



**JOINT MEETING BETWEEN THE CITY COUNCIL
AND PLANNING COMMISSION
SPECIAL MEETING AGENDA
MAY 7, 2024
5:30 P.M.**

WE ENCOURAGE ALL MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC TO PARTICIPATE IN THE MEETING VIA TELECONFERENCE BY CALLING (520) 525-8911. ANY MEMBER OF THE PUBLIC PARTICIPATING VIA TELECONFERENCE WILL BE GIVEN THE OPPORTUNITY TO PROVIDE PUBLIC COMMENT.

ADDITIONALLY, THE MEETING WILL BE STREAMED ON YOUTUBE LIVE
https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCB_ZmQZIHlH-ECEPZ2VwZg

Notice is hereby given that the City Council will hold a Joint Special Meeting on May 7, 2024, at the City Council Chambers, 663 Main Street, Livingston, California. Assistance will be provided to those requiring accommodations for disabilities in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990. Persons requesting accommodation should contact the Deputy City Clerk at least 24 hours prior to this meeting at (209) 394-8041, Ext. 121. Any writings or documents pertaining to an Open Session item provided to a majority of the members of the legislative body less than 72 hours prior to the meeting shall be made available for public inspection by email if requested. Public comments can be submitted via email at citycouncil@livingstoncity.com. Comments must be received by 2:00 p.m. on the day of the City Council meeting in order for them to be distributed to the Council prior to consideration of the matter. You will need to provide: Meeting date, item number, name, email and comment (please limit to 300 words or 3 minutes). Please include: PUBLIC COMMENT in the subject for the email. Written comments will not be read aloud at the meeting, but will be reported as received for the record. If you do not receive an acknowledgement of receipt by 4:00 p.m., please call the City Clerk's Office at (209) 394-8041, Ext. 121 (Note: This technology is not a guaranteed method).

CALL TO ORDER

Pledge of Allegiance.

Moment of Silence – First Responders and Military Members.

City Council Roll Call.

Planning Commission Roll Call.

Changes to the Agenda.

CITIZEN COMMENTS

At a special meeting, members of the public wishing to address the Council or the Planning Commission for any matter on the agenda may do so at this time. Note, under the provisions of the California Government Code, the City Council is prohibited from discussing or taking action on any item not on the agenda. Comments are normally limited to three (3) minutes.

*Please note that under California Government Code section 54954.3(a) (The Brown Act), Special Meeting agendas need only provide an opportunity for members of the public to directly address the legislative body concerning **any item that has been described in the meeting agenda before or at the end of consideration of the item.** The public will have an opportunity to comment on matters not on the agenda at regularly scheduled Council Meetings.*

STUDY SESSION

1. **Livingston 2040 General Plan Update Joint City Council/Planning Commission Study Session:**
Discussion and Direction on Progress Report and Land Use Alternatives.

ADJOURNMENT



STAFF REPORT

AGENDA ITEM: Livingston 2040 General Plan Update Joint City Council / Planning Commission Study Session – Progress Report & Land Use Alternatives

MEETING DATE: May 7, 2024

PREPARED BY: Gary Conte, Community Development Director

REVIEWED BY: Christopher Lopez, Interim City Manager

OBJECTIVE:

Presentation on the status of the Livingston 2040 General Plan Update, and the presentation and discussion of three (3) land use alternative concepts to be considered moving forward with the General Plan Update process. The objective of the study session is to present a full range of ideas regarding potential future growth and development being represented in one or more alternative concepts to conduct a detailed comparative analysis that will provide an understanding of the advantages and disadvantages of each alternative.

RECOMMENDATION:

Consider study session presentation and provide direction to staff in defining three land use alternative concepts to be subject to a detailed comparative analysis.

BACKGROUND AND DISCUSSION:

Work Completed

The General Plan Update Project, composed of eight (8) phases, formally started March 2020 with a Kickoff meeting with City staff and the consultant team – Mintier Harnish. At that meeting, Project issues, communication protocols, work scope, and schedule were discussed. Shortly after the kick-off meeting, the Covid 19 pandemic struck. This event had a significant effect on the Project for the next two years, in that most of the public and City staff meetings were held virtually.

During the second Phase of the Project, Mintier Harnish prepared the Project logo, constructed the Project website, and gathered data and information. Minitier Harnish published Newsletter #1 and facilitated a General Plan forum with the Planning Commission and City Council in May 2020. The team also conducted 26 stakeholder interviews. The Stakeholder Interview Summary is posted on the General Plan website, along with all other Project documents produced to date. This and most other project documents are published in English, Spanish, and Punjabi.

During Phase 3, the Mintier Harnish team researched and prepared the Existing Conditions and Trends Workbook. Based on the community engagement that had cumulated during Phase 4, the team facilitated a City Council / Planning Commission joint study session on the Vision and Guiding Principles in June 2021. The Workbook and the Vision and Guiding principles are found on the Project website.

Following completion of the Vision and Guiding Principles, the consultant team next initiated work on the land use alternatives evaluation (Phase 5). The consultant team met with City staff to get direction on alternative land use concepts and had an internal draft largely completed. It was at that point the General Plan Update Project was suspended in July 2021 by the City due to the loss of City staff and City Council changes.

The Project restarted August 2022 with a status report to the City Council. Mintier Harnish initially worked with new City Planning staff consultants to review and refine the land use alternative concepts and were ready to start the alternatives analysis. However, additional City staff changes paused the Project again. With the arrival of new City staff, the Project is now restarted.

Work Remaining

At this juncture, there are three (3) basic phases to complete: Phase 5) Land Use Alternatives Analysis; Phase 6) General Plan Policy Document; and Phase 7) Environmental Impact Report (EIR). The consultant team anticipates completion of the land use alternatives analysis by Fall of this year. The General Plan Policy document will take 3 to 4 months to complete, followed by the preparation of the EIR, which is anticipated to take 9 to 10 months to complete. Completion and adoption of the 2040 General Plan Update (Phase 8) is projected in mid- to late-2025.

LAND USE ALTERNATIVES

As part of the General Plan Update project, Phase 5 is dedicated to the analysis of land use alternatives. The purpose of analyzing land use alternatives is to develop an updated land use diagram for the General Plan which reflects the community's vision for the next 20 years. The consultant team, in consultation with City staff, developed three alternatives land use concepts to provide City decision makers and the community with a general understanding of the implications of emphasizing different approaches to future growth.

Alternative 1 represents development based on the existing General Plan policies and land uses. Alternative 2 represents development with a focus on encouraging infill development, with potential to increase residential densities and building intensities in the existing urban boundaries. Finally, the Alternative 3 represents City expansion and a focus on annexing additional land into the City.

In addition to the land use alternatives, several key areas have been identified as important topics to the community. These topics can be considered in terms of how each alternative accommodates housing needs, economic development, job opportunities, and downtown revitalization, as well as parks, recreation, and walkability / bikeability. In addition to a description of the alternatives, this document also provides a list of the key areas and concepts/issues that can be included in any of the alternatives.

Key Topics and Concepts

The three alternatives were developed based on a set of key topics and concepts identified by the community during the early community engagement phases of the project. These topics and concepts should be referenced when considering each proposed alternative. Topics and concepts can be considered in terms of how each alternative accommodates housing needs, economic development, job opportunities, and downtown revitalization, as well as parks, recreation, and walkability / bikeability.

Downtown/Commercial

- Revitalize Downtown
- Increase economic vitality
- Diversify businesses
- Support the development of an ACE station in Downtown
- Increase residential densities and building intensity
- Create walkable/bikeable streets
- Develop more public open space
- Attract and incentivize local and regional business owners to locate in Livingston

Housing

- Address existing capacity and projected needs
- Create more housing capacity and opportunities for different housing types, including:
 - Allow annexation of specific properties
 - Increase residential densities
 - Encourage mixed-use development
- Find a balance between preservation and revitalization
- Create opportunities to develop missing middle housing, ADUs, and other innovative housing concepts

Employment

- Preserve and enhance existing industrial areas
- Encourage a variety of industrial land uses
- Capitalize on existing City assets
- Lower housing costs
- Proximity to SR 99
- Existing local industry
- Increase the opportunity for more higher-paying jobs

Parks, Recreation, and Walkability / Bikeability

- Enhance existing parks and recreation facilities
- Introduce additional bike lanes around the City
- Develop a sports facility that can support regional events
- Create interconnected walking and biking paths

The following provides a description of each proposed alternative, including a breakdown of land use designations, development standards, and allowed land uses within each proposed designation.

Alternative 1: Baseline

Alternative 1 is a baseline alternative. This alternative proposes no changes to the existing General Plan land uses, the City Limits, or the City's Sphere of Influence (SOI).

Existing General Plan policies would be revised and updated to address changes in State law. Land use designations, development standards, and zoning would remain unchanged. This alternative is important to analyze as a point of comparison to the other alternatives and represents what the City will look and feel like if the existing General Plan land uses were carried forward to the year 2040.

Alternative 2: Infill

Alternative 2 is an infill alternative that focuses on existing vacant and underutilized land in the City for development. Proposed development in this alternative will rely on the City's existing infrastructure and concentrates on increasing development intensities (housing density and/or building intensity) to increase capacity of the existing developed areas.

This alternative does not propose any City expansion or annexation of land and assumes there will be no development beyond the City's existing SOI within the 2040 planning horizon. Alternative 2 places an emphasis on enhancing the existing City fabric, expanding walking, and biking facilities, increasing opportunities for recreation, and the revitalization of downtown. Major features of Alternative 2 include:

- Creation of an agriculture land use designation for existing agricultural areas within the SOI. No conversion of existing farmland in the SOI is proposed in this alternative.
- Replaces the Downtown Commercial land use designation with a Mixed-Use designation, which allows high density residential development.
- Creation of a separate Estate Residential land use designation for residential areas at the urban fringe. This land use designation is currently a sub-category of Low Density Residential.
- Groups all existing Reserve land use designations into a single Urban Reserve designation.

Alternative 3: Expansion

Alternative 3 is an expansion alternative that proposes the annexation of key areas on the urban fringe into the City limits. Under this alternative, expansion will likely require the construction of additional infrastructure for undeveloped and underdeveloped areas to accommodate new development.

Unlike Alternative 2, this alternative proposes converting existing agricultural land to urban uses (e.g., commercial, residential, industrial). Alternative 3 places an emphasis on creating opportunities for a variety of housing types and encourages the expansion of employment-based land uses. Major features of Alternative 3 include:

- Annexing key areas currently outside the City Limits.
- Conversion of surrounding agriculture to urban uses.
- Creation of a separate Estate Residential land use designation for residential areas at the urban fringe. This land use designation is currently a sub-category of Low Density Residential.

- Groups all existing Reserve land use designations into a single Urban Reserve designation.
- Increase the maximum floor area ration (FAR) in downtown from 1.0 to 1.5.

NEXT STEPS:

The purpose of this staff report and joint City Council / Planning Commission presentation is to receive feedback and direction from the Council and Commission on the land use alternative concepts before conducting a detailed comparative analysis that will provide an understanding of the advantages and disadvantages of each alternative. The objective is to make sure that the full range of ideas about future growth and development in Livingston is represented in one of more of the alternatives.

Following City Council / Planning Commission direction for the alternatives, the consultants and City staff will make refinements as necessary and the conduct a thorough comparative analysis of the alternatives to give decisionmakers an understanding of the implications of selecting one alternative over another. Often this process results in the City selecting a hybrid alternative - selecting the best features of each alternative initially presented to compose a hybrid alternative.

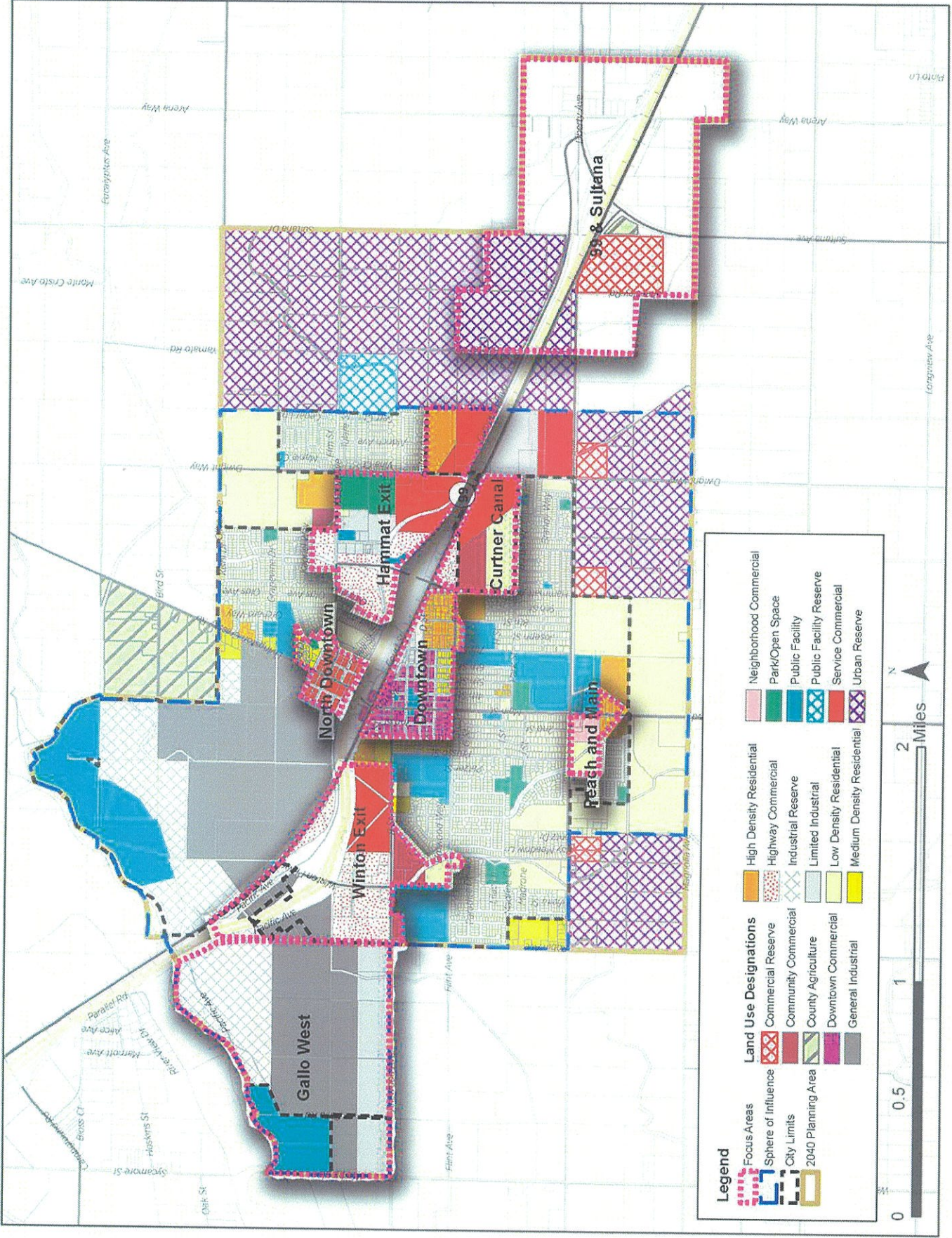
FISCAL IMPACT:

None. This joint City Council / Planning Commission study session is funded under a current contract with Minitier Harnish to prepare the City 2040 General Plan Update.

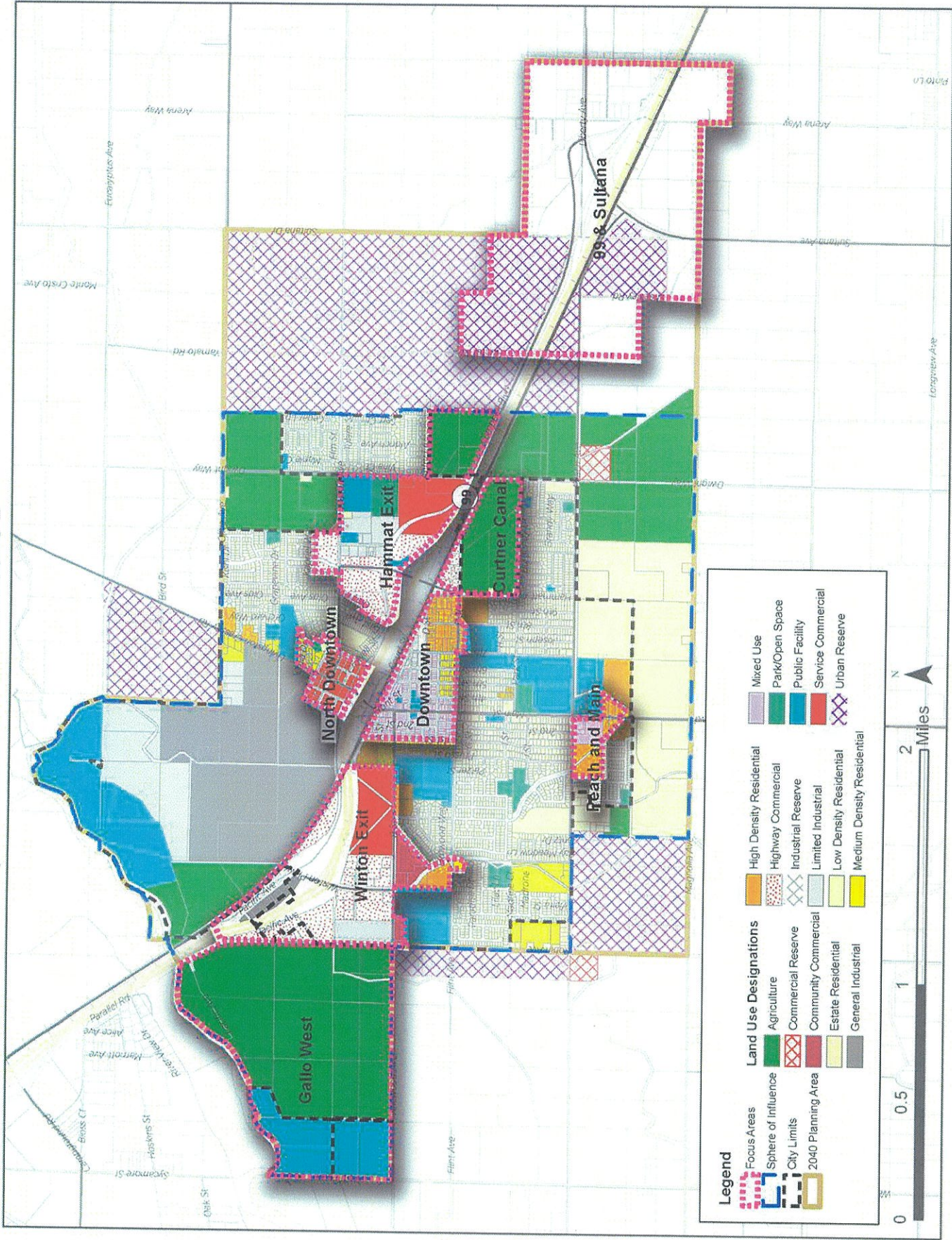
RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends that Council and Commission discuss and confirm three land use alternatives to be subject to a detailed comparative analysis.

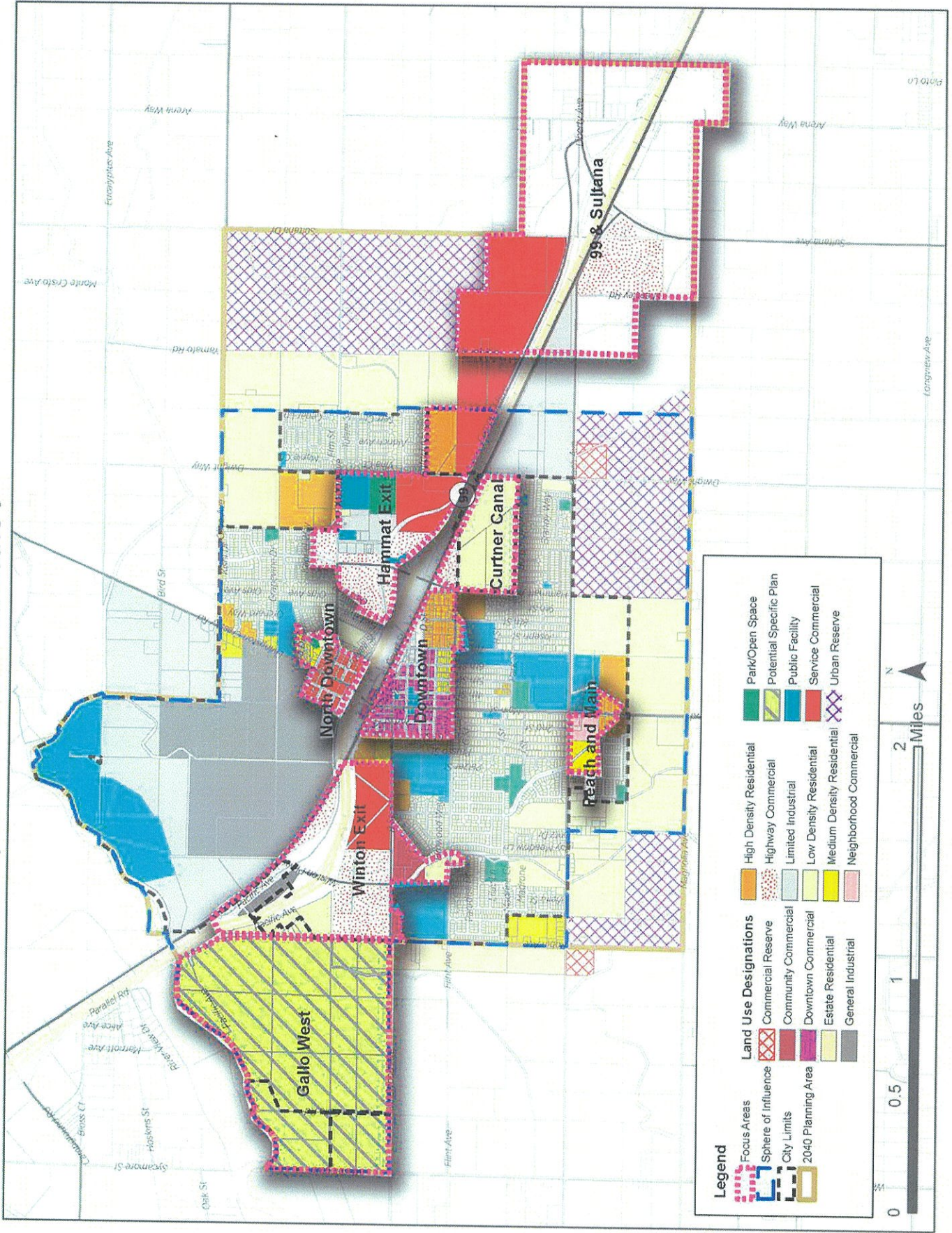
Livingston 2040 General Plan Update Alternatives: Alternative 1



Livingston 2040 General Plan Update Alternatives: Alternative 2



Livingston 2040 General Plan Update Alternatives: Alternative 3



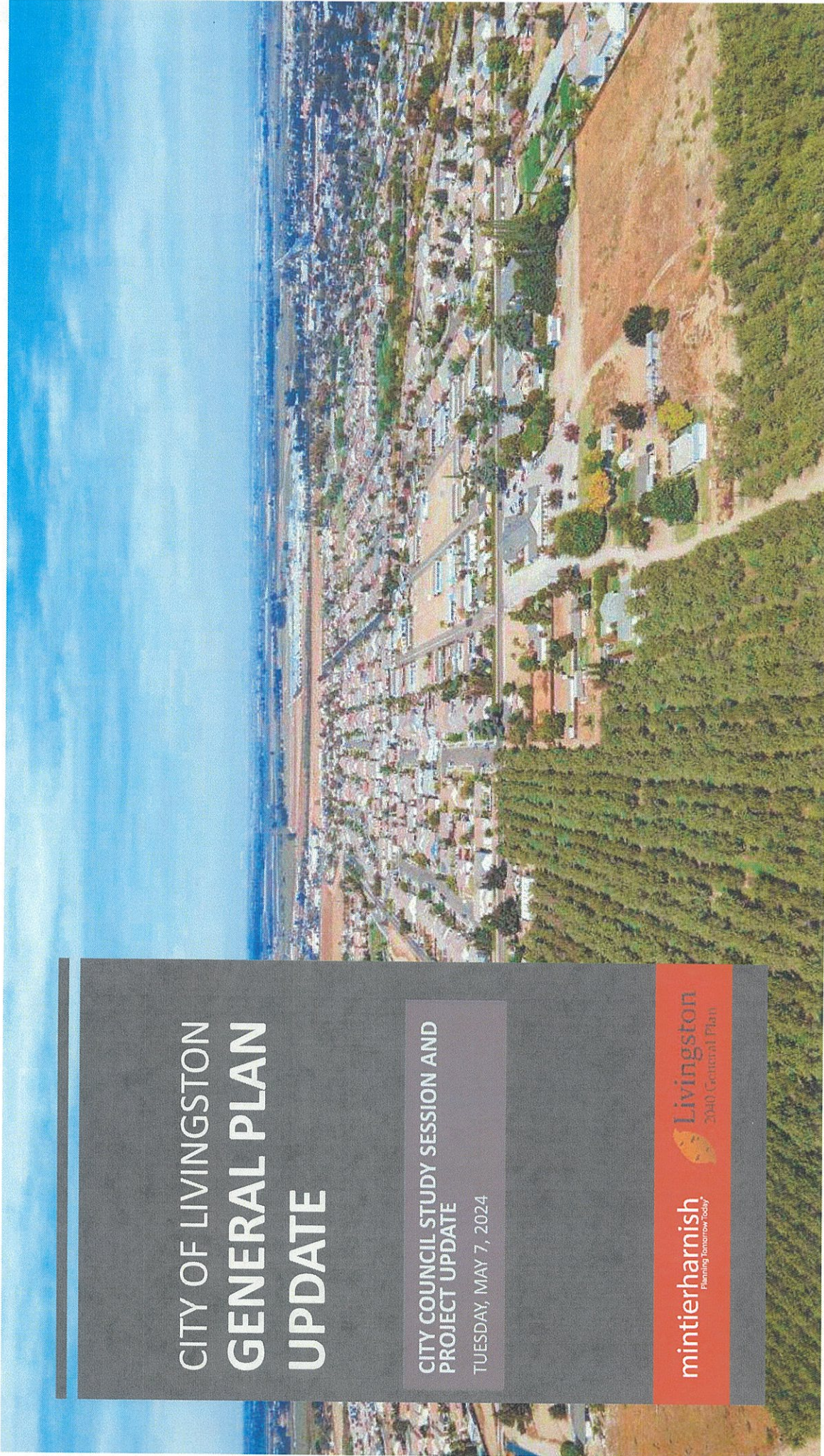
CITY OF LIVINGSTON GENERAL PLAN UPDATE

CITY COUNCIL STUDY SESSION AND
PROJECT UPDATE

TUESDAY, MAY 7, 2024

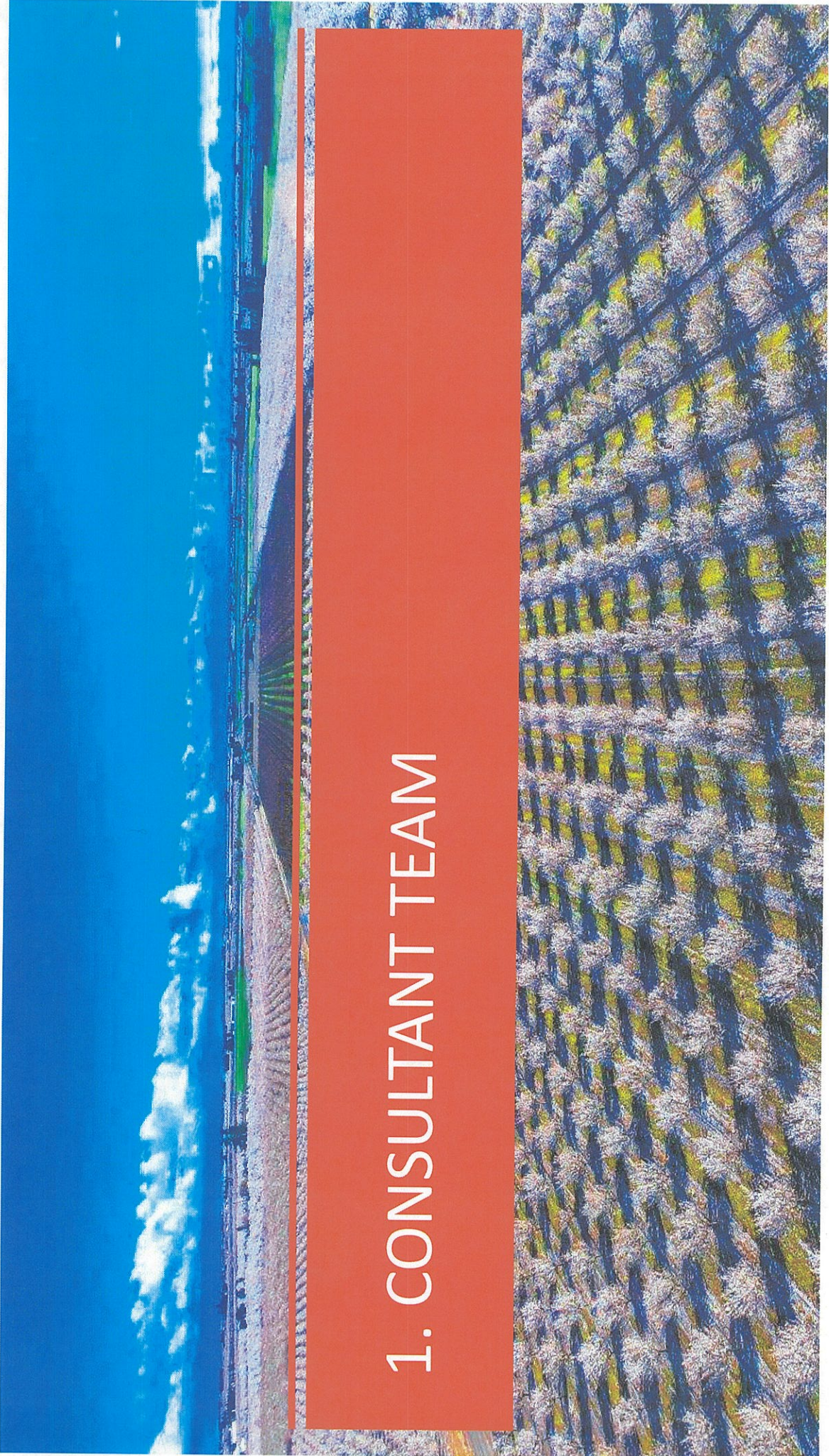
mintierharnish
Planning tomorrow today

Livingston
2040 Centennial Plan



AGENDA

1. Overview of the Consultant Team
 2. Purpose and Contents of General Plans
 3. Project Overview and Schedule
 4. Worked Completed So Far
 5. Land Use Alternatives
 6. Next Steps
 7. City Council Discussion and Questions
-




1. CONSULTANT TEAM

OUR TEAM


City of Livingston
City Council
Planning Commission
City Staff



Project Management



Jim Harnish
Project Director



Michael Gibbons
Project Manager

Mintier Harnish
Outreach
Alternatives
Policy Document



GHD
Transportation Analysis
Policy Document
Environmental Review

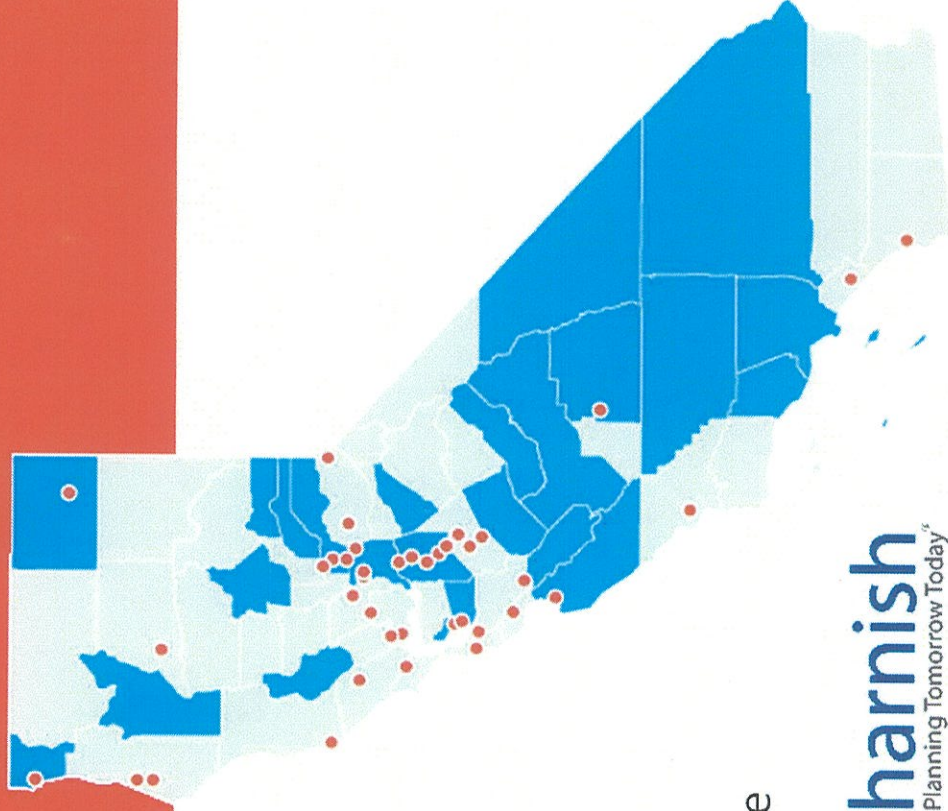


Rincon
Policy Document
Environmental Review



EXPERIENCE

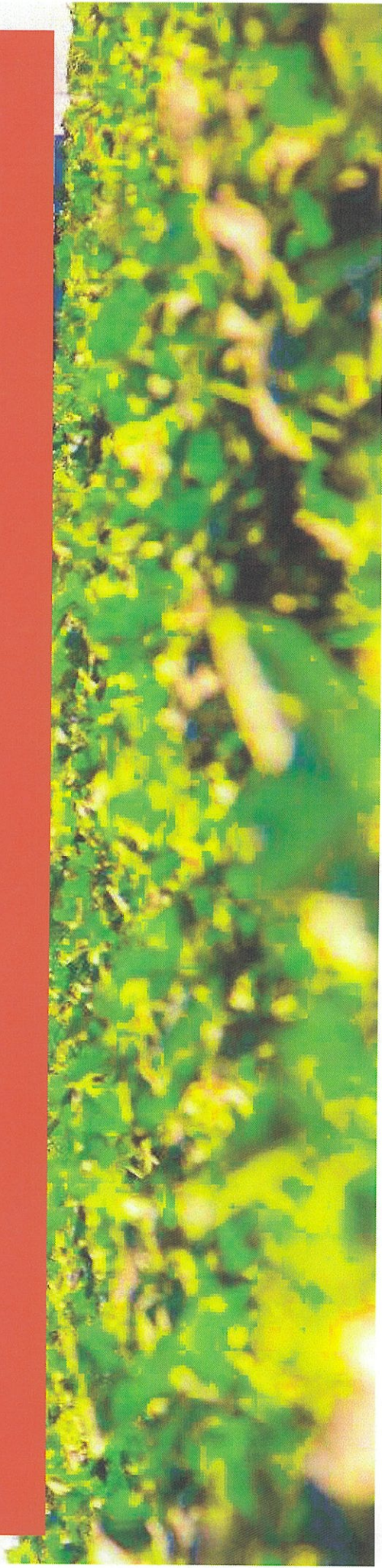
- Established in 1985
- Land use planning and community engagement specialists
- Prepared over 60 general plans, 80 housing elements, and 40 zoning codes
- Local government experience with general plan administration and implementation
- Extensive familiarity with Merced County and the San Joaquin Valley



mintierharnish
Planning Tomorrow Today[®]

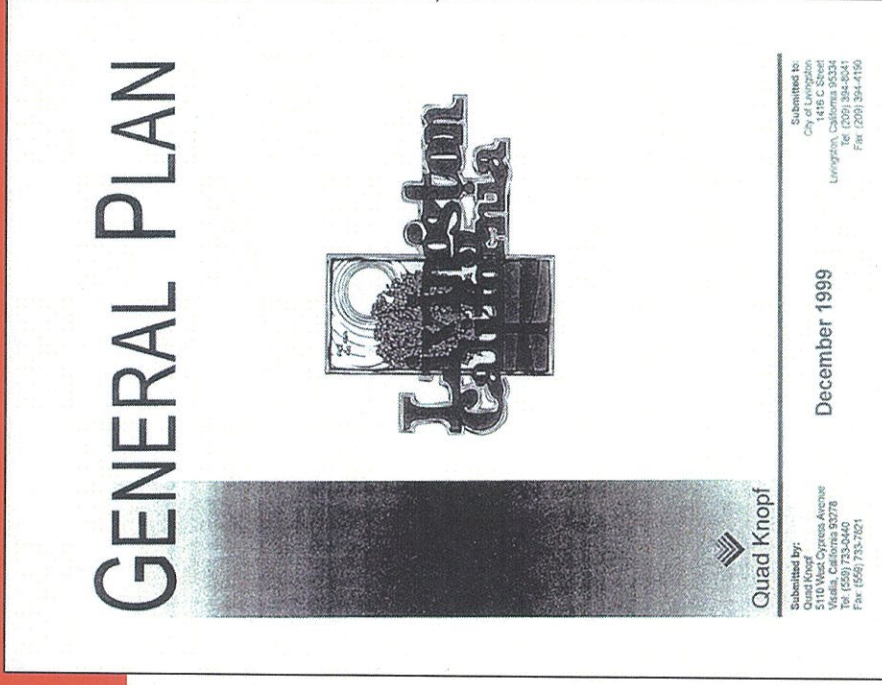


2. GENERAL PLAN OVERVIEW

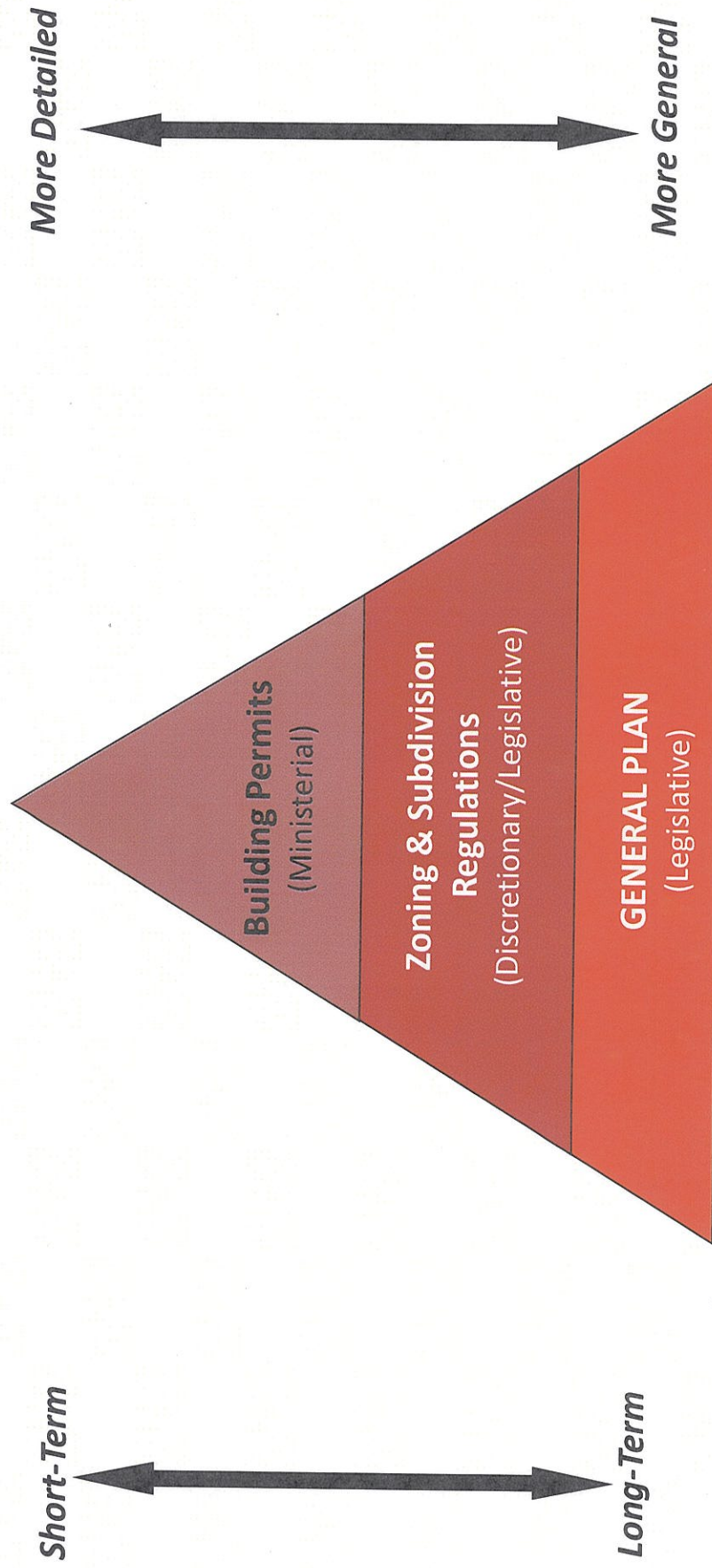


WHAT ARE GENERAL PLANS?

- **Required** by State law for every city and county
- Represents the community's **vision for the future**
- Guides **long-term decisions**
- Establishes community **expectations**
- Addresses a broad **range of topics**, organized by "elements"

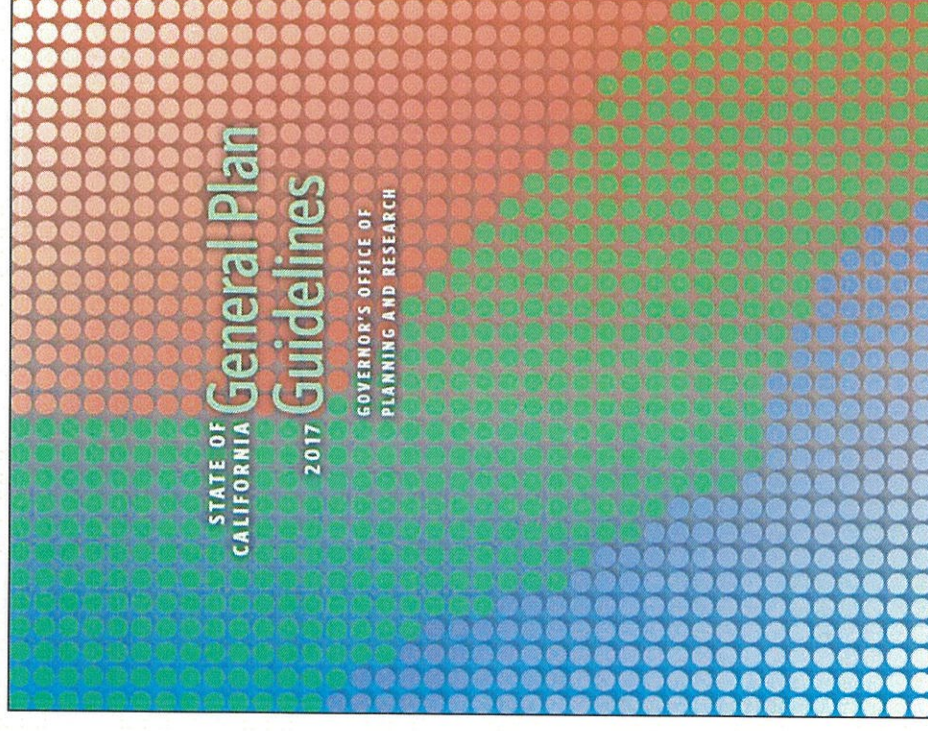


GENERAL PLAN HIERARCHY



REQUIRED ELEMENTS

- Land Use
- Circulation
- Housing
- Conservation
- Open Space
- Safety
- Noise
- Environmental Justice
- Air Quality



NEW STATE REQUIREMENTS





3. PROJECT OVERVIEW & SCHEDULE

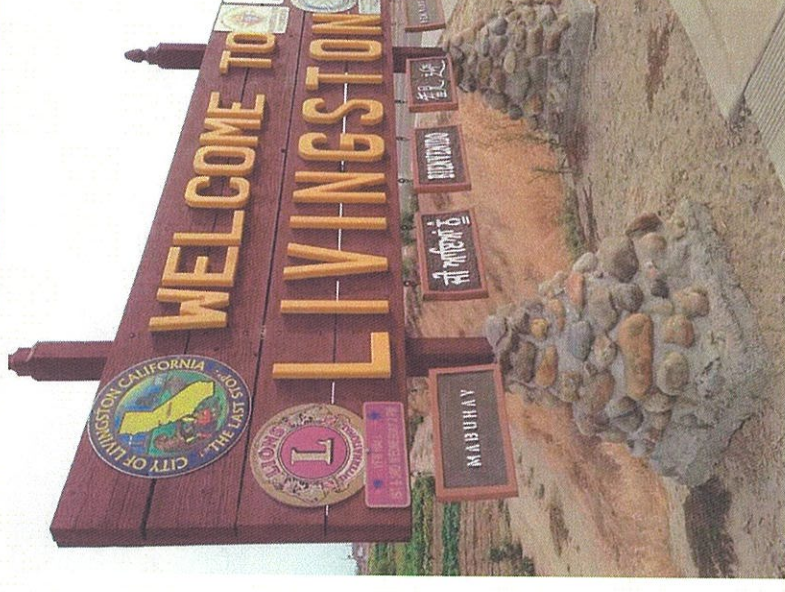
FOCUS OF UPDATE

- Produce a General Plan that is innovative and contemporary
- Comply with State Planning Law
 - Climate change
 - Environmental justice
 - Hazards
- Diversity/inclusivity
- Emerging trends



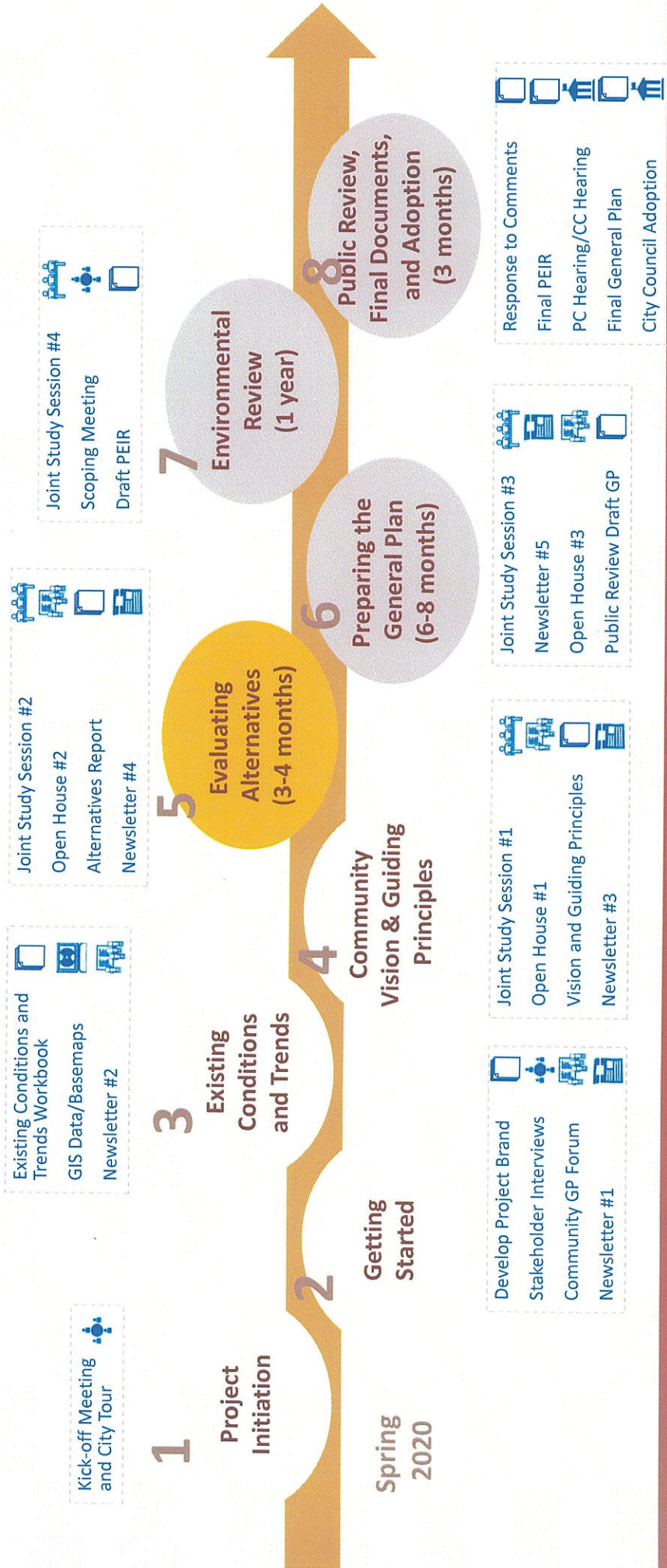
FOCUS OF UPDATE

- Smart growth
- Land use
- Economic stability and vitality
 - Economic diversification
 - Downtown preservation
 - Intergovernmental coordination
 - Strategic Economic Development Plan implementation



PROJECT PHASES & SCHEDULE

- Meeting
- Community
- Study Session
- Deliverable
- Web-based
- Newsletter
- PC/CC Hearing



Spring 2020



4. WORK COMPLETED SO FAR

WORK COMPLETED SO FAR....

Project Branding

Website

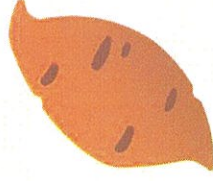
Newsletters

Mapping

Existing Conditions and Trends Workbook

Vision and Guiding Principles

Community Workshops



Livingston

2040 General Plan

Primary Update logo

WORK COMPLETED SO FAR...

Project Branding

Website

Newsletters

Mapping

Existing Conditions and Trends Workbook

Vision and Guiding Principles

Community Workshops

LivingstonCity2040.com



WORK COMPLETED SO FAR...

Project Branding

Website

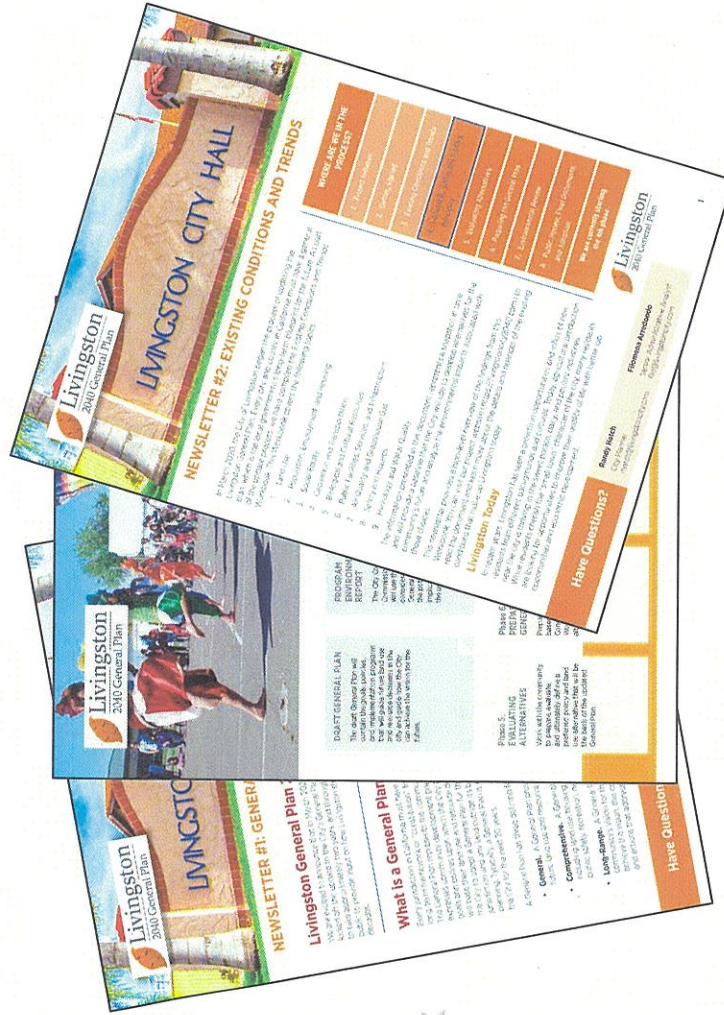
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Vision and Guiding Principles

Community Workshops



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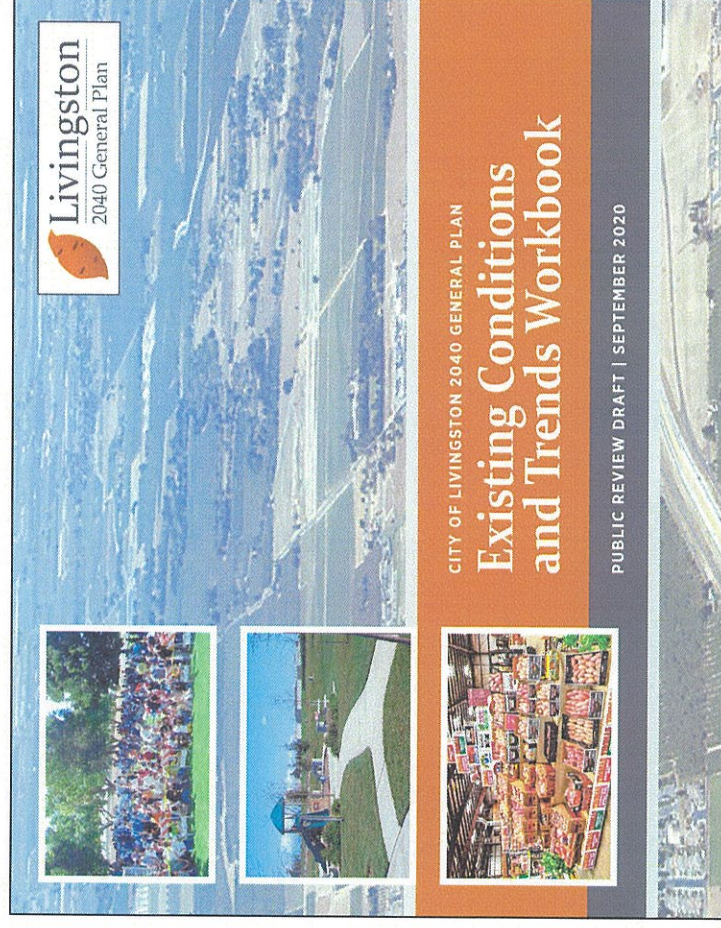
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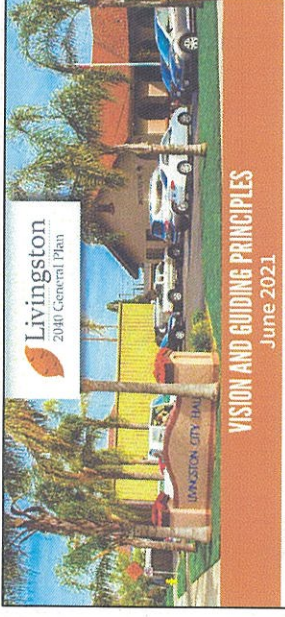
Newsletters

Mapping

Existing Conditions and Trends Workbook

Vision and Guiding Principles

Community Workshops



Vision Statement

In 2040, Livingston is a diverse, multicultural, welcoming, peaceful community with a small-town feel. Livingston's schools continue to be the best in the region. Downtown Livingston is home to many local businesses, trendy restaurants, and fun things to do and see. There are many places for friends and family to gather in Livingston. Residents do not worry about water quality or quantity, and the city has achieved a balance between growth and preservation of agricultural lands.

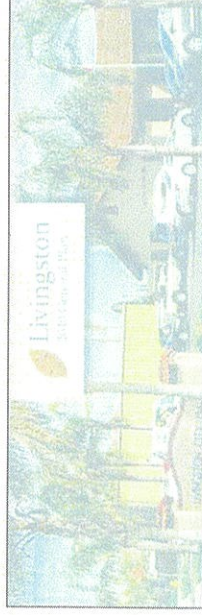
Guiding Principles

- Cultivate a Downtown Renaissance.** Support and attract businesses that will restore downtown Livingston to a vibrant district. Support local artists, entrepreneurs, and dining options, especially commercial and entertainment-focused uses, while preserving the small-town feel.
- Balancing Growth and Agricultural Land Preservation.** Support a balanced growth management strategy that protects productive agricultural lands while allowing for new economic opportunities.
- Offer Recreation Opportunities.** Maintain and expand walking and biking facilities to encourage non-automobile modes of transportation, continue to hold community-wide events and festivals, and support the development of new recreational facilities to attract regional sports tournaments.
- Foster Economic Growth.** Promote a strong local economy by supporting existing businesses and industries, while providing additional opportunities for local and regional businesses to become established in the city, especially those that recruit, retain, and expand quality jobs for Livingston's resident workforce.
- Maintain Multicultural Assets.** Continue to celebrate the different communities and heritages that contribute to Livingston's diversity and foster appreciation for different cultures, while embracing Americanism, patriotism, and their unifying principles.

WORK COMPLETED SO FAR...

Project Branding

Website



Vision Statement

In 2040, Livingston is a diverse, multicultural, welcoming, peaceful community with a small-town feel. Livingston's schools continue to be the best in the region. Downtown Livingston is home to many local businesses, trendy restaurants, and fun things to do and see. There are many places for friends and family to gather in Livingston. Residents do not worry about water quality or quantity, and the city has achieved a balance between growth and preservation of agricultural lands.

Community Workshops



1. Offer Recreation Opportunities: To ensure the availability of quality recreation opportunities, the city will support the development of new, world-class recreation opportunities for residents.
2. Foster Economic Growth: Through a variety of programs, the city will support the growth and development of the downtown area, including the development of new businesses and the revitalization of existing ones.
3. Maintain Multicultural Assets: The city will continue to promote and support the diverse cultural and ethnic heritage of the community, including the development of new cultural and ethnic centers.

Guiding Principles



1. Cultivate a Downtown Renaissance. Support and attract businesses that will restore Downtown Livingston to a vibrant destination with unique retail, entertainment, arts, and dining options, especially commercial and entertainment-focused uses, while preserving the small-town feel.



2. Balancing Growth and Agricultural Land Preservation. Support a balanced growth management strategy that protects productive agricultural lands while allowing for new economic opportunities.



3. Offer Recreation Opportunities. Maintain and expand walking and biking facilities to encourage non-automobile modes of transportation, continue to hold community-wide events and festivals, and support the development of new recreational facilities to attract regional sports tournaments.



4. Foster Economic Growth. Promote a strong local economy by supporting existing businesses and industries, while providing additional opportunities for local and regional businesses to become established in the city, especially those that recruit, retain, and expand quality jobs for Livingston's resident workforce.



5. Maintain Multicultural Assets. Continue to celebrate the different communities and heritages that contribute to Livingston's diversity and foster appreciation for different cultures, while embracing Americanism, patriotism, and their unifying principles.

WORK COMPLETED SO FAR...

Project Branding

Website

Newsletters

Mapping

Existing Conditions and Trends Workbook

Vision and Guiding Principles

Community Workshops



Livingston General Plan Update Summary of Visioning Outreach

May 13, 2021

Community input is a key part of the General Plan update process. The General Plan update process is a 20-year look into the future, and allows the community to provide input on the future of the city for the next generation. Therefore, as part of this process, it was important to create an opportunity where the General Plan team could hear from community members about their vision for the community.

The purpose of the **Issue, Assets, and Visioning Workshop (Workshop)** was to provide an opportunity for community members to share their views on the current community conditions, current or future land use-related issues and opportunities, and to explore potential community features and quality of life improvements that will aid in developing a vision for the future of Livingston.

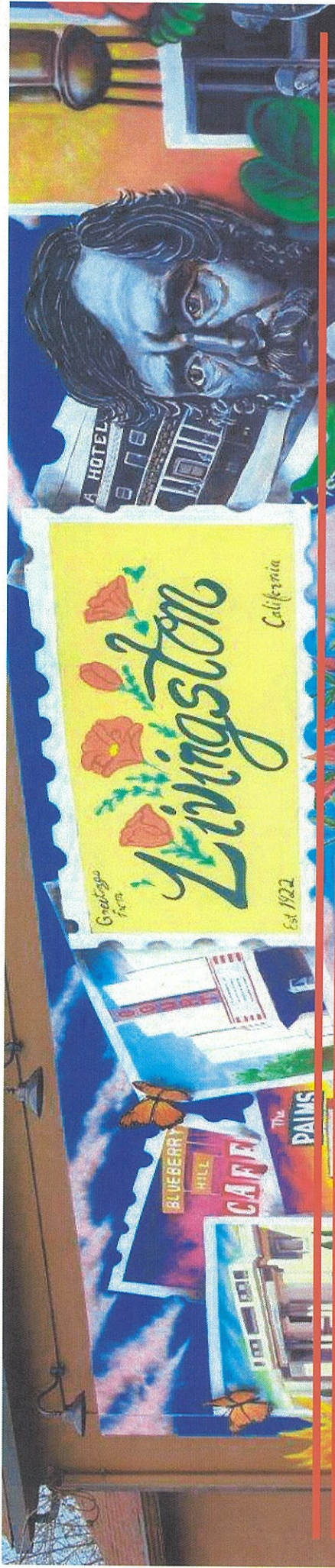
The Workshop was originally planned as an in-person, open house, to be held in mid-2020. Due to safety concerns related to the gathering related to the rapid spread of COVID-19, it was delayed by several months. By early 2021, the workshop was reimagined to take place in a virtual engagement format in an effort to minimize overall delay of the General Plan update process. In 20th 2021, General Plan team facilitated the Workshop virtually via Zoom, an online video conferencing platform. To complement the virtual platform, General Plan team also prepared a **Vision and Opportunities Survey (Survey)**, which the participants were asked to take at the end of the Workshop. The Survey was also available for several weeks after the Workshop.

Publicity

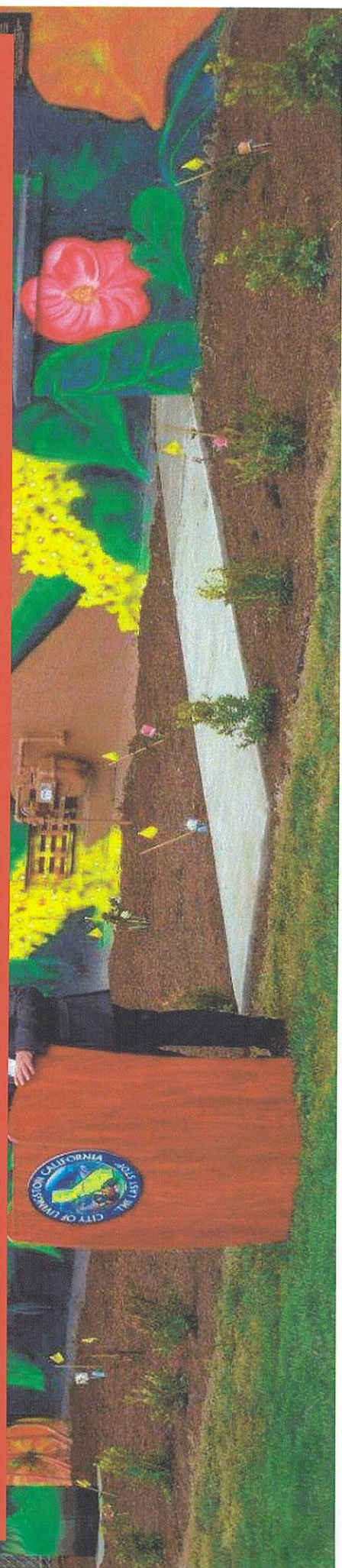
Information about the Workshop was shared as part of a monthly utility bill insert, on the City's Facebook page, and through the General Plan email list. The General Plan team also asked Stakeholders, who were interviewed during an earlier phase of the project (see [Stakeholder Interview Summary](#), available at: <https://www.livingstonca.gov/resources/documents.html>), to reach out to their respective networks to spread the word about the Workshop.

Workshop Format

The Workshop began with a presentation that provided an overview of the purpose of the virtual workshop and the general plan process. After the presentation, participants were organized into smaller groups where there was more opportunity for participants to speak and share their views. Discussion questions were high-level and designed to warm-up and engage participants for providing more detailed input through the Survey at the end of the Workshop. Real-time Spanish and Punjabi translation services for the small group discussion were available, however no participants indicated the need for those services.



5. LAND USE ALTERNATIVES



WHAT ARE LAND USE ALTERNATIVES

- **Goal:** Updated Land Use Diagram
 1. Each represent varying land use approaches and potential growth scenarios
 2. Point of comparison
 3. Pros and cons to each alternative
 4. Public input necessary
 5. City Council ultimately selects a preferred alternative

KEY TOPIC AND CONCEPTS



- **Downtown/commercial**



- **Housing**



- **Employment**



- **Multi-modal transportation**

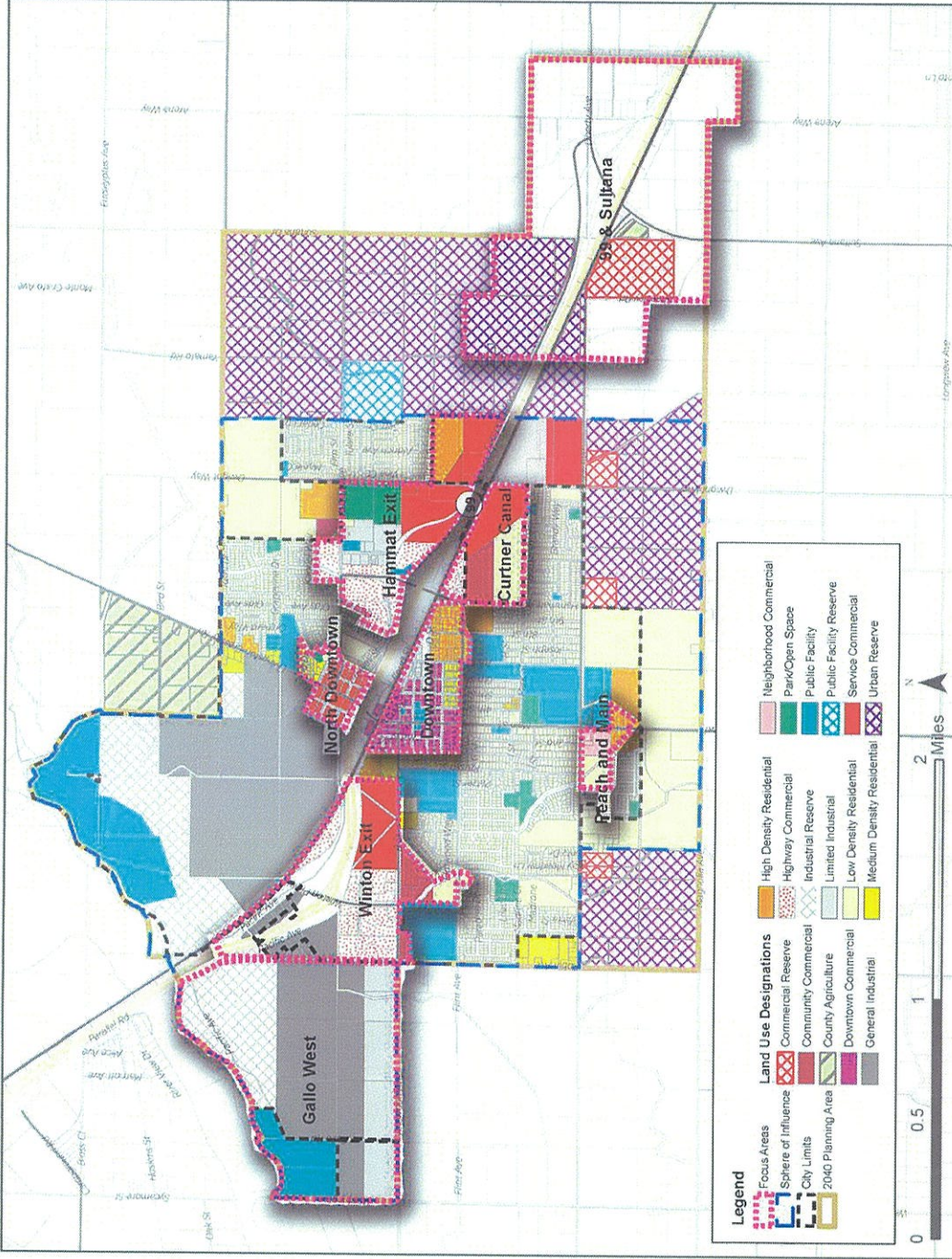


- **Parks and recreation**

ALTERNATIVE 1: BASELINE

- Baseline “business as usual” alternative
 - Represents what the city would look like if existing General Plan were carried forward to 2040
 - Proposes no changes to General Plan land use, City Limits, or the SOI
 - Used as a point of comparison for other alternative concepts
-

Livingston 2040 General Plan Update Alternatives: Alternative 1

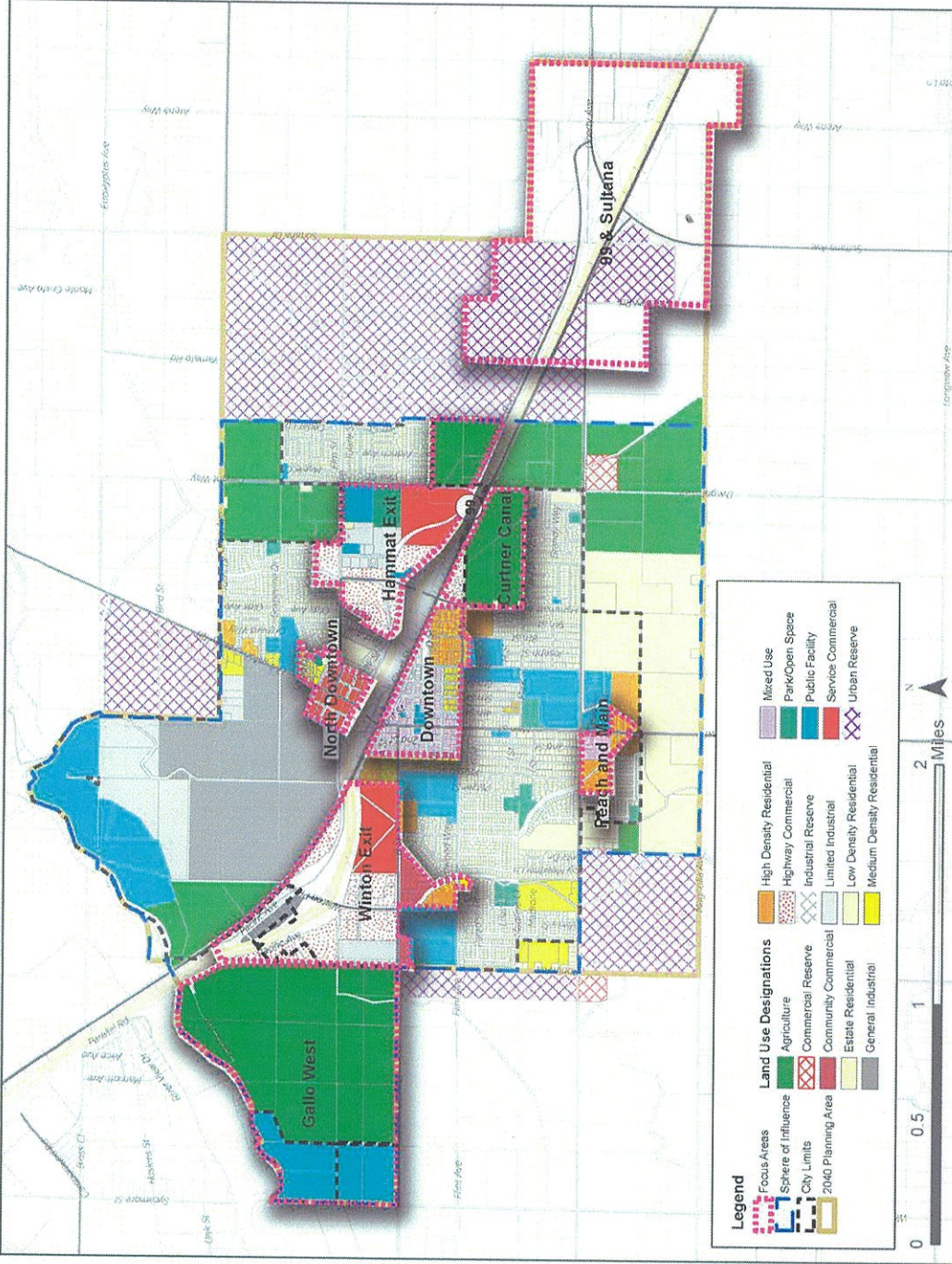


Updated: June 6, 2023

ALTERNATIVE 2: INFILL

- Focus on existing vacant and underutilized land
- Creation of an agriculture land use designation for existing agricultural areas within the SOI
- Replaces the Downtown Commercial land use designation with a Mixed-Use designation
- Creation of a separate Estate Residential land use designation
- Groups all existing Reserve land use designations into a single Urban Reserve designation

Livingston 2040 General Plan Update Alternatives: Alternative 2

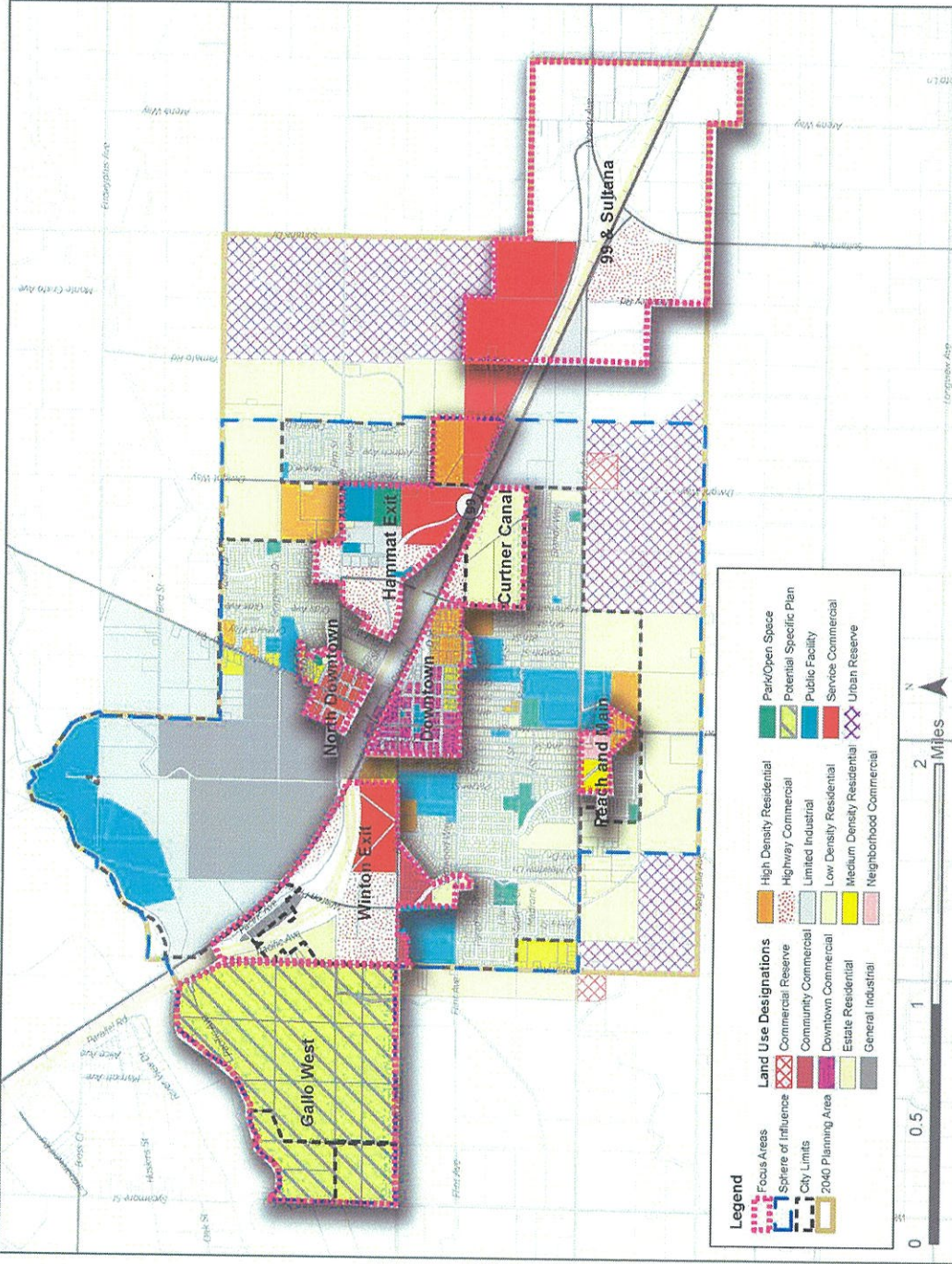


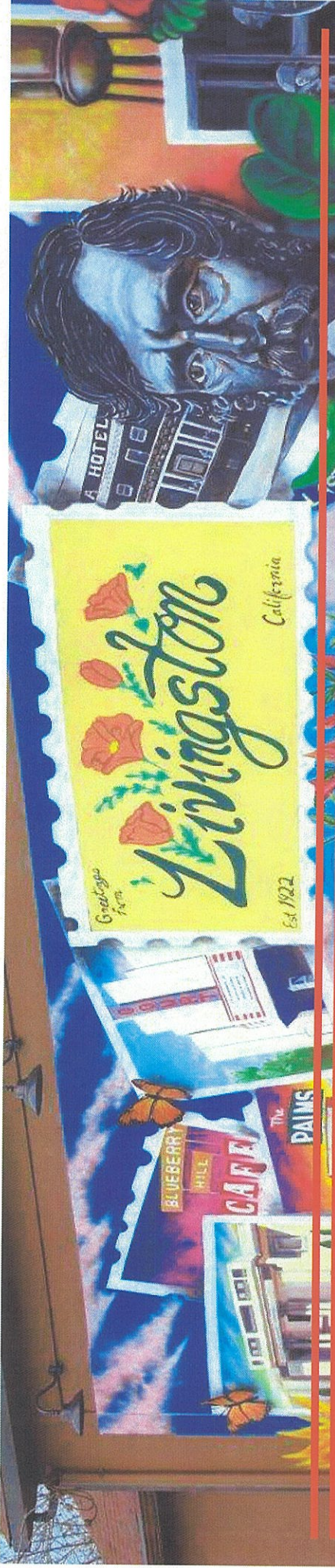
Updated: June 6, 2023

ALTERNATIVE 3: EXPANSION

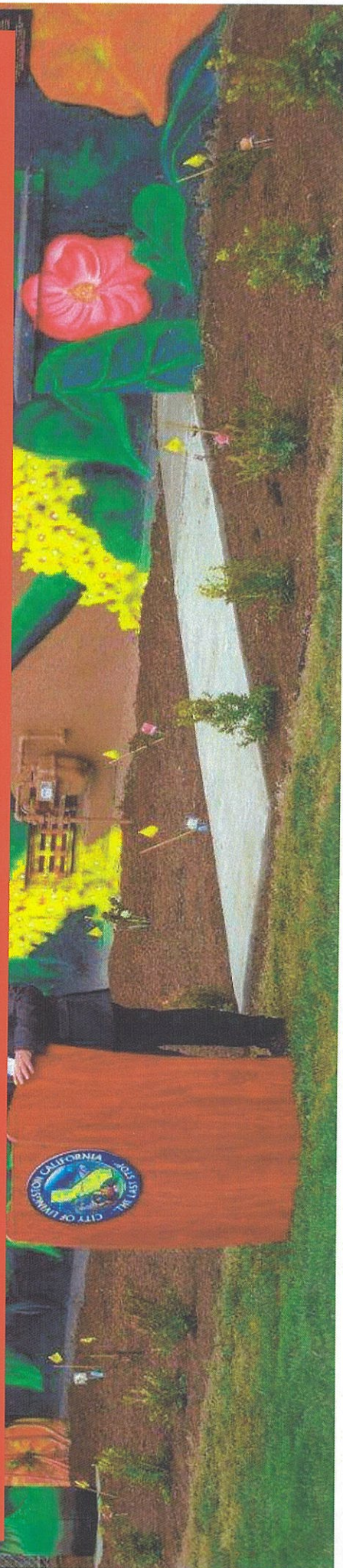
- Proposes the annexation of key areas on the urban fringe into the City limits
- Conversion of surrounding agriculture to urban uses
- Increase the maximum FAR in downtown from 1.0 to 1.5
- Creation of a separate Estate Residential land use designation
- • Groups all existing Reserve land use designations into a single Urban Reserve designation

Livingston 2040 General Plan Update Alternatives: Alternative 3



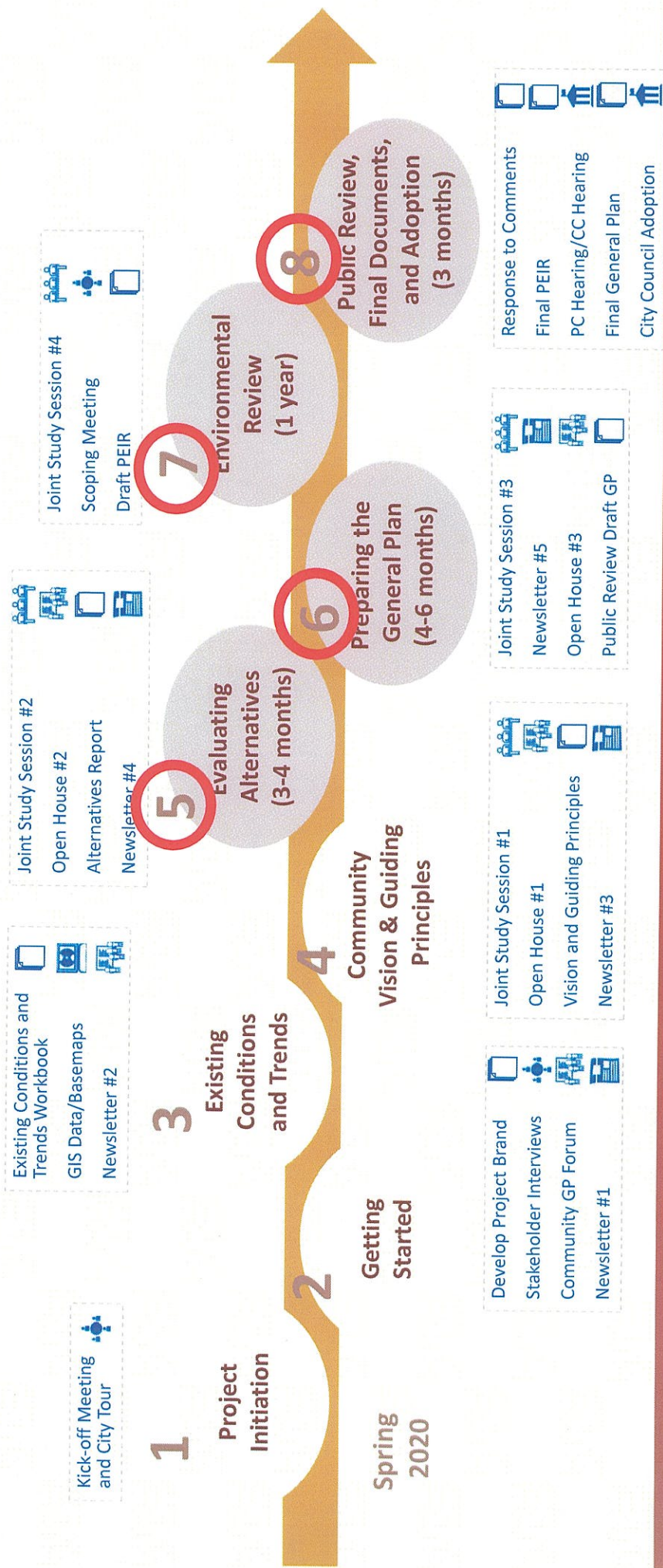


6. NEXT STEPS



NEXT STEPS

- Meeting
- Community
- Study Session
- Deliverable
- Web-based
- Newsletter
- PC/CC Hearing



Kick-off Meeting and City Tour

Existing Conditions and Trends Workbook
GIS Data/Basemaps
Newsletter #2

Joint Study Session #2
Open House #2
Alternatives Report
Newsletter #4

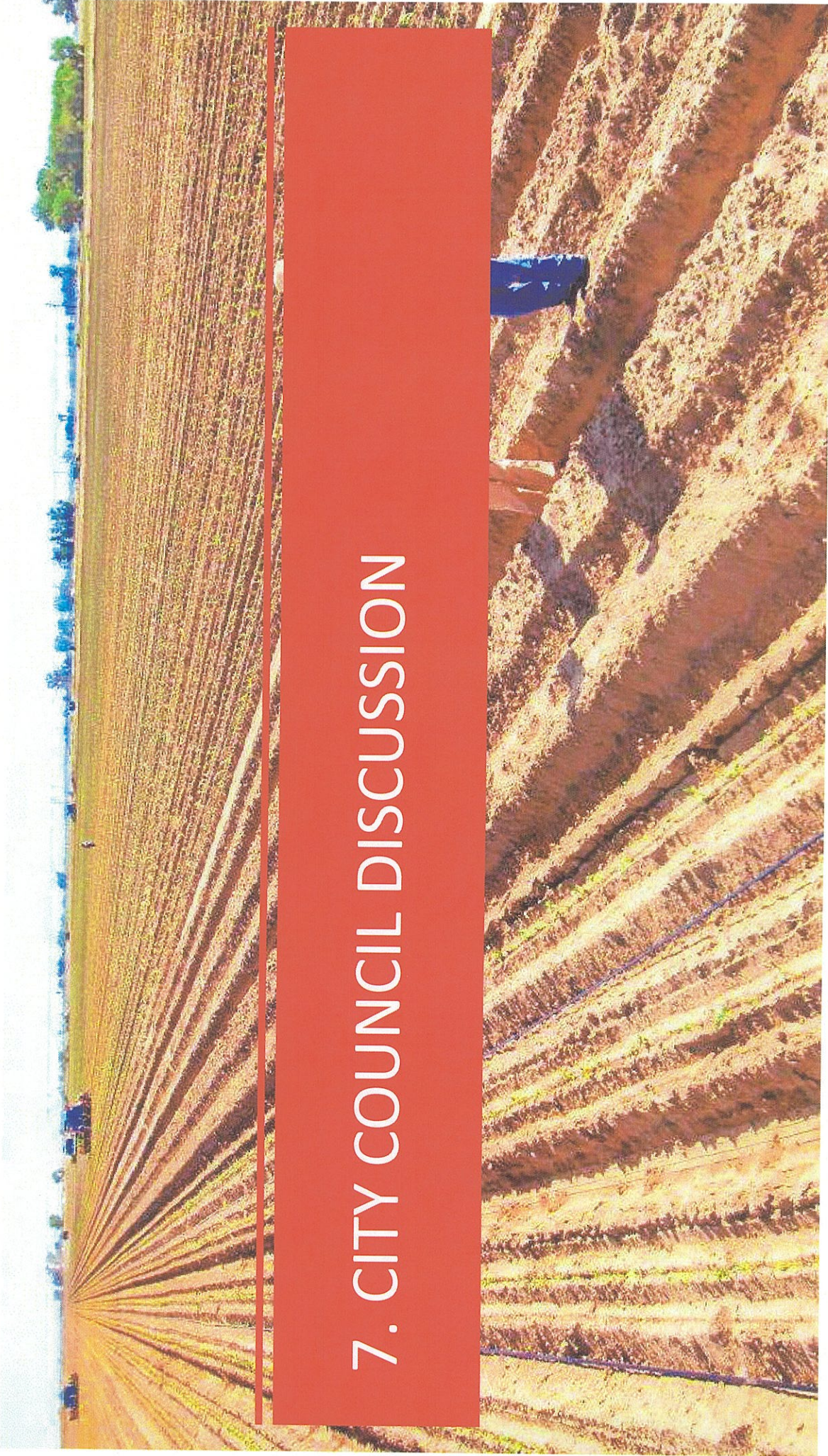
Joint Study Session #4
Scoping Meeting
Draft PEIR

Develop Project Brand
Stakeholder Interviews
Community GP Forum
Newsletter #1

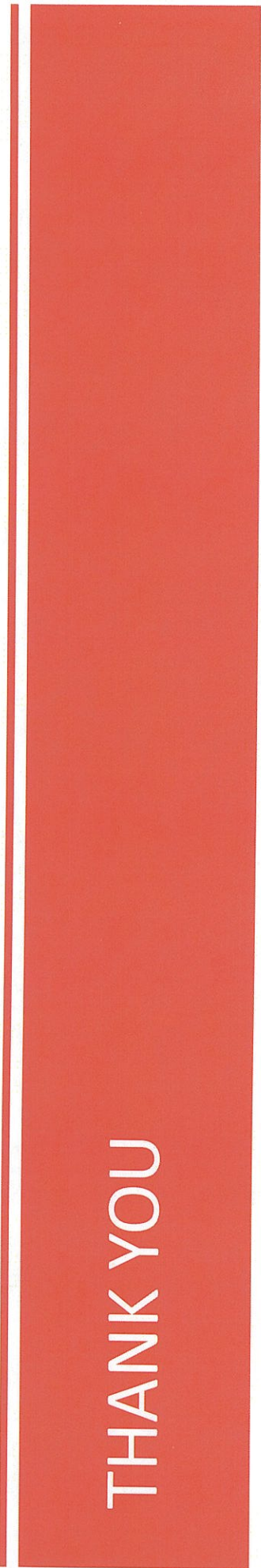
Joint Study Session #1
Open House #1
Vision and Guiding Principles
Newsletter #3

Joint Study Session #3
Newsletter #5
Open House #3
Public Review Draft GP

Response to Comments
Final PEIR
PC Hearing/CC Hearing
Final General Plan
City Council Adoption



7. CITY COUNCIL DISCUSSION



THANK YOU