
3.0 COMMUNITY CHARACTER AND DESIGN



3.1 INTRODUCTION

“Community character” refers to the physical characteristics that lend shape, form, and identity to a community. Concepts such as “small town,” “quality of life,” “living environment,” “neighborhood,” and “community” are, to a large extent, expressions of familiar physical characteristics – landmarks, streets, buildings, parks, and natural features that create a unique identity in every community. “Community design” or “urban design” refers to the architectural and engineering design principles that create the shape, form, and appearance of both new development and the redevelopment of existing districts and neighborhoods.



The Community Character and Design Element is not a state-mandated element as are others in this General Plan. Rather, it is an optional element that provides policy direction to guide community design as new development occurs. Municipalities statewide increasingly choose to include in their general plans a community design component that establishes a regulatory framework in recognition of the importance of aesthetics as a public policy issue.

This element establishes a design review process and implementing actions to help achieve the desired visual character and livability of Colusa in the context of the existing natural and built environments. Its goals and policies are intended to ensure that the community’s future character reflects the vision of both residents and decision-makers. The over-arching vision statements, goals, policies, and implementing actions in this element reinforce and complement those in other elements, such as Land Use, Circulation, Municipal Facilities & Services, and Parks, Recreation & Resource Conservation.

3.2 COMMUNITY VISION

Past and recent community outreach efforts involving residents, business owners, and City officials have concluded that there are certain facets to development that can substantially contribute to or detract from the shape, form, and identity of Colusa. The vision statements below convey some long-range expectations of the City with regard to its community character. The “road map” for achieving these visions is in the policy framework that follows.

VISION 1: PRESERVE COLUSA’S SENSE OF COMMUNITY AND SMALL TOWN CHARACTER

- Colusa will still be recognizable to today’s residents decades from now. New development will be expected to reinforce the desirable characteristics that make Colusa an attractive community for both residents and visitors.



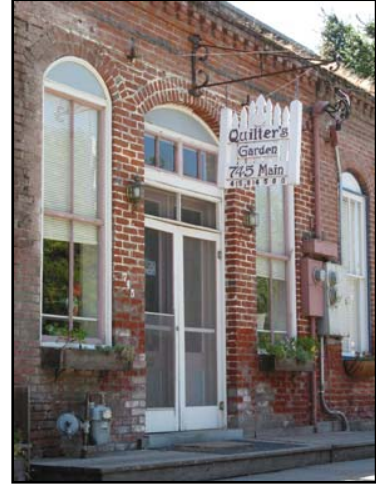
landmarks.

- New development will build upon the City’s attractive and distinctive neighborhoods rather than create isolated subdivisions that bear no relationship to the existing community’s environment.
- Colusa will welcome visitors and reinforce municipal pride with its distinctive gateways and City

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VISION 2: PRESERVE AND STRENGTHEN THE DOWNTOWN, RIVERFRONT, AND HISTORIC PLACES

- The downtown and Riverfront will continue to serve as the central focus of the community.
- Downtown business and civic activities will be mutually supportive to promote social interaction and strengthen the City's economic vitality.
- Colusa's historic and cultural resources will be showcased and regarded as a source of civic pride.
- Access to the Sacramento River will be expanded for the enjoyment of Colusa residents and visitors.
- Commercial development along the SR 20 and SR 45 corridors will complement rather than displace or preempt investment in the downtown.



VISION 3: PRESERVE THE ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCES THAT DEFINE COLUSA

- The Sacramento River and related natural areas will be showcased and enhanced for both preservation and public enjoyment.
- New development will accommodate views to the Sutter Buttes as a community amenity.
- Existing City neighborhoods will connect to new development and the Sacramento River through an extensive and interconnecting trail system, with the river's natural features and sensitive vegetation areas integrated into this system.



- Farmland, open space and wildlife are important elements of this community. A clear edge between urban development and agriculture will allow this to continue.

VISION 4: ENSURE EASE OF MOBILITY FOR ALL RESIDENTS, VISITORS, AND BUSINESSES

- Accessible and convenient circulation systems for autos, pedestrians, and bicyclists will be incorporated into all new developments.
- Daily activities will occur within walking distance of each other as much as possible to allow independence and safe movement for those who do not drive, especially seniors and young people.
- Convenient and accessible truck routes for delivery and shipping of goods and services will not impede activities in residential



neighborhoods.

- While it is a fact of modern life that development must adequately accommodate automobiles, pedestrian accessibility will not be sacrificed or made less important than automobile accessibility.
- Streets, thoroughfares, and public spaces will be safe, comfortable, and attractive to the pedestrian and motorist, free of barriers and designed with multiple connections to various parts of the community.

3.3 SETTING

Located in the northern Central Valley, just east of Interstate 5, the City of Colusa provides wide diversity in its natural and built environment. While it is largely defined by its role as an agriculture-supporting community, this small town offers an abundance of recreational opportunities and provides an attractive alternative to the urban and suburban lifestyles found in more populated counties to the south and east.



NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

Colusa is nestled in a bend of the Sacramento River with vast acreages of agricultural land extending beyond its urban edge. Colusa is adjacent to the 4,507-acre Colusa National Wildlife Refuge, which primarily consists of intensively managed wetland impoundments and serves as one of the primary wintering areas for waterfowl in the Sacramento Valley. These wetlands also provide optimal habitat for resident wildlife and spring/summer migrant fowl.

Visually, the natural landscape extends far beyond Colusa's boundaries. The area's flat topography allows for expansive scenic views, including those of the Sutter Buttes to the east and the Coastal Range to the west.

HISTORIC DOWNTOWN AND EXISTING NEIGHBORHOODS

- The City's vibrant downtown maintains its historic character with tree-shaded, walkable residential areas located south of Market Street. Colusa conveys the feel of a community that is not highly suburbanized or modernized and celebrates long-established community activities such as Colusa Days, the Fireman's Crab Feed, and the County Fair. A collection of landmark features, including the City water tower, City Hall, and historic downtown buildings all contribute to Colusa's distinct character.

Incorporated in 1868, the City of Colusa remains an attractive and picturesque community with many of its original buildings still intact. The community boasts fine examples of 19th Century architecture and has unique residential neighborhoods built on a



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traditional street grid pattern. The City offers quaint shops and small businesses in the historic downtown, as well as visitor- and residential-serving uses along the SR 20 and SR 20/45 corridors.

In the central core, Colusa retains its original urban structure— a strong orientation toward the edge of the Sacramento River with residential neighborhoods in close proximity to the commercial businesses along Main and Market Streets. Consistent with Colusa’s traditional visual context, many of the City’s older neighborhoods contain a mix of housing types and architectural styles, which have evolved over the last 140 years. No single type or style dominates; single-family homes are intermingled with multi-family dwellings, and setbacks are varied with detached garages often rear-facing along alleys or set back from the street. The City has 244 buildings that are considered historically significant. The City of Colusa Heritage Preservation Committee (HPC) maintains the City of Colusa Historic Resources Inventory which includes structures representative of architectural building styles from Colusa’s early years. Examples of numerous period styles can be found in the City, including Classical Revival, Late Gothic, Late 19th and 20th Century Revival, Tudor Revival, Queen Anne, and Craftsman.

In 1996, the HPC worked with the California State Historic Preservation Office to designate the City a Certified Local Government (CLG). The National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, provided for the establishment of a CLG program to encourage the direct participation of local governments in the identification, evaluation, registration, and preservation of historic properties within their jurisdictions and promote the integration of local preservation interests and concerns into local planning and decision-making processes. The CLG designation allows the City of Colusa to compete for state grants to help fund preservation planning activities and develop design guidelines for new development in or adjacent to historic places in the City.

In recent years, more modern residential neighborhoods have been established south of the downtown core. These subdivision designs trend toward ranch-style detached, single-family homes with an emphasis on attached garages fronting the streets.

The incorporation of neighborhood serving commercial businesses in Colusa’s residential areas is consistent with traditional urban design principles. This historic development pattern emerged out of convenience to residents who did not use the automobile to the extent that it is used today. The strategic location of small markets, salons, and services encouraged pedestrian and bicycle mobility for residents to meet their daily needs.

CITY STREETS

The City’s grid-based street system is comprised of 300-foot long blocks and 20-foot-wide alleys bisecting the blocks. The original road and alley structure provides an accessible and pedestrian-friendly urban environment that presents the opportunity to change direction every half-block. This grid system offers the shortest trip lengths and the largest number of route choices (and therefore the most convenient pedestrian travel) of any street layout, due to the multitude of interconnections available within each block. A typical historic residential street section in Colusa is contains an eight-foot “parkway strip” or “tree lawn” between the sidewalk and the street. Typically, large canopied



street trees have been planted in these parkways, providing shade and definition to the street edge and separating pedestrian from vehicle traffic.

Like most American communities, Colusa began to deviate from the traditional grid street system after World War II. More recently, conventional neighborhood streets have changed in character and shape, with subdivisions to the south developing on curvilinear streets and cul-de-sacs. These streets are at least 36 feet wide at the curbs, with a "monolithic" sidewalk that is adjacent to the curb and without a parkway. If street trees are planted, they occur in public utility easements or front yards. Newer Colusa neighborhoods do not produce the street tree canopy that is commonplace in historic residential neighborhoods.

STATE ROUTES 20 AND 20/45 CORRIDORS

State Route (SR) 20 bisects Colusa County from west of the City of Williams to the Sutter County line. This segment of SR 20 is a key travel corridor that ultimately leads west to Ukiah on Highway 101 and Fort Bragg on the coast, while extending east to the gold country town of Nevada City and into the Sierra Nevada. State Route 45 follows the scenic Sacramento River past rice paddies, orchards, and wildlife sanctuaries from Grimes in the south and through the City of Colusa and Princeton at the north end of the County.



Within the Colusa planning area, these roadways are considered scenic corridors and acknowledged as such in this element. The environmental and aesthetic characters of the SR 20 and 20/45 corridors vary in different places throughout Colusa. Along SR 20 from the west, the character is still largely rural

when entering the City limits, then transitions to traditional neighborhoods and the historic downtown. As SR 20/45 exits the downtown, it converts to a highway-serving commercial corridor with rural and suburban subdivisions on the southeast, before once again returning to a rural setting.



These major highway corridors are of significant concern, particularly in the areas of safety, access, and efficient traffic movement. Pedestrian crossing is particularly hazardous along SR 20/45 at the Wescott Road intersection. Crossing hazards pose one of the most serious obstacles to the realization of a trail system linkage. A primary objective of this element is to provide direction in the design of neighborhoods that will ensure safe travel for pedestrians and bicyclists across these highways.

3.4 OUTLOOK

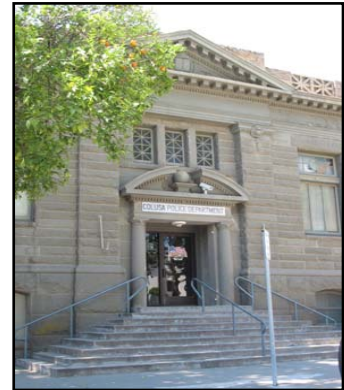
Because Colusa is emerging as a community suitable for a work force of commuters traveling to the Sacramento, Yuba City, and Chico urban areas, new development is anticipated to occur in the City. Given that there is significant potential for new residential development within the Planning Area, it is important that it be harmonious with the character of existing traditional neighborhoods. New opportunities also exist for rehabilitation and enhancement of existing structures elsewhere in the City to strengthen this character.

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Colusa's historic urban structure serves as a point of reference as the City grows and develops with new streets and neighborhoods. This element is intended to identify what works best about the City and how that can be applied to new development. New residential subdivisions are expected to bear some relationship to the character of traditional downtown neighborhoods and avoid isolated, largely self-contained neighborhoods.

HISTORIC DOWNTOWN AND RIVERFRONT DISTRICT

Historic structures are a major component of the City of Colusa's effort to identify, protect, and encourage preservation of historic and cultural resources. The HPC will continue to provide architectural review, technical assistance, and make recommendations concerning projects involving qualified historic properties that are undergoing permit review in the City. The HPC will also provide assistance to property owners seeking information regarding historic architecture and landscaping.



The City will complete an update of its Landmark and Historic Preservation Ordinance to implement the General Plan's heritage preservation goals and policies. While restoration and preservation of period architecture in the City will remain a priority, as future development projects are undertaken, the City will also seek to encourage new and innovative designs compatible with existing historic resources in the City. The development of new design guidelines will help integrate the design of new structures in proximity to existing historic properties in the City. The City will also seek to take advantage of federal and state incentives for heritage preservation activity by citizens and funding of planning and education efforts.

Integration of new development into the historic downtown will help revitalize the City by encouraging adaptive reuse of historic districts and buildings, conserving resources, using existing infrastructure, increasing property values, fostering heritage tourism, supporting existing businesses and new small business development, and generating new jobs.

Downtown commercial activities are expected to increase along Market and Main Streets with the existing grid continuing to provide easy access to adjacent historic residential areas. The retention of existing landmarks and public spaces, along with the addition of new ones, will serve to strengthen community appreciation of this urban environment. At the same time, the extension of Downtown to the river's edge will take in panoramic views of the Sutter Buttes and further define the City as a very special place to live and recreate.

The riverfront provides a unique opportunity for enhanced public access and enjoyment of this recreational and scenic asset. The blocks between the Sacramento River and Market Street, extending from 13th Street to Bridge Street, are designated in the Land Use Element as the Riverfront District. This district has been identified as a Special Planning Area (SPA) that will take full advantage of its historic resources and the riverfront through implementation of a comprehensive master planning and redevelopment effort.

NEW DEVELOPMENT AREAS

The anticipated development of four other Special Planning Areas (SPAs) identified in the Land Use Element have largely triggered the need for a community character and design component in this comprehensive General Plan update. Together they could provide as many

as 4,300 new homes, a community park, several neighborhood parks, a fire station, two new elementary schools, and highway commercial businesses. As described in greater detail in the Land Use Element, the new development areas are:

Brookins Ranch Estates This 161.4-acre proposed residential development is situated south of the high school between Will S. Green Road and South Third Street, extending south to the old railroad right-of-way. The development would consist of 600 single-family detached homes, a fire station, neighborhood parks, pedestrian and bicycle pathways, and open space.

Colusa Crossings This proposal encompasses approximately 310 acres on the Vann Property, extending west of SR 20 to the old railroad right-of-way. It proposes a mix of uses including low-, medium-, and high-density residential development, an elementary school site, a neighborhood or community park, and a mix of commercial uses to serve local residents and travelers along SR 20.

Colusa Riverbend This 442-acre development area on the east side of the City generally extends from Bridge Street (SR 20/45) to the Sacramento River, and south to Moon Bend Road. A master-planned community is proposed that would provide approximately 2,530 single-family homes. Amenities within the project area would include an elementary school, parks, and open space with public access provided to the river.

Colusa Industrial Park Directly north of the Colusa County Airport, this 137.5-acre site is part of the larger 1,049-acre Colusa Industrial Properties (CIP) complex. A mix of uses is proposed for this area, including 200 single-family homes, high-density residential development, approximately 28 acres of commercial uses fronting SR 20/45, and golf course facilities.

As the City grows, achieving a balance between new development and preservation of Colusa's desirable small-town character will be critical. A key component in the successful planning and buildout of these areas will be the application of the community character and design principles provided in this element.

CITY STREETS

As Colusa looks to the future, a return to the pre-1900s grid is considered a desirable pattern for development. However, opportunities exist for a hybrid of street designs that balance the need for connectivity with current development strategies and consumer interests. This includes the integration of modern and traditional street standards—both oriented toward safe, efficient automobile travel and easy emergency vehicle access. However, there will be a renewed emphasis on narrower roadways, raised curbs, and separated sidewalks or parkways in street design.



Because city streets occupy the majority of the public domain, their design should extend beyond that of servicing the automobile. Pedestrian and bicycle movement through neighborhoods to the central business district, the riverfront,

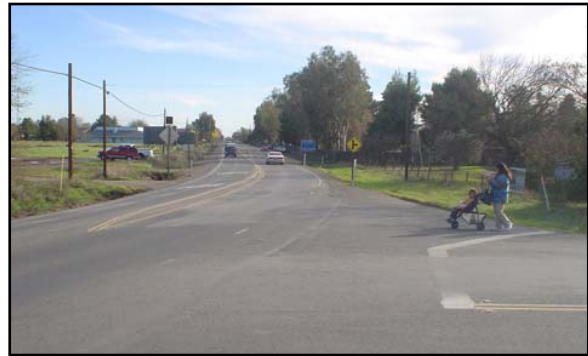
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parks, and schools is key to maintaining the small-town quality of life in Colusa. This will be accomplished with the integration of trails and pathways into new development areas, consistent with the Circulation Element and the Open Space, Recreation & Conservation Element.

Finally, street landscaping will play an important part in street design. The renewed practice of establishing tree canopies along city streets will help to ensure that the community's aesthetic appeal is preserved while providing shade during hot summers and abundant habitat for birds and wildlife.

STATE ROUTES 20 AND 20/45 CORRIDORS

Arterial roadways that carry large traffic volumes are a major determinant of community character because every resident and visitor views these streets every day as they travel through town. Design principles in this element can be applied to SR 20 and SR 20/45, which carry large traffic volumes, improving these arterials with additional landscaping and renovated commercial facades to enhance the character of Colusa. While some structures have been renovated over the years, many have not, and the building facades that front the streets look worn and, in some cases, dilapidated. Improving these building fronts with new paint, signs, awnings, and attractive materials would greatly enhance the City's community character.



As Colusa is expected to grow significantly over the next 20 years, ensuring safe crossing of these heavily traveled highways is paramount to the livability of the community. School children, non-drivers, and others who prefer to get around town without using an automobile must be supported with safe travel between home, school, businesses, and places of employment. This is of particular concern with the anticipated development of large areas east and west of the highway corridors. This element emphasizes neighborhood design that will facilitate pedestrian and bicycle access to all parts of the City.

3.5 GOALS, POLICIES, AND IMPLEMENTING ACTIONS

Community Character & Design goals, policies, and implementing actions are derived from, and are intended to achieve the related vision statements described in Section 3.2 above.

Design Review Process

Colusa's Design Review process is part of the zoning permit process that is intended to protect the city's unique qualities and strong sense of place by carrying out citywide development and design objectives. The purpose of Design Review is to protect the character of Colusa and to ensure that new development or changes to existing development are compatible with surrounding neighborhoods. It will allow the City to look beyond the specifics of a proposed development, and consider its context and how the project will fit and benefit its surroundings.

Design Review will help assure property owners that their investment will be protected. As traditional zoning prevents incompatible uses from locating within a neighborhood, Design Review can ensure that the character of a neighborhood or community is maintained.

Improvements in the quality of design stabilize and, in some cases, enhance the value of private property, which will benefit the overall attractiveness of the city.

Design Review is an especially important tool for the city's commercial district where increased private investment and maintenance of an image of vitality is the goal. Places like Historic Downtown and the Riverfront will rely heavily on Design Review to protect and enhance public and private investments, and to support and encourage new development.

A range of design issues will be addressed during the Design Review process. While each issue considered individually may appear small, in combination they can make the difference between a compatible project that enhances the area and an incompatible project that does not.

Goal CCD-1:

To ensure the preservation and enhancement of Colusa's unique community character and vitality within its neighborhoods and business districts.

Policy CCD-1.1:

New development and rehabilitation of existing development shall comply with a Design Review Ordinance that supports preservation and enhancement of Colusa's community character and promotes economic vitality within the planning area.

Implementing Action CCD-1.1.a: Design Review Ordinance: The City will adopt a Design Review Ordinance that will establish a process to consider a wide range of design issues with development projects. These include such things as open space and natural features, pedestrian and traffic circulation, building scale and massing, architectural history and details, signs and advertising features, landscaping, site lighting, and utility connections. The Design Review process will provide the public with an opportunity to review and comment on all development projects requiring a permit before the Design Review Board makes a final decision on the project.

Implementing Action CCD-1.1.b: Design Guidelines: The City will adopt Community Design Guidelines in which preservation and enhancement of the City's existing character will be the overriding design principle. These Guidelines, to be used in conjunction with the City's zoning ordinance, will include specific design criteria for each of the following development types:

- *Community Design Criteria:* General criteria and overriding design principles to enhance and preserve Colusa's unique character. Defines basic principles of high-quality urban design, environmental sustainability, architecture, and landscape architecture. Considerations include, but are not limited to human-scaled development, pedestrian-oriented design, inter-connectivity of street layout, siting of corner buildings, entryways, focal points, and landmarks.
- *Highway 20 and 20/45 Corridor Design Criteria:* Design criteria to include but not be limited to, setback provisions, parking requirements, walkways, bikeways, landscaping, lighting, architecture, signage, landmarks/focal points and other design criteria as determined appropriate.

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- *Streets and Blocks Design Criteria:* Design criteria to emphasize bicycle and pedestrian safety within and between neighborhoods. Visual quality to include attractive streetscape design, providing interest within the public right-of-way. Traffic calming measures, bicycle paths/on-street lanes, sidewalk design and greenways, as well as criteria for infrastructure siting and installation, and utility undergrounding to be included.
- *New Single-Family Residential Design Criteria:* Criteria to consider relationship to the streets and neighborhood through building orientation and site layout. They may include, but not be limited to, varied setbacks, a range of architectural designs, rear alley-loaded and detached street-loaded garages, and fencing requirements.
- *Ancillary or Second Unit Design Criteria:* Criteria to address maximum unit size, compatibility with primary residence, flexibility in setbacks and design, exterior building materials, entrance and parking access points.
- *Multifamily Unit Design Criteria:* Criteria to emphasize well-designed and visually attractive multifamily residential structures to provide high quality housing close to employment centers and transportation routes. A variety of massing options, architectural and building materials will be recommended. Site planning hardscape and landscaping elements, coupled with open space amenities will be geared toward creating an inviting atmosphere and an asset to the larger community.
- *Non-residential Building Siting, Orientation, and Access Design Criteria:* Criteria to generally address commercial, office, light industrial, and public facility land uses. Parking and circulation, landscaping, architecture, screening of mechanical equipment, lighting and signage (applied using separate criteria described below).
- *Lighting and Signage Design Criteria:* Criteria to guide the types and placement of signs and sign structures so as not to detract from the architectural character and scale of their surroundings. Factors to be considered are height, size, scale, illumination characteristics, enhancements, and integration into project landscaping or streetscape.
- *Historic Downtown and Riverfront District Design Criteria:* Criteria to incorporate design provisions that encourage and facilitate the preservation and restoration of Colusa's historic residences, buildings, and landmarks. To include a set of historic preservation principles. These principles will be used to provide guidance for the preservation of architectural features, use of historic building materials, adaptive reuse of historic structures, and recommendations for new additions, site features, signage, and public improvements,
- *Rehabilitation, Reconstruction, and Renovation Design Criteria:* Criteria will establish minimum acceptable standards for quality rehabilitation of historic buildings, and other residential and non-residential structures. They will focus on site development relating to open space and street facades; building design and materials; and pedestrian and vehicle access.

Environmental Sustainability

Many types of design guidelines exist, but attention will be given to design considerations that respect for the natural environment. These include preservation of Colusa’s biological resources, use of local materials in development, minimal waste disposal, and climate-related building design options.

The motivations for environmental design extend above and beyond a commitment to stewardship. Experience has shown that policy decisions on environmental sustainability can positively influence a community’s overall quality of life. Attention to the natural environment creates the basis for a more sustainable way of life—one that safeguards and enhances local resources, prevents harm to the natural environment and human health, and strengthens the community and local economy for the sake of current and future generations.

Goal CCD-2:
To ensure that new development respects the natural environment.

Policy CCD-2.1:

The City shall encourage site and building design that respects the natural resources of Colusa, as an enhancement to the environmental, aesthetic, and social benefits of the community.

Implementing Action CCD-2.1.a: Design Guidelines—Community Design Criteria (see Implementing Action CCD-1.1.b above)

Policy CCD-2.2:

New development shall respect the contours of drainage ways as important recognizable features of the City.

Implementing Action CCD-2.2.a: Design Review Ordinance (see Implementing Action CCD-1.1.a above)

Implementing Action CCD-2.2.b: Design Guidelines—Community Design Criteria (see Implementing Action CCD-1.1.b above)

Implementing Action CCD-2.2.c: Improvement Standards

The City will update and adopt improvement standards to be applied to improvements and private works to be dedicated to the public and accepted by the City for maintenance or operation, as well as improvements to be installed within existing rights-of-way and easements. These standards shall serve to regulate and guide the design and preparation of plans for street construction, alleys, drainage, sewer, street lighting water supply facilities, and related public improvements.

Policy CCD-2.3:

New development shall identify and preserve significant viewsheds and vistas.

Implementing Action CCD-2.3.a: Visual Impact Analysis

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Initial review of public and private development proposals will determine whether a visual impact analysis will be required. This analysis will aid in the project's site design to ensure protection of viewsheds and vistas to natural areas from streets, parks, trails, and community facilities.

Implementing Action CCD-2.3.b: Design Review Ordinance (see Implementing Action CCD-1.1.a above)

Implementing Action CCD-2.3.c: Design Guidelines—Community Design Criteria (see Implementing Action CCD-1.1.b above)

Policy CCD-2.4:

New development shall ensure that public utilities are screened from view and do not detract from the surrounding environment.

Implementing Action CCD-2.4.a: Design Review Ordinance (see Implementing Action CCD-1.1.a above)

Implementing Action CCD-2.4.b: Design Guidelines—Community Design Criteria (see Implementing Action CCD-1.1.b above)

Policy CCD-2.5:

The City shall ensure that infrastructure improvements demonstrate sensitivity to any natural systems affecting a project site.

Implementing Action CCD-2.5.a: Design Guidelines—Community Design Criteria (see Implementing Action CCD-1.1.b above)

Implementing Action CCD-2.5.b: Development Review

Impacts of proposed new development will be evaluated with each proposal. Mitigation of significant impacts to the natural environment, including biological resources, water quality and air quality, will be required as part of the development review process. Mitigation measures to minimize impacts on these natural resources will be implemented as appropriate.

Implementing Action CCD-2.5.c: Improvement Standards (see Implementing Action CCD-2.2.c above)

Streets, Blocks, and Circulation

The guiding principle of the City's circulation system is the preservation and development of a variety of transportation systems that link residential, commercial and public areas of the community. The street system is intended to safely and efficiently link neighborhoods to public facilities and commercial business districts within the planning area in a manner that will serve the entire community. The application of streets and blocks design criteria will help unify areas targeted for new development with the existing urban center.

Older neighborhoods of Colusa are good models for street design. Traditional grid patterns, including narrow streets, alleys to the rear of residences, and garages set back from streets and

adjacent to alleys promote a pedestrian-friendly environment while allowing efficient movement of motorized vehicles throughout a neighborhood.

Deciduous street trees create shade in summer keeping the pavement cool and allowing solar warming during cold winter months. Trees also soften the streetscape and define corridors of use. Street trees are essential in making neighborhoods attractive and livable.

To the extent practicable, the City intends to preserve and promote the traditional circulation concept throughout the existing neighborhoods and in new areas of development.

Goal CCD-3:

To create safe, attractive streets that serve to interconnect the entire community.

Policy CCD-3.1:

New development shall ensure that street systems within new areas are designed to efficiently connect to the existing street network.

Implementing Action CCD-3.1.a: Design Review Ordinance (see Implementing Action CCD-1.1.a above)

Implementing Action CCD-3.1.b: Design Guidelines – Streets and Blocks Design Criteria (see Implementing Action CCD-1.1.b above)

Policy CCD-3.2:

New development street patterns shall minimize distances to adjacent neighborhoods and avoid a concentration of vehicles associated with internal neighborhood trips.

Implementing Action CCD-3.2.a: Design Review Ordinance (see Implementing Action CCD-1.1.a above)

Implementing Action CCD-3.2.b: Design Guidelines – Streets and Blocks Design Criteria (see Implementing Action CCD-1.1.b above)

Policy CCD-3.3:

Neighborhoods shall be designed with a street pattern that allows for multiple routes through a neighborhood and greater opportunities for pedestrian movement.

Implementing Action CCD-3.3.a: Design Review Ordinance (see Implementing Action CCD-1.1.a above)

Implementing Action CCD-3.3.b: Design Guidelines – Streets and Blocks Design Criteria (see Implementing Action CCD-1.1.b above)

Policy CCD-3.4:

The City shall encourage and promote neighborhood design that provides pedestrian and bicyclist connectivity to community civic areas, schools, parks, workplaces, and commercial areas.

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Implementing Action CCD-3.4.a: Design Guidelines – Streets and Blocks Design Criteria (see Implementing Action CCD-1.1.b above)

Policy CCD-3.5

The City shall designate bicycle routes within the existing and planned transportation network.

Implementing Action CCD-3.5.a: Design Guidelines – Streets and Blocks Design Criteria (see Implementing Action CCD-1.1.b above)

Implementing Action CCD-3.5.b: Bike Master Plan (see Implementing Action CIR-4.1.a in the Circulation Element)

Policy CCD-3.6:

Pedestrian and bicycle routes/corridors shall be incorporated into all new major development projects.

Implementing Action CCD-3.6.a: Design Review Ordinance (see Implementing Action CCD-1.1.a above)

Implementing Action CCD-3.6.b: Design Guidelines – Streets and Blocks Design Criteria (see Implementing Action CCD-1.1.b above)

Policy CCD-3.7:

Sidewalks shall be provided on both sides of the street in all neighborhoods, except areas designated as Estate Residential, where it may be acceptable to have sidewalks on only one side of the street.

Implementing Action CCD-3.7.a: Design Guidelines – Streets and Blocks Design Criteria (see Implementing Action CCD-1.1.b above)

Implementing Action CCD-3.7.b: Improvement Standards (see Implementing Action CCD-2.2.c above)

Policy CCD-3.8:

New development shall avoid long, unbroken blocks, interruptions of pathways to common destinations, and other street design elements that impede pedestrian circulation for internal trips. Alleys shall be encouraged and incorporated into the street design where lengthy blocks occur.

Implementing Action CCD-3.8.a: Design Review Ordinance (see Implementing Action CCD-1.1.a above)

Implementing Action CCD-3.8.b: Design Guidelines – Streets and Blocks Design Criteria (see Implementing Action CCD-1.1.b above)

Policy CCD-3.9:

On-street parking shall be provided in all neighborhoods, and where street widths are too narrow to allow for emergency vehicles, accommodation shall be made for parking turnouts.

Implementing Action CCD-3.9.a: Design Review Ordinance (see Implementing Action CCD-1.1.a above)

Implementing Action CCD-3.9.b: Design Guidelines – Streets and Blocks Design Criteria (see Implementing Action CCD-1.1.b above)

Policy CCD-3.10:

Common driveways serving multiple units shall be encouraged to minimize hardscape.

Implementing Action CCD-3.10.a: Design Review Ordinance (see Implementing Action CCD-1.1.a above)

Implementing Action CCD-3.10.b: Design Guidelines – Ancillary or Second Unit Design Criteria

Policy CCD-3.11:

As existing areas redevelop and change over time, improved connections for vehicular, bicycle, and pedestrian access shall be considered as part of the overall site design.

Implementing Action CCD-3.11.a: Design Review Ordinance (see Implementing Action CCD-1.1.a above)

Implementing Action CCD-3.11.b: Design Guidelines – Streets and Blocks Design Criteria (see Implementing Action CCD-1.1.b above)

Policy CCD-3.12:

Neighborhoods shall be designed so that daily shopping errands can generally be completed within easy walking or biking distance to businesses and services.

Implementing Action CCD-3.12.a: Design Review Ordinance (see Implementing Action CCD-1.1.a above)

Implementing Action CCD-3.12.b: Design Guidelines – Streets and Blocks Design Criteria (see Implementing Action CCD-1.1.b above)

Policy CCD-3.13

Schools shall be geographically sited to maximize the number of students that can walk or travel by bicycle.

Implementing Action CCD-3.13.a: Design Review Ordinance (see Implementing Action CCD-1.1.a above)

3.0 COMMUNITY CHARACTER & DESIGN

Implementing Action CCD-3.13.b: Design Guidelines – Streets and Blocks Design Criteria (see Implementing Action CCD-1.1.b above)

Policy CCD-3.14:

Neighborhood and local streets shall be designed with widths that result in slower traffic and allow for safe pedestrian and bicycle movement.

Implementing Action CCD-3.14.a: Design Guidelines – Streets and Blocks Design Criteria (see Implementing Action CCD-1.1.b above)

Implementing Action CCD-3.14.b: Improvement Standards (see Implementing Action CCD-2.2.c above)

Policy CCD-3.15:

The City shall include landscaping and use street trees in street right-of-ways to create a shaded environment in summer and to define the clear separation of uses.

Implementing Action CCD-3.15.a: Design Guidelines – Streets and Blocks Design Criteria (see Implementing Action CCD-1.1.b above)

Implementing Action CCD-3.15.b: City Code 19.3 Tree Ordinance

The City will continue to implement its Tree Ordinance governing the protection of mature trees by retaining the Tree Commission and assessing tree removal as part of the development review process.

Implementing Action CCD-3.15.c: Improvement Standards (see Implementing Action CCD-2.2.c above)

Policy CCD-3.16:

Site design shall avoid access routes through parking lots and loading and service areas or behind residential rear yards wherever possible.

Implementing Action CCD-3.16.a: Design Review Ordinance (see Implementing Action CCD-1.1.a above)

Implementing Action CCD-3.16.b: Design Guidelines – Streets and Blocks Design Criteria (see Implementing Action CCD-1.1.b above)

Policy CCD-3.17:

Parking lots shall not dominate street frontage, public spaces, or buildings.

Implementing Action CCD-3.17.a: Design Review Ordinance (see Implementing Action CCD-1.1.a above)

Implementing Action CCD-3.17.b: Design Guidelines – Streets and Blocks Design Criteria (see Implementing Action CCD-1.1.b above)

Policy CCD-3.18

The City shall ensure that utility infrastructure projects comply with the design objectives of the community and any specific area standards and guidelines.

Implementing Action CCD-3.18.a: Design Review Ordinance (see Implementing Action CCD-1.1.a: Design Review Ordinance above)

Implementing Action CCD-3.18.b: Design Guidelines- Streets and Blocks Design Criteria (see Implementing Action CCD-1.1.b above)

Implementing Action CCD-3.18.c: Improvement Standards (see Implementing Action CCD-2.2.c above)

Policy CCD-3.19:

Whenever and wherever feasible, overhead utility lines shall be converted to underground, and the City shall require underground utilities in areas of new development.

Implementing Action CCD-3.19.a: Design Guidelines- Streets and Blocks Design Criteria (see Implementing Action CCD-1.1.b above)

Implementing Action CCD-3.19.b: Public-Private Partnership

Developers will work with the City and utility companies (electric, cable, telephone, etc.) to provide undergrounding of new utilities.

Implementing Action CCD-3.19.c: Rule 20A Program

Undergrounding of Overhead Utilities - Projects performed under Rule 20A are nominated by a city, county or municipal agency and discussed with Pacific Gas and Electric Company, as well as other utilities. The costs for undergrounding under Rule 20A are recovered through electric rates after the project is completed. To qualify, the governing body of a city or county must, among other things, determine, after consultation with Pacific Gas and Electric Company, and after holding public hearings on the subject, that undergrounding is in the general public interest.

Community Gathering Places

Community gathering places contribute significantly to Colusa's quality of life. Colusans identify with their community as not only a place to live, but as an opportunity to gather with neighbors, socialize, and conduct their business. With this community interaction, residents are more likely to offer support to neighbors and become more involved in local improvement projects. The Downtown and Riverfront District offer excellent opportunities to build upon these central gathering places where residents can meet and foster community spirit. Similarly, creating gathering places within new developments will help further this social interaction, and extend this tradition of community and neighborhood pride to new residents.

3.0 COMMUNITY CHARACTER & DESIGN

Goal CCD-4:

To retain and strengthen the role of the historic Downtown as the central focus of community gatherings.

Policy CCD-4.1:

The City shall encourage public gathering places such as post offices, meeting halls, community centers, libraries, and entertainment venues in the downtown.

Implementing Action CCD-4.1.a: Riverfront Specific Plan (see Implementing Action LU-7.1.a in the Land Use Element)

Implementing Action CCD-4.1.b: Capital Improvement Program

The City will identify public projects and funding sources in its five-year Capital Improvement Program that can solely fund or leverage private development funds to create public gathering places for the community at large.

Policy CCD-4.2:

The City shall encourage a combination of uses in the Downtown to include retail, office, and entertainment uses (e.g., movie and performing arts theaters) that serve the daily and occasional needs of residents.

Implementing Action CCD-4.2.a: Retail Market Analysis (see Implementing Action LU-7.1.d in the Land Use Element)

Implementing Action CCD-4.2.b: Riverfront Specific Plan (see Implementing Action LU-7.1.a in the Land Use Element)

Implementing Action CCD-4.2.c: Design Guidelines (see Implementing Action CCD-1.1.b above)

Policy CCD-4.3:

The City shall encourage a vertical mix of uses with residential and office above retail.

Implementing Action CCD-4.3.a: Design Guidelines –Historic Downtown and Riverfront District Design Criteria (see Implementing Action CCD-1.1.b above)

Policy CCD-4.4:

New development in the Downtown and Riverfront District shall be designed to reflect the scale, pattern and historic character of the existing areas.

Implementing Action CCD-4.4.a: Design Review Ordinance (see Implementing Action CCD-1.1.a above)

Implementing Action CCD-4.4.b: Design Guidelines –Historic Downtown and Riverfront District Design Criteria (see Implementing Action CCD-1.1.b above)

Implementing Action CCD-4.4.c: Riverfront Specific Plan (see Implementing Action LU-7.1.a in the Land Use Element)

Goal CCD-5:

To capitalize on the Riverfront District's proximity to the Sacramento River to become a unique public gathering area appealing to residents and visitors alike.

Policy CCD-5.1:

Residential and commercial development in the Riverfront District will provide outdoor spaces that maximize views of, and access to, the Sacramento River and Riverfront Park.

Implementing Action CCD-5.1.a: Retail Market Analysis (see Implementing Action LU-7.1.d in the Land Use Element)

Implementing Action CCD-5.1.b: Design Review Ordinance (see Implementing Action CCD-1.1.a above)

Implementing Action CCD-5.1.c: Design Guidelines –Historic Downtown and Riverfront District Design Criteria (see Implementing Action CCD-1.1.b above)

Implementing Action CCD-5.1.d: Riverfront Specific Plan (see Implementing Action LU-7.1.a in the Land Use Element)

Policy CCD-5.2:

The City shall encourage commercial uses that provide both daytime and evening activities along the Riverfront District.

Implementing Action CCD-5.2.a: Retail Market Analysis (see Implementing Action LU-7.1.d in the Land Use Element)

Implementing Action CCD-5.2.b: Design Guidelines—Historic Downtown and Riverfront District Design Criteria (see Implementing Action CCD-1.1.b above)

Implementing Action CCD-5.2.c: Riverfront Specific Plan (see Implementing Action LU-7.1.a in the Land Use Element)

Policy CCD-5.3:

The City shall encourage buildings in the Downtown and Riverfront district that feature outdoor use areas, such as plazas and open-air seating in cafes and restaurants.

Implementing Action CCD-5.3.a: Design Guidelines – Historic Downtown and Riverfront District Design Criteria (see Implementing Action CCD-1.1.b above)

3.0 COMMUNITY CHARACTER & DESIGN

Goal 6:

To create distinctive community-gathering locations within new developments while maintaining connectivity to the entire community.

Policy CCD-6.1:

New developments shall include community and neighborhood activity centers at appropriate locations that create recreational opportunities, encourage social interaction, and provide a sense of public space and centers for neighborhood activities.

Implementing Action CCD-6.1.a: Design Review Ordinance (see Implementing Action CCD-1.1.a above)

Implementing Action CCD-6.1.b: Design Guidelines—New Single Family Residential Design Criteria (see Implementing Action CCD-1.1.b above)

Policy CCD-6.2:

New non-residential development and redevelopment areas shall facilitate pedestrian activity and community gathering by providing connections to adjoining residential neighborhoods and public areas where land ownership and site conditions allow.

Implementing Action CCD-6.2.a: Design Review Ordinance (see Implementing Action CCD-1.1.a above)

Implementing Action CCD-6.2.b: Design Guidelines— Design Guidelines – Non-residential Building Siting, Orientation, And Access Design Criteria (see Implementing Action CCD-1.1.b above)

Gateways, Landmarks, and Focal Points

State Routes 20 and 20/45 serve as the primary entrances to the City from the east and west, as well as the city’s main street and commercial corridor. These entries to the City provide a significant opportunity to make a positive first impression on visitors and pique their interest in the community.

The City also recognizes the importance of its existing distinctive features, including the Riverfront, the historic Downtown, and its traditional neighborhoods. The City can continue to build a strong, appealing image by providing policy direction that emphasizes enhancement of these features and extending that direction to new development.

The policies presented below are intended to facilitate creation of a memorable City image by defining the entries to Colusa, preserving City landmarks, and encouraging distinctive private development. An opportunities map for community entryways, identity features, and landmarks is shown in **Figure 3.1 Colusa Landmarks**.

Goal CCD-7:

To create a strong sense of entry into the City along the primary corridors of State Routes 20 and 20/45 and along key secondary entrances into the City.

Policy CCD-7.1:

The City shall identify and encourage highway improvements, signage, and focal points that guide local and through-traffic and slow motorists as they transition through the City on Highway 20 and 20/45.

Implementing Action CCD-7.1.a: Interagency Coordination

The City will request that the State of California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) improve speed limit signage prior to and at the city limit line along State Routes 20 and 20/45 entering the City. The City will also work cooperatively with Caltrans to implement streetscape improvements, signage, and landmarks designed to slow incoming traffic and clearly identify the City's preferred routes through town.

Implementing Action CCD-7.1.b: Capital Improvement Program

The City will identify public projects and funding sources in its five-year Capital Improvement Program that can leverage, funding of highway improvements for the public benefit.

Implementing Action CCD-7.1.c: Design Guidelines – Highway 20 and 20/45 Corridor Design Criteria (see Implementing Action CCD-1.1.b above)

Implementing Action CCD-7.1.d: Development Agreements (see Implementing Action LU-2.1.b in the Land Use Element)

Policy CCD-7.2:

The City shall encourage development of attractive community entry features at key entry points along Highways 20 and 20/45.

Implementing Action CCD-7.2.a: Design Guidelines – Highway 20 and 20/45 Corridor Design Criteria (see Implementing Action CCD-1.1.b above)

Policy CCD-7.3:

The intersections of Market Street and Thirteenth and Market and Bridge Streets shall be given special attention in their design as gateways to the Downtown as illustrated in **Figure 3.2** *General Plan Downtown & Riverfront Design Concepts*.

Implementing Action CCD-7.3.a: Design Guidelines – Community Design Criteria

Implementing Action CCD-7.3.b: Design Guidelines – Highway 20 and 20/45 Corridor Design Criteria (see Implementing Action CCD-1.1.b above)

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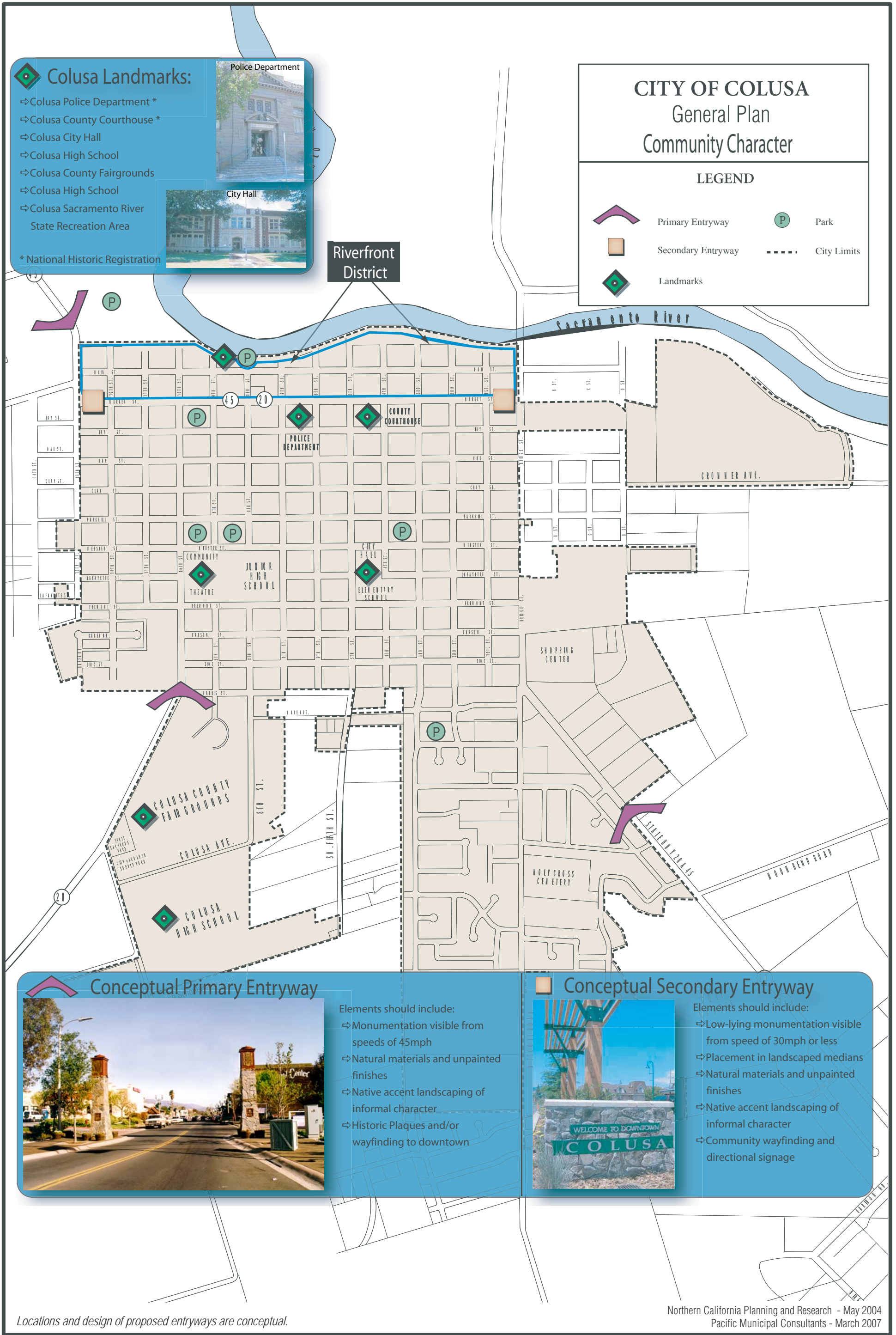


FIGURE 3.1
COLUSA LANDMARKS

Goal CCD-8:

To create landmarks and focal points at strategic locations throughout the City.

Policy CCD-8.1:

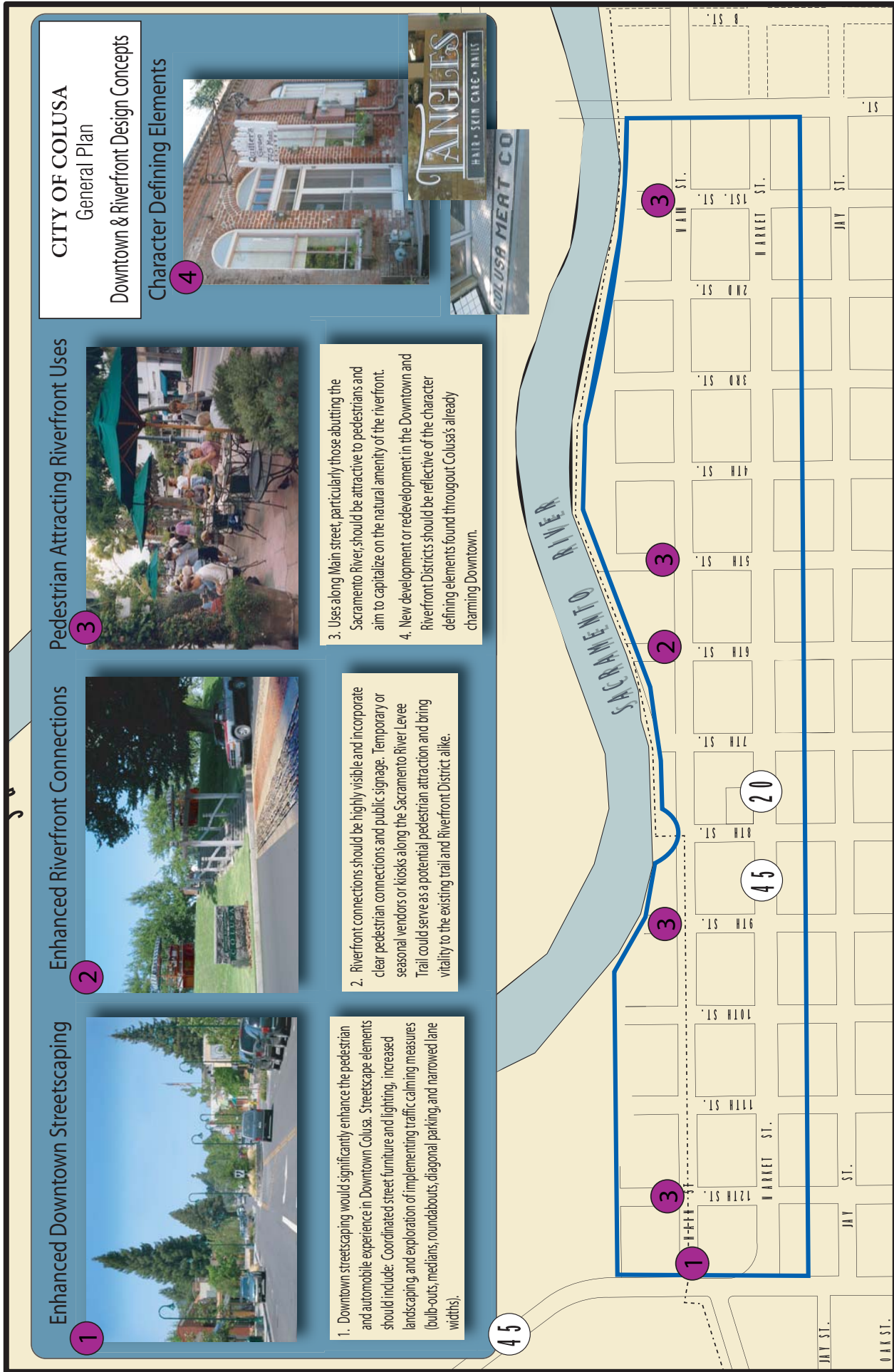
The City shall encourage the design and incorporation of community landmarks, including public art (sculptures, murals and/or other monuments) at strategic locations within neighborhoods, parks, and commercial areas in the historic Downtown and Riverfront District.

Implementing Action CCD-8.1.a: Design Guidelines—Community Design Criteria (see Implementing Action CCD-1.1.b above)

Implementing Action CCD-8.1.b: Design Guidelines— Historic Downtown and Riverfront District Design Criteria (see Implementing Action CCD-1.1.b above)

Implementing Action CCD-8.1.c: Art in Public Places Program

The City will support the creation of an Art in Public Places program to visually enrich the community, provide opportunities for artists to work in a public context, and lead to increased citizen recognition of the ability of local artists to contribute in a significant and



1. Enhanced Downtown Streetscaping



1. Downtown streetscaping would significantly enhance the pedestrian and automobile experience in Downtown Colusa. Streetscape elements should include: Coordinated street furniture and lighting, increased landscaping, and exploration of implementing traffic calming measures (bulb-outs, medians, roundabouts, diagonal parking, and narrowed lane widths).

2. Enhanced Riverfront Connections



2. Riverfront connections should be highly visible and incorporate clear pedestrian connections and public signage. Temporary or seasonal vendors or kiosks along the Sacramento River Levee Trail could serve as a potential pedestrian attraction and bring vitality to the existing trail and Riverfront District alike.

3. Pedestrian Attracting Riverfront Uses



3. Uses along Main street, particularly those abutting the Sacramento River, should be attractive to pedestrians and aim to capitalize on the natural amenity of the riverfront.
 4. New development or redevelopment in the Downtown and Riverfront Districts should be reflective of the character defining elements found throughout Colusa's already charming Downtown.

CITY OF COLUSA
General Plan

Downtown & Riverfront Design Concepts
Character Defining Elements



FIGURE 3.2
CITY OF COLUSA GENERAL PLAN DOWNTOWN & RIVERFRONT DESIGN CONCEPTS

beneficial way toward the visual enhancement of its public settings. Through the efforts of an Art in Public Places Panel, the program's goals will be:

- To provide high quality and diverse art forms to residents and visitors.
- To integrate art within the City's public spaces where it will be highly accessible and visible to the public at large.
- To reflect the City's rich cultural and historic elements.
- To increase the knowledge, understanding and enjoyment of the visual arts.
- To stimulate economic benefits for the arts, businesses, and tourism.
- To contribute to the civic pride of the City.
- To encourage citizen participation the public art process.

Policy CCD-8.2:

The City shall ensure that structures at corners of major intersections, dominant buildings in a cluster or complex, and central gathering places are designed to provide distinctively appealing qualities and identity to neighborhoods and the community as a whole.

Implementing Action CCD-8.2.a: Design Review Ordinance (see Implementing Action CCD-1.1.a above)

Implementing Action CCD-8.2.b: Design Guidelines—Rehabilitation, Reconstruction and Renovation Design Criteria (see Implementing Action CCD-1.1.b above)

Implementing Action CCD-8.2.c: Public-Private Partnerships

Work with property owners to construct or improve building façade appearance and signage at key locations through the major travel corridors.

Policy CCD-8.3:

Public art and other design features such as fountains and monuments shall be used to enliven the public realm in the historic Downtown and Riverfront District.

Implementing Action CCD-8.3.a: Design Guidelines— Historic Downtown and Riverfront District Design Criteria (see Implementing Action CCD-1.1.b above)

Implementing Action CCD-8.3.b: Art In Public Places Program (see Implementing Action CCD-8.1.c above)

Policy CCD-8.4:

Every neighborhood shall have at least one focal point that is incorporated into a park, school, plaza, clubhouse, recreation center, retail use, open space, or any combination of these, and is accessible to all citizens.

3.0 COMMUNITY CHARACTER & DESIGN

Implementing Action CCD-8.4.a: Design Guidelines—Community Design Criteria (see Implementing Action CCD-1.1.b above)

Signage and Lighting

Signage: Throughout Colusa’s commercial areas, signs play a major role in creating either a positive or negative visual image for the City. Signs should make a positive contribution to the general appearance of the street and commercial area in which they are located. A well-designed sign can be a major asset to a building. The individual identification of a business is not achieved through use of an over-scaled mass of signage, but rather through a simple, direct, well-designed sign that is unique to the business—the quality of a business’ sign is a direct reflection of the business. Signage design criteria are intended to guide high quality, imaginative, and innovative sign design.

Lighting: Colusa possesses a rich architectural heritage within a uniquely beautiful scenic setting. At night, lighting is an integral component of this built and natural environment. It is important that illumination is carefully planned to complement the surroundings, is subtle to avoid over-lighting, and can provide a cohesive appearance for the city and its neighborhoods. Safety and security for persons and property are also of paramount concern, and it is necessary to recognize the importance of quality of light rather than quantity. The goal of lighting design guidelines is to promote a high standard of quality for lighting in commercial and residential areas of the city through the application of concepts behind good lighting design.

Goal CCD-9:

To apply the use of signage and lighting in a manner that will enhance the aesthetic character of the community.

Policy CCD-9.1:

The scale of signs should be appropriate for the building on which they are placed and the area in which they are located. The size and shape of a sign should be proportional with the scale of the structure and the sign shall be designed so it is integrated with the design of the building.

Implementing Action CCD-9.1.a: Design Review Ordinance (see Implementing Action CCD-1.1.a above)

Implementing Action CCD-9.1.b: Design Guidelines – Lighting and Signage Design Criteria (see Implementing Action CCD-1.1.b above)

Implementing Action CCD-9.1.c: City Code Article 31—Outdoor Advertising Sign Ordinance

The City will update its sign ordinance consistent with the Signage Design Guidelines to be implemented with this element.

Implementing Action CCD-9.3.d: City Code Article 31—Outdoor Advertising Sign Ordinance (see Implementing Action CCD-9.1.b above)

Policy CCD-9.2:

Pedestrian-oriented signage shall be encouraged so that signs may be easily and comfortably read as pedestrians stand adjacent to the business.

Implementing Action CCD-9.2.a: Design Guidelines – Lighting and Signage Design Criteria (see Implementing Action CCD-1.1.b above)

Policy CCD-9.3:

The domination of signage and billboards along city streets and highways shall be avoided.

Implementing Action CCD-9.3.a: Design Review Ordinance (see Implementing Action CCD-1.1.a above)

Implementing Action CCD-9.3.b: Design Guidelines – Lighting and Signage Design Criteria (see Implementing Action CCD-1.1.b above)

Implementing Action CCD-9.3.c: Public-Private Partnerships

Work with private property owners, County departments, Caltrans, and other public agencies to improve the aesthetic appearance of signage and reduce the number of billboards along SR 20 and SR 20/45.

Policy CCD-9.4:

Lighting fixtures and illumination levels shall be appropriate to the type of use proposed, the style of architecture, and the overall neighborhood.

Implementing Action CCD-9.4.a: Design Review Ordinance (see Implementing Action CCD-1.1.a above)

Implementing Action CCD-9.4.b: Design Guidelines – Lighting and Signage Design Criteria (see Implementing Action CCD-1.1.b above)

Implementing Action CCD-9.4.c: Improvement Standards (see Implementing Action CCD-2.2.c above)

Policy CCD-9.5:

Lighting shall be designed to control glare and minimize light spillage onto adjacent properties and into the night sky.

Implementing Action CCD-9.5.a: Design Guidelines – Lighting and Signage Design Criteria (see Implementing Action CCD-1.1.b above)

Implementing Action CCD-9.5.b: Design Review Ordinance (see Implementing Action CCD-1.1.a above)

Implementing Action CCD-9.5.c: Improvement Standards (see Implementing Action CCD-2.2.c above)

3.0 COMMUNITY CHARACTER & DESIGN

Policy CCD-9.6:

Pole lighting in parking lots and traffic areas shall provide a cohesive and homogeneous general illumination.

Implementing Action CCD-9.6.a: Design Guidelines – Lighting and Signage Design Criteria (see Implementing Action CCD-1.1.b above)

Implementing Action CCD-9.6.b: Development Review (see Implementing Action CCD-2.5.b above)

Implementing Action CCD-9.6.c: Improvement Standards (see Implementing Action CCD-2.2.c above)

Policy CCD-9.7:

Security lighting shall be effective while confining illumination to the property on which the fixtures are located.

Implementing Action CCD-9.7.a: Design Guidelines – Lighting and Signage Design Criteria (see Implementing Action CCD-1.1.b above)

Implementing Action CCD-9.7.b: Development Review (see Implementing Action CCD-2.5.b above)

Implementing Action CCD-9.7.c: Improvement Standards (see Implementing Action CCD-2.2.c above)

Historic Character

Downtown Colusa clearly displays its period of historic significance, during which the area gained its architectural and historical importance. The residential structures in the downtown area, the Riverfront district, and historic neighborhoods generally are intact and relatively unchanged from the time of construction. Most structures still exhibit the majority, if not all, of the original architectural elements and details that make them unique.

In addition to being from an historical period, an historic property also should retain sufficient integrity; that is, a high percentage of the structure should date from the period of significance and be maintained to preserve that character. Blanket or prescriptive zoning regulations that are not compatible with the density or design characteristics of these historic places will be replaced with historic design criteria that provide appropriate guidelines for restoration, rehabilitation, and adaptive reuse. This will help to ensure that future uses respect the historic design of the building and that uses will be compatible with its historic character.

Goal CCD-10:

To preserve and enhance the character of historic Colusa, including the residential, downtown and Riverfront areas.

Policy CCD-10.1:

The City will encourage and promote the preservation, restoration, rehabilitation, and adaptive reuse of downtown structures in a manner that preserves and enhances their historic character to the greatest extent feasible.

Implementing Action CCD-10.1.a: Design Guidelines – Rehabilitation, Reconstruction, and Renovation Design Criteria (see Implementing Action CCD-1.1.b above)

Implementing Action CCD-10.1.b: Ordinance No. 403 Article 30—Landmark and Historic Preservation Ordinance

The City will complete an update of the Landmark and Historic Preservation Ordinance. This ordinance will provide for the identification, designation, protection, and enhancement of historic structures and landscapes that reflect Colusa's heritage. It is also intended to prevent the needless destruction and impairment of such sites, structures and areas, as well as to discourage the decay, disuse and neglect of the same to promote economic vitality in the City.

Policy CCD-10.2:

Demolition of historic structures shall be considered a "last-resort" remedy for buildings, limited to those in such disrepair that they are beyond reconstruction or relocation and are creating blight and threatening public health and safety. Prior to any demolition, the City shall ensure that the neighborhood interest will be served best by removal and that demolition is the only reasonable course of action.

Implementing Action CCD-10.2.a: Design Guidelines – Rehabilitation, Reconstruction, and Renovation Design Criteria (see Implementing Action CCD-1.1.b above)

Implementing Action CCD-10.2.b: Ordinance No. 403 Article 30—Landmark and Historic Preservation Ordinance (see Implementing Action CCD-10.1.b above)

Policy CCD-10.3:

The City shall require high quality architecture that preserves the historic integrity within the historic Downtown. "Franchise architecture" that detracts from the unique and distinctive setting of the downtown shall be discouraged.

Implementing Action CCD-10.3.a: Design Guidelines – Historic Downtown and Riverfront District Design Criteria (see Implementing Action CCD-1.1.b above)

Implementing Action CCD-10.3.b: Ordinance No. 403 Article 30—Landmark and Historic Preservation Ordinance (see Implementing Action CCD-10.1.b above)

Policy CCD-10.4:

Building renovations of historic structures shall complement the character of existing historic architecture in the Downtown.

Implementing Action CCD-10.4.a: Design Review Ordinance (see Implementing Action CCD-1.1.a above)

3.0 COMMUNITY CHARACTER & DESIGN

Implementing Action CCD-10.4.b: Design Guidelines – Historic Downtown and Riverfront District Design Criteria (see Implementing Action CCD-1.1.b above)

Policy CCD-10.5:

Building setbacks in the downtown area and Riverfront district shall be minimized and reflect the desired character of the area.

Implementing Action CCD10.5.a: Design Guidelines – Historic Downtown and Riverfront District Design Criteria (see Implementing Action CCD-1.1.b above)

Implementing Action CCD-10.5.b: Development Review (see Implementing Action CCD-2.5.b above)

Policy CCD-10.6:

Exterior alterations of historic structures with no historic basis shall be discouraged.

Implementing Action CCD-10.6.a: Design Guidelines – Rehabilitation, Reconstruction, and Renovation Design Criteria (see Implementing Action CCD-1.1.b above)

Implementing Action CCD-10.6.b: Ordinance No. 403 Article 30—Landmark and Historic Preservation Ordinance (see Implementing Action CCD-10.1.b above)

Policy CCD-10.7:

Rehabilitation and renovation projects shall ensure that the integrity of distinctive historic features or examples of skilled craftsmanship that characterize a structure is maintained.

Implementing Action CCD-10.7.a: Design Guidelines – Rehabilitation, Reconstruction, and Renovation Design Criteria (see Implementing Action CCD-1.1.b above)

Implementing Action CCD-10.7.b: Ordinance No. 403 Article 30—Landmark and Historic Preservation Ordinance (see Implementing Action CCD-10.1.b above)

Policy CCD-10.8:

The City shall ensure that deteriorated architectural features are repaired rather than replaced whenever feasible.

Implementing Action CCD-10.8.a: Design Review Ordinance (see Implementing Action CCD-1.1.a above)

Implementing Action CCD-10.8.b: Ordinance No. 403 Article 30—Landmark and Historic Preservation Ordinance (see Implementing Action CCD-10.1.b above)

Residential

The community character of Colusa’s historic residential neighborhoods presents a model for the desired character of the new growth areas. The siting and orientation of residential units on a lot and their relationship to the public realm are crucial to achieving the City’s desired community character.

Modern subdivision design often includes placement of the garage in front of the house toward the street, with the rest of the structure behind or to the side of the garage. The garage may account for more than half the visible house frontage or lot width, thus becoming the primary visual element of the streetscape, with the living areas becoming secondary. This garage placement reduces the driveway length, forcing cars to be parked closer to the street, adding to further dominance of the automobile to the streetscape. This creates an environment that discourages interaction with neighbors and limits family living and recreation to back yards, away from the street.

The Community Character and Design Element offers a more traditional approach to the design of new residential areas. On blocks with relatively small lots, garages would be recessed or pushed back behind the front living area or porch so that cars parked in the driveway do not dominate the streetscape. With this approach, the continuity of street edges and the public landscape are enhanced. Pulling the house forward on the site and recessing the garage improves street character and increases the private rear yard area.

The City anticipates that new development and redevelopment proposals will also contain attached housing, such as multiple family apartments or condominiums. This medium- to high-density housing is intended to achieve the City's goals and objectives for housing, land use, and circulation and mobility. The City envisions that attached housing will be integrated attractively into neighborhoods throughout the community, and that traditional design concepts will be applied to this housing type, as well.

A shift away from conventional modern residential subdivision design toward more traditional neighborhood design and integration of medium- and high-density housing into neighborhoods will help to promote community interaction, increase efficiency in movement throughout the community, and retain the City's small-town qualities. The General Plan's policies provide for residential design guidelines that are intended to guide development in this direction.

Goal CCD-11:

To encourage new development that reflects the design and character of Colusa's traditional residential neighborhoods.

Policy CCD-11.1:

Placement of residential structures on lots and building sites shall reinforce residents' sense of neighborhood and promote community interaction.

Implementing Action CCD-11.1.a: Design Guidelines – New Single-Family Residential Design Criteria (see Implementing Action CCD-1.1.b above)

Policy CCD-11.2:

New development shall minimize the use of front-loaded garages that dominate the streetscape in residential neighborhoods. Garages that are alley-loaded or set back from street view are preferred.

Implementing Action CCD-11.2.a: Design Review Ordinance (see Implementing Action CCD-1.1.a above)

3.0 COMMUNITY CHARACTER & DESIGN

Implementing Action CCD-11.2.b: Design Guidelines – New Single-Family Residential Design Criteria (see Implementing Action CCD-1.1.b above)

Policy CCD-11.3:

Residential developments shall be designed in a manner that incorporate community-friendly features such as front porches and garages oriented away from the street.

Implementing Action CCD-11.3.a: Design Review Ordinance (see Implementing Action CCD-1.1.a above)

Implementing Action CCD-11.3.b: Design Guidelines – New Single-Family Residential Design Criteria (see Implementing Action CCD-1.1.b above)

Policy CCD-11.4:

Architectural design of new residential development, including large additions, shall complement the scale and character of surrounding neighborhoods.

Implementing Action CCD-11.4.a: Design Review Ordinance (see Implementing Action CCD-1.1.a above)

Implementing Action CCD-11.4.b: Design Guidelines – New Single-Family Residential Design Criteria (see Implementing Action CCD-1.1.b above)

Policy CCD-11.5:

New development shall incorporate a variety of architectural styles in each neighborhood and within each block of a neighborhood.

Implementing Action CCD-11.5.a: Design Review Ordinance (see Implementing Action CCD-1.1.a above)

Implementing Action CCD-11.5.b: Design Guidelines – New Single-Family Residential Design

Policy CCD-11.6:

Landscaped and bermed setbacks shall be the preferred sound attenuation methods for residential developments.

Implementing Action CCD-11.6.a: Design Review Ordinance (see Implementing Action CCD-1.1.a above)

Implementing Action CCD-11.6.b: Design Guidelines – New Single-Family Residential Design Criteria (see Implementing Action CCD-1.1.b above)

Policy CCD-11.7:

New development projects shall not be isolated from established neighborhoods.

Implementing Action CCD-11.7.a: Design Review Ordinance (see Implementing Action CCD-1.1.a above)

Implementing Action CCD-11.7.b: Design Guidelines – New Single-Family Residential Design Criteria (see Implementing Action CCD-1.1.b above)

Policy CCD-11.8

Development of walled or gated communities shall be discouraged.

Implementing Action CCD-11.8.a: Design Review Ordinance (see Implementing Action CCD-1.1.a above)

Implementing Action CCD-11.8.b: Design Guidelines – New Single-Family Residential Design Criteria (see Implementing Action CCD-1.1.b above)

Policy CCD-11.9:

The design of attractive front yards that face residential streets shall be encouraged. Walled subdivisions and backyards oriented to city streets shall be discouraged.

Implementing Action CCD-11.9.a: Design Review Ordinance (see Implementing Action CCD-1.1.a above)

Implementing Action CCD-11.9.b: Design Guidelines – New Single-Family Residential Design Criteria (see Implementing Action CCD-1.1.b above)

Goal CCD-12:

To integrate well-designed, attractive multifamily housing into the residential fabric of the community.

Policy CCD-12.1:

Neighborhoods shall be designed to provide a range of lot sizes and housing types, including single-family homes, second units, multi-plexes, town-homes, and apartments.

Implementing Action CCD-12.1.a: Design Review Ordinance (see Implementing Action CCD-1.1.a above)

Implementing Action CCD-12.1.b: Design Guidelines — Multifamily Unit Design Criteria (see Implementing Action CCD-1.1.b above)

Implementing Action CCD-12.1.c: Design Guidelines – Ancillary or Second Unit Design Criteria (see Implementing Action CCD-1.1.b above)

Policy CCD-12.2:

Multifamily units shall be designed as an integral part of residential neighborhoods and mixed-use districts.

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Implementing Action CCD-12.2.a: Design Review Ordinance (see Implementing Action CCD-1.1.a above)

Implementing Action CCD-12.2.b: Design Guidelines — Multifamily Unit Design Criteria (see Implementing Action CCD-1.1.b above)

Policy CCD-12.3:

Multifamily housing design shall complement the scale and character of the surrounding neighborhood.

Implementing Action CCD-12.3.a: Design Review Ordinance (see Implementing Action CCD-1.1.a above)

Implementing Action CCD-12.3.b: Design Guidelines — Multifamily Unit Design Criteria (see Implementing Action CCD-1.1.b above)

Goal CCD-13:

To encourage reconstruction and rehabilitation of existing residential structures that enhance the surrounding neighborhood.

Policy CCD-13.1:

The City shall ensure reconstruction of existing residential structures is to a height, massing, scale, and architectural style that reflects or enhances the surrounding neighborhood.

Implementing Action CCD-13.1.a: Design Review Ordinance (see Implementing Action CCD-1.1.a above)

Implementing Action CCD-13.1.b: Design Guidelines – Rehabilitation, Reconstruction, and Renovation Design Criteria (see Implementing Action CCD-1.1.b above)

Non-Residential

Location and orientation are as important for non-residential buildings as for residential structures. Proper orientation of office and commercial structures in relation to the surrounding development and roadways can facilitate pedestrian activity and reduce dependence on the automobile.

In traditional neighborhoods and downtowns, the placement of businesses on the street—adjacent to a wide sidewalk—encourages easy pedestrian access from nearby neighborhoods and businesses, as well as access by vehicle. By contrast, modern centers typically turn unattractive “back doors” to the street and sidewalk, while their storefronts face internally toward the parking lots. They are located at intersections of arterials or major collector streets with few, if any, direct connections to adjacent neighborhoods. Even though strip centers and individual commercial uses frequently abut each other, direct connections do not exist between them. Consequently, cars are forced onto the frontage street in order to access an adjacent center.

General Plan policies and non-residential design criteria recognize that modern commercial centers need high visibility, necessitating locations at major intersections. However, the policies

directing non-residential design encourage the internal creation of a “Main Street” appearance, requiring building fronts to be oriented toward at least one street or plaza and away from parking lots. Linkages for both vehicles and pedestrians are to be created between commercial uses and residential neighborhoods, multi-family buildings, and plazas.

It is expected that the small commercial centers located along SR 20 and 20/45 will accommodate small commercial uses, such as convenience markets, cafes or coffee shops, dry cleaners, gas stations, office service and support, video stores, and other service-oriented businesses. General Plan policies and design guidelines will help to avoid random placement and design of such highway and convenience commercial structures. They will encourage non-motorized access to the businesses located in these centers and create aesthetically pleasing commercial corridors along heavily traveled routes through town.

As future residential development occurs, it is expected that a need for heavier employment or service centers may logically follow. The goals and policies below are intended to guide not only commercial development, but office professional uses as well, and any light industrial development that may be proposed in the future.

Goal CCD-14:

To develop attractive commercial and business centers that provide multi-modal access.

Policy CCD-14.1:

Non-residential commercial and office complexes shall front on adjacent streets and create pedestrian-oriented access wherever possible. Where building orientation to the street is not feasible, landscaped setbacks and pathway connectors shall be provided from the street frontage.

Implementing Action CCD-14.1.a: Design Review Ordinance (see Implementing Action CCD-1.1.a above)

Implementing Action CCD-14.1.b: Design Guidelines – Non-residential Building Siting, Orientation, And Access Design Criteria (see Implementing Action CCD-1.1.b above)

Policy CCD-14.2:

Where non-residential buildings are sited close to a residential area, the City shall ensure that their scale and character complement the surrounding neighborhood.

Implementing Action CCD-14.2.a: Design Review Ordinance (see Implementing Action CCD-1.1.a above)

Implementing Action CCD-14.2.b: Design Guidelines – Non-residential Building Siting, Orientation, And Access Design Criteria (see Implementing Action CCD-1.1.b above)

Policy CCD-14.3:

Buildings along non-residential corridors shall include human-scale details such as welcoming entryways, street-facing windows, awnings, outdoor furniture and architectural features, as appropriate, that create a visually interesting pedestrian environment.

3.0 COMMUNITY CHARACTER & DESIGN

Implementing Action CCD-14.3.a: Design Review Ordinance (see Implementing Action CCD-1.1.a above)

Implementing Action CCD-14.3.b: Design Guidelines – Non-residential Building Siting, Orientation, And Access Design Criteria (see Implementing Action CCD-1.1.b above)

Goal CCD-15:

To create safe and attractive highway commercial corridors that encourage pedestrian activity and provide multi-modal access from nearby neighborhoods and business centers.

Policy CCD-15.1:

Commercial buildings and business centers along heavily traveled commercial corridors shall be oriented to an adjacent street with pedestrian pathways or create an internal “village” orientation.

Implementing Action CCD-15.1.a: Design Review Ordinance (see Implementing Action CCD-1.1.a above)

Implementing Action CCD-15.1.b: Design Guidelines – Highway And Convenience Commercial Design Criteria (see Implementing Action CCD-1.1.b above)

Policy CCD-15.2:

To the extent feasible, commercial parking lots shall be located to the rear of buildings rather than the front, although businesses may provide pedestrian access from both the street and parking areas.

Implementing Action CCD-15.2.a: Design Review Ordinance (see Implementing Action CCD-1.1.a above)

Implementing Action CCD-15.2.b: Design Guidelines – Highway And Convenience Commercial Design Criteria (see Implementing Action CCD-1.1.b above)

Policy CCD-15.3:

Where commercial centers or office complexes abut each other, both vehicle and pedestrian connections shall be required between these complexes in order to minimize vehicle turn movements onto major streets.

Implementing Action CCD-15.3.a: Design Review Ordinance (see Implementing Action CCD-1.1.a: above)

Implementing Action CCD-15.3.b: Design Guidelines – Highway And Convenience Commercial Design Criteria (see Implementing Action CCD-1.1.b above)

Policy CCD-15.4:

Developer incentives shall be provided with innovative parking strategies that can safely and effectively reduce the overall parking requirements.

Implementing Action CCD-15.4.a: Design Guidelines – Highway And Convenience Commercial Design Criteria (see Implementing Action CCD-1.1.b above)

Implementing Action CCD-15.4.b: Zoning Ordinance Update – Parking Standards (see Implementing Action CCD-10.1.b in the Land Use Element)

Goal CCD-16:

To create attractive, well-designed office professional and light industrial centers as desirable places of employment.

Policy CCD-16.1:

Where visible from public streets, overall design of buildings shall be sensitive to the aesthetic treatment the building or complex's design. These developments shall consider features such as front office exteriors, landscaping, walls, lighting, driveway/parking placement, truck-loading areas, and fencing, to enhance the appearance for viewing by neighbors and passersby.

Implementing Action CCD-16.1.a: Design Review Ordinance (see Implementing Action CCD-1.1.a above)

Implementing Action CCD-16.1.b: Design Guidelines – Non-residential Building Siting, Orientation, and Access Design Criteria (see Implementing Action CCD-1.1.b above)

Policy CCD-16.2:

Office professional and light industrial centers shall provide or encourage the location of small-scale, employee-serving commercial services such as cafes, small markets and other uses that can be patronized by employees within short walking distances.

Implementing Action CCD-16.2.a: Design Guidelines – Non-residential Building Siting, Orientation, and Access Design Criteria (see Implementing Action CCD-1.1.b above)

Implementing Action CCD-16.2.b: Development Review (see Implementing Action CCD-2.5.b above)

Implementing Action CCD-16.2.c: Development Agreements (see Implementing Action LU-2.1.b in the Land Use Element)

Policy CCD-16.3:

New employment centers shall be designed to provide safe and convenient pedestrian and bicycle access.

Implementing Action CCD-16.3.a: Design Review (see Implementing Action CCD-1.1.a above)

Implementing Action CCD-16.3.b: Design Guidelines – Non-residential Building Siting, Orientation, and Access Design Criteria (see Implementing Action CCD-1.1.b above)

Implementing Action CCD-16.3.c: Development Review (see Implementing Action CCD-2.5.b above)

3.0 COMMUNITY CHARACTER & DESIGN

Goal CCD-17:

To ensure that the distinctive qualities and character of a building and its environment are not destroyed.

Policy CCD-17.1:

Rehabilitation projects shall ensure that ensure new additions to existing non-residential structures are constructed to a height, massing, and scale consistent with adjacent buildings.

Implementing Action CCD-17.1.a: Design Review Ordinance (see Implementing Action CCD-1.1.a above)

Implementing Action CCD-17.1.b: Design Guidelines – Rehabilitation, Reconstruction, and Renovation Design Criteria (see Implementing Action CCD-1.1.b above)

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