

# Fair Oaks Boulevard Concept Plan

## Carmichael's Main Street



prepared by: Sacramento County Planning  
with assistance from: RACESTUDIO

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# Executive Summary

The Concept Plan process has provided an opportunity for Carmichael residents, property owners and County departments to participate in creating a design concept for Fair Oaks Boulevard. The Concept Plan illustrates Draft General Plan and Carmichael Community Plan draft policies, addresses the creation of a special planning area (SPA), and compares roadway design options. Specifically, the concept plan illustrates ways in which the community's desires for Fair Oaks Boulevard can be meshed with the roadway project proposed by the County of Sacramento.



*Above:  
The planning Focus Group expressed the desire to create a street that reestablished Fair Oak Boulevard's social and economic status for the Carmichael community.*

*Below:  
View of concept plan from the west*

Fair Oaks Boulevard winds through well established and mature unincorporated neighborhoods in Sacramento County, which are surrounded by the region's fast growing cities. The community envisions the transformation of the District into a pedestrian-friendly mixed-use place. There is an opportunity to demonstrate how community and General Plan policies can be implemented on Fair Oaks Boulevard.

The planning concepts for the Old Colony Main Street District envision a "big beautiful boulevard" where land uses cluster around open spaces, common areas and streets to create a sense of place. Parking lots and storefronts are to be connected with shared driveways and sidewalks. New land uses will provide improved commercial services for the community.

Implementation of the Fair Oaks Boulevard Concept Plan will require a long-term commitment by the County, property owners and community. Overcoming the challenges inherent in revitalizing aging strip commercial corridors demand a comprehensive approach to updating regulations, committing necessary staff time, private sector leadership, and strategic public investment.



## Fair Oaks Boulevard Concept Plan



*Left:*

*This sketch shows the scale and quality of commons spaces envisioned for ownership townhouses located between Fair Oak Boulevard's commercial uses and adjacent residential neighborhoods. Townhouses would be designed to transition in scale to the neighborhoods.*

*Below:*

*The Focus Group wanted to introduce open spaces that could provide a sense of place and a destination for the community. This sketch shows a new grocery store and "Old Colony Green" along the Boulevard.*



*Right:*

*The Focus Group imagined a future where Fair Oaks is a comfortable and safe walking environment. This sketch shows a planting strip with shade trees along the street. Storefronts facing the sidewalk.*

*Below:*

*The roadway improvements planned for Fair Oaks Boulevard will displace parking spaces from some of the area's parcels. This sketch shows how the roadway project could connect sites together with shared parking access and pedestrian pathways.*



**Recommended Organizational Actions:**

- Roadway Project Implementation—Form an implementation team comprised of County staff, citizens and property owners to provide feedback on the implementation and roadway design.
- Colony Main Street Organization—Have County Economic Development staff work with the Carmichael Chamber of Commerce, citizens, and property owners to organize property owners into a promotional and advocacy group.

**Recommended Regulatory Actions:**

- Special Planning District—Prepare the necessary documentation and environmental review to create the Carmichael Colony Main Street SPA. Include recommendations for parking, land uses and development standards.
- Design Guidelines Application—Apply the Community Design Guidelines to the roadway design and use the Fair Oaks Boulevard Concept Plan as the urban design concept that the guidelines support.

**Recommended Administrative Actions:**

- Staff Commitment—The County should allocate the resources to make sure planning, economic development and transportation staffing is adequate for planning and implementing the Concept Plan.



*Above and Below:*

*These model images show how the Concept Plan anticipates blending residential and commercial uses into connected and pedestrian friendly places.*



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# Introduction

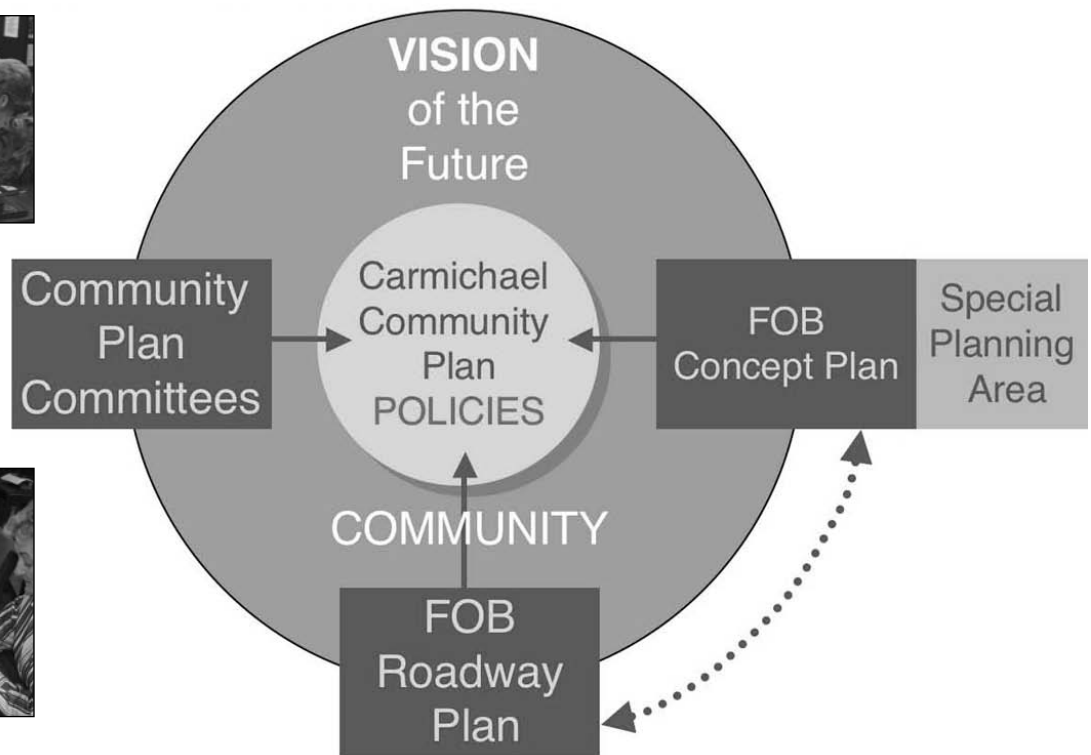
The Concept Plan process has provided an opportunity for Carmichael residents, property owners and County departments to participate in creating a design concept for Fair Oaks Boulevard. The Concept Plan illustrates Draft General Plan and Carmichael Community Plan draft policies, informs the creation of a special planning area (SPA), and compares roadway design options.

Below:

*The Fair Oaks Boulevard Concept Plan is part of the community planning process involving the Carmichael community. It is to implement larger objectives from the Community Plan and inform the roadway planning and creation of development standards.*

## Purpose

The planning for the properties along Fair Oaks Boulevard was pursued as an outgrowth of the Carmichael Community Plan process. The Carmichael planning envisioned the properties along Fair Oaks Boulevard being transformed into the community's main street district tasking the boulevard planning to identify desired land uses and design concepts that supported the Community Plan's objectives. In addition to the Community Plan, the Fair Oaks Boulevard planning has provided an opportunity to demonstrate draft General Plan policies and test the design implications of roadway options being prepared by Sacramento County Department of Transportation. The planning was scoped to provide a qualitative level of analysis and planning to support decision-making.



## Fair Oaks Boulevard Concept Plan

### Process

The Carmichael planning process is a multi-year effort to comprehensively update the Community Plan. The Fair Oaks Boulevard planning is a separate effort that falls under the umbrella of the community planning. A stakeholders group including residents and property owners met three times to establish objectives, identify potential concepts and review preliminary plans for Fair Oaks Boulevard. The process included two study sessions with the Board of Supervisors to review preliminary concepts and the draft planning recommendations.

### Organization of Report

This report is organized as three sections with an introduction and appendix. Section one summarizes the area's planning and policy context. The second section summarizes planning objectives, principles and concepts. The third section includes regulatory and administrative actions necessary to implement the plan. Workshop summaries and slide shows can be found in the appendix.



*Left:*

*The April 4, 2004 Focus Group meeting provided an opportunity for stakeholders to:*

*Review planning process  
Discuss public participation  
Identify planning objectives*



*Left:*

*The May 24, 2004 Focus Group meeting included a hands-on planning exercise where participants used the planning objectives developed at the first workshop to create concepts for Fair Oaks Boulevard.*



*Left:*

*The October 5, 2004 workshop provided a chance for stakeholders to discuss overall concepts and implementation issues.*

# SECTION ONE: Context

**Fair Oaks Boulevard is located in the middle of a growing region. The community envisions the transformation of the District into a pedestrian-friendly mixed-use place. There is an opportunity to demonstrate how the community's and general plan policies can be implemented on Fair Oaks Boulevard.**

Section 1 of the Fair Oaks Boulevard Concept Plan includes:

- History—brief history of Carmichael and Fair Oaks Boulevard;
- Community Context—overview of regional and local position and conditions;
- Roadway Project—summary of existing traffic conditions and alternative modes of travel; and
- Policy Context—overview of key community and countywide policies.

*Below: Historic Carmichael Colony photos*



## Fair Oaks Boulevard History

Mr. Daniel W. Carmichael developed the Carmichael Colony in 1909. He purchased 2,000 acres of land north and west of the American River. This land was part of the San Juan Grant of 1844. Two years later he acquired an additional 1,000 acres, which was part of Rancho Del Paso. Fair Oaks Boulevard runs between these two portions of land and was the primary road leading to J Street in downtown Sacramento.

The following history of land uses along Fair Oaks Boulevard is from the Carmichael Chamber of Commerce website:

*Prior to 1940, the community had no central business district. The Red & White Store supplied meat and groceries at the corner of California and Fair Oaks Boulevard and there was a gas station at the triangle a Fair Oaks Boulevard and Manzanita Avenue. Another grocery store, Arrowhead, was on the southeast corner at Fair Oaks Boulevard and Palm Avenue and Dan Donovan operated a bar, restaurant and grocery store at Fair Oaks and Garfield.*

*As Carmichael grew, businesses clustered around Palm Avenue and Marconi Avenue. Bob Marchal built the Carmichael Shopping Center on the southwest corner. One business, the Rose Tree remains in Carmichael today.*

*Carmichael's first bank, The Suburban Bank, opened in the 1940's after Marchal drove to Washington, D.C. to obtain a bank charter. Crocker Bank took over the service in the 1950's.*

*Carmichael's first large shopping complex was Crestview Center. It was built in 1963 by Richard and Dea Holesapple.*

*Since the 1950's, Carmichael's rural pattern of 10-acre orchards has evolved into suburban tract housing with apartments and commercial uses located along major streets. Fair Oaks Boulevard is the traditional central spine of the community that contained commercial services, churches, post office and the community park.*

As Carmichael and the region expanded, Fair Oaks Boulevard has witnessed the conversion of residential and traditional commercial development into auto-oriented uses. Largely due to the lack of land provided for other service commercial and industrial uses in the community and lazy-faire zoning practices, Carmichael "main street" also has become a location for rent-sensitive uses such as mini-storage, thrift stores, industrial and auto repair businesses.

## Community Context

The land use and transportation solutions for Fair Oaks Boulevard should be examined in the context of regional and local trends. This includes the position of Fair

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*Left:*

*The romantic rural Carmichael Colony was transformed after WWII into a prosperous suburban community. Fair Oaks Boulevard developed incrementally reflecting retailing and architectural of the times.*

*This photo is of the Marconi, Fair Oaks and Palm Drive intersection. Some of the buildings and the palm trees still exist.*

Oaks Boulevard and the community of Carmichael in the region, how the planning area is defined and approached, what parts of the area are expected to change in the near and mid-term, and what existing uses support community life.

### Regional Position

Over the past 30 years, Carmichael has evolved from a rural colony on the periphery of the Sacramento Metropolitan Area to a nearly built-out semi-rural and suburban community of approximately 72,000 people in the center of the expanding Sacramento Metropolitan Area. Carmichael and Fair Oaks Boulevard are surrounded by existing employment centers in Roseville and Sacramento and emerging development areas at former McClellan and Mather AFB's. Other nearby major shopping centers and corridors include Auburn, Sunrise, Greenback, Galleria, and Madison (parts of which are within the Carmichael Community). The stretches of I-80 and Highway 50 north and south of Carmichael are the most heavily traveled commuter corridors in the region. Residents of Carmichael can only access these corridors by traveling through adjacent communities.

Population in the six-county Sacramento Metropolitan Area is expected to grow by almost a million people, an increase of about 50 percent, between 2000 and 2025. Sacramento County is expected to have a more modest gain of approximately 475,000 (a 39 % increase). By 2025, employment is expected to increase by about half a million (a 60% increase). This job growth is expected primarily in downtown Sacramento, South Placer County (Roseville and Rocklin), and the U.S. 50 Corridor (West Sacramento, Rancho Cordova, and Folsom/West El Dorado County), which all lie within a 20-mile radius of Fair Oaks Boulevard.

### Planning Boundary and Sub-Districts

The Fair Oaks Boulevard planning area encompasses commercial and contiguous residential parcels located between Oak Avenue and Manzanita Avenue. Fair Oaks Boulevard runs between the original 2,000 and 1,000-acre rural "colonies" created by Daniel W. Carmichael in 1909. Approximately 2 miles long, the planning area has three sub-districts:

#### *Manzanita Sub-District*

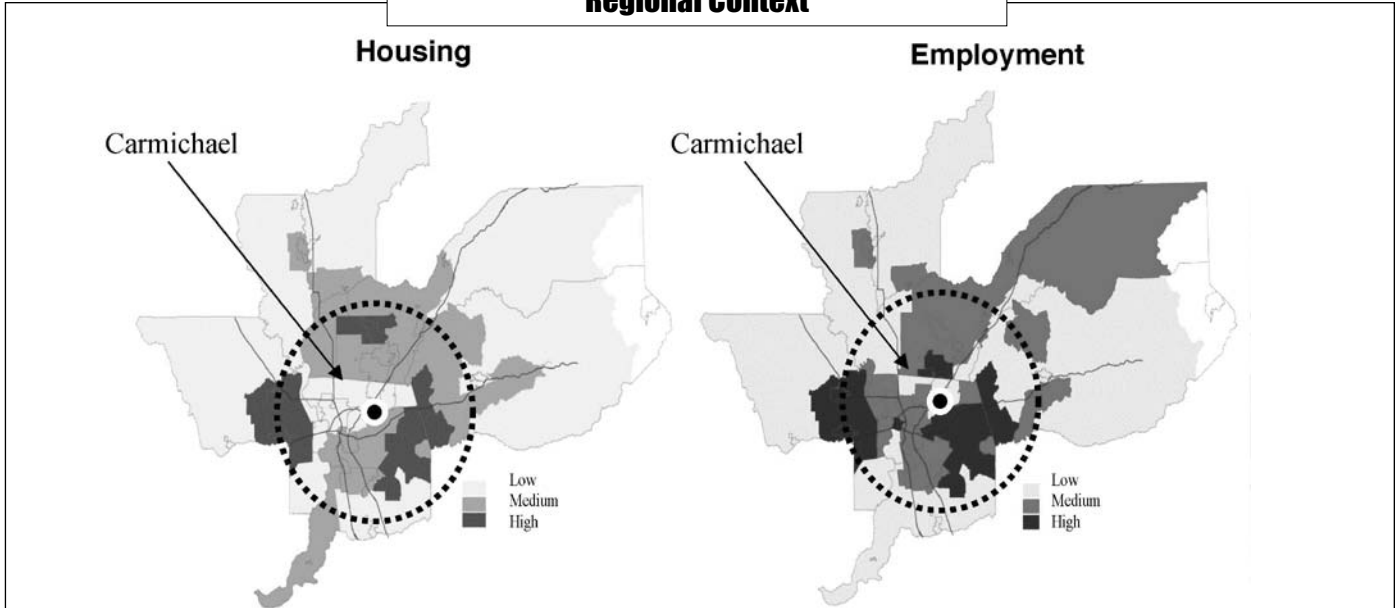
The Manzanita District is the northern portion of the Boulevard. Predominate eco-



*Above:*

*Some of the original Carmichael Colony structures can be found in the planning area. These smaller buildings have been home to several generations of local businesses. Many have been "improved" over the years obscuring original design features and details.*

## Regional Context



Above:

### Regional Growth

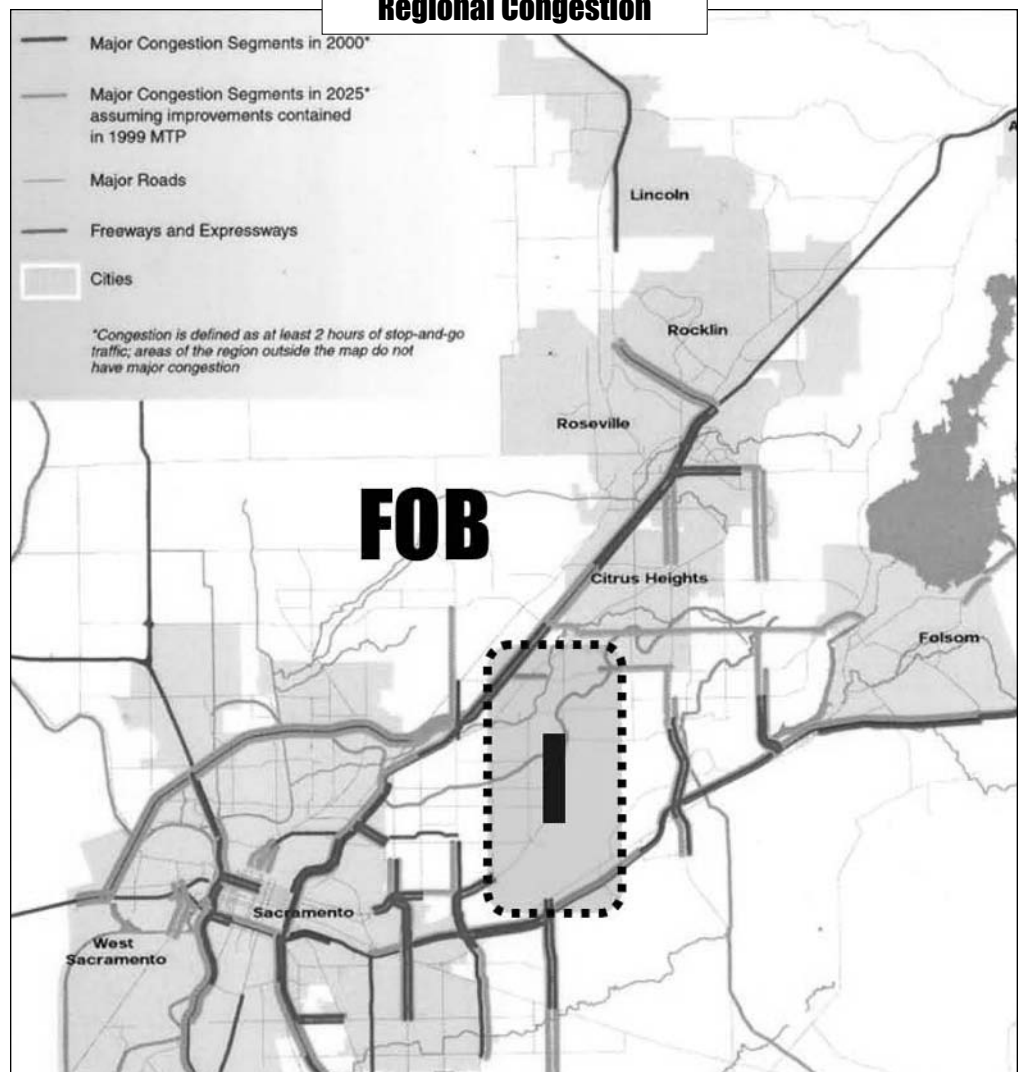
*Carmichael and Fair Oaks Boulevard are becoming increasingly central to the regions population and job growth.*

Source: SACOG

Right:

*Fair Oaks Boulevard runs between growing areas along Highway 50 and I-80. This map from SACOG shows the major roads that are currently congested and projected congested areas in 2025. From a regional perspective, Fair Oaks Boulevard has not been identified as a congested corridor within the Carmichael community planning area.*

## Regional Congestion

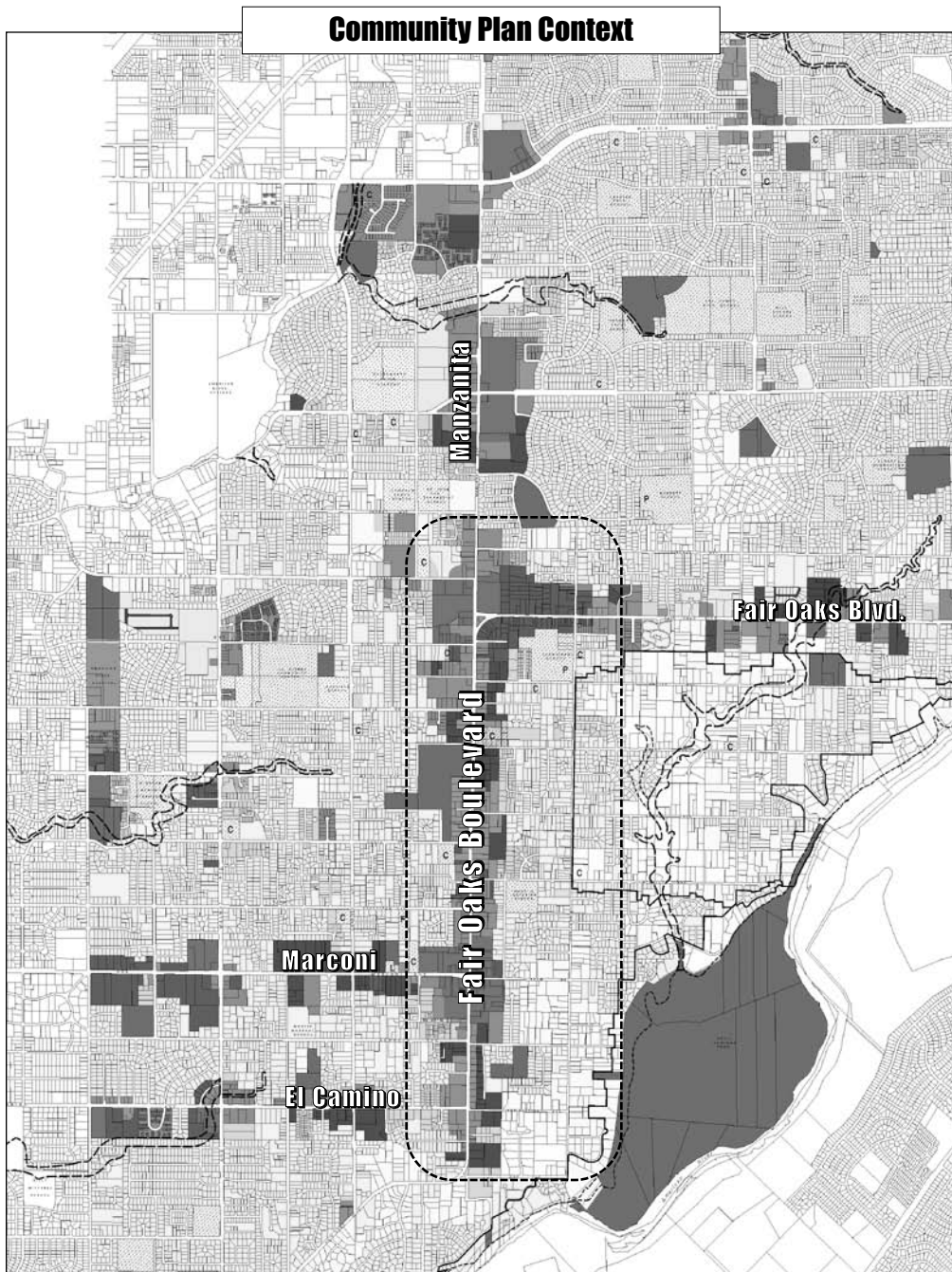


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conomic activities include larger commercial centers, mix of small commercial service uses, industrial and automotive uses. This area includes completed roadway and sidewalk enhancements.

### *Colony Main Street Sub-District*

The Colony Main Street District is located between Engle Avenue north of Carmichael Park and Kenneth Avenue south of Marconi Avenue. It includes Carmichael Park, the Carmichael Post Office, multi-family residential, a mix of commercial services, industrial, self-storage and vacant parcels. This area is contiguous with the next phase of roadway improvements.



*Left:*

*the 1993 Carmichael Community Plan Map shows Fair Oaks Boulevard as the primary commercial and community address. Other important commercial corridors that intersect with Fair Oaks Boulevard include Marconi, Manzanita and El Camino.*

*Below:*

*Auto repair and related business are common on Fair Oaks Boulevard.*



*South Gateway Sub-District*

The South Gateway Sub-District is located between Kenneth Avenue and Oak Avenue. It is comprised of a mix of shallow lot commercial and apartment uses.

Development Suitability

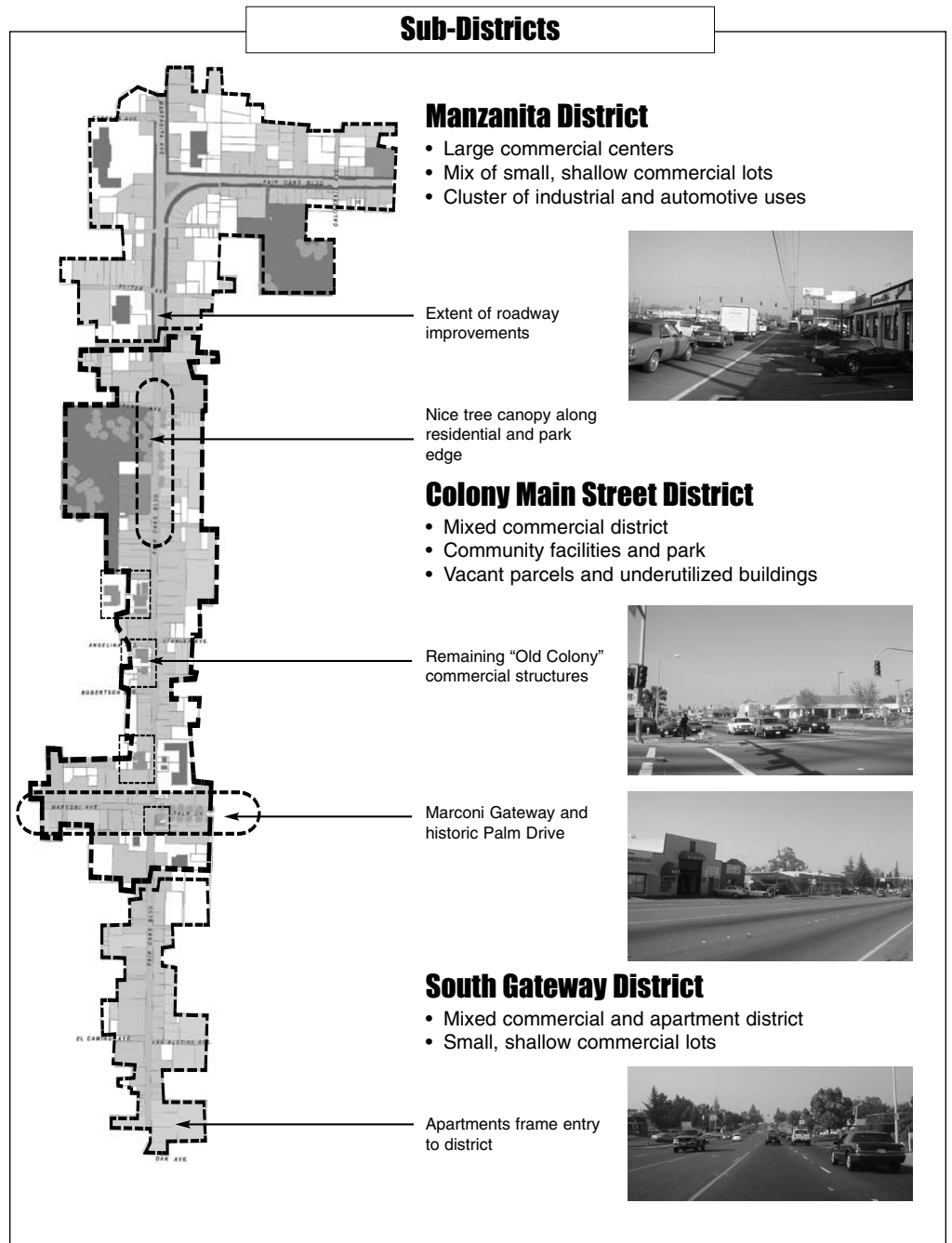
The planning assumes the private market will determine which sites are developed but anticipates reinvestment opportunities. There are 14 vacant parcels in the area. There are 20 parcels that are being used for industrial and mini-storage uses. There are seven larger shopping centers and discount stores of various ages comprised of 17 parcels. Automotive service and repair uses occupy 32 parcels. Overtime, these

*Right:*

*The 2 mile long planning area has three distinctive character areas or sub-districts. These have played different economic roles. As a result, they have a different mix of uses and visual character.*

*Below:*

*The commercial uses and buildings vary in age. Generally, older buildings orient towards the streets and newer buildings towards parking lots.*



## Fair Oaks Boulevard Concept Plan

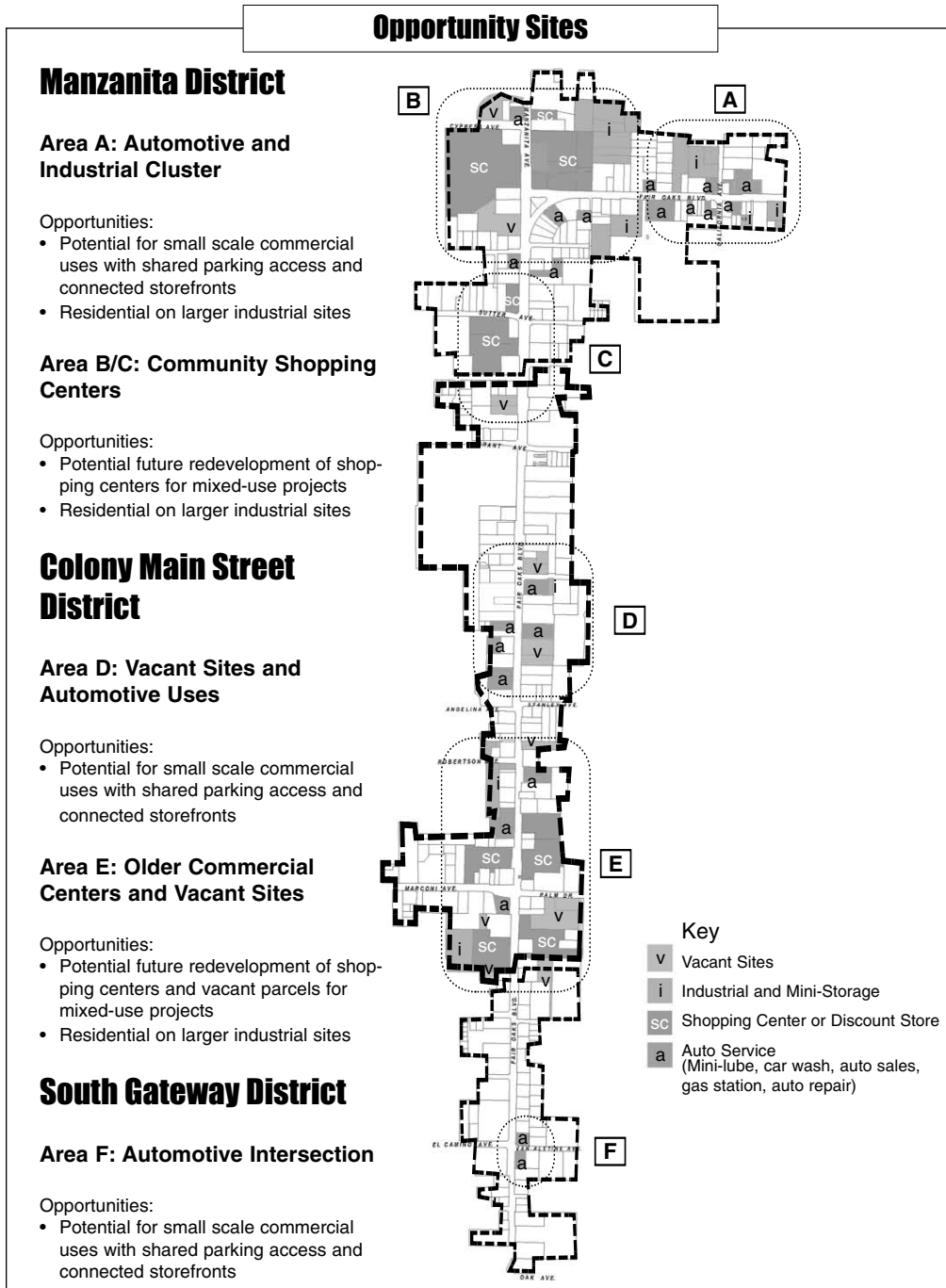
large, vacant and underutilized parcels are the most susceptible to change in use or be redeveloped with new buildings.

### Community Elements

In the planning area are uses that support adjacent neighborhoods and provide a focus for community life. These include housing of various types, public uses such as the park and school in the Manzanita Sub-District, churches and grocery stores.

### Roadway Project

The County is planning to improve Fair Oaks Boulevard between Marconi Avenue



Left:

*Over the next 25 years most of Fair Oaks Boulevard's uses and structures will undergo a change in use or be redeveloped. Certain parts of the planning area are most susceptible to change than others due to the large size of the parcel, marginal value of existing uses, or they are vacant.*

Below:

*The planning has anticipated where opportunity sites are clustered. These photos are of vacant parcels.*





and Engle Avenue. This section of roadway has several unsignalized intersections, many driveway curb cuts, a lack of continuity in the sidewalk system and difficult left turn access. There have been several options prepared with various types of pedestrian and lane width improvements that are analyzed in Section Three.

In 2004, the County’s traffic consultant prepared a report summarizing existing conditions and analyzing various roadway design alternatives. Findings regarding existing traffic conditions included:

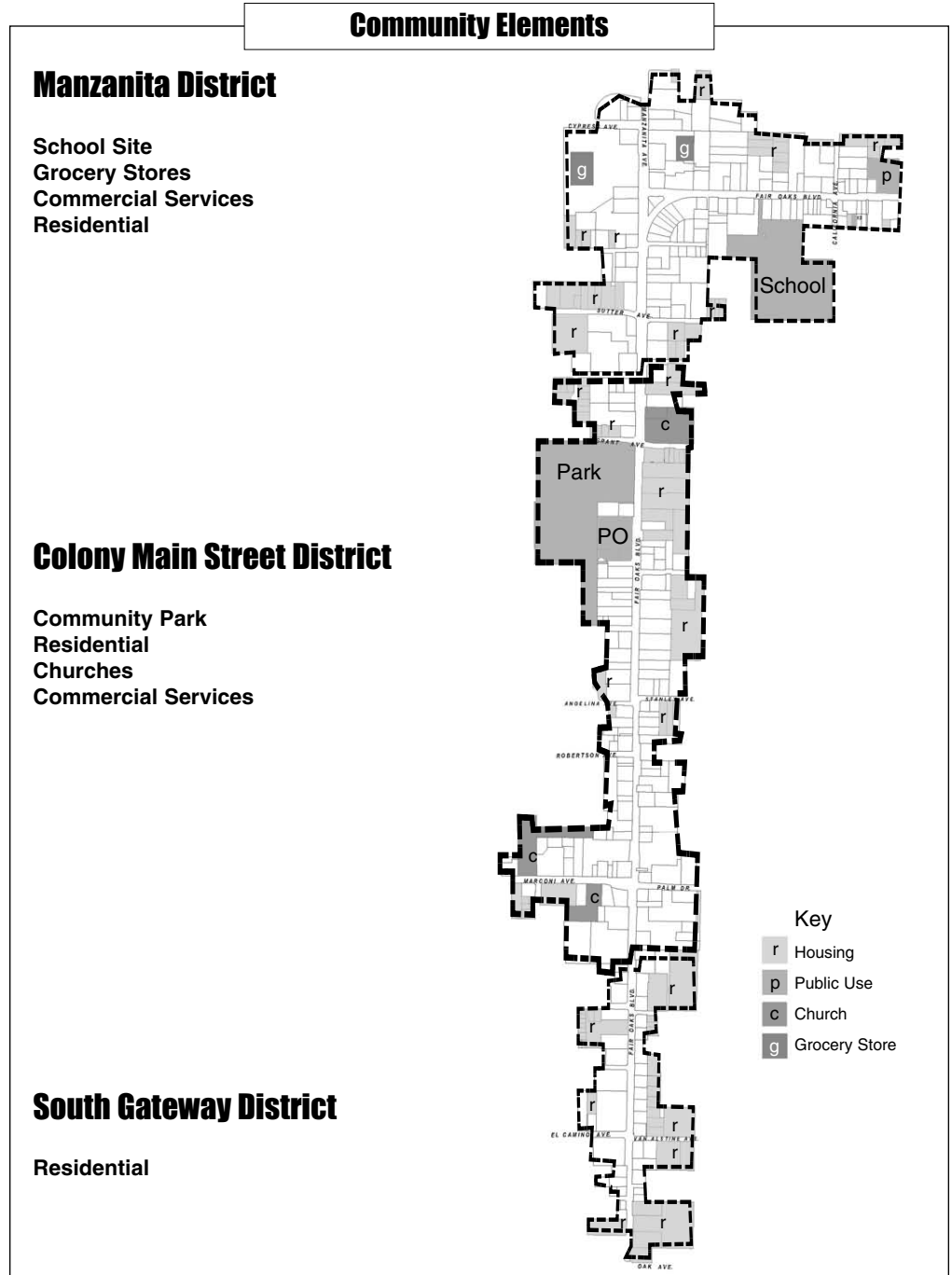
- Fair Oaks Boulevard is an urban arterial street classified as a “Thoroughfare” in the current General Plan (a six-lane limited access street).

Right:

Fair Oaks Boulevard has traditionally served the Carmichael community. In the planning area are uses that contribute to the sense of community. These include residential uses, grocery stores, churches, Carmichael Park, the post office and a school. These uses can be integrated into the planning to enhance the Boulevard’s role as the community’s “main street”.

Below:

Photos of Carmichael Park and post office

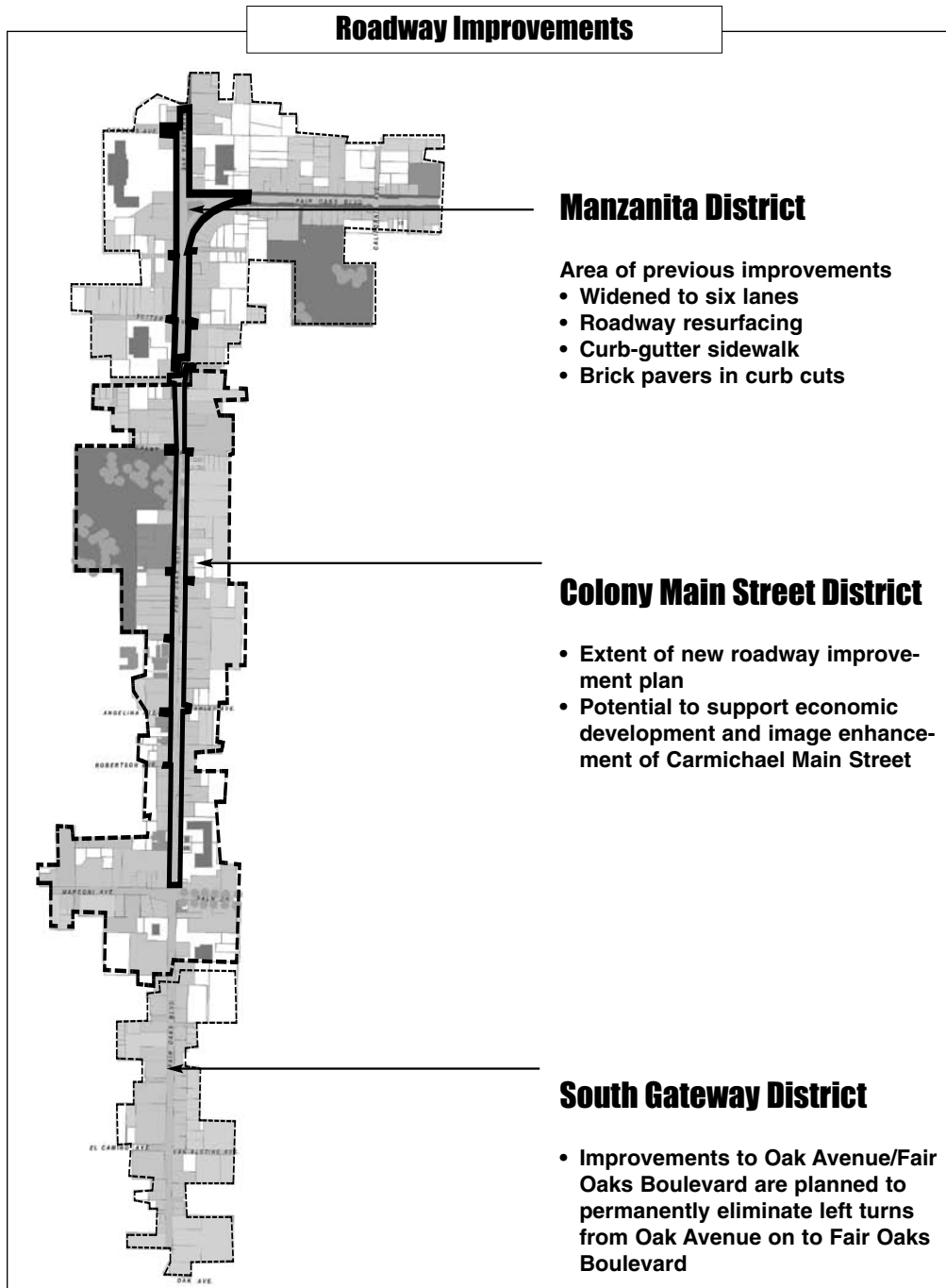


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- Fair Oaks Boulevard carries about 56,500 cars per day through the Manzanita Avenue to Engle Avenue segment and 42,600 in the Marconi Avenue to El Camino Avenue segment.
- The existing roadway level of service (LOS) between Manzanita Avenue and El Camino Avenue is F in the AM and PM.
- The worst performing intersections are the unsignalized ones at Landis Avenue (F in AM and PM), North Avenue (LOS C in AM and F in PM), and Robertson Avenue (LOS D in AM and C in PM).

### Alternative Mode Travel

One of the issues discussed in the County's traffic study, and by participants in the



Left:

*As part of an ongoing roadway program, Sacramento County Department of Transportation prepared improvement alternatives. The diagram on the left shows the scope of the initial phase completed in 2003 and the next phase to be completed in 2008.*

Below:

*The northern portion of the planning area had modest roadway improvements including widening to six lanes, resurfacing and new curb-gutter-sidewalk.*



workshops, was the lack of safe choices to driving on the Boulevard. The traffic study identified the following issues:

- Poor continuity in sidewalks and crosswalks;
- Lack of ADA/disabled access accommodations;
- Lack of landscaping;
- Poor separation and definition between pedestrian routes and auto traffic; and
- No bikes lanes.

The road has very low pedestrian and bike usage as a result of unfriendly walking and biking conditions, land use mix, and site planning. The traffic study stated the total peak hour bike and pedestrian movements was only 54 (46 pedestrians and eight bikes).

*Below:*

*Fair Oaks Boulevard is an important transit corridor with ample opportunity to add uses that can provide economic energy while improving neighborhoods. The 2004 Corridor Conditions and Opportunities Study prepared by the County identified over 3 million square feet of existing space in the Central Fair Oaks Boulevard area, of which the planning area is part of. Assuming existing zoning, the study concluded that over 900,000 square feet of new development capacity existed on underutilized sites.*



Fair Oaks Boulevard and Manzanita Avenue are feeder routes for RT buses. There are four transit routes that use portions of Fair Oaks Boulevard and one that travels east of Manzanita Avenue.

### **Policy Context**

Fair Oaks Boulevard planning is an outgrowth of the Carmichael Community Plan and concurrent with a major update of Sacramento County's General Plan. The planning for the Fair Oaks Boulevard area should reflect local objectives in the context of larger public objectives, goals and policies.

### Carmichael Community Plan Policies

The following policies are from the Carmichael Community Plan and are relevant to the planning for Fair Oaks Boulevard:

- Designate a portion of Fair Oaks Boulevard Corridor as a Main Street with a common design theme (architectural design standards, landscaping, signage, street lights).
- Maintain/Improve traffic flow (and control speeding) in Carmichael.
- Efforts by the County to improve Fair Oaks Boulevard shall be coordinated with the Special Planning Area ordinance process. It shall be recognized that the plan to create a "Main Street" needs to consider that FOB will remain a major corridor for auto traffic that should not be shifted to the neighborhood streets surrounding Fair Oaks Boulevard. Because Fair Oaks Boulevard will remain a transportation corridor, alternative modes of transportation shall be encouraged.
- Projects within residentially zoned high density and commercially zoned areas along the major streets should be developed as mixed-use (retail and high density residential in the same development) which are compatible with adjacent residential neighborhoods and promotes public transit.
- Increase the level of public transit service to Carmichael.
- Create a network of bike lanes throughout Carmichael connecting parks, schools, the library, shopping, and neighborhoods.
- Accelerate the pace of pedestrian-friendly improvements.
- An effort should be made to actively recruit businesses that will enhance Carmichael such as restaurants, boutiques, and businesses that are oriented to families.

### Current Sacramento County General Plan Policies

The following policies are from our Existing General Plan – December 15, 1993. The General Plan is currently being updated with a greater emphasis on community design and reliance on community and corridor plans to provide more detailed guid-

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ance.

### *Land Use:*

- Provide for additional mixed use development in commercial parking areas near the trunk of feeder line networks where such uses would be compatible with surrounding uses and where parking demand can be appropriately accommodated or structured parking can be constructed. (LU-6)
- Discourage the establishment and build-out of linear, strip pattern, commercial centers (LU-33)
- Discourage the creation of excessive amounts of retail shopping facilities.(LU-34)

### *Circulation:*

- Funding for development, operations, and maintenance of facilities for mass transit, bicycle, and pedestrian modes of transportation shall be given appropriate priority for transportation programs. (C1-5)
- Encourage transit, bicycle, and pedestrian projects when making decisions for the expenditure of discretionary local, state, or federal funds and in the Sacramento County Capital Improvement Program and the Congestion Management Plan. (C1-6)
- Sacramento County shall reduce automobile travel demand by promoting mixed use development throughout the county, including the development of neighborhood support commercial services in areas that are primarily residential. (C1-11)
- Sacramento County shall utilize design and development standards which support travel by transit, walking, bicycling, and clean alternative fuel and low emission vehicles. (C1-14)

### Emerging General Planning Themes

Sacramento County's General Plan was in the process of being updated during the Fair Oaks Boulevard planning effort and the Commercial Corridor Study. Many of the opportunities and emerging themes from these efforts are demonstrated by the Fair Oaks Boulevard Concept Plan.

Three opportunities and themes identified in the General Plan update process include:

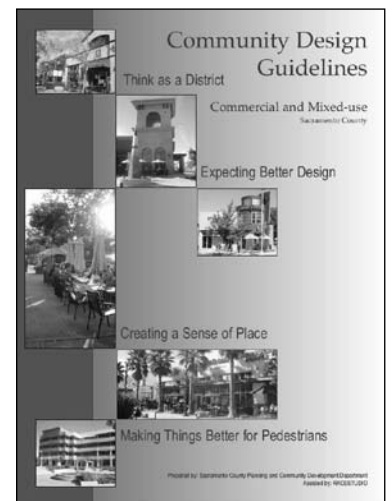
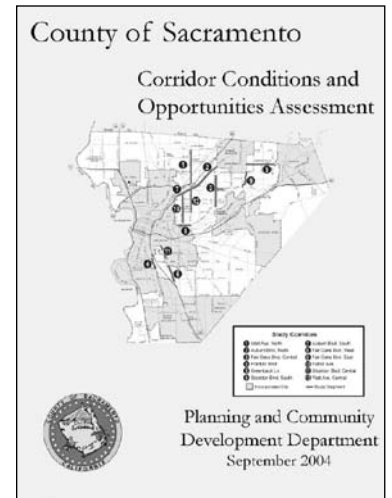
- Viewing commercial corridors in the context of community plan objectives;
- Revitalizing the county's underutilized commercial corridors as mixed-use streets that serve both regional commercial and local service needs; and
- Making commercial corridors mixed-mode streets with an emphasis on uses and site planning that facilitate the use of transit.

### Draft Community Design Guidelines

The Draft Community Design Guidelines provide guidance for the quality of site planning, architecture and signage. The Guidelines apply to both new development and renovation of existing sites and buildings.

The Guidelines identify the following three design opportunities for mixed-use streets:

- Integrate residential and commercial uses with renovated or new development as an economic development catalyst;
- Creating better pedestrian connection between neighborhoods and commercial corridors; and
- Creating transit and pedestrian-friendly options to isolated apartments.



*Above:*

*Sacramento County has prepared a study of commercial corridors that identifies opportunities and is preparing Community Design Guidelines that will provide qualitative direction for new investment in commercial, business and mixed-use districts.*

# SECTION TWO: Planning Concepts

The planning concepts for the Old Colony Main Street District envision a “big beautiful boulevard” where land uses cluster around open spaces, common areas and streets to create a sense of place. Parking lots and storefronts are connected with shared driveways and sidewalks. And, new land uses provide improved commercial services for the community.

Section 2 of the Fair Oaks Boulevard Concept Plan provides a summary of:

- Objectives—that express intended to express expectations for the Boulevard;
- Principles—which communicate directives for public and private investment; and
- Concepts— that provide a framework of land use, circulation and design ideas that express the objectives and principles.

## Community Objectives

In community workshops, participants identified leading objectives for land use, circulation and design. The objectives are intended to describe expectations. The community members that participated in the planning process expressed the desire for higher quality commercial uses that supported a walkable environment and created a sense of place.

### Land Use Objectives

Land use objectives focus on increasing the quality of businesses and enhancing the image of Fair Oaks Boulevard as a commercial and neighborhood address.

#### Objective 1: High Quality Commercial Uses

*Encourage the retention and recruitment of commercial businesses that are high quality. Cycle-out less desirable businesses such as auto repair, thrift stores and massage parlors.*

#### Objective 2: Pedestrian and Neighborhood Friendly Businesses

*Support businesses that result in a more pleasing pedestrian experience and social interaction that reinforce the sense of community such as cultural activities.*

#### Objective 3: Mix of Uses

*Include a variety of uses in the district including family-friendly commercial services, restaurants and housing.*

### Circulation Objectives

Overall circulation objectives reflect the desire for a street and district that works for all modes of travel and access.

#### Objective 1: Pedestrian Friendly

Improve the level of pedestrian comfort and interest along the street and between individual parcels parallel to Fair Oaks Boulevard and meet ADA standards.

#### Objective 2: Traffic Flow

Maintain or improve roadway capacity while slowing down traffic to make conditions safer and more comfortable for pedestrians and bicycles.

#### Objective 3: Major Transportation Corridor(added by County staff)

*Recognize that Fair Oaks Boulevard will remain as a major transportation corridor so as to not shift traffic onto adjacent neighborhoods.*

#### Objective 4: Transit

Provide public transportation to Fair Oaks Boulevard that gets you there directly and cheaply.

#### Objective 5: Neighborhood Linkages

Improve walking and bicycle connections to adjacent neighborhoods and to the park.

#### Objective 6: Regional Connections

*To Develop alternative transportation options between I-80 and Highway 50 that*

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*do not involve driving through this residential community– including ideas contained in mobility study (last part of objective added by County staff).*

### Community Design Objectives

Design objectives reflect the desire to have investment on Fair Oaks Boulevard reinforce the sense of community found in residential neighborhoods in Carmichael.

#### Objective 1: Sense of Place

*Organize land uses and buildings to create a sense of place that brings people together. Ensure both public and private investment contributes to enhancing the unique character and history of Carmichael.*

#### Objective 2: Site and Landscape Design

*Create a landscape plan for the roadway and new private development that makes the district cool and comfortable for walking. Use street lighting, landscaping and district signage to highlight Carmichael's uniqueness.*

#### Objective 3: Architectural Design

*Design commercial buildings to add interest at a pedestrian pace and become an integral part being part of a main street district.*

#### Objective 4: Signage

*Include signage for businesses and the district that reflect both the pedestrian and auto-oriented nature of Fair Oaks Boulevard.*

### **Planning Principles**

Principles communicate directives for public and private investment. They provide a set of basic rules for land use, circulation and design.

#### Principle 1. Create a “Colony Main Street District” between Marconi Avenue and Carmichael Park that provides a social and economic focus for the community.

The County should work with property owners and the community to create a contemporary Colony Main Street District on Fair Oaks Boulevard. The district should have an overall urban design concept that is coordinated with the design of the roadway projects and new private development.

#### Principle 2. Make the Main Street a mixed-use place that includes commercial services, residential and community uses.

Fair Oaks Boulevard should become a mixed-use district that includes housing. Housing should be located around the park, as part of small commercial developments, and when feasible, over commercial storefronts. Commercial uses such as grocery stores, restaurants, offices and shops should be encouraged to be located on Fair Oaks Boulevard.

#### Principle 3. Cluster uses around open space to create a sense of place.

New investment should create a sense of place. New buildings should be organized around open spaces, along walking routes and clustered to define and activate spaces. There should be a variety of architecture and walking experiences. Parking should be located behind or beside buildings.

#### Principle 4. Interconnect new and existing uses to side streets and along Fair Oaks Boulevard with sidewalks and driveways.

New streetscape and development should connect side streets to Fair Oaks Boulevard's storefronts and places. Buildings along Fair Oaks Boulevard should face sidewalks and share parking.

### **Vision of the Colony Main Street District**

The Carmichael Community Plan envisions Fair Oaks Boulevard being transformed into a contemporary main street for the community's 72,000 people. This overall goal inspired the creation of the Fair Oaks Boulevard Concept Plan. Participants in workshops identified the design features and uses that characterized Fair Oaks Boulevard's traditional design features and uses.

#### Design Features of the “Old Colony” of Carmichael:

- Setbacks were consistent between buildings creating a connected series of storefront buildings
- The investment was fresh, better condition
- There was variety in the architecture
- There were covered walkways

#### Uses of the “Old Colony” main street:

- Grocery stores
- Apparel shops
- Gas and service stations
- Sit-down restaurants
- Other commercial services for a semi-rural and suburban community

**Principle 5. Make the Colony Main Street District a comfortable and interesting walking experience.**

The roadway project and new private investment should contribute to the successful evolution of Fair Oaks Boulevard into a mixed-mode district. Streetscape, landscaping, pedestrian routes, building placement and design and open spaces should all make walking the preferred mode to traverse the district.

**Framework Plan Concepts**

The planning framework for the district addresses all three of Fair Oaks Boulevard's sub-districts at a conceptual level and the Colony Main Street Sub-District in greater detail. Generally, the overall traditional role of the sub-districts is enhanced.

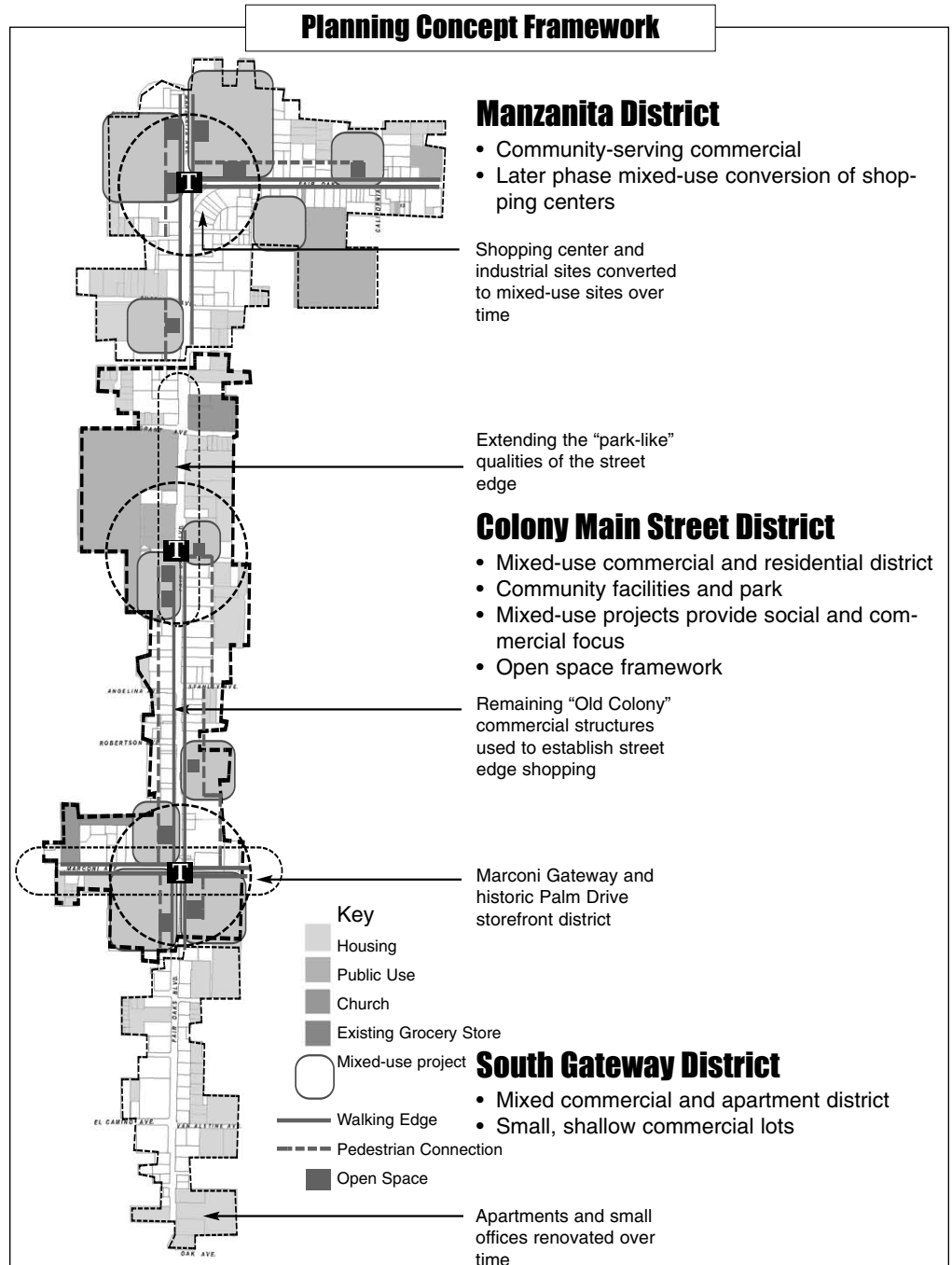
*Right:*

*The diagram on the right represents an overall long-term conceptual framework for the Fair Oak Boulevard planning area. It identifies:*

- Land uses for sub -districts;
- Clusters of opportunity sites that can become mixed-use developments around a regional transit stop; and
- A general locations of common open spaces.

*Below:*

*The concept assumes pedestrian friendly storefront commercial uses and ownership housing as an interface with existing neighborhoods.*



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Manzanita Avenue and Marconi Avenue will continue to be important community shopping focal points while other parts of the sub-district provide for adding residential and smaller clusters of commercial activities. Connected open space is envisioned as part of the overall concept in each sub-district.

### Manzanita Sub-District

The Manzanita Sub-District concept assumes the transformation of the area's industrial and automotive repair uses into commercial and residential. In the longer term, larger shopping centers could be redeveloped into mixed-use projects that include shopping for area residents. A major transit stop would be located at the Manzanita intersection.

### Colony Main Street Sub-District

The Colony Sub-District is to become the social and economic focus for the Carmichael community. This area will be initially improved by the implementation of the roadway project and related streetscaping. It will become a mixed-use commercial and residential area that features open space, pedestrian connectivity and Carmichael Park. Transit stops would be located at the park and Palm Drive/Marconi Avenue, including the southwest corner of Fair Oaks Boulevard and Marconi Avenue.

### South Gateway Sub-District

The South Gateway Sub-District will continue to provide for small-scale commercial services, offices and apartments. The planning anticipates upgrading and replacing existing buildings as they reach the end of their economic life.

### **Colony Main Street District Concepts**

The Colony Main Street Sub-District is to become the primary pedestrian-oriented central place for Carmichael. The area is over one mile in length and has two important focal points. One is the Palm Drive/Marconi Avenue intersection. This area has been the traditional location for commercial services and has remaining some of the pre-1950's buildings that can be integrated into plans. The other is Carmichael Park. This area has multi-family housing, the post office and distinctive tree canopy. There are vacant sites and other redevelopment opportunity sites near the park. Other parts of the Colony Main Street Sub-District are expected to developed in smaller clusters of parcels around shared parking and open spaces.

### Mixed-use with Commercial Frontage

The overall approach to land use and site planning in the Colony Main Street area is to provide a continuous commercial walking edge with residential uses located between commercial and existing neighborhoods. This approach provides the pedestrian friendly atmosphere desired by the community and buffer existing homes from commercial uses and parking lots. Mixed-use developments would be organized around shared parking and open spaces.

### Desired Land Uses

Desired uses in the Colony Main Street area included sit-down (non-fast food) restaurants, coffee shops/cafes, professional offices, and grocery stores or specialty food markets. Less desirable uses include mini-storage facilities, industrial, thrift stores, massage and tanning salons, recycling centers, auto repair and service stations. These uses are not viewed as appropriate for Carmichael's "main street" district and have a negative impact on investor interest.

*Below:*

*The objectives for the Colony Main Street District identified by workshop participants emphasized uses and design that made the Boulevard a social and economic destination. New investment is to create a "sense of place".*





Below:

*Below is an illustrative plan for Colony Main Street District around Palm Drive. It shows how the existing driveway and parking lot system can become streets; assumes renovation of many of the existing commercial buildings and older shopping centers; adds townhouses adjacent to residential neighborhoods; and provides a system of common open spaces.*

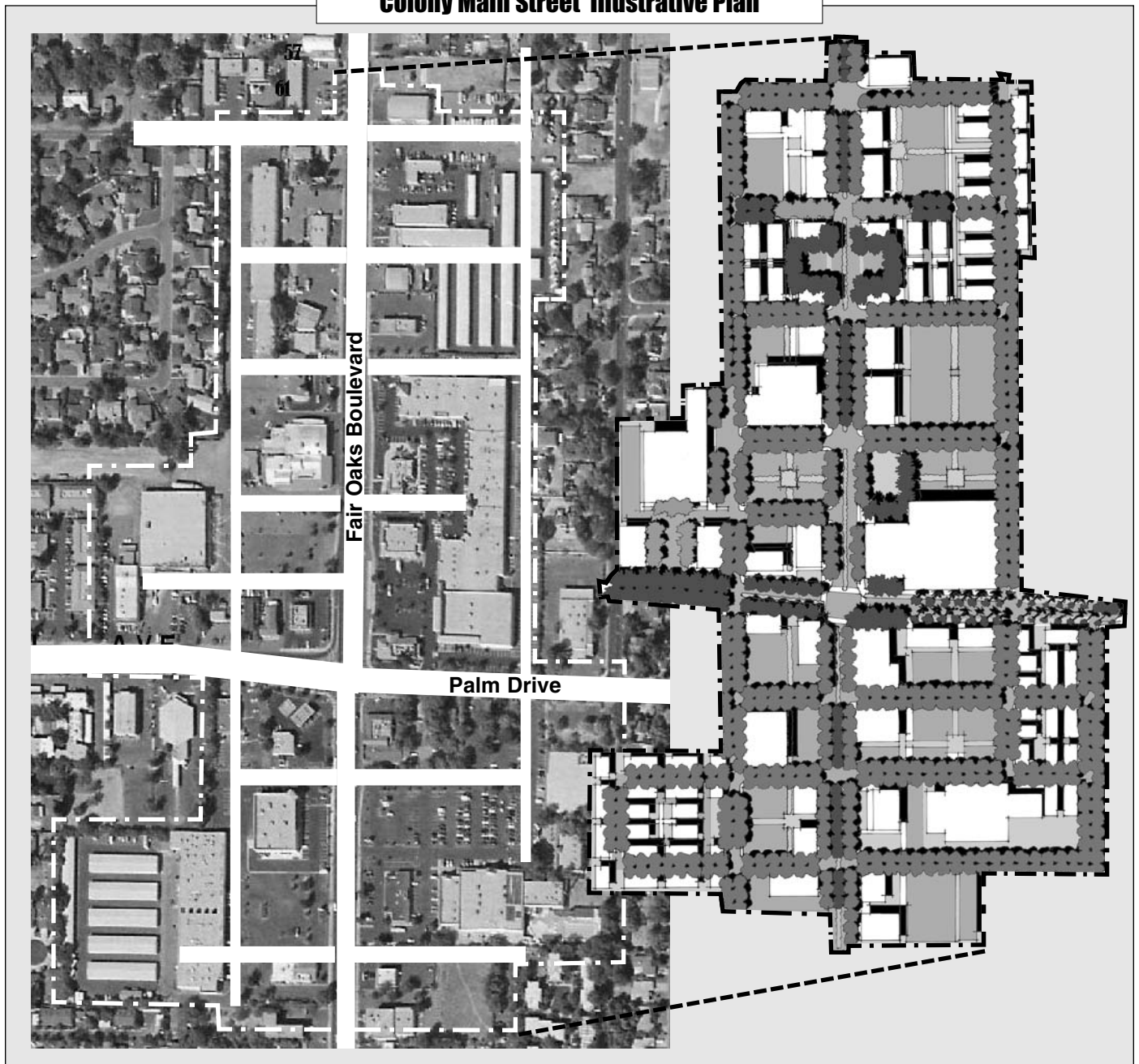
### Community Uses

Fair Oaks Boulevard has been a traditional location for community serving institutional uses. The area has the park, library (on Marconi Avenue), post office, and churches. The community expressed a desire for future cultural uses, such as community theater, be located in the area.

### Big Beautiful Boulevard

The design concept envisions the development of a "big beautiful boulevard". Big trees and pedestrian amenities are ways to improve the image of Fair Oaks Boulevard and create an environment that supports the types of places and economic investment desired for the Colony Main Street area. A comprehensive

## **Colony Main Street Illustrative Plan**



## Fair Oaks Boulevard Concept Plan

streetscape design would make walking more comfortable and safe by consolidating curb cuts, introducing shade, and enhancing the overall identity of the district.

### Architectural Design

The design of new buildings and renovation of existing ones are to provide architectural variety with continuity being created by each project's efforts to orient towards the street and sidewalks. Commercial buildings should include storefronts, awning and canopies, pedestrian scaled signage and building massing broken up to reflect a walking pace and scale. Residential buildings should orient towards common spaces and streets and possess overall massing and roof forms that reflect the scale and traditions of nearby houses.

### Roadway Design

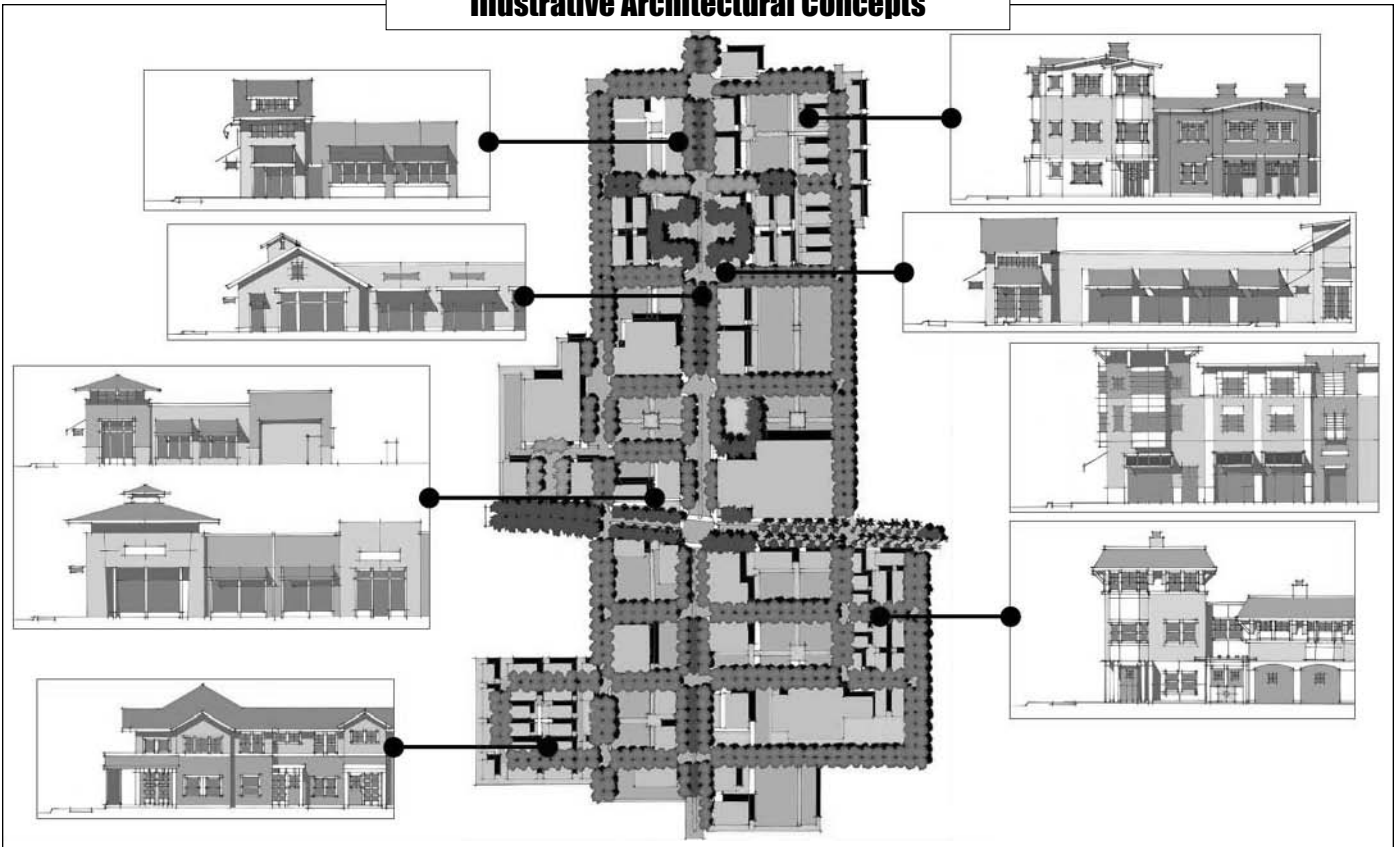
The Fair Oaks Boulevard Concept Plan's initial public investment will be the improvements to the roadway. The roadway planning and district planning efforts have produced alternatives that were reviewed by the Board of Supervisors. The

*Below:*

*The photographs and sketch elevations below illustrate how new development can contribute to the Colony Main Street District's sense of place. The building designs reflect a sensitivity to pedestrian scale and pace desired by the community. The commercial buildings have transparent storefronts and architectural features that add interest to the street. Townhouses and mixed-use buildings express individual units and have a variety of roof and architectural elements.*



### Illustrative Architectural Concepts



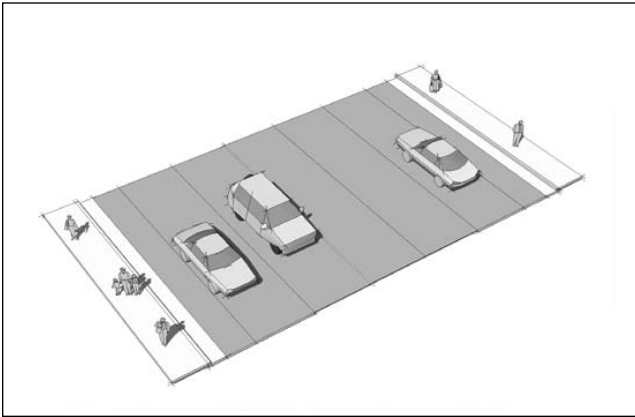


Supervisors selected four for further analysis. The County's Department of Transportation has provided a technical review and descriptions of the alternatives to accommodate 56,000 daily car trips. The Fair Oaks Boulevard Concept Plan includes a qualitative comparison with a goal to improve traffic flow and safety, enhance walking environments, and improve the image of the street.

Roadway Design Context: Designing for a Preferred Future

The roadway design alternatives should be viewed both within the current environment and as part of a future main street for Carmichael. The scope and design of the roadway project should strive to enhance the pedestrian experience, improve access to transit, replace parking, and anticipate future parcel consolidation.

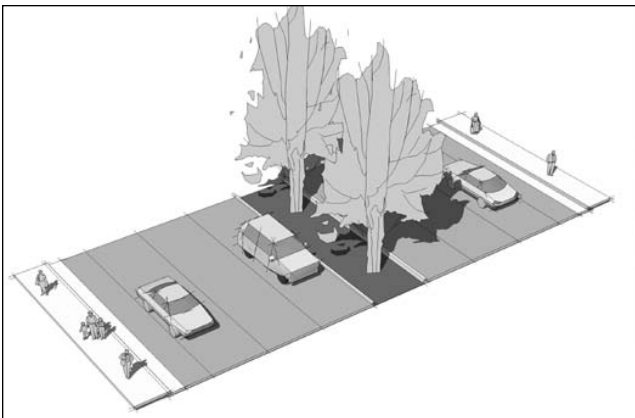
*Above:  
The community wants Fair Oaks to be a "big beautiful boulevard".*



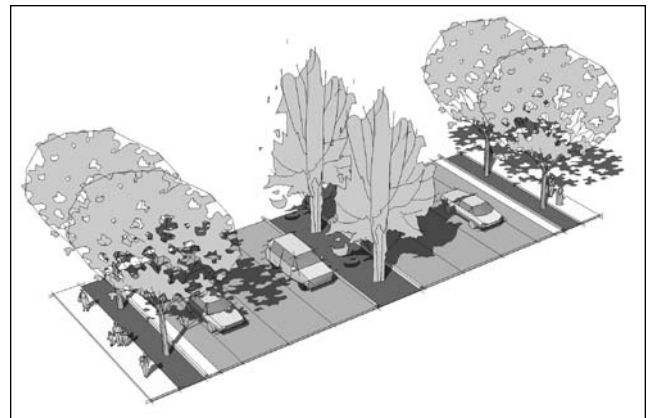
*Above:  
Alternative 1: Existing Road (no project)*



*Above:  
Alternative 2: Four-Lane Boulevard*



*Above:  
Alternative 3: Six-Lane Road with Median*



*Above:  
Alternative 4: Six-Lane Boulevard*

## Current Context: Auto Oriented Commercial Strip

- 80' ROW without landscaping
- Curb cuts for each individual site
- Poor traffic flow
- Poor pedestrian safety
- Lack of traffic or pedestrian connections between parcels
- Lack of connections to adjacent neighborhoods



*Left:*

*This 3-D computer model shows the existing building pattern and scale near Palm Drive and Angeline Avenue.*

*Below:*

*Existing street edge conditions*



## Future Context: Mixed-use and Mixed-mode Main Street District

- Wider ROW with landscaping
- Shared parcel access
- Improved traffic flow
- Improved pedestrian safety and comfort
- Improved access to transit
- Auto and pedestrian connections between parcels

*Right:*

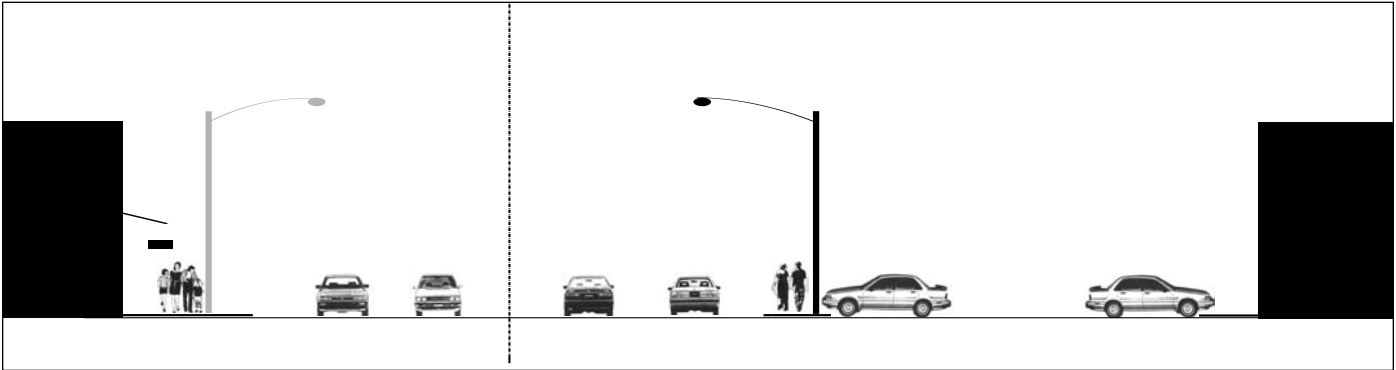
*This 3-D computer model illustrates a future context for roadway improvements.*

*Below:*

*Desirable conditions for commercial and townhouse street edges*



# Alternative 1: No Build (Existing 80' ROW)



*Above:*

*The photo is of the area between Marconi and Robertson Avenue. The existing roadway lacks landscaping, has many individual curb cuts, and does not provide a comfortable walking edge.*

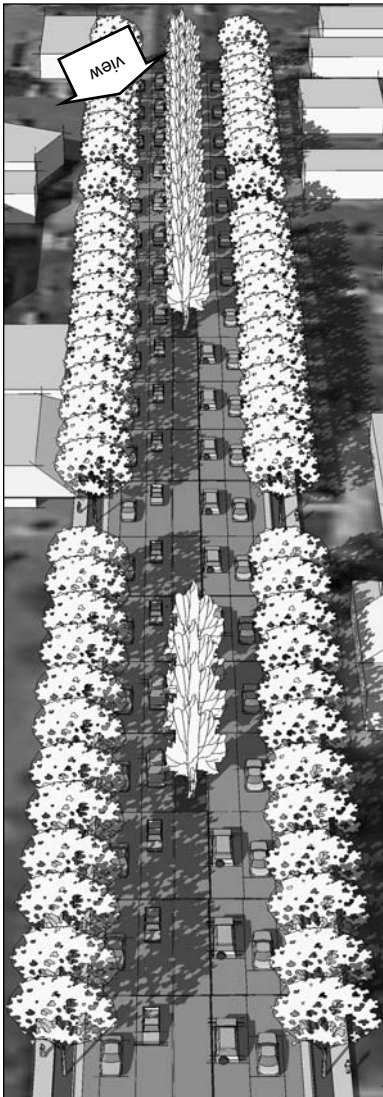
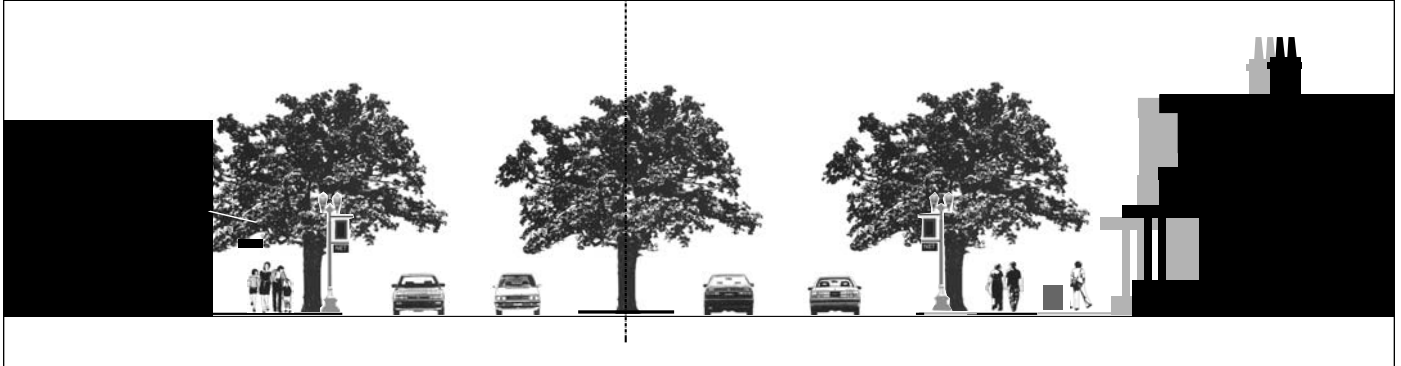
*Right:*

*Existing roadway sample plan area between Marconi and Robertson has a variety of edge conditions as a result of several generations of investment and road widening projects.*



## Alternative 2: 98' ROW

- Four lanes with 12-foot wide median and 6-foot wide landscape strips
- Adds traffic signals at the intersection of Landis/Fair Oaks
- Bus turn-outs and shelters at Stanley/Angeline, Landis and Grant, and the southwest corner of Marconi/Palm/Fair Oaks Boulevard



*Above:*

*This 3-D model view of Fair Oaks Boulevard is between Marconi and Robertson. It illustrates a sidewalk environment with mid-day shade in August.*

*Left:*

*This oblique plan view of a 3-D model is of the section between Marconi and Robertson. It assumes all existing buildings are kept and there is some consolidation of curb cuts.*

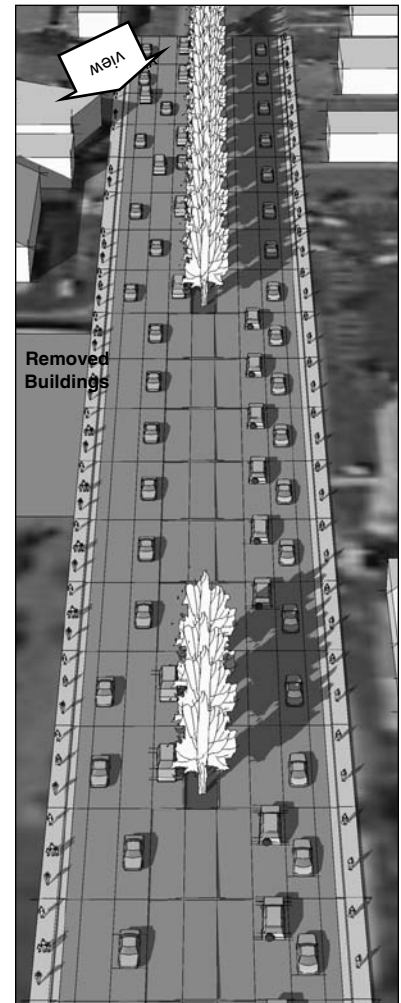
## Alternative 3: 108' ROW

- Six lanes with 12-foot wide median
- Landscaped median
- Bus turn-outs and shelters at Stanley/Angeline, Landis and Grant, and the south-west corner of Marconi/Palm/Fair Oaks Boulevard



*Above:*  
This 3-D model view of Fair Oaks Boulevard is between Marconi and Robertson. It illustrates a sidewalk environment with mid-day shade in August.

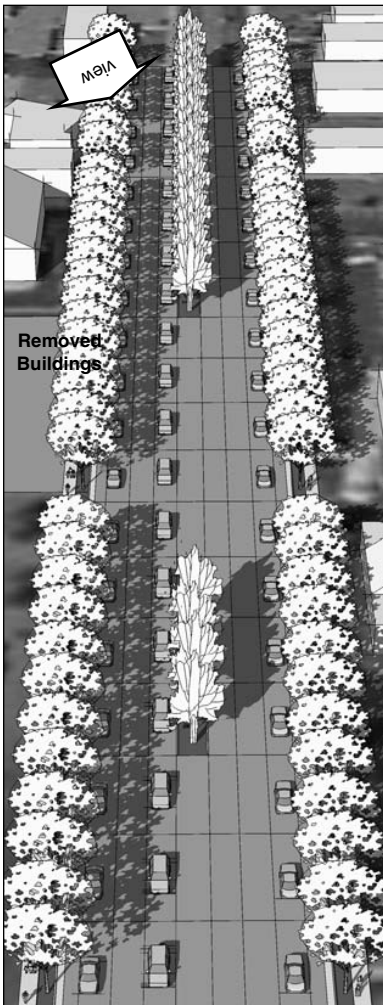
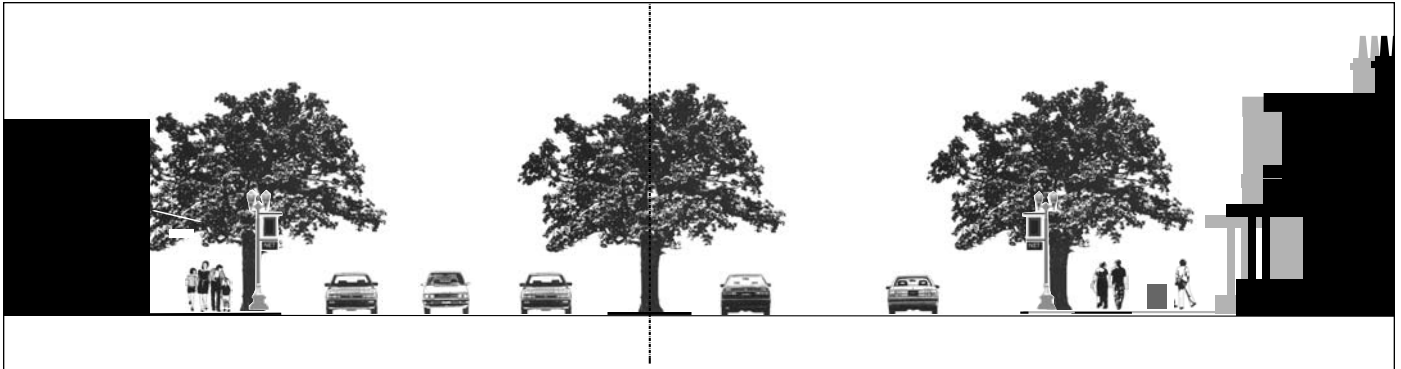
*Right:*  
This oblique plan view of a 3-D model is of the section between Marconi and Robertson. It assumes two older building are removed that are within the new expanded ROW and there is some consolidation of curb cuts.





## Alternative 4: 124' ROW

- Six lanes with 12-foot wide median and 6-foot wide landscape strips
- Landscaped median and sidewalks
- Bus turn-outs and shelters at Stanley/Angeline, Landis and Grant, and the south-west corner of Marconi/Palm/Fair Oaks Boulevard
- Additional 10-12' of ROW would be required at major intersections to accommodate left turn lanes or discontinuation of landscape strips and trees



*Above:*

*This 3-D model view of Fair Oaks Boulevard is between Marconi and Robertson. It illustrates a sidewalk environment with mid-day shade in August.*

*Left:*

*This oblique plan view of a 3-D model is of the section between Marconi and Robertson. It assumes two older buildings are removed that are within the new expanded ROW and there is some consolidation of curb cuts.*

## Fair Oaks Boulevard Concept Plan

### Shared Parking–Parking District Approach

The circulation concept for Fair Oaks Boulevard includes shared parking and driveway access to reduce the number of curb cuts, improve pedestrian connectivity and make parcels more efficient. For parcels impacted by roadway widening, replacement parking could be created in common off-street or diagonal on-street parking at side street intersections, or both. The shared lots would be located to reflect the demand, access and urban design opportunities along segments of the Colony Main Street District. Implementation for common parking lots will require a district approach allowing a portion of required spaces to be located off-site.

#### Option 1: On-site Replacement

The first option for replacement parking is to selectively purchase sites that are in areas impacted by road widening. The diagram on page 2-15 indicates six potential locations that could benefit from this approach. The County would purchase a parcel and swap for the land required for the roadway. The lot would be shared by adjacent properties (as illustrated below).

#### Design features:

- Combines curb cuts
- Adds landscaping strip and trees to Boulevard frontage
- Creates shared pedestrian and vehicle connections between parcels

#### Advantages:

- The County does not have to manage or maintain replacement parking

#### Disadvantages:

- Requires cooperative arrangement between property owners
- County has to implement on-site improvements

Right:

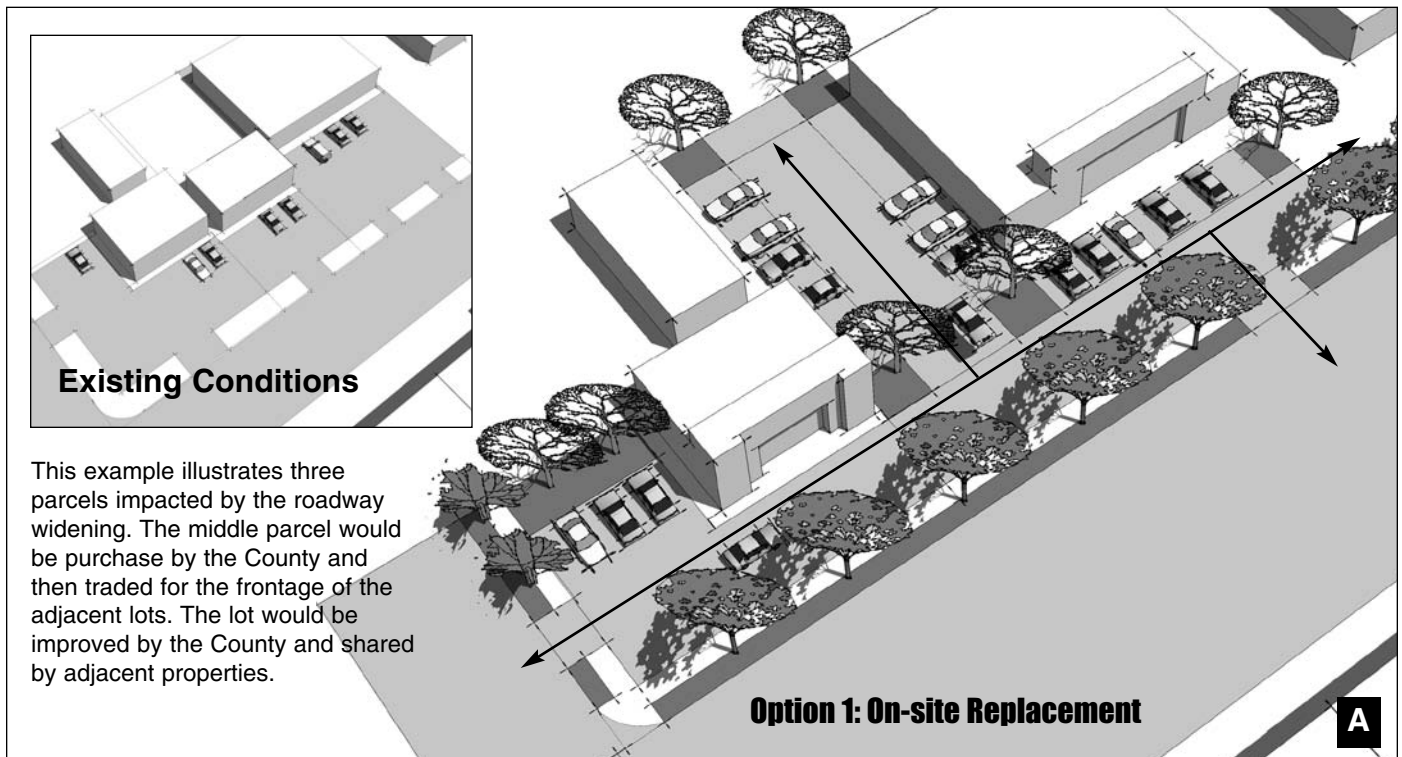
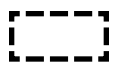
*This key map illustrates potential locations for on-site shared parking (A) and on-street off-site parking (B).*

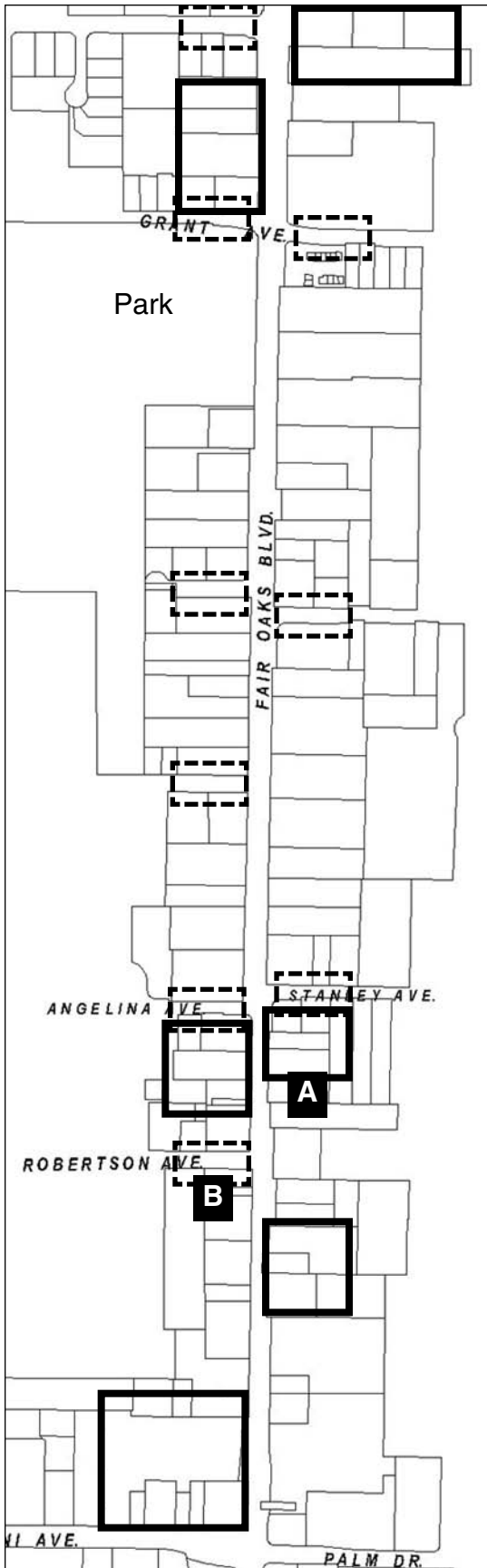
### Key

On-site shared parking



Off-site on-street parking





*Option 2: Shared Parking Facilities*

The second option for replacement parking is to use side street frontage for on-street diagonal parking. The diagram to the left indicates nine potential locations. The County would include right-of-way acquisition along side streets and develop parking as part of the roadway project.

Design features:

- Creates landscaped sidewalk connections to neighborhoods
- Can have traffic calming effect on traffic on residential streets

Advantages:

- Evenly disperses parking throughout district
- Parking is a direct extension of roadway project
- Is not dependent on adjoining property owners collaboration

Disadvantages:

- County has to manage and maintain on-street parking



**B Option 2: On-street Replacement**

## Fair Oaks Boulevard Concept Plan

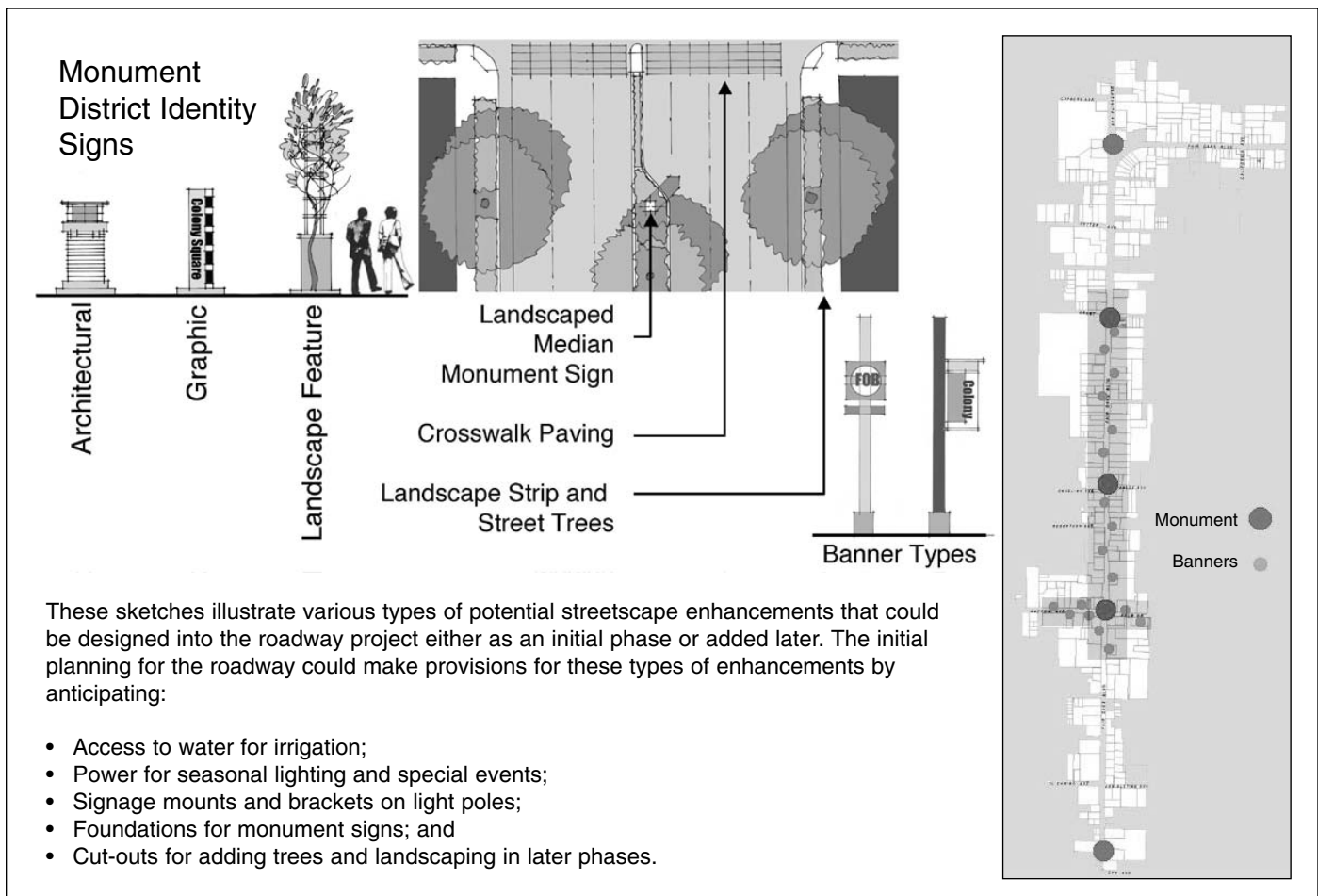
### Right-of-Way Improvements

The roadway project is an opportunity to add image and identity improvements that help define Carmichael's Main Street. The County Department of Transportation has lighting and roadway design engineering standards. The standards are cost effective to implement and maintain. They do not, however, support the type of pedestrian environment envisioned by the Fair Oaks Boulevard Concept Plan. Adding these types of enhancements will require commitment to the added costs to install and maintain them by the County and/or property owners.

The baseline streetscape improvements assumes planting strips with canopy trees, undergrounding of utility poles, standard "cobra-head" vehicular-scale lighting, and painted crosswalks. The roadway project could be designed to accept pedestrian enhancements at a later date when property owners are ready to share the maintenance costs.

Potential streetscape enhancements include:

- Shrubs and accent planting in planting strips and medians;
- Adding paving treatment to crosswalks;
- Wayfinding and district identity signage;
- Pedestrian-scale lighting; and
- Street furniture (benches, transit shelters, trash receptacles, etc.).



# SECTION THREE: Action Plan

Implementation of the Fair Oaks Concept Plan will require a long-term commitment by the County, property owners and community. Overcoming the challenges inherent in revitalizing aging strip commercial corridors demands a comprehensive approach to updating regulations, committing necessary staff time, private sector leadership, and strategic public investment.

Section 3 of the Fair Oaks Boulevard Concept Plan provides a summary of:

- Implementation Opportunities—challenges and opportunities to facilitate reinvestment on Fair Oaks Boulevard;
- Regulatory Actions—changes in zoning and planning policies; and
- Administrative Actions—technical and management support for revitalization of the planning area.

## Implementation Opportunities

The long-term market and financial opportunities for property owners and businesses can be shaped to transform Fair Oaks Boulevard into the type on place envisioned by the community over the next 20 years. However, in order to take advantage of this, the County, citizens, and property owners need to “share the vision” to advance a coordinated effort to reinvest.

### Competitive Position

Land supply analysis from the General Plan process revealed unincorporated areas of the county have thousands of acres of vacant and underutilized commercial land—well beyond the capacity of the market. Draft General Plan policies encourage infill development and reinvestment that supports the use of transit and provides housing. Carmichael has livable and stable residential neighborhoods, a strong sense of community pride, and position in the center of a growing region that gives Fair Oaks Boulevard some distinct advantages in the market place compared to other underutilized commercial corridors.

### Roadway Project

The roadway project can establish an esthetic for the area while addressing a variety of pedestrian, traffic safety and parking issues. To do so, the design and implementation of the roadway project has to assume a future where pedestrian continuity is a high priority, property owners are expected to collaborate on site access and other site design efforts, and streetscaping and related maintenance reflect the County’s commitment to creating main street districts as social and economic focal points for communities. Investment in the Fair Oaks Boulevard roadway project cannot be merely treated as a traffic engineering problem with mitigation, and requires coordination between the Planning and Community Development Department and the Department of Transportation.

### Need for Proactive Private Leadership

The private sector has a very significant role to play on Fair Oaks Boulevard. The investment will be market driven and leadership driven. Owners of key properties will need to rethink their opportunities in the context of a coordinated effort to improve the value of their holdings. Getting organized, communicating with others, and reinvesting with a view towards creating a higher value address will be necessary. The Carmichael Chamber of Commerce and the County Economic Development Department should make a deliberate effort to work with property owners to support and coordinate new investment, recruit new tenants, and help create a Colony Main Street organization capable of self-promotion and advocacy.

## Fair Oaks Boulevard Concept Plan

### *Recommended Organizational Actions:*

- **Roadway Project Implementation**—Form an implementation team comprised of County staff, citizens and property owners to provide feedback on the implementation and roadway design.
- **Colony Main Street Organization**—Have County Economic Development staff work with the Carmichael Chamber of Commerce, citizens, and property owners to organize property owners into a promotional and advocacy group.

### **Regulatory Actions**

One of the original motivations for preparing a concept plan was the desire to identify standards for land uses and development that reflect the aspirations of the Carmichael community. Regulatory activities for the planning area need to reflect the ongoing efforts in the County to reform the zoning code and create a design review system. If a Special Planning Area (SPA) is established for Fair Oaks Boulevard to provide specialized standards, it needs to support the concept plan and address planning issues unique to its implementation.

### Development Standards

There are a number of planning and urban design issues that should be addressed by a SPA. These include identifying desirable land uses, building heights and set-backs, and parking requirements.

### Parking District Approach

In addition to the typical development standards issues, the roadway project will be mitigating the loss of parking. The location, funding and enforcement for “public” or “common” parking facilities is a new role for the County. A parking district approach may be necessary for the project to work, and therefore a new area of policy. This may require a new ordinance to implement a district that stipulates in-lieu fee structure, maintenance, governance and other issues.

### Design Guidelines

Sacramento County is currently preparing design guidelines for commercial and mixed-use districts. Four overall themes for the Guidelines were developed by the

## **Example Land Uses**

*Left: Example Land Uses*

*The example land uses listed to the left are to help guide the community and their private sector partners determine appropriate uses for Fair Oaks Boulevard. Land use objectives for Fair Oaks Boulevard include:*

- *Attracting high-quality commercial uses;*
- *Promoting neighborhood friendly businesses that improve the pedestrian experience; and*
- *Encouraging a mix of uses.*

#### **Desirable Uses**

- Sit-down Restaurants
- Commercial Services
- Apparel
- Family-Oriented Retail
- Media and Book Stores
- Residential/Live-Work
- Office
- Cultural

#### **Conditional Uses**

- Drive-thru Restaurants
- Automotive Supplies
- Liquor Sales
- Bars
- Check Cashing
- Tobacco Sales
- Fire Arms
- Motels
- Gas Stations
- Car Washes
- Convenience Stores
- Commercial Storage Facilities
- Auto Repair
- Used Auto Sales
- Industrial
- Thrift/Second Hand Stores
- Recycling Centers
- Outdoor Storage
- Adult Media Stores

## Development Standards\*

<u>Allowable Building Heights</u>	<u>Max. Ht.</u>	<u>Transition to Residential/Max. Ht.</u>	
Commercial Retail	1 story/30'	1 story/20' within 20' of residential use	
Office	3 stories/45'	1 story/20' within 20' of residential use	
Commercial Mixed-use	3 stories/45'	1 story/20' within 20' of residential use	
Residential Mixed-use	3 stories/45'	2 stories/24' within 20' of residential use	
Residential/Live-Work	3 stories/36'	2 stories/24' within 20' of residential use	
<u>Required Setbacks</u>	<u>FOB Frontage</u>	<u>Side Street Frontage</u>	<u>Rear at Residential</u>
Commercial and Mixed-use	16' from curb	16' from curb	15' min.
Residential/Live-Work	20' from PL	15' from PL	10' min.
<u>Parking Requirements</u>	<u>Total Rqd.</u>	<u>On-site</u>	<u>Off-site/in-lieu Fees</u>
Commercial Retail	4/1,000 square feet	2/1,000 square feet	2/1,000 square feet
Office	3/1,000 square feet	1/1,000 square feet	2/1,000 square feet
Commercial Mixed-use	Blended requirement		2/1,000 square feet
Residential Mixed-use	Blended requirement		2/1,000 square feet for comm.
Residential Apartments	1/DU and .25 visitor parking		NA
Residential Townhouses	2/DU for 2+ BR, 1/DU for 1BR and S		NA
Live-Work	2/DU	1/DU	1/DU

\*The County's requirements for water quality, transit accessibility and other technical requirements would still apply.

Focus Group of citizens and other stakeholders—think as a district, expect better design, creating a sense of place, and making things better for pedestrians. These guidelines will apply to all commercial and mixed-use areas within the county. They provide qualitative criteria for roadway projects, site design, architectural design and signage design.

In the Design Guidelines, Section One: Commercial Districts and Section 3: Mixed-use Districts would apply to the Fair Oaks Boulevard planning areas. The desired approach to planning Fair Oaks Boulevard make it a candidate for establishing community urban design objectives that supported by individual projects (sections 1.1.1 and 3.1.1) and roadway and streetscape design (sections 1.1.2 and 3.1.2).

### ***Recommended Regulatory Actions:***

- ***Special Planning Area—Prepare the necessary documentation and environmental review to create the Carmichael Colony Main Street SPA. Include recommendations for parking, land uses and development standards.***
- ***Design Guidelines Application—Apply the Community Design Guidelines to the roadway design and use the Fair Oaks Boulevard Concept Plan as the urban design concept that the guidelines support.***

## **Fair Oaks Boulevard Concept Plan**

### **Administrative Actions**

Administrative actions include staff and technical assistance activities that further refine and organize efforts to implement the Concept Plan. The success of the planning and economic development concepts embodied in the Plan will require staff commitment. The County will need to provide on-going technical assistance and organizational support for the area, particularly in early stages before a private sector organization becomes established.

### Economic Development Staffing

The Economic Development Department has to be an engaged partner in the revitalization process. There is a variety of technical assistance programs they can provide to help committed existing merchants and property owners and to recruitment new investors. Economic development activities could include tenant recruitment, facade grant and commercial loan programs, and marketing and promotion support. These types of activities need to be an acknowledged priority by the Board of Supervisors.

### Planning Staff

The Carmichael Community Plan process is running concurrently with the preparation of the Fair Oaks Boulevard Concept Plan effort. The interconnected nature of the policies and implementation of each is important. Providing staff time to continue to coordinate the two projects and keep them moving together through the review and adoption process is important.

### Implementation of the Roadway Project

The roadway project will establish an atmosphere of cooperation and provide an opportunity to engage property owners. The process for communicating the construction process, right-of-way acquisition, and parking implementation needs to be coordinated. A team of County staff, community representatives, citizens, and property owners should meet periodically to review the progress of the project. The County should consider setting up a website for the project.

### ***Recommended Administrative Actions:***

- ***Staff Commitment—The County should allocate the resources to make sure planning, economic development and transportation staffing is adequate for planning and implementing the Concept Plan.***

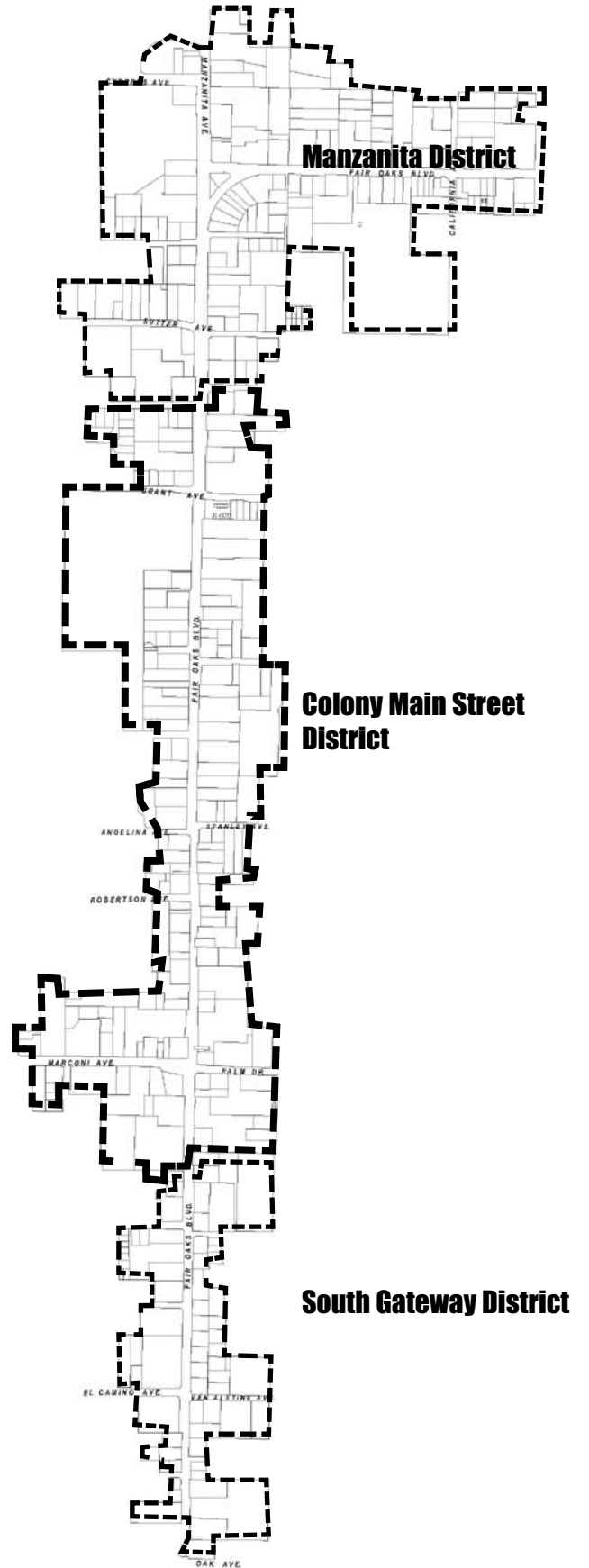


# Proposed Fair Oaks Boulevard SPA Boundaries

Right:

*The proposed boundaries for the Fair Oaks Boulevard Special Planning Area include all three sub-districts of the Fair Oaks Boulevard Concept Plan. The Colony Main Street District includes the roadway project and the most opportunity sites that could developed in the near term.*

*All commercial, institutional and residential projects located in these areas will be subject to the Fair Oaks Boulevard SPA list of allowable uses and development standards.*





# Acknowledgements

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## Board of Supervisors

Roger Dickinson, 1st District  
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Susan Peters, 3rd District  
Roberta MacGlashan, 4th District  
Don Nottoli, 5th District

Terry Schutten, County Executive



## Fair Oaks Boulevard Focus Group

Gary Barnhart, Noah Baygell, Anne Berner, Bonnie Berns Russ Brown, John Deterding, Sandra Dunn, Burnie Lenau, Carolyn McMillen, Jan and Gaylord Moulds, Jan Bass Otto, Irene Potter, James Rae, Frank Sheehan, Jill Stockinger, Peter Tateishi, Betsy Weiland, Tom Yancey

## County Staff

Margie Daugherty, Bobbe Dworkis, Richard Maddox, Victor Morrison-Vega, Jim Pardun, Dave Pevny, Corinna Sandmeier, Kohar Shirikian, Dan Shoeman, Cindy Storelli, Steve White

## Consultant

RACESTUDIO  
Bruce A. Race, FAIA, AICP

