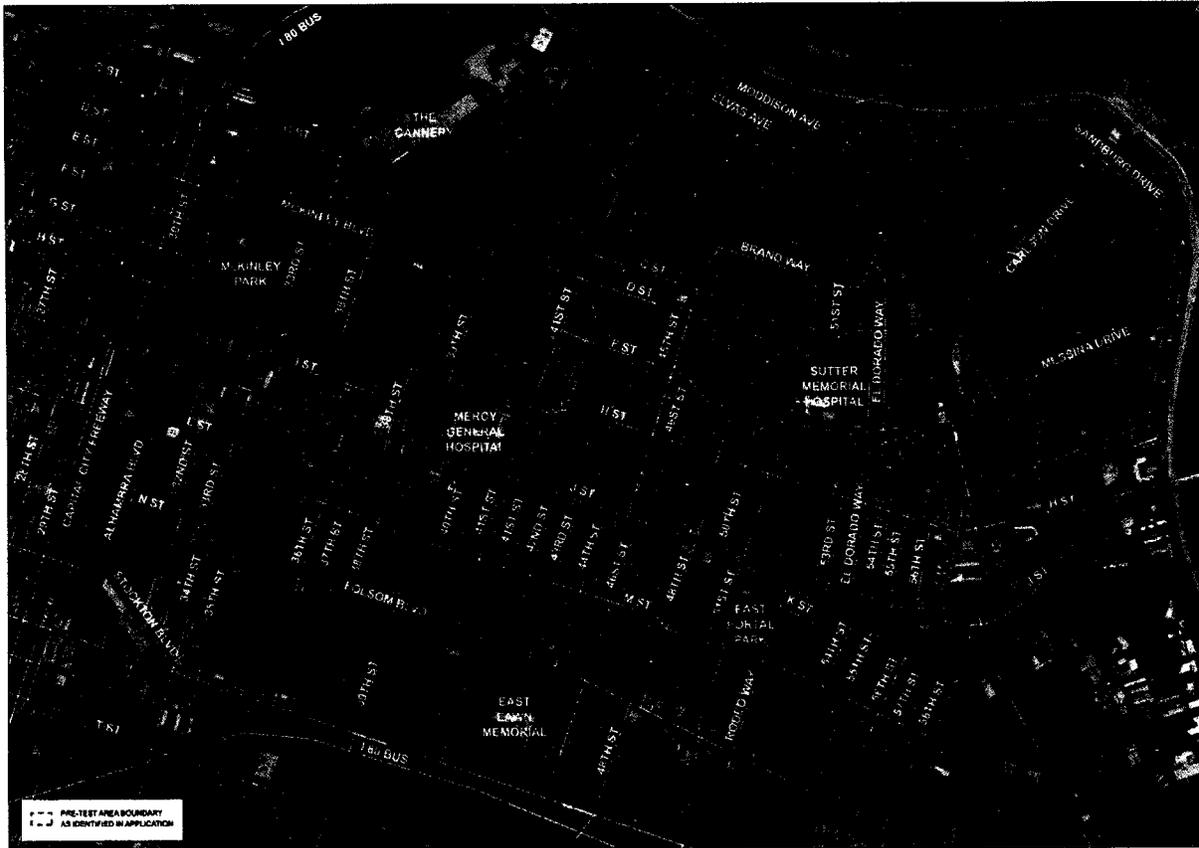


Figure 10, East Sacramento Pretest Area

## Existing Policy Context

### **Alhambra Corridor Design Guidelines**

The *Alhambra Corridor Design Guidelines* (1988) were developed by the City to address the form and function of the Alhambra Corridor as a whole, as well as of adjacent neighborhoods. The guidelines were intended to promote continuity and connectivity between neighborhoods within the Alhambra Corridor and between the Alhambra Corridor and East Sacramento and Midtown. For many years, the most prominent feature in the Alhambra Corridor was the elevated Capital City Freeway (also known as Business 80). The design guidelines place particular emphasis on architectural elements, landscaping, and pedestrian improvements.



*Spanish Revival Theme Established by the Alhambra Corridor Design Guidelines*

***Interim East Sacramento Design Review Ordinance (Ordinance Number 2007-026)***

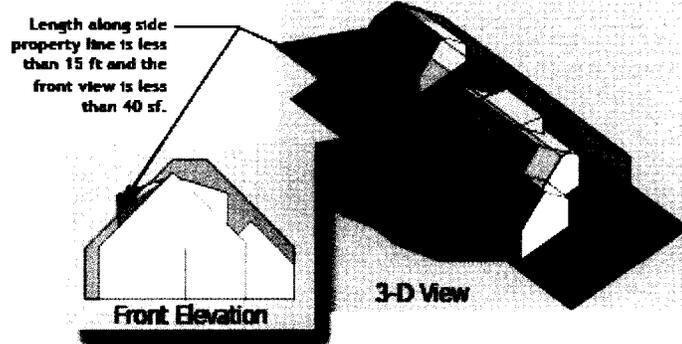
The Sacramento City Council approved the Interim East Sacramento Design Review Ordinance in April 2007 in an effort to protect the distinctive character of the East Sacramento area. The ordinance implemented a series of threshold “triggers” that help determine the level of design review for a new or remodeled home. The ordinance is intended to mitigate detrimental impacts of scale and massing of new and remodeled homes on the established character of the neighborhood.

The triggers established by the ordinance determine when a new or remodeled residential structure or addition (single-family, two-family, or second unit) exceeds the base threshold and becomes subject to contextual design review. The threshold for design review is determined by the portion of construction that occurs outside the base building envelope, which is an imaginary tent that encompasses the structure. The building envelope is comprised of the three-dimensional air space contained within the front-yard setback and the rear-yard setback of a lot and conforming to the following side-yard and roofline planes. The side-yard planes of the envelope begin at the side property lines at the average elevation of the finished lot grade at the front setback line and rise directly vertical and perpendicular to each side property line to a height of 12 feet. The building envelope then slopes inward at a 45 degree angle to form the roofline planes. (See Figure 11, “East Sacramento Design Review Ordinance Triggers.”)

## NO TRIGGER THRESHOLD - PROCEED TO PLAN CHECK

Contextual design review is not be required if your construction or remodel meets the following:

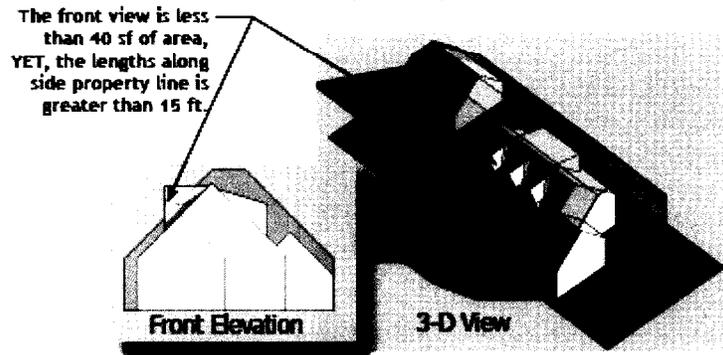
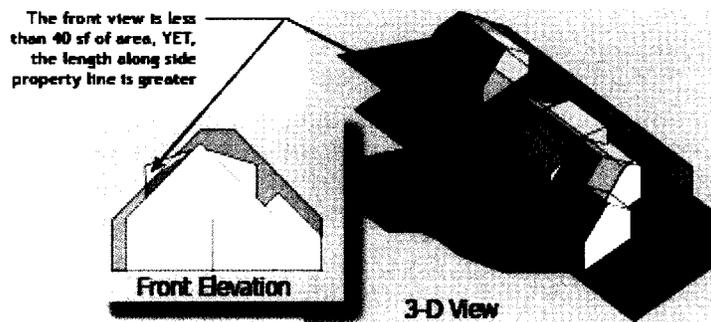
- Is up to or less than 40 square feet of front profile on the side of the building that is outside of the base building envelope.
- The length of the projecting construction along the side elevation does not exceed 15 feet aggregate.



## TRIGGER 1 THRESHOLD - STAFF LEVEL REVIEW

Staff level design review is required if the portion of the proposed construction that projects beyond the base building envelope is greater than 40 but less than or equal to 100 square feet on each side of the structure.

Staff level review is also required if the projection is 40 square feet or less of front profile on each side of the structure but the length of the projecting construction along a side elevation exceeds 15 feet aggregate.



## TRIGGER 2 THRESHOLD- STAFF REVIEW DESIGN DIRECTOR

Director level design review is required if the portion of the proposed construction that projects beyond the base building envelope is greater than 100 square feet of front profile on either or both sides of the structure.

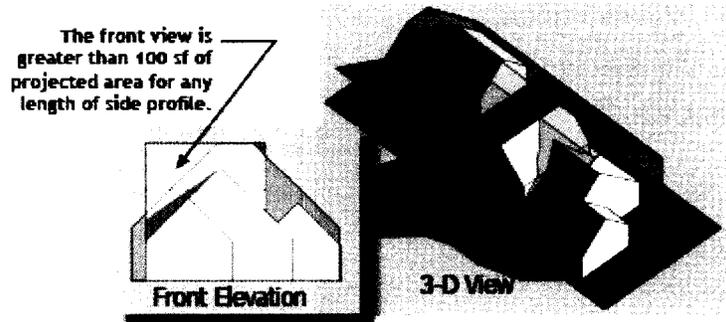


Figure 11, East Sacramento Design Review Ordinance Triggers

**65th Street/University Transit Village Plan**

The 65th Street/University Transit Village Plan provides land use, parking/circulation, open space, and infrastructure goals, policies, objectives, and implementation measures that will guide land use decisions over the next 20 years (see Figure 12, "65th Street Transit Village Urban Design Concept Plan," for the plan area boundaries). The plan will be implemented through general plan and zoning ordinance amendments, public improvements, and other development incentives. The plan provides a mix of housing types in East Sacramento, intensifies residential and commercial mixed use development opportunities to increase Regional Transit ridership at the 65th Street transfer station (bus and light rail), improves pedestrian and bicycle circulation and access to light rail, and strengthens the connection between California State University, Sacramento (CSUS), the East Sacramento neighborhood, and the 65th Street station.

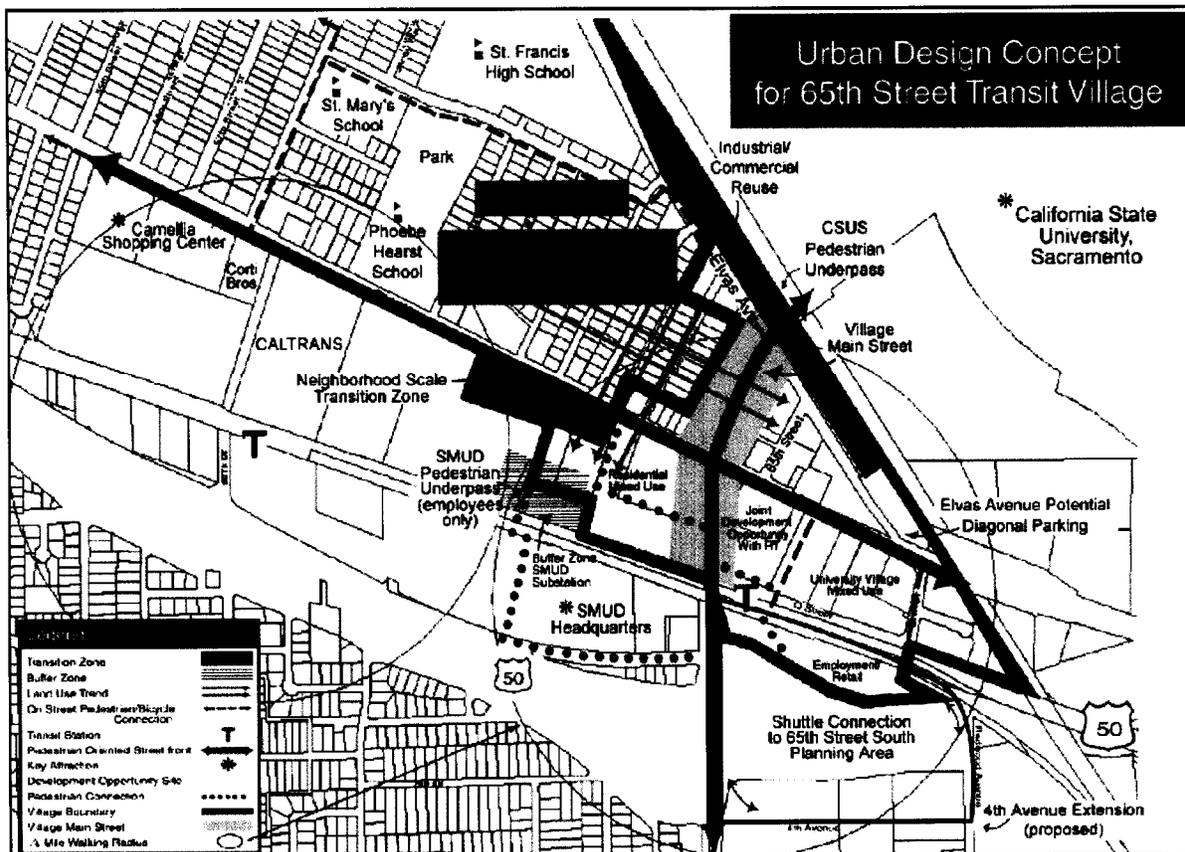


Figure 12, 65th Street/University Transit Village Urban Design Concept Plan

**Stakeholder and Neighborhood Meetings**

Two stakeholder meetings were held in November 2006. Neighborhood representatives at the November 6, 2006, meeting noted that the rationale behind the proposed pretest area boundaries included manageable size of area for implementation, uniformity of character, and neighborhood residents interested in and committed to form-based codes.

The applicants suggested the pretest area might be expanded to include the Cannery Business Park, with boundaries of Elvas Avenue, C Street, and McKinley Boulevard. Alhambra Boulevard is west of the pretest area and falls within the Alhambra Corridor Special Planning District and was therefore not included in the potential pretest area.

The applicants identified a number of concerns, including:

- the history of mansionization in the neighborhood;
- lot line adjustments resulting in large parcels and homes and tear-downs of existing homes;
- the frequency of additions that are out of scale with existing homes;
- the need to maintain the affordability of homes in the neighborhood;
- homes that are oversized or out of character as new residents wanting the amenities of larger, suburban homes apply these to East Sacramento; and
- the desire for pedestrian access and amenities.

There was a general consensus that residents want to preserve the existing character of the neighborhood. The positive existing character of the East Sacramento neighborhood includes homes with:

- similar floor plans, but differing facades;
- inconspicuous second stories;
- a roof pitch that is similar, despite differing home styles;
- a small window near each front door; and
- a mature tree canopy.

Residents noted that existing commercial uses and the Cannery Business Park (which serves as a local employment center) contribute to a positive neighborhood character.

The East Sacramento neighborhood is also subject to land use changes, including:

- new high-density residential development, which will increase traffic;
- potential sale of the Cannery Business Park and adjacent properties; and
- limited commercial uses (at the intersection of McKinley and 37th Street, and along C Street). There is some desire for additional commercial uses, if developed in keeping with established character.

At the November 30, 2006, stakeholder meeting, the participants identified the following issues and concerns:

- full disclosure of the pretest process;
- interest in the use of pattern books;
- a concern that design elements used in form-based codes be influenced by the community process; and
- the wish to exclude the East Sacramento neighborhood from the Alhambra corridor, when applying form-based codes.

Stakeholders identified a number of different subdistricts on the aerial map and discussed the fact that the character among these districts varied widely, making the development and application of a form-based code difficult. Other potential issues besides form-based codes include the Cannery Business Park, Alhambra Corridor, Mary Ann's Bakery, new multifamily development, and traffic.

On June 4, 2007, a neighborhood workshop was held to discuss and obtain neighborhood input on form-based codes and issues within the broader East Sacramento community. The workshop was attended by approximately 60 East Sacramento and Midtown residents and began with a presentation on form-based codes, pattern books, and design guidelines and how they vary from traditional zoning ordinances. After the presentation, which included a community image survey, attendees participated in several group exercises to identify areas of potential change and issues that a form-based code could address. Meeting minutes are in Appendix D, "Meeting Notes, East Sacramento Stakeholder and Neighborhood Meeting, Sacramento Form-Based Codes Pretest (June 4, 2007)."

Areas of potential change could include:

- North Alhambra Boulevard and B Street;
- Cannery Business Park (north of C Street);
- Mary Anne's Bakery (west of Alhambra Boulevard);
- The Village (north of C Street);
- Mercy hospital area (J Street from Alhambra Boulevard to 42nd Street);
- Elvas Corridor;
- CSUS/Armory area;
- Folsom Boulevard;
- Sutter Memorial Hospital;
- Alhambra corridor;
- 65th Street/Folsom Boulevard;
- H and J Streets; and
- Residential areas, via rehabilitation, infill, and second units.

Issues that the form-based codes might address that were identified in the neighborhood meeting include the following:

- traffic,
- mansionization and design not in character with existing structures,
- landscaping,
- high-density residential near existing low-density residential,
- type of commercial,
- lighting and safety,
- walkability,
- mixed use transit,
- historic preservation and demolition,
- parking,
- energy efficiency, and
- stormwater runoff and infiltration.

### **Potential Policy Approaches**

The pretest application addresses a small subarea within the northwest corner of East Sacramento near McKinley Park. The results of the public outreach process suggest that the planning area boundary should include this area as the initial planning effort. The larger East Sacramento neighborhood is sufficiently large and varied that initial steps should be modest in scope.

Because there is only a small amount of neighborhood-serving commercial uses within the pretest area and this is adequately addressed in the current zoning ordinance, there is little need to regulate land use. Therefore, it is recommended that the approach to the pretest area be to develop a pattern book/design guidelines that would address both residential and commercial rehabilitation and new construction. The guidelines should be consistent with those recently adopted in Oak Park and North Sacramento.

### ***Commercial Corridors and Opportunity Sites***

As ascertained through the public process, there are a number of areas that are susceptible to change, including the H Street, J Street, Folsom Boulevard, and Elvas Avenue corridors. These corridors display unique characteristics in their physical design and their relationship to the surrounding setting. All corridors and opportunity sites would be good candidates for a form-based code approach, with standards modified to address the differing characteristics of each corridor.

Streets or locations along the street exhibiting a similar character could have a single set of standards. The opportunity sites (Cannery Business Park, Mary Anne's Bakery, The Village, CSUS/Armory area, and Sutter Memorial Hospital) are likely to be very different from each other in terms of product type and should undergo an independent and intensive community planning and community design process.



*Housing Types in East Sacramento*

In addition to identifying desirable land uses, form-based codes can address the relationship of the built environment to the public realm using a minimum of text and easily comprehensible graphics. The application of a “street hierarchy” can provide design standards defining such elements as:

- building envelopes;
- relationship of buildings to the site and to the public realm;
- size and type of building extensions into the public realm;
- width and location of sidewalks, parking lanes, bike lanes, and travel lanes; and
- location of planting strips and landscaped areas.

***Additional Standards and Guidelines for Historic Districts***

East Sacramento has not been subject to a historic preservation survey and district designation. As was noted in the Alkali Flat discussion, the City’s Historic Preservation Department currently employs the U.S. Secretary of the Interior’s standards for review of structural modifications to buildings within the historic districts. However, the Secretary of the Interior’s standards address primarily architectural elements, leaving site design and landscape elements to be addressed by local ordinances. Thus, such features as setbacks are not addressed by the

Secretary of the Interior's standards. The adoption of additional guidelines could address these site elements.

In addition, like Alkali Flat, East Sacramento possesses a wide variety of architectural styles and types. A pattern book identifying the various styles and their predominant features would be a useful tool that could provide guidance for infill development constructed in keeping with the existing context.

In summary, planning efforts in East Sacramento should include the commercial corridors as well as residential neighborhoods. The application of form-based codes should take into consideration the neighborhood's diversity of built form and site design, with codes tailored to address specific corridors, residential areas, and commercial and opportunity sites.

## Conclusion

The pretest project has been useful in identifying the values and priorities that applicants, stakeholders, and other residents have for their respective pretest areas and wider neighborhoods. The stakeholder and neighborhood meetings associated with the pretest have also provided the information necessary to generate a set of potential implementation steps. All three pretest neighborhoods could benefit from the application of the following measures.

### ***Coordination of Planning Efforts***

Efforts taken by the City's Planning Division to implement measures suggested by the pretest process can be enhanced by incorporating the results of other concurrent planning efforts, when appropriate. For instance, the City's Historic Preservation Department is carrying out an Oak Park Historic Survey, which could potentially be applied to the Oak Park pretest area. A second example is the *Sacramento Urban Design Plan Update*, which is currently underway. This document could address such issues as massing, streetscape, and circulation along the 12th Street corridor in Alkali Flat.

### ***Definition of Planning Area Boundaries***

The pretest areas, as defined in the original applications, may not be large enough or sufficiently unique to warrant establishment as separate planning areas supported by distinct planning documents. The boundaries of the three pretest areas should therefore be reviewed and appropriate boundaries established by planning staff before follow-on efforts are carried out.

### ***Inclusion of Local Residents in the Implementation Process***

Some stakeholders and residents have expressed interest in participating in the implementation of the pretest process. Neighborhood support for implementation will be strengthened if planning staff enlists local residents to assist with specific tasks. For example, residents could take photographs of their respective neighborhoods to develop a database of local architectural and streetscape forms.

### ***Application of Existing Resources***

To make the best use of the City's resources, existing planning documents should be considered for application to the pretest areas when appropriate. For example, the *Oak Park Design Standards and Guidelines*, sponsored by Sacramento Housing and Redevelopment Agency for the Oak Park Redevelopment Area, could be extended to include adjacent portions of the neighborhood located outside of the Redevelopment Area.

### ***Emphasis on Hybrid Form-Based Codes***

Form-based codes, while relatively new, have been in practice long enough to warrant some useful commentary and review. Critiques of form-based codes suggest that they are most effective when applied in combination with more conventional planning techniques that address land use and design issues. Emphasis should be placed on developing a hybrid form-based code approach that is tailored to include these components in combination.

Therefore, this report recommends that any form-based code that is adopted by the City for application to a pretest area will address, at a minimum:

- built form,
- architectural elements,
- site design,
- relationship of buildings to the public realm, and
- streetscape design and amenities.

These aspects of neighborhood design will best be achieved through a combination of a form-based code and design guidelines, as deemed suitable.

While not necessary for all pretest areas, measures that address desired land uses will benefit development in rapidly changing areas, such as the commercial portions of East Sacramento. This is particularly important for Alkali Flat where significant infill and redevelopment efforts are underway or are likely to occur in the near future.

In addition to the general steps noted above, the following specialized measures should be considered for application to individual neighborhoods.

### ***Oak Park***

- Apply enhanced commercial corridors design guidelines to the section of Broadway between Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard and Stockton Boulevard, and to Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard south of Broadway to address the need for additional guidance regarding architectural style and massing.
- Implement historic districts in commercial and residential areas, as identified by the Historic Preservation Department.
- Apply the citywide *Minimum Design Standards For New Construction of Single and Two Family Dwellings* developed to assist design review of single-family and multi-family homes and promote high-quality new construction.
- Apply architectural pattern books in combination with design guides where supported by neighborhood residents to protect the established character of residential streets and neighborhoods.

### ***Alkali Flat***

- Apply the citywide *Neighborhood Historic District & Infill Standards* to historic districts in Alkali Flat, which are currently under development by the Historic Preservation Department. The new standards will supplement

the Secretary of the Interior's standards by addressing the unique conditions of Sacramento's historic districts.

- Of the three pretest neighborhoods, Alkali Flat is the only one that justifies the development of a form-based code, due to its strategic location as a transitional area between the railyards to the north and the Central Business District to the south; the potential for infill development and redevelopment of opportunity sites; the large number of historic districts; and the great variety of style and form displayed by existing structures.
- The proposed form-based code should supplement the *Neighborhood Historic District & Infill Standards* with a hybrid form-based code that addresses built form, site design, and streetscape conditions for the entire Alkali Flat neighborhood. Coordinate with the Sacramento Area Council of Governments, which is developing a Form-Based Codes Production Manual, with Alkali Flat as the test case. Consider extending the study area to include a portion of Mansion Flats extending to 16th Street.

### ***East Sacramento***

- Develop neighborhood pattern books and/or design guidelines to supplement the East Sacramento Design Review Ordinance (Ordinance Number 2007-026). Because the ordinance primarily addresses massing, additional guidance is needed for architectural elements and site design.
- Develop commercial guidelines to address commercial corridors (H and J Streets) and opportunity areas, which are not currently covered by other planning documents.

# Appendices

# Appendix A

**Meeting Notes**  
**Oak Park Neighborhood Meeting**  
**Sacramento Form-Based Codes Pretest**  
**January 18, 2007**

**Summary**

Participants were provided with a large map of the Oak Park neighborhood and were encouraged to identify assets and issues. The resulting comments are summarized below.

**Neighborhood Assets**

- Broadway Victorians, Victorian styled homes
- Broadway corridor and area north of Broadway, south of Y Street and west of Stockton is a cleaner area with more ownership and pride in neighborhood, homes not as crowded together
- There is an area that may have been part of Curtis Park but divided by the freeway - nice area and feel of the 1950s and 1960s, street details and character are charming with shade trees and fewer trees in area around 33rd and sound wall (east of 99, north of 12th Ave. along 99)
- Old theater near Broadway and Stockton - like the renovation and look of building
- Garages detached in the back with alley or deep driveway
- Like city feel with quaint mom and pop stores - local retail rather than corporate
- Stable residents
- Trees
- Smaller, older homes with landscaping

**Concerns**

- Two dwelling units on small lot - too cramped
- Rolled curbs/sidewalks provide less space for pedestrians to walk because cars park on the sidewalks
- Parking along street should be replaced by parking in back or side
- MLK is drab farther south, more industrial
- Alleys north of 12th Ave. are too long and have some prostitution and illegal dumping
- No buffer between sidewalks and street
- Dilapidated housing and storefronts
- Big multi-story houses with large massing on a street with mainly single-story homes, especially at 36th and Broadway by the church and 34th and 2nd Ave. by the bike shop
- More economic growth south of 12th Ave. that supports local retail
- More trees and groomed streets
- More attractive homes that promote home ownership
- More neighborhood serving businesses; locally owned businesses
- Pedestrian friendly streets
- Area south of 12th Ave., west of MLK and east of 99, infill single-family homes on vacant lots
- Need development at intersection of MLK and Broadway
- Mixed use on Broadway near Y Street
- Area along 99 near Y Street needs cleanup
- Apply medians all the way down Broadway
- Better entrance into Oak Park off of Stockton
- Area indicated on map as having cool character that should influence development, such as the use of brick (south of Miller, north off Y Street, west of Stockton)
- More access across 99

**Potential Planning Tools**

- Hybrid code that can control visual aspects and use
- Support diversity of neighborhood uses (range of retail)
- Prevent gentrification and allow uses that fit the community, target market that is consistent with the neighborhood and diversity of community
- Support long-term residents (shopping and affordable housing)
- New infill that looks like surrounding buildings
- Important to preserve existing character of commercial and residential neighborhoods
- Stoops and front porches that encourage social interaction

# Appendix B

**Meeting Notes**  
**Alkali Flat Neighborhood Meeting**  
**Sacramento Form-Based Codes Pretest**  
**February 15, 2007**

**Summary**

Meeting participants divided into four groups, each of which was provided with a large map of the Alkali Flat/Mansion Flats neighborhoods and a sheet with potential building types that could be constructed in the neighborhoods. Participants were then encouraged to identify issues and preferred development forms. The resulting comments are summarized below.

Several areas of emerged from the break-out group discussion:

- The neighborhood's existing historic character, diversity, and location are highly valued
- There is an interest in more commercial particularly along 12th and 16th Streets, with a willingness to consider higher residential densities than currently exist
- Opportunities to identify potential open space should be considered as new development is proposed

**Break-out Groups and Mapping Exercise**

**Group 1**

- Need parks and open space with connectivity to other parts of the neighborhood, and destinations beyond; open space could be identified in the Crystal Dairy redevelopment
- Need more historic lighting and pedestrian walkways
- Prefer residential component for proposed County office building on 8<sup>th</sup> and 9th

Preferred Building Types:

- 12th and 16th Streets – 3+ story office; higher density residential, such as live-work and condominiums with structured parking
- 12th Street – vertical mixed use
- C Street – 3+ story office; live-work
- Interior – diverse residential types (single-family homes, townhomes, garden court condominiums) as long as historic structures are protected

**Group 2**

- Neighborhood qualities that are valued include:
  - Historic character
    - Infill should complement historic buildings with similar materials and massing
    - Want to avoid Disney character
  - Diversity of culture and physical forms
    - Affordability; opportunities for families with children
  - Mature trees and landscaping
  - Good walkability
  - Light rail is a key asset
- Crystal Dairy should be focal point of the neighborhood, with open space and a community center

- Supportive of railyard development, but concerned that architectural styles complement Alkali Flat
- The Alkali Flat neighborhood should be involved in the railyard decision-making process
- More neighborhood commercial is desirable on 12th and 16th to encourage greater use
- Concerns:
  - Too many vacant lots
  - Poorly maintained industrial
  - Lack of streetlights
- 12th and 16th Streets not used as benefits to neighborhood, but as expressway
  - Should be designed so that people have a reason to stop, not simply pass through
  - Need higher density/intensity

### **Group 3**

- Block by block diversity is valued
- Prefer a mix of uses on each block, not monolithic development
- Appreciate the value of the “developed garage,” which provides parking, but adds uses

#### Preferred Building Types:

12th and 16th Streets– vertical mixed use

F Street – higher density residential, including townhomes, live-work, and condominiums with structured parking

7th Street – Neighborhood commercial, and vertical mixed use

### **Group 4**

- Garden could be combined with multi-family housing
- Development at the Crystal Dairy site should be 5 stories max
- The County property on 8th and 9th Streets should be 7-9 stories max
- Hotels on the east side of 16th Street could be converted to residential
- Mixed use and live-work units could be used for adaptive reuse of light industrial buildings
- Desirable features on live-work units:
  - Varied colors
  - Ground floor windows
  - Option for ground floor retail
- Desirable features on all buildings
  - Energy efficiency
  - Room for gardens
  - Community owned and operated businesses

#### Preferred Building Types:

- Large infill areas – vertical mixed use; live-work units
- 12th Street – Live-work and vertical mixed use
- 8th Street – townhomes
- F Street – vertical mixed use, live-work, condominiums with structured parking
- Crystal Dairy – condominiums with structured parking

***Follow-up Discussion***

- Should guidelines or code be used (“should” versus “shall”); some individuals prefer tighter regulations
- Foster more mixed use, neighborhood serving uses
- Participants in the 2/15 meeting include 8 local residents. 19 people from the Alkali Flat/Downtown/Midtown area participated. All expressed interest in form-based codes.

# Appendix C

**Comment Card Responses  
Alkali Flat Neighborhood Meeting  
Sacramento Form-Based Codes Pretest  
February 15, 2007**

The comment card questions are organized below by the number of respondents (in parentheses) giving each answer.

***What do you like best about the Alkali Flat/Mansion Flats neighborhoods? What features would you like to see preserved?***

- (10) Historic character and districts, Victorian homes
- (9) Mature trees
- (8) Diversity of income, architecture, residents
- (6) Proximity to work, Downtown, railyard, entertainment
- (5) Walkability on residential streets
- (3) Light rail
- (2) Historic lighting
- (2) Open space, parks
- (1) Community Garden
- (1) County jury parking at F and 8th Streets
- (1) Variety of birds

***What kind of infill development might be appropriate for Alkali Flat/Mansion Flats, and where should it go?***

- (9) Mixed use, including:
  - High density infill mixed uses on 12th and 16th Streets
  - Community serving retail
  - Create a destination location – would like a sidewalk café
  - Food stands, stores more than just the transit stop
  - Give people a stop rather than just a drive through
  - Commercial uses should be encouraged in residential blocks, and residences add diversity to blocks that are heavily commercial
  - See Santa Cruz downtown
- (6) Open Space:
  - Need more and larger community gardens
  - More natural areas or community garden – benches and areas to interact with other community members
  - Open Space (nature/garden areas), park benches
  - Community Center/park – maybe at Crystal Dairy
  - Crystal Dairy should develop under a comprehensive concept – perfect opportunity to create a neighborhood center (park, community center)

- (5) Family friendly:
  - Need schools
  - Family housing
  - Housing co-op
  
- (4) Architecture:
  - Within historic districts, new projects should not detract from listed resources, while not trying to replicate historic structures.
  - Enhance – make user friendly buildings that are moderate, but not necessarily “historic.” Don’t replicate historic structure, but don’t detract/blend with existing structures. Don’t have “blocky” development.
  - Whatever a given block lacks – areas that have tall buildings should be protected from becoming canyons.
  - Areas that are low and flat could accommodate tall sculptural buildings. Stop characterizing areas as “residential,” “commercial,” etc. We need various reasons for people to come to each block each time of day.
  
- (3) Need more street lighting
- (3) Neighborhood serving retail and grocery store (Ray Kerridge promised at NA6 for within Crystal Dairy)
- (3) Minimize traffic and other impacts of railyard development
- (2) Need a school
- (2) Make 12th, 16th, 15th streets more pedestrian and bike friendly and more like J Street in midtown.
- (2) Transit oriented development at Light Rail Station on 12<sup>th</sup> Street
- (2) Mix of housing, affordability for lower-income families and workers. More high-density housing 3–5 stories would be okay.
- (2) Human-scaled, pedestrian-scaled - break up mass
- (2) Preserve separate landscape strips for sidewalk.
- (1) Key development area: jury parking lots
- (1) Sustainability
- (1) Walkability

***What detracts from the physical appearance of Alkali Flat/Mansion Flats? (Examples: buildings needing rehabilitation, vacant properties, landscape, streets, etc.)***

- (10) Run-down areas, poorly maintained industrial properties, buildings that need rehabilitation, ailing infrastructure (sidewalks, etc.), vacant buildings, vacant spaces in functional buildings which are not in use due to traffic/parking
  
- (8) Vacant lots, unused spaces where trash accumulates

- (4) 12th, 15th, and 16th Streets have traffic that moves too fast and not a benefit to Alkali Flat
- (3) Large ugly parking structures, blocky office buildings, horrible 1970s architecture, outdated building designs
- (1) Lack of street parking on 12th Street and 16th Streets

***Are there any related land use issues that were not covered tonight? Please note your comments here.***

- Use green energy building standards for new development. Solar panel usage could lead to these buildings generating more electricity than they use. This is also less harmful to the environment.
- Avoid just moving in Starbucks, Subway, etc., and encourage community owned and operated businesses.
- Convert hotels to housing opportunities such as co-op housing.
- Bring nonexistent business/services to area such as ice cream parlor, unisex barber, Icee/Slurpee machine inside grocery stores with limited liquor license.
- 12th, 15th, and 16th Streets are good locations for denser development and higher buildings with a significant residential component.
- Dairy property is a good opportunity to create a community center, including park, community meeting spaces, school, etc.

# Appendix D

**Meeting Notes**  
**East Sacramento Neighborhood Meeting**  
**Sacramento Form-Based Codes Pretest**  
**June 4, 2007**

**Summary**

Participants at the June 4 workshop were asked to identify areas of potential change and other issues that might be influenced by form-based codes, as shown below.

**Group 1**

Most Vulnerable

- Lack of code enforcement
- New development on B Street; traffic at Elvas/Alhambra
- Putting in mother-in-law looking at back side neighbors
- East Sacramento has eclectic street image based on remodels in past
- One bath homes
- 2–3 bdrm-1-bath house typical
- Remodels location of garage to front trees
- Commercial area needs help

Risk Areas

- Transition residential to commercial
- Example-Michael Dunlevy business next to homes
- Small strip mall vs. Camellia Center (Dean Dance Center)
- Don't want to drive out to get to malls
- Big malls, big traffic
- Cannery Integration in residential area. But they have high rents and like large organizations i.e., state to rent to
- Keeping small businesses from going out on the freeway and commute to more affordable areas
- North Alhambra and B - large development, little traffic mitigation
- Affordable space for small business and mom & pop
- Put teeth in design approval process - not rubber stamps

**Group 2**

Areas of Change

- The Cannery (north of C) form-based
- Maryanne's Bakery (west of Alhambra) form-based
- The Village (north of C) form-based
- Mercy (J from Alhambra to 42nd) form-based
- Alhambra and Q form-based

Form-based influences and threats

- Traffic safety, quality of life
- Quality of design-(poor) not in character
- Landscape-if none
- High density in residential area
- Regular type of commercial that goes on
- Lighting-safety
- Walkability-too much traffic going by

### **Group 3**

Form-based code can influence

- Poor quality design
- Incompatibility with neighborhood-McMansion
- Density
- Mixed use-transit

Area of potential Change-where form-based code might influence

- Centrage area
- C Street-Cannery (American Can)
- Elvas Corridor
- CSUS/Armory area
- Folsom Commercial Corridor

### **Group 4**

Areas of change

- Cannery
- Centrage
- Sutter Hospital may go
- Mercy Hospital bigger
- Alhambra corridor
- 65th/Folsom-TOD
- Mercy outpatient goes

Issues

- Elvas-impacts
- Whole area at risk
- Out of scale structures
- Traffic-air quality impacted by congestion
- Jobs housing imbalance

### **Group 5**

Priorities

- Scale, quality of design (keep the community spirit in quality of design)
- Sensitive areas that form-base can help
- 34th street at Stockton Blvd-T Street-what will the future bring to this area in development?
- Mercy Hospital and Sacred Heart School and the intense cannery development
- The proposed village development and impact on East Sacramento and Elvas Avenue
- Limit in size and scale of remodels and new houses
- Major concerns with historic preservation and the lack of tough laws to stop demolition of homes and neighborhoods.

### **Group 6**

Areas of Change

- All of J Street (Mercy Hospital Area)
- Elvas and C street/residential/the Cannery
- Alhambra Commercial area
- Camellia shopping center-need landscaping
- St. Francis High School-adding a cafeteria

- Area around Mercy Hospital-should not go west of 39th

#### Issues

- Poor quality of design
  - Camellia Shop Center
  - Rite Aid 48/J
- Parking lot on Alhambra/Rite Aid
- Safeway parking lot on Alhambra
- Increased density
  - Not a lot at Cannery

#### **Group 7**

What is form-based design?

Concern-increase development will occur along

- Alhambra/Capitol City freeway
- Stockton Blvd.
- Folsom 48th and 65th
- Elvas near Sacramento State

#### Issues

- Commercial encroachment on housing
- Too much density
- Does form-based code recognize energy efficiency?-solar roofs etc.
- How does this respond to storm water runoff and infiltration
- Respond to changes in technology

#### **Group 8**

##### Issues

- Existing neighborhood
- Reasonable remodel/teardown rebuilds

##### Areas of Change

- Cannery
- Mary Ann's Bakery-upper Alhambra
- Mercy
- Sutter Memorial - Future?
- Village
- Elvas Avenue-demand for commercial
- 56th and Elvas Commercial

#### **Group 9**

##### Areas of Change

- Cannery and "Centrage"
- Mercy Hospital area
- Sutter Memorial Hospital
- North end of Alhambra

##### Issues

- Preservation of single family homes, maintaining architectural integrity of the area
- Anything that brings more traffic or diverts traffic to residential streets, causing lower safety and lower quality of life, more noise

- Think Green in all projects!
- No freeway bypass through East Sacramento
- Enforcement of existing codes and laws
- Compromising the treasure that East Sac is
- Strategies to decrease asphalt not expand asphalt
- Sustainable development

## **Group 10**

### Issues

- McMansionization - too much house for the lot size
- Generic design that could be anywhere in California, no sense of place as you travel through
- Height that blocks trees and light and looks down on other yards and houses invading privacy.
- Bare concrete with no trees and landscape
- Line and design must be in harmony even if style are different
- "Mother in law" expansions all over US high density apartment complexes like 65th Street as a way to increase density without condo-ization
- Common architectural themed streets vs. mixed architecture streets-different rules needed, especially residential
- Maintain large and small mixed housing so people don't have to leave neighborhoods as they cycle through family start up to empty nest
- Live and work in same area-home based offices
- Affordable space for mom and pop business
- 65th and Folsom to east to change - needs form-based codes
- Traffic Issues

### Areas of Change

- Conversion of commercial corridors H/J/ Folsom from small neighborhood shops to larger chain-based stores with corporate architecture
- Caltrans/Cannery and other large spaces that define the image of nearby neighborhoods
- Neighborhood serving businesses as destination sites that bring added traffic

## Attachment 3

**SACRAMENTO AREA COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS  
FORM-BASED CODES HANDBOOK ANNOTATED OUTLINE DRAFT**

5 SEPTEMBER 2007

DAVID EVANS AND ASSOCIATES | SERA + URBSWORKS URBAN DESIGN | PB PLACEMAKING

## SECTION 1: PURPOSE OF THE HANDBOOK

### SUBSECTION 1.1: FACILITATE BLUEPRINT PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION

A) What is the Blueprint?

A paragraph summarizing the Blueprint Project and the desired outcome.

B) Growth Principles

Discuss that a strong link between land use and transportation, good urban design, inviting pedestrian environments, a mix of land uses, etc., are all important for creating the livable communities envisioned in the Blueprint. Indicate that much of the Blueprint is based on 7 Growth Principles (a summary description of each will be provided).

- Transportation Choices
- Mixed-Use Developments
- Compact Development
- Housing Choice and Diversity
- Use of Existing Assets
- Quality Design
- Natural Resources Conservation

C) What Is a Form Based Code?

As will be explained in more detail in this handbook, a form based code is much more focused on the design of buildings and the public realm rather than a zoning ordinance focus on uses with less concern about design. Because the successful implementation of the Blueprint principles will require a regulatory approach, which is more attuned to design, a form based code is regarded as a potentially valuable tool help communities shape their future.

### SUBSECTION 1.2: PROVIDE GUIDANCE TO CITIES AND COUNTIES

A) Part One – What Is a Form Based Code?

The form based code techniques are described and compared with conventional zoning techniques.

B. Part Two – Creating a Form Based Code

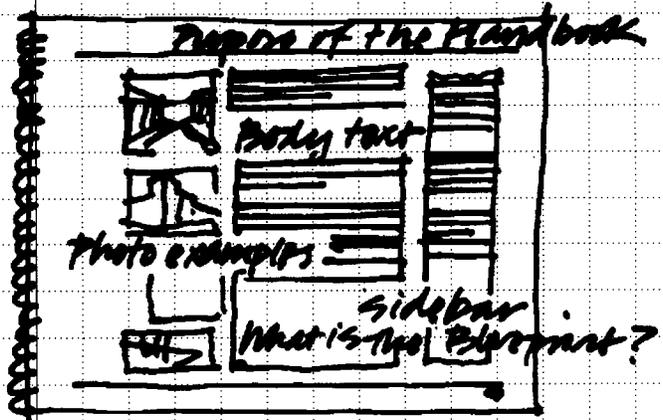
This part of the handbook provides the general process and recommendations to develop a FBC and integrate it with the community's zoning and development regulations.

C. Part Three - Case Studies

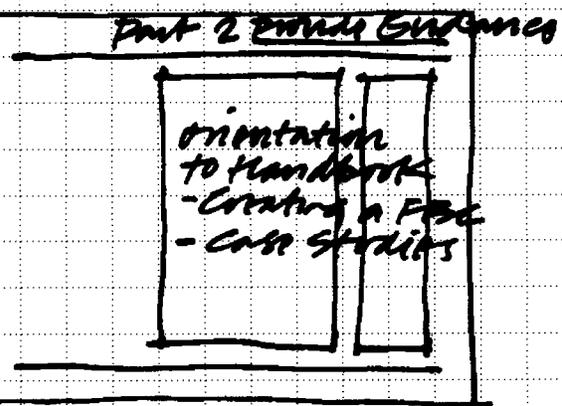
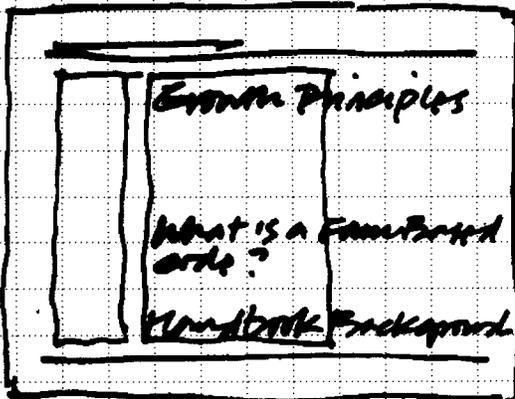
To help illustrate how a form based code might be applied to real world situations, this portion of the handbook will examine how it could be used in four example situations with very different characteristics and planning issues.

SECTION ONE:  
PURPOSE OF THE  
HANDBOOK

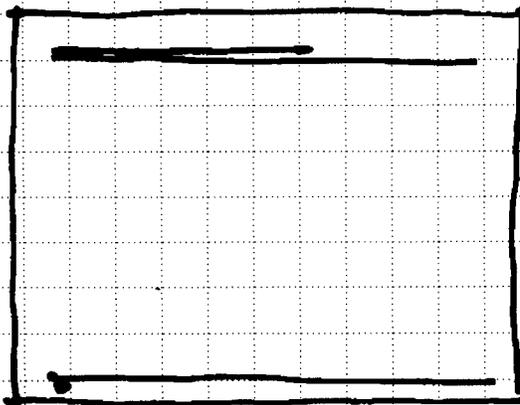
- navigation guide for handbook
- brief overview + orientation to following chapters



→ Purpose of the →



→ Handbook - approximately 4 pages →



## SECTION 2: WHAT IS A FORM BASED CODE?

### SUBSECTION 2.1: CONVENTIONAL ZONING AND FORM BASED CODE COMPARISON

#### A) Conventional Zoning Regulations

This will include a discussion of the following:

- Originally developed to segregate incompatible uses (e.g., industry from residences).
- Continue to retain an emphasis on regulating uses within identified districts.
- Often pay minimal attention to building form and site design.
- Many zoning ordinances originated during the '50's and '60's. Although amended since then, many continue to have an auto-oriented bias from that era (e.g., detailed parking standards but no on-site circulation requirements for pedestrians).
- Standards and design requirements often apply generally throughout a district or the entire community.
- Zoning requirements are not always directly linked to the implementation of a specific planning vision.

#### B) Form Based Code (FBC) regulations

This will include a discussion of the following:

- Minimal emphasis is placed on regulating uses.
- Mixed-use is encouraged.
- A focus on building form and design is used to promote compatibility between different uses.
- Emphasis is placed on creating pleasant and comfortable streetscapes and public areas by integrating the building edge with the street environment and public realm.
- A clear and articulate vision of what the community wants is the necessary foundation for a form based code.

### SUBSECTION 2. 2: FORM BASED CODE IN PRACTICE

#### A) FBC Elements

This would include a short discussion about how there are essential elements, such as uses, basic setback/building height standards, landscaping, buffering requirements, environmental regulations, etc., which appear in both conventional zoning and FBC. As discussed above, it is mainly a matter of emphasis given to these and design issues, which define the difference between the two regulatory approaches. Also, FBC is often applied to specific planning areas as a supplement to the community's zoning and development regulations.

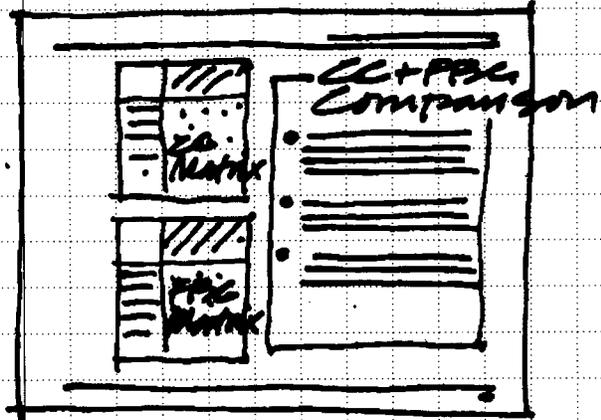
#### B) Advantages of the FBC approach

The following items will be discussed:

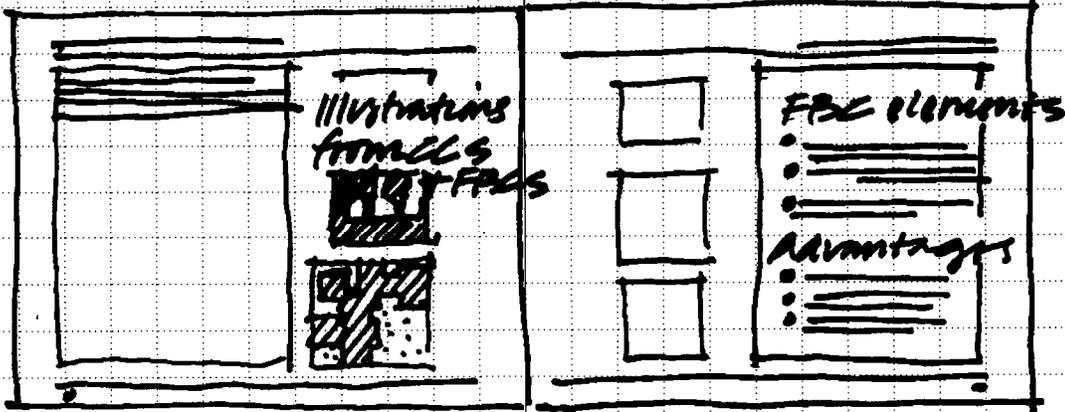
- A brief discussion in this section will indicate that to some extent, all of the seven growth principles require thoughtful design solutions to be successful. For example, providing transportation choices requires more than just furnishing sidewalks and bike lanes. It requires locating different uses and destinations closer together, careful design of the streetscape, and integrating private and public development to create a safe and inviting public realm.
- More focus on what the community wants, not what it doesn't.
- More emphasis on how development works for people by providing a good urban environment.
- Tailored to fit a specific place or neighborhood.
- Requires community involvement and planning upfront to establish a clear vision, sense of purpose, and direction.

SECTION TWO:  
WHAT IS A  
FORM BASED CODE?

- Comparison
- Elements
- Advantages

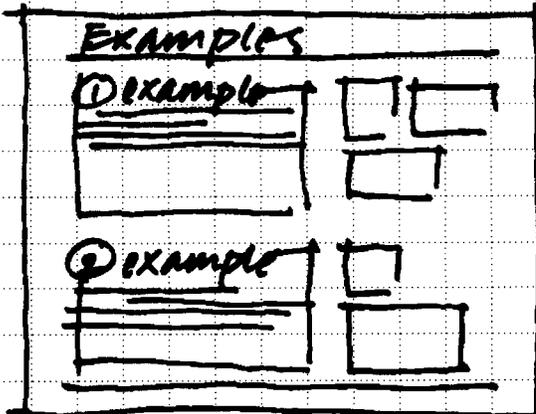


Comparison →



2-4 pages →

Form-Based Code →



in practice →

- The plan vision coupled with a form based approach enable communities to create places to come back to and not just travel through.
- 

C) Examples of FBC

Short summaries of FBCs will be provided, especially as they relate to the context of the four case studies:

- Hercules, CA
- Petaluma, CA
- Rancho Cordova, CA

Provide examples from these codes that relate to all, or at least some, of the four case study situations.

### SECTION 3: THE WORKBOOK—DEVELOPING A FBC

The important steps in creating a form based code are:

- Developing a Community Vision
- Determining What Should be Regulated and Why?
- Auditing the Existing Code
- Choosing a Regulatory Approach
- Organizing and Simplifying the Code
- Conducting a “Road Test” and Monitoring

#### SUBSECTION 3.1: COMMUNITY VISION

A) Community Outreach and Involvement

- Public
- Developers
- Agencies/Departments
- Property owners

Note here that because a FBC is more place- and context-based, there needs to be active involvement at all levels from the beginning. Maybe the Sacramento FBC “pretest” for Alkali Flat could be an example. Perhaps some editorial comments about how the FBC needs to work from the perspective of these four general groups.

B) Creating a Vision

The key is for the community to identify the desired outcome as it relates to the seven growth principles. The key elements for the plan’s success must be identified.

#### SUBSECTION 3.2: WHAT SHOULD BE REGULATED AND WHY?

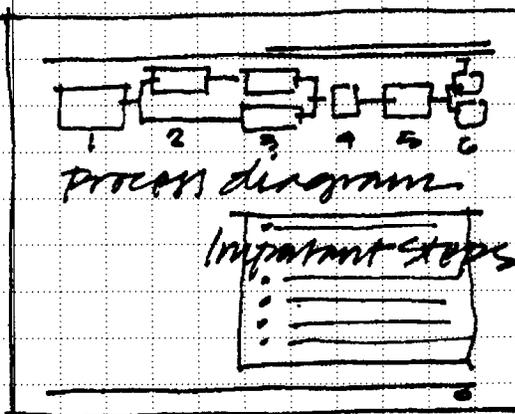
A) Define the Affected Area

Indicated that a FBC needs to be tied to a specific area or district, and give examples.

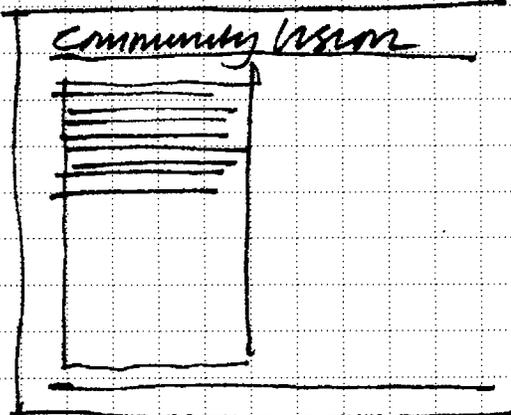
B) Identify Important Regulatory Elements to Achieve the Vision

The plan and vision will have specific elements that define the desired outcome for the community.

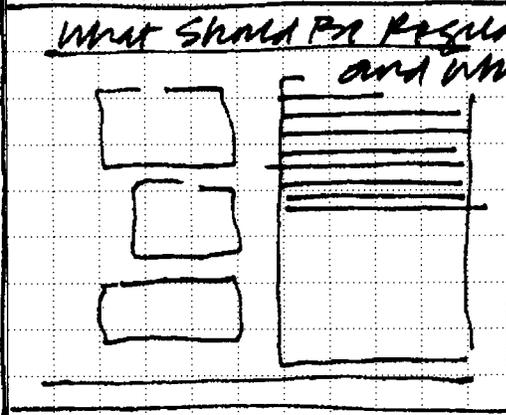
The Workbook



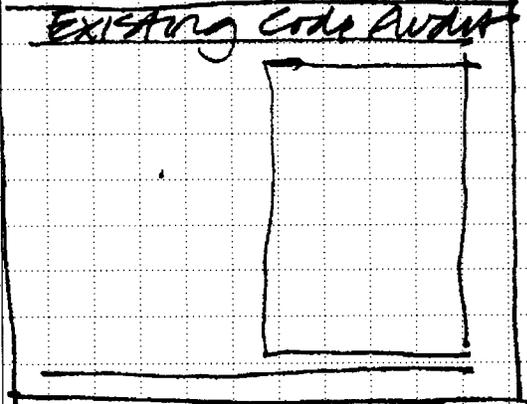
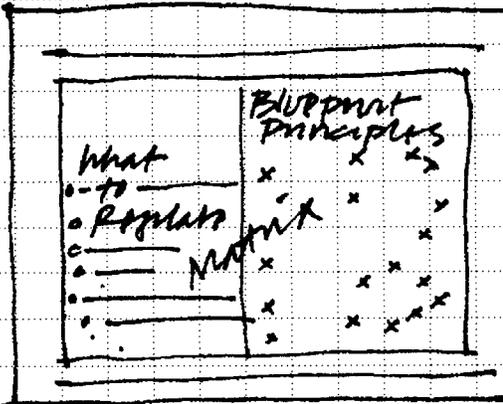
Community Vision



What Should PR Regulate and Why?



Existing Code Audit



### SUBSECTION 3.3: EXISTING CODE AUDIT

A) Create a Checklist

The important elements identified in the plan document should be listed into a checklist.

B) Code Evaluation

Using the checklist, the current zoning regulations should be evaluated systematically for the degree to which they would enable implementation of the plan (perhaps a range from very supportive to contrary). The current code deficiencies should be identified and summarized.

### SUBSECTION 3.4: CHOOSE A REGULATORY APPROACH

A) Conventional or FBC Tools

Have a discussion here about using the audit to determine the right regulatory approach. Indicate that some type of blend between conventional and FBC is appropriate.

B) Standards v. Guidelines

Indicate that standards should generally be used for development and design elements that are 1) essential for successful plan implementation and/or 2) are relatively easy to apply clear and objective language. Guidelines should generally be used for development and design elements that are 1) desirable but not essential for successful plan implementation and/or 2) are more subjective in nature and difficult to distill into quantifiable standards.

C) Regulations v. Incentives

Discuss how regulations should be used to set the “floor” and that incentives can be a good way to encourage developers going beyond the minimum.

### SUBSECTION 3.5: ORGANIZE AND SIMPLIFY THE CODE

A) Proper integration with existing code

B) Amendment v. rewrite

C) Make it readable

D) Use of illustrations/diagrams

### SUBSECTION 3.6: ROAD TEST AND MONITORING

A) Road Test

A description will be provided about trying to apply the draft code provisions to actual past development applications to determine how well the draft addresses real world development and design issues. Determine if the draft code would enable successful plan implementation without being unnecessarily burdensome to the applicant. Amend the draft as necessary to respond to issues identified during the test.

B) Monitoring Performance

Indicate that this is a continuation of the road test after the code provisions have been adopted.



## SECTION 4: CASE STUDIES

### SUBSECTION 4.1: INTRODUCTION

The purpose of the case studies is to illustrate how the FBC development process described in Section 3 could be applied in different situations. It must be emphasized that while these are real places, they are hypothetical examples to only show how the FBC process might be applied – not to provide a plan and ordinance for the city to implement.

### SUBSECTION 4.2: DEVELOPMENT SCENARIOS

#### A) Urban Infill – Sacramento

City Profile

Study Area Context and Issues

Developing a FBC

- Developing a Community Vision
- Determining What Should be Regulated and Why?
- Auditing the Existing Code
- Choosing a Regulatory Approach
- Organizing and Simplifying the Code
- Conducting a “Road Test”

#### B) Suburban Infill – Citrus Heights

City Profile

Study Area Context and Issues

Developing a FBC

- Developing a Community Vision
- Determining What Should be Regulated and Why?
- Auditing the Existing Code
- Choosing a Regulatory Approach
- Organizing and Simplifying the Code
- Conducting a “Road Test”

#### C) Small City Downtown Redevelopment – Auburn

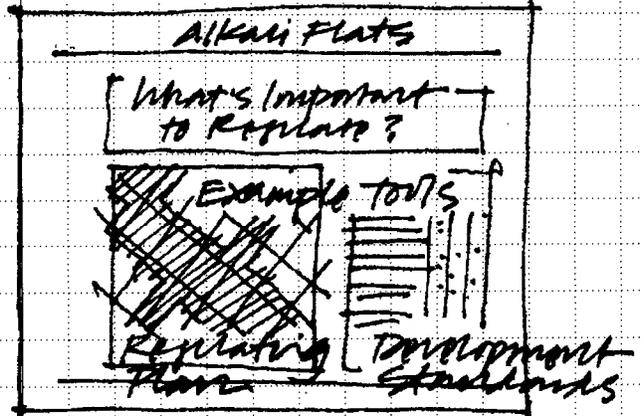
City Profile

Study Area Context and Issues

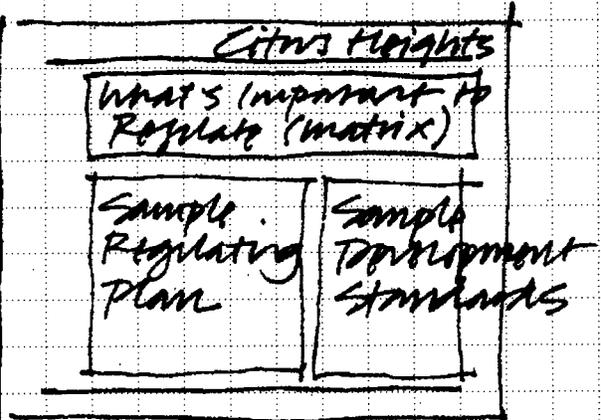
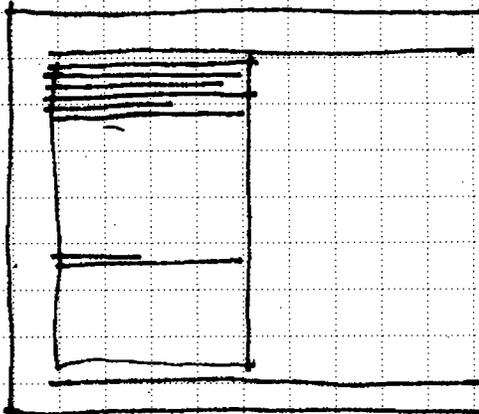
Developing a FBC

- Developing a Community Vision
- Determining What Should be Regulated and Why?
- Auditing the Existing Code
- Choosing a Regulatory Approach
- Organizing and Simplifying the Code
- Conducting a “Road Test”

Case Studies

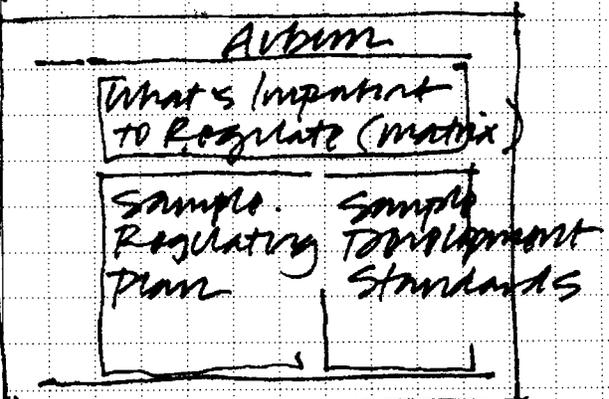
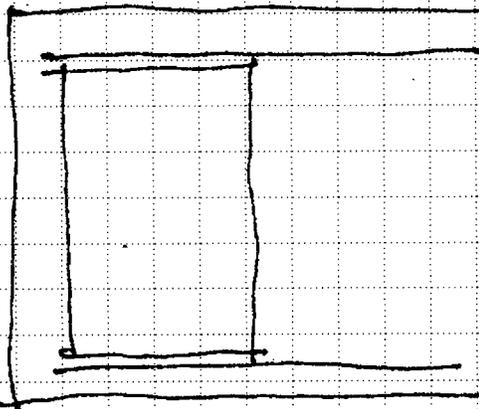


2-4 pages for



each case study →

2-4 pages



D) Greenfield Development – Roseville

City Profile

Study Area Context and Issues

Developing a FBC

- Developing a Community Vision
- Determining What Should be Regulated and Why?
- Auditing the Existing Code
- Choosing a Regulatory Approach
- Organizing and Simplifying the Code
- Conducting a “Road Test”

SUBSECTION 4.3: CONCLUSION

The conclusion will stress the importance of customizing the approach to fit the context and specific needs of each community. The discussion will be organized around the six bullets (“Developing a Community Vision,” “Determining What Should be Regulated and Why,” etc) detailed in each case study.

