

AGENDA
SPECIAL MEETING OF THE CITY OF SUISUN CITY
PLANNING COMMISSION
7:00 P.M., JULY 6, 2011

COUNCIL CHAMBERS
701 CIVIC CENTER BOULEVARD
SUISUN CITY, CALIFORNIA 94585

Next Resolution No. PC11-11

1. ROLL CALL:

Chairperson Clemente
Vice-Chair Wade
Commissioner Adeva
Commissioner Harris
Commissioner Holzwarth
Commissioner Mirador
Commissioner Ramos

2. ANNOUNCEMENTS:

None

3. AUDIENCE COMMUNICATIONS:

This is a time for public comments for items that are not listed on this agenda. Comments should be brief. If you have an item that will require extended discussion, please request the item be scheduled on a future agenda.

4. PUBLIC HEARINGS:

For each of the following items, the public will be given an opportunity to speak. After a Staff Report, the Chair will open the Public Hearing. At that time, the applicant will be allowed to make a presentation. Members of the public will then be allowed to speak. After all have spoken, the applicant is allowed to respond to issues raised by the public, after which the Public Hearing is normally closed. Comments should be brief and to the point. The Chair reserves the right to limit repetitious or non-related comments. The public is reminded that all decisions of the Planning Commission are appealable to the City Council by filing a written Notice of Appeal with the City Clerk within ten (10) calendar days.

- A. **A Resolution of the Planning Commission of the City of Suisun City Recommending City Council Approval of a Preferred Land Use Alternative for the General Plan Update.**
- **Adoption of Resolution No. PC11-___-.**

5. COMMUNICATIONS:

- A. **Staff**
- B. **Commissioners**
- C. **Agenda Forecast**

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AGENDA TRANSMITTAL

MEETING DATE: July 6, 2011

PLANNING COMMISSION AGENDA ITEM: PUBLIC HEARING: A Resolution of the Planning Commission of the City of Suisun City Recommending City Council Approval of a Preferred Land Use Alternative for the General Plan Update.

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW: The action is exempt from the requirements of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), under the General Rule that CEQA only applies to projects which could have an impact on the environment and the consideration of GPU land use alternatives is not a project and will not have an impact on the environment.

BACKGROUND: The City of Suisun City's General Plan was last comprehensively updated in 1992. Since that time, there have been amendments only to the Circulation Element and to the Land Use map.

In May 2010, City Council authorized a professional services contract with AECOM, Inc. to complete a comprehensive update of the City's General Plan. Since that time, the consultant team and city staff have completed many tasks, including background reports and public workshops/community outreach.

In August 2010, the City Council discussed a set of Guiding Principles that would help direct staff's work on the General Plan Update. These principles (attached) consist of ten (10) topic areas:

- Community Character
- Destination Tourism and Entertainment
- Downtown
- Economic Vitality
- Infrastructure
- Neighborhood Revitalization
- Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness
- Quality of Community Life
- Sustainability
- Transportation

These principles have informed all work to date, including the development of the draft land use alternatives.

STAFF REPORT: One of the important steps in the development of the General Plan Update is the consideration and selection of a preferred land use alternative. The preferred land use alternative forms the basis for environmental analysis of potential impacts of the GPU on the environment. The process provides for a recommendation from the Planning Commission and the approval of a preferred alternative by the City Council. Staff is recommending that

PREPARED BY:

John Kearns, Associate Planner

REVIEWED/APPROVED BY:

April Wooden, Community Development Director

throughout the City most existing development continue to be designated with the current General Plan land use designation. However, vacant sites in the City represent “opportunity sites” for consideration of changes in land use designation. The intent is that the new land use designation will assist the City in achieving its long term vision and goals, particularly related to economic development and fiscal stability.

Staff has prepared four alternatives for the Planning Commission and public to consider and discuss with staff (listed below):

- 1.) Existing General Plan Land Use Designations
- 2.) Existing General Plan Land Use Designations with Property Owner Requests
- 3.)
 - a. Retail Focus
 - b. Retail Focus with Priority Development Area (PDA) Sustainable Development
- 4.)
 - a. Destination Tourism/Recreation Focus
 - b. Destination Tourism/Recreation Focus with PDA Sustainable Development

Existing General Plan Land Uses

This alternative is based on the existing General Plan Land Use map and provides that the city use it as the basis for planning through the plan’s horizon year of 2035. The current General Plan contemplates the areas immediately east and west of the current city limits as primarily Agricultural or Open Space land use.

Existing Land Uses w/Property Owner Requests

This alternative is based on the existing General Plan Land Use map, but also includes three (3) property owner requests which were presented to the Planning Commission on May 10, 2011. These requests are highlighted below:

- Ted Aksnes, representing Assessor Parcel Number 0174-190-060, requested that this parcel be considered for a mitigation bank type of use. This property is outside of the current city limits, but within the city’s Sphere of Influence and is designated as part of the Travis Study Area (as staff believes this is the best use for these properties, this request is reflected on all alternatives);
- Robert Schwartz, representing Assessor Parcel Numbers 0032-411-010 through 030 and 050-110, requested that these properties be designated for a mix of uses (commercial and high-density residential). These properties are within the current city limits and are designated as PUD Commercial in the current General Plan (as staff believes this is the best use for these properties, this request is reflected on all alternatives); and
- Chris Johnson, representing Assessor Parcel Numbers 0174-170-420 through 450, requested that these parcels (totaling approximately 18 acres) be considered for residential use. These properties are within the current city limits and are currently designated as Commercial Service in the current General Plan (this request is reflected on some, but not all alternatives).

Retail Focus

Alternative 3a contemplates a shift in current land use designation on vacant parcels to commercial (specifically retail commercial). The City is located adjacent to communities like the

cities of Fairfield and Vacaville which are located along Interstate 80 and have strong cores of retail uses (i.e. Westfield Mall, Vacaville Premium Outlets, and The Nut Tree). By comparison, most of the City's current retail is located at the intersection of State Route 12 and Sunset Avenue, split between two shopping centers. The City of Suisun City experiences extremely high retail leakage to these neighboring cities. Staff's presentation at the meeting will provide greater detail and explanation regarding the leakage and its relationship to the land use alternatives discussion.

This alternative focuses on the designation of vacant "opportunity" sites, especially along State Route 12, as commercial. This designation is generally consistent with the current General Plan. However, the areas on the east side of the city south of State Route 12 and between the Lambrecht Sports Complex and the Montebello Vista Subdivision are designated as Agriculture in the current General Plan. This alternative also provides for certain sites to be designated as High-Density Residential. The basis for using the High-Density Residential designation is getting the required number of "roof tops" in the city to support the large amount of proposed retail development.

Retail Focus w/PDA Sustainable Development

Alternative 3b keeps the same designations outside the PDA, but within the PDA area shows a shift to "Mixed Use". In addition, sites designated "Destination Tourism/Recreation" are also shown. The development of the regional Sustainable Communities Strategy (SCS), currently underway by the Association of Bay Area Governments (ABAG) and the Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC), will have long-term impacts on the City. The SCS is designed to achieve required statutory reductions in Greenhouse Gas (GHG) emissions, as well as achieving other positive results, such as improved health, increased pedestrian activity, and increased employment opportunities. Tied to the SCS is the policy that transportation investment in the Bay Area will be directed to areas that are using smart-growth and sustainable development principles as they grow, especially in those areas in proximity to transit, such as the City's PDA. This alternative also provides future flexibility in the PDA area as both Mixed-Use and Destination Tourism/Recreation will potentially allow for many different uses.

Destination Tourism/Recreation Focus

The City of Suisun City is unique in its demographics, physical accomplishments, and geographic location. The City has diversity in both socio-economic and racial makeup. Within a quarter-mile distance there are luxury waterfront homes, alley-loaded single-family homes, and mixed use projects. In the late 1980's, the City was a less than desirable place to live due to the high crime rates and incompatible land uses in and around the Suisun Channel. The efforts of the Suisun City Redevelopment Agency began to change Suisun City's stereotype as an undesirable community and to help the City reach its potential by addressing undesirable uses and developing a positive vision of what should take place downtown. Building upon the efforts of the redevelopment work in the downtown area and creating public access opportunities in and around the Suisun Channel places the City in a position to take advantage of its location directly adjacent to the largest brackish marsh in the western United States.

Alternative 4a focuses development of vacant parcels on "Destination Tourism/Recreation" centered on tourist and amusement types of activities. This land use designation could allow

great flexibility regarding the types of uses consistent with the designation. For example, uses envisioned in these areas include: hotels, bed and breakfasts, and other lodging; from simple to luxury campgrounds; regional recreational and sports facilities; educational facilities and conference facilities; wine-related uses, including tasting rooms and retail; and a vast array of retail uses that complement the destination tourism/recreational development. The alternative retains the Sunset Avenue corridor as retail (consistent with the prior alternative), and incorporates some mixed-use in the PDA area.

It appears that there is a real opportunity to capitalize on the City's strengths through this alternative. There are waterfront properties that are vacant and, if developed in accordance with the proposed alternative, could provide an opportunity to draw visitors from outside the city and county, with a resulting fiscal improvement based on spending from outside the community.

Destination Tourism Focus w/PDA Sustainable Development

Alternative 4b identifies the same land use designations outside of the PDA, but much like Alternative 3b, the alternative focus within the PDA supports the Sustainable Communities Strategy with mixed use and transit-oriented retail and residential uses, as well as employment generation. The primary change in this alternative is mixed-use north of State Route 12 and the addition of residential south of State Route 12.

Staff believes that each of the alternatives has positive characteristics. Through the discussion at the meeting, the best use of each vacant site in the City can be considered. It is likely that a hybrid version of multiple alternatives will become the Planning Commission's recommended alternative. If that occurs, a new map will be developed reflecting the preferred land use alternative for consideration by the City Council.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: Adopt Resolution No. PC11-__: A Resolution of the Planning Commission of the City of Suisun City Recommending City Council Approval of a Preferred Land Use Alternative for the General Plan Update.

ATTACHMENTS:

1. Resolution No. PC11-__
2. Land Use Alternatives
3. Priority Development Area Map
4. Comments received at the May 10th and 12th General Plan Update Workshops
5. Guiding Principles

RESOLUTION NO. PC 11-__

**A RESOLUTION OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF SUISUN
CITY RECOMMENDING CITY COUNCIL APPROVAL OF A PROPOSED
PREFERRED LAND USE ALTERNATIVE FOR THE GENERAL PLAN UPDATE**

WHEREAS, the Suisun City General Plan Update project (“GPU”) was initiated with a public meeting on June 2, 2010; and,

WHEREAS, meetings to solicit public comment on GPU land use were held on May 10, 2011 at a regular Planning Commission meeting and on May 12, 2011 at a public meeting held at the Suisun City library; and

WHEREAS, the City and its consultants have developed land use alternatives for consideration by the public, city staff, and the Planning Commission; and

WHEREAS, pursuant to California Government Code section 65090, the Planning Commission held a duly noticed public hearing on the GPU land use alternatives on July 6, 2011; and

WHEREAS, the Planning Commission has received certain evidence on July 6, 2011 and hereby recommends that the City Council approve the proposed preferred land use alternative identified on Exhibit A, attached hereto and made a part hereof.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT from the facts and testimony presented, the Planning Commission has determined that the approval of the proposed preferred land use alternative is consistent with the Guiding Principles discussed by the City Council at its August 17, 2010 meeting and will not be detrimental to property or improvements in the City or to the public health, safety, or general welfare, and is consistent with good planning practice.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT THE PLANNING COMMISSION recommends that the City Council adopt a resolution approving the proposed preferred land use alternative, Exhibit A, for use in the further development of the GPU, including a Notice of Preparation for an Environmental Impact Report analyzing environmental impacts of the proposed preferred land use alternative.

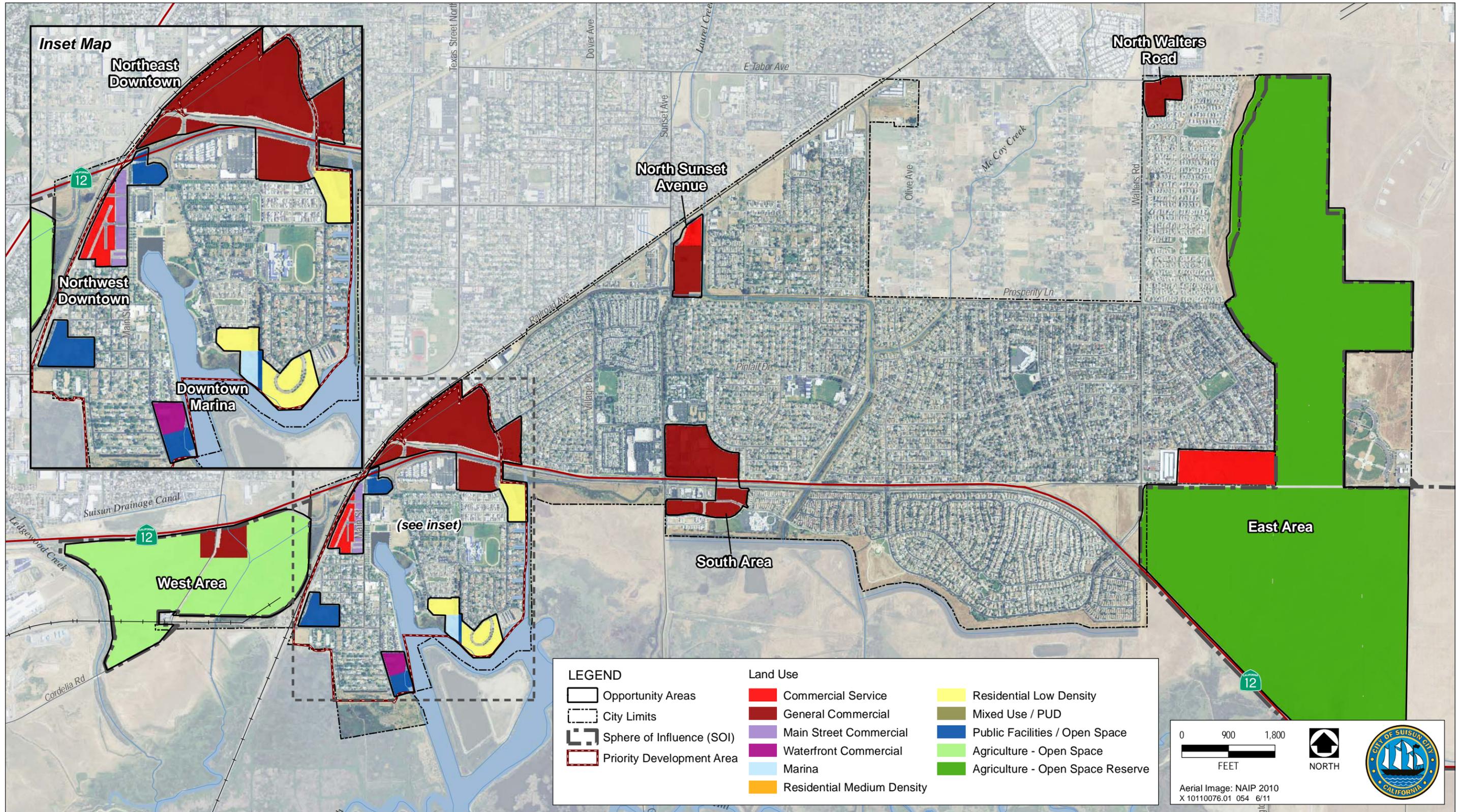
The foregoing motion was made by Commissioner _____ and seconded by Commissioner _____ and carried by the following vote:

- AYES: Commissioners:
- NOES: Commissioners:
- ABSENT: Commissioners:
- ABSTAIN: Commissioners:

WITNESS my hand and the seal of said City this 6th day of July 2011.

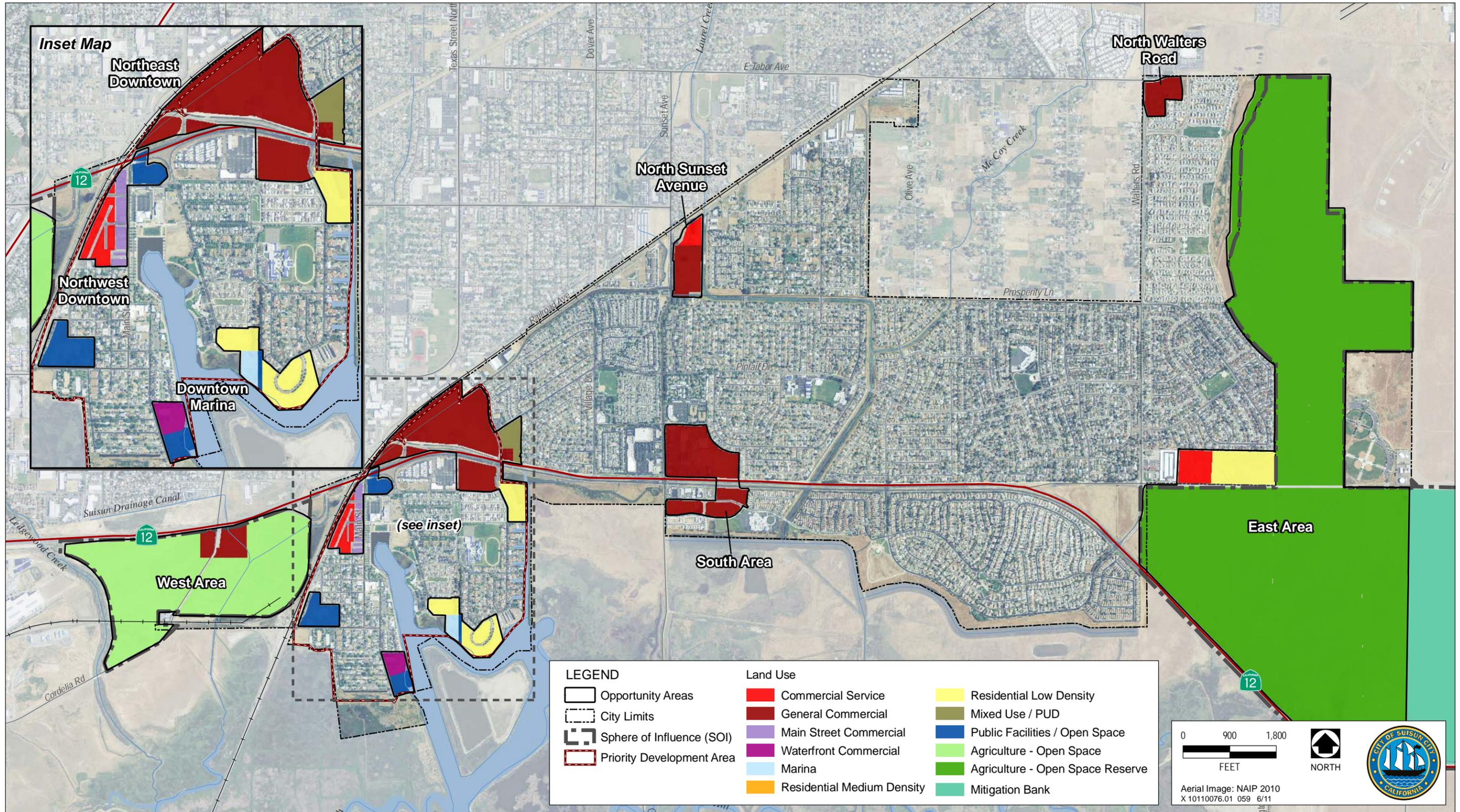
Attachment 1

Anita Skinner, Commission Secretary



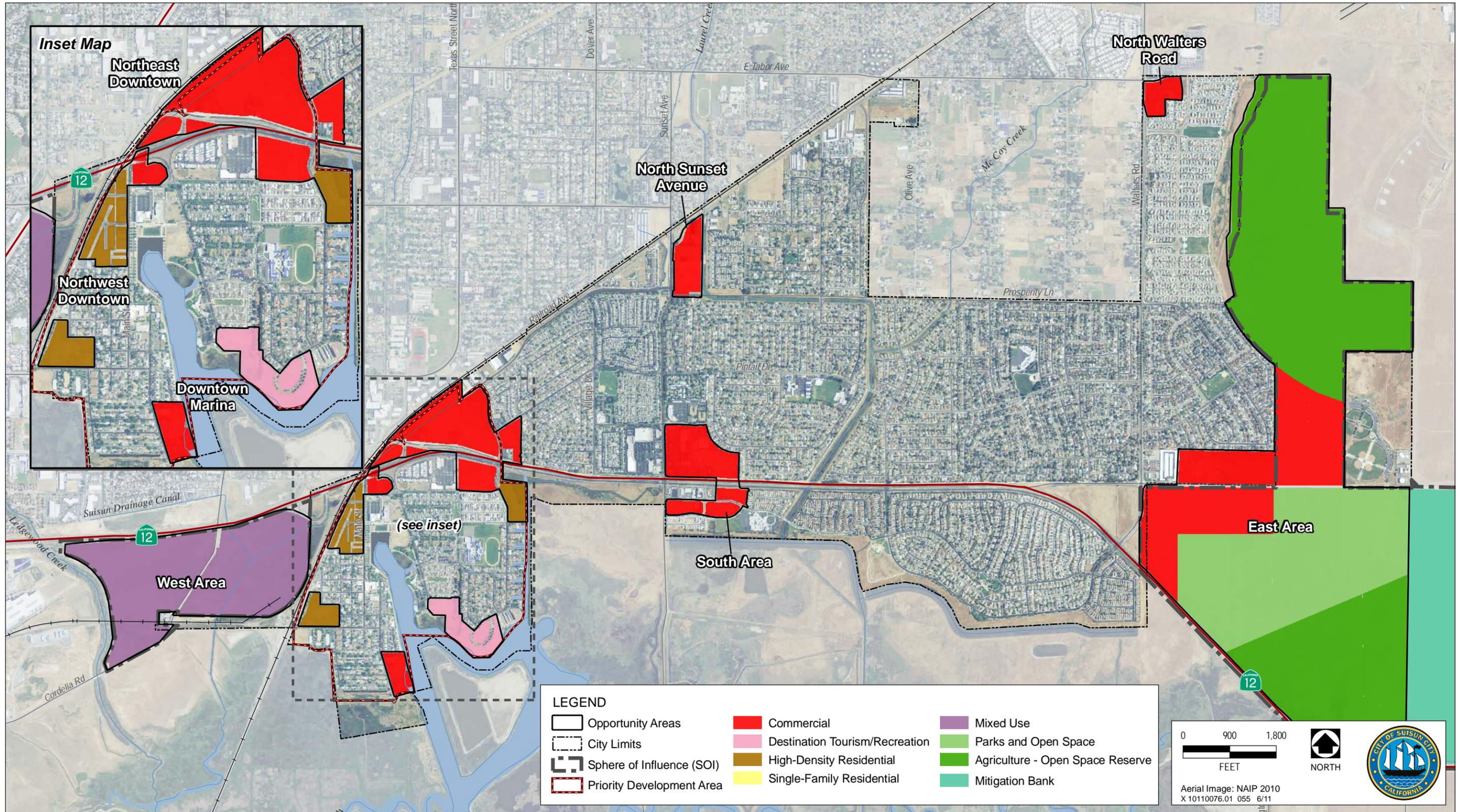
Source: Suisun City 2011, AECOM 2011

Alternative 1



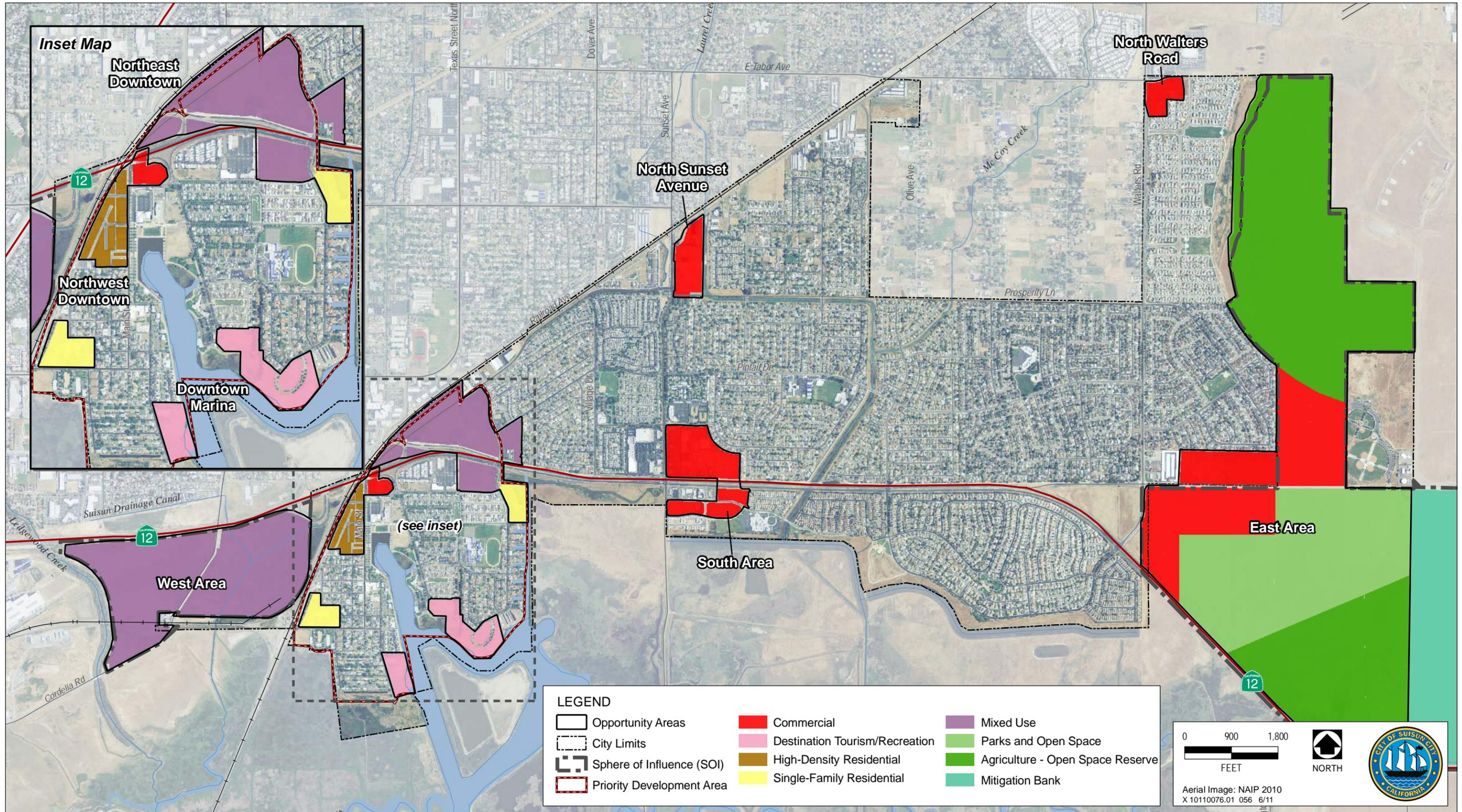
Source: Suisun City 2011, AECOM 2011

Alternative 2



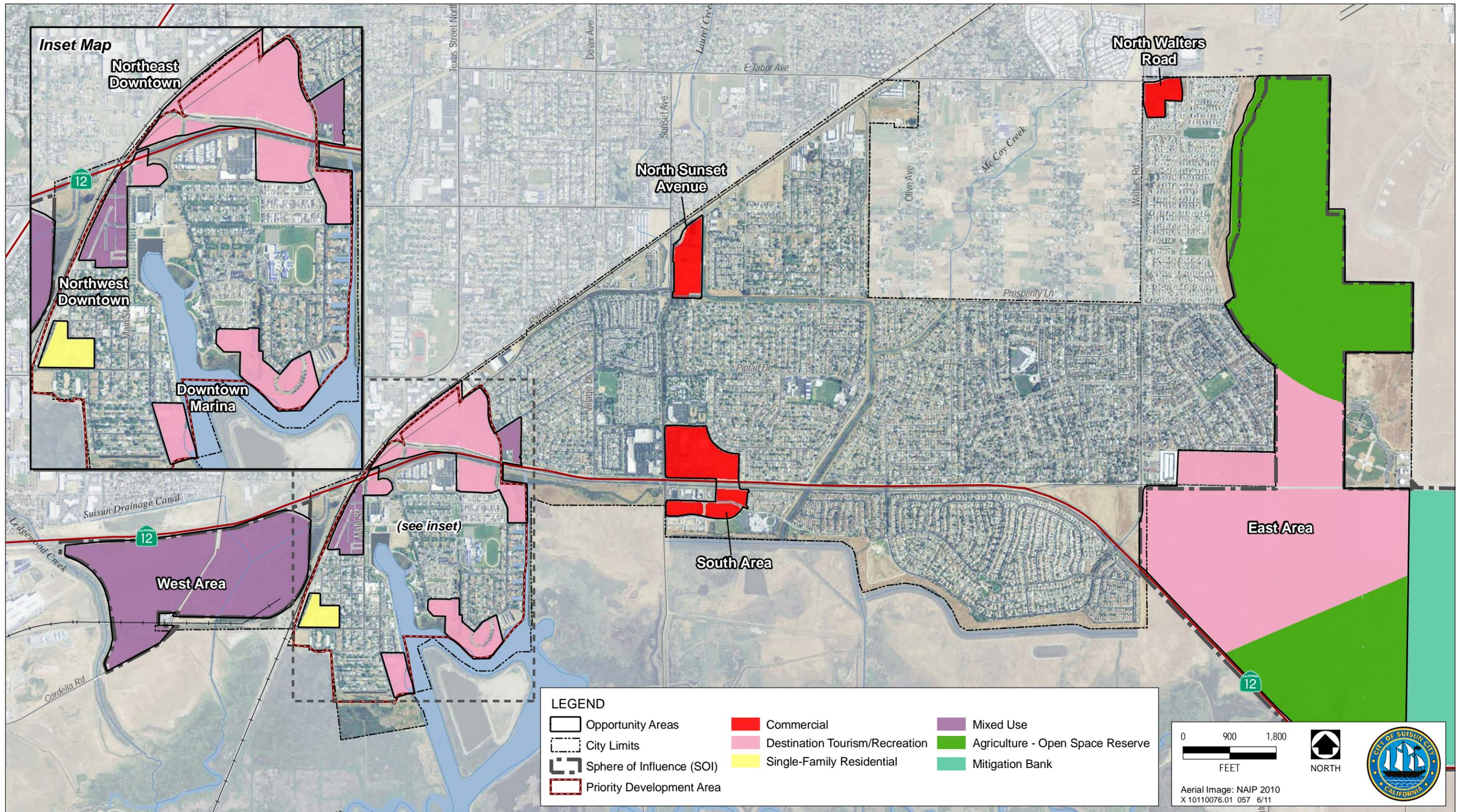
Source: Suisun City 2011, AECOM 2011

Alternative 3a



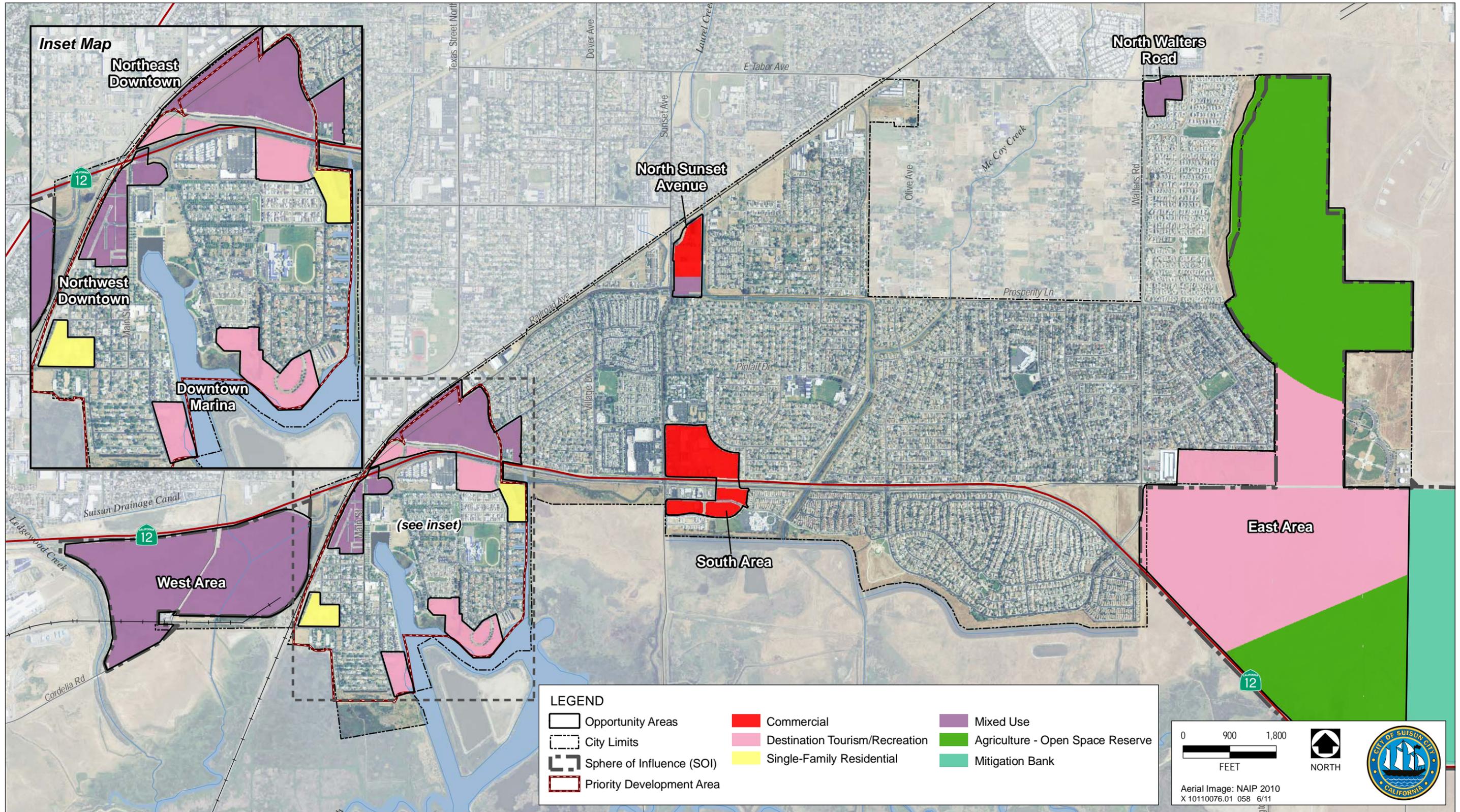
Source: Suisun City 2011, AECOM 2011

Alternative 3b



Source: Suisun City 2011, AECOM 2011

Alternative 4a

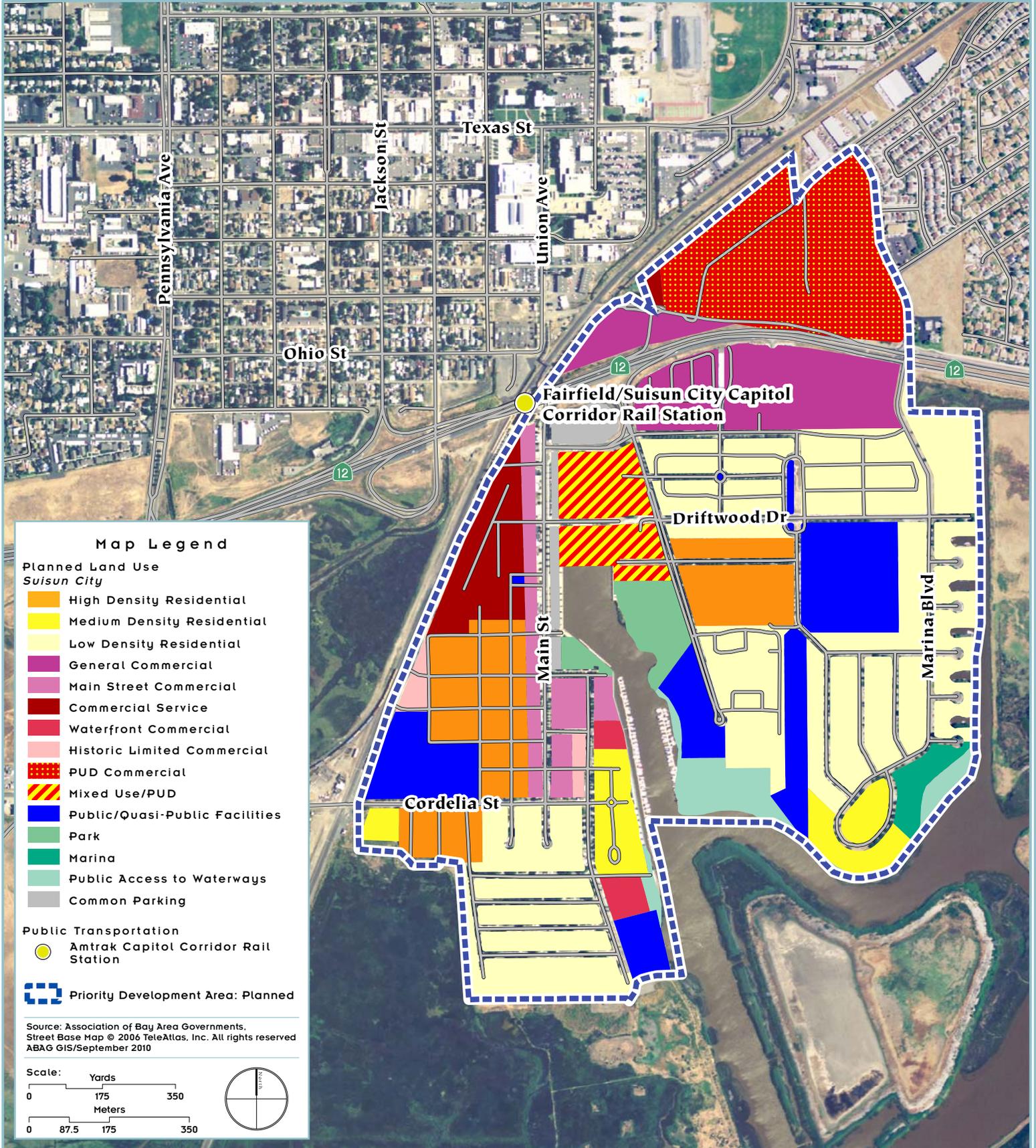


Source: Suisun City 2011, AECOM 2011

Alternative 4b

FOCUS

a development and conservation strategy
for the San Francisco Bay Area



Comments Received at General Plan Workshops

May 10, 2011

Pat Matteson, 832 Driftwood Drive, asked about the location of the existing sports complex.

Laura Caulderon, 1742 Ventura Way, expressed concern regarding the Sphere of Influence in the area near Travis AFB being encroached upon.

George Guinn 1109 Pheasant Drive, asked for clarification of an entrance to Lawler Ranch

Chuck Kingeter, 510 Erin Drive, asked for clarification about the parcel at southeast corner of Marina and Highway 12 and asked what entitlements were. Ms. Wooden explained that the parcels identified on the map as vacant parcels with entitlements were locations on which proposed projects had gone through the process of becoming "entitled" with an approval to do certain things on the property, such as develop a project.

Nate Pyron, Planner from Travis AFB was present to address any concerns regarding the base and any potential development and its compatibility with Travis. He also explained the "no fly" and "clear" zones surrounding the base.

Robert Schwartz, Hofmann Development Company, spoke about the five acres adjacent to the Arco station at the corner of Marina Boulevard and Highway 12. He stated that he has worked with staff to keep a portion commercial with the remaining as high density residential.

Chris Johnson, property owner of a parcel north of Petersen Road, east of Walters Road, stated that the current zoning was commercial and he would like consideration to change the parcel to residential.

Ted Aksnes, 3424 Astoria Ct, Fairfield, referenced a parcel he owned on Petersen Road. He stated that they are planning to develop it as a mitigation bank. The land would be set aside as a mitigation bank for such things as endangered species. He stated that he has been working with Travis AFB and other government agencies and progress is being made. He stated that if the City of Suisun City would like to include the parcel in their Sphere of Influence it would open up the area east of town with consideration of placing at least a waterline easement through the property giving access to other vacant parcels east of town. He stated that he would be happy to work with the City to make this happen.

Ms. Wooden asked Mr. Pyron if the proposed mitigation bank proposed any immediate concerns. Mr. Pyron stated that they would have to look at the proposed plans, type of mitigation bank, potential bird strike hazards, and work with all agencies involved to create a safe environment.

Ms. Wooden stated staff would compile all comments after the May 10th workshop and bring back to the Commission before any final recommendations are made.

May 12, 2011

Nate Pyron, Planner from Travis AFB discussed the noise contours and other constraints that property to the east of the city would have to comply with. Travis AFB and the Solano Airport Land Use Commission would have some authority over development in this area. Mr. Pyron indicated that he had a conversation with a representative of Amtrak to discuss the need for both the existing Suisun City train station as well as the future Fairfield/Vacaville train station. Mr. Pyron also shared that the City and Travis should look at alternative means of transportation between the City and Travis mentioning high-speed transportation as an option.

Attachment 4

Ted Aksnes, 3424 Astoria Ct., reaffirmed that he would like to create a mitigation bank on a parcel that he owns east of the city. He also commented that the city should consider looking at annexing property even further east of the city.

Chris Johnson, property owner of land on the east side of town as well as land within the Sphere of Influence, reaffirmed his prior request for a land use change of the land north of Petersen Road within the current city limits and that he and his family have interest in annexing all of the properties directly adjacent to current city limits into the city.

Gerry Raycraft, Consultant to property owners to the east, commented that the site at the northwest corner of Highway 12 and West of Marina Boulevard should be considered for a mix of uses due to its proximity to the downtown and the existing train station.

Chuck Kingeter, Suisun City citizen, asked some questions of staff regarding the current status of certain parcels. One of the areas that Mr. Kingeter mentioned was the parcels on the west side of the currently planned Grizzly Island Trail project. Mr. Kingeter also had some questions about different terms that were being used during the discussion as well as the difference between the City's land use classifications and the Solano County Assessor's assessment codes.

General Discussion

- There was some discussion of what the Gentry project is and what the current status of the project is. Staff explained that the project had been around for some time (in different forms), but the most recent effort has not moved forward due to market conditions;
- There was some discussion regarding the parcel at the southeast corner of Walters Road and East Tabor Avenue. Staff explained that a mix of uses had been looked at for the site;
- The site at the northwest corner of Highway 12 and Marina Boulevard should be developed solely as commercial.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES – SUISUN CITY GENERAL PLAN UPDATE

(Listed alphabetically, since they are not ranked by importance)

COMMUNITY CHARACTER

Suisun City will strive to enhance the City's authentic, local identity as a vibrant waterfront community.

- Preserve and restore historic resources and utilize design review to ensure compatibility with existing development.
- Focus higher density development and mixed-use projects in areas adjacent to the train station.
- Provide regional leadership by working cooperatively to improve the economy and the quality of life in Solano County.

DESTINATION TOURISM AND ENTERTAINMENT

Suisun City will encourage the development of uses and protection of resources that attract visitors, enhancing the community as a tourism destination.

- Promote a vibrant downtown that provides both daytime and nighttime activities to attract visitors.
- Protect and enhance the Suisun Marsh as a natural scenic recreational resource.
- Provide a variety of high-quality passive and active recreation and leisure activities.
- Promote arts and culture in the community, including theaters, galleries, museums, music venues, and other activities.
- Provide conference and meeting facilities.

DOWNTOWN

Suisun City will continue to develop the downtown as a vibrant, pedestrian-scaled commercial and entertainment center that reflects our community's unique waterfront character.

- Develop the downtown as the social and cultural heart of the community.
- Provide convenient linkages from the train station and other regional connectors to bring patrons to the downtown.
- Ensure safe and efficient walking, biking, driving, and parking in the downtown.
- Strategically develop the Priority Development Area to provide convenient, attractive housing, shopping, services, and employment in the downtown neighborhood.

ECONOMIC VITALITY

Suisun City will strive for economic vitality, providing jobs, services, revenues, and opportunities.

- Maintain an economic base that is fiscally balanced and provides a wide range of job opportunities.
- Encourage the creation of a mix of uses that sustains a tax base that will allow the City to provide public services to the residents, businesses and visitors of the community.
- Strategically develop vacant, under-utilized, and infill land throughout the City, and especially in the downtown.
- Retain and attract new businesses to support the tax base and provide jobs and services for the community.

INFRASTRUCTURE

Suisun City will provide quality community services and sound infrastructure.

- Deliver public facilities and services in a timely and cost-effective manner.
- Ensure availability of water and sewer services to accommodate the City's continued growth and prosperity.
- Plan for the design and cost of future infrastructure to serve the community as it grows.

NEIGHBORHOOD VITALITY

Suisun City will ensure that neighborhoods maintain their character and vitality.

- Maintain complete, well-designed, and walkable neighborhoods, with places to gather, nearby services, and multi-modal access to jobs, recreation, and other community and regional services.
- Create policies and programs to maintain the character and vitality of neighborhoods.
- Foster transit-oriented development around the train station.

PUBLIC SAFETY AND EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS

Suisun City will strive to protect the community and minimize vulnerability to disasters.

- Foster neighborhood safety through sensitive community planning practices, fire safety measures, building codes/seismic requirements, and effective code enforcement.
- Protect life and property through reliable law enforcement and fire protection, as well as active, sensitive service to members of the community in need.
- Minimize the City's vulnerability to natural and man-made disasters and strengthen the City's emergency response systems.

QUALITY OF COMMUNITY LIFE

Suisun City will foster an inclusive, multigenerational community that is economically and ethnically diverse.

- Foster volunteerism and encourage and recognize our service, non-profit, and faith-based organizations and their impact on the community.
- Encourage our community to live, work, and play locally, while supporting social and cultural activities, facilities and programs.
- Provide a full-spectrum of activities and services to meet the needs of the entire community, including youth and seniors.

SUSTAINABILITY

Suisun City will practice economically, fiscally and environmentally responsible municipal decision-making to avoid shifting today's costs to future generations.

- Utilize sustainable development and land use practices that provide for today's residents and businesses while preserving choices for the community in the future.
- Encourage a healthy living environment.
- Preserve and enhance natural resources and minimize negative environmental impacts.

TRANSPORTATION

Suisun City will provide choices for attractive, convenient transportation.

- Maintain and construct roadway infrastructure as needed.
- Design for active pedestrian and bicycle-friendly paths and streets and public spaces.
- Provide transportation alternatives to the automobile, especially capitalizing on the location of the train station.