

3

Land Use and Development

Future development in the Downtown will be based on a combination of market forces and public and private investment. The community also helps in guiding future development by providing policy and regulatory guidance. The Woodland General Plan sets the overall policy direction for the City, including the Downtown. Other plans developed and used in the community, including this Specific Plan, are required to be consistent with the policy direction set out in the General Plan. The key General Plan goals and policies related to the Downtown are summarized in Section 2.7, "Policy Framework."

Building on the policy guidance provided in the General Plan, this Specific Plan provides further definition and direction in the development and enhancement of the Downtown area. This chapter provides details on existing land uses in the Downtown area and discusses the issues and opportunities that have been identified by the community and consultants. With this background, the chapter then sets out vision statements for each of the areas (districts) within the

Downtown (see Section 3.2, "Planning Districts").

3.1 EXISTING LAND USE

The Downtown area today includes a broad mix of land uses that includes commercial, office, residential, industrial, governmental facilities, institutional (such as churches and lodges), and recreation. The percentage distribution of land uses in the Downtown is shown on Figure 3-1, "Existing Land Use Distribution," and a map of existing land uses is shown on Figure 3-2, "Existing Land Use."

Like most downtowns, Woodland's Downtown contains a broad mix of land uses. Of note on Figure 3-1 is that 7.9% of the Downtown area is vacant land. This amount of vacant land, and the potential for the automobile dealerships to move out of the Downtown in the future, provides unique opportunities and challenges in the development of the Downtown.

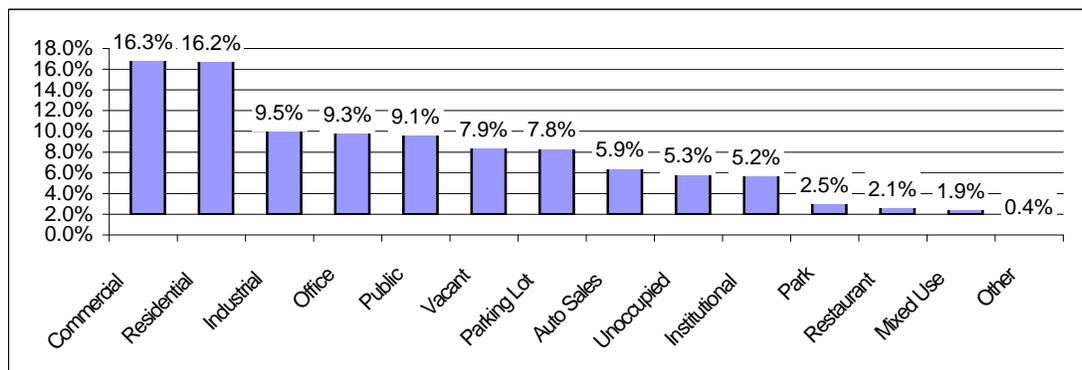


Figure 3-1. Existing Land Use Distribution



3.2 PLANNING DISTRICTS

To better recognize the diversity and unique needs in the Downtown area, the Specific Plan’s planning area was divided into five districts. The boundaries of each district were determined by similarities in land uses, future land use potentials, or issues to be addressed. Two districts (A and E) were divided further to focus on specific opportunities. The area covered by each of the districts is shown on Figure 3-3, “Downtown Districts.”

The following paragraphs provide an overview of the five districts.

District A – Main Street. As the name suggests, this district covers the Main Street corridor and adjacent land that has a strong relation to Main Street. Due to the length and diverse opportunities within this district, it was divided further into four smaller areas referred to as Districts A1, A2, A3, and A4.

- **District A1 – Western Gateway.** This district covers the two-block area along Main Street between Cleveland and Elm Streets (plus a few parcels east of Elm Street). This district is dominated by auto-related uses and does not tie in well with the look and feel of the core Downtown area to the east.
- **District A2 – Downtown Core.** This district, between Elm and Third Streets, reflects the historic heart of the Downtown. Included in this area are key landmarks such as the Hotel Woodland, the Porter Building, the Opera House, Dead Cat Alley, the China Town site, and Heritage Plaza.
- **District A3 – Core Expansion.** Continuing east along Main Street, this district lies between Third and Fifth Streets and is characterized by the

auto dealer on the north, and smaller shops on the south.

- **District A4 – Eastern Gateway.** This district lies at the far eastern edge of the Downtown area. The area contains a number of underutilized or vacant parcels, a mix of commercial and office uses, and Freeman Park.

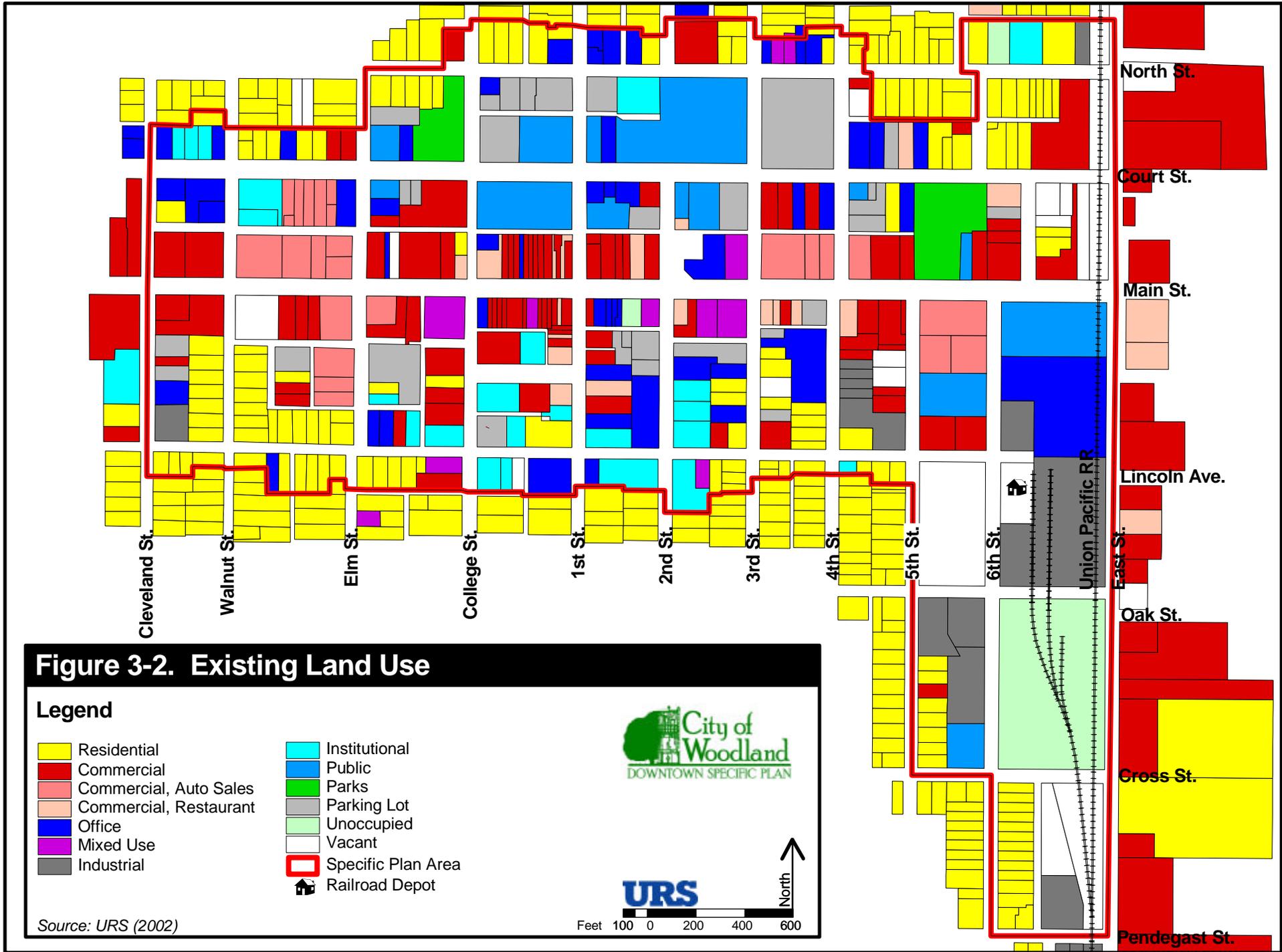
District B – Government Center. This district is centered along Court Street and includes City Hall, the County Courthouse and County administrative buildings, and the main library.

District C – Transition District. Located on the north and south edges of the Specific Plan area, the land in this district serves as a transition between the Downtown and adjacent residential areas. The Transition District is dominated by office uses in converted residential structures, residential, and institutional uses.

District D – Mixed Use District. This area, located on the north side of Lincoln Avenue, includes a diverse mix of land uses, including industrial, office, residential, and institutional uses.

District E – Gateway. District E is dominated by industrial uses and underutilized/vacant land. Due to the different opportunities in this District, it was further divided into two smaller areas referred to as Districts E1 and E2.

- **District E1 – Mill District.** The Mill district is centered on the old Rice Mill building (the East Street Court development) at the northwest corner of Court and East Streets. This district is a key secondary entry to the Downtown area from East Street.



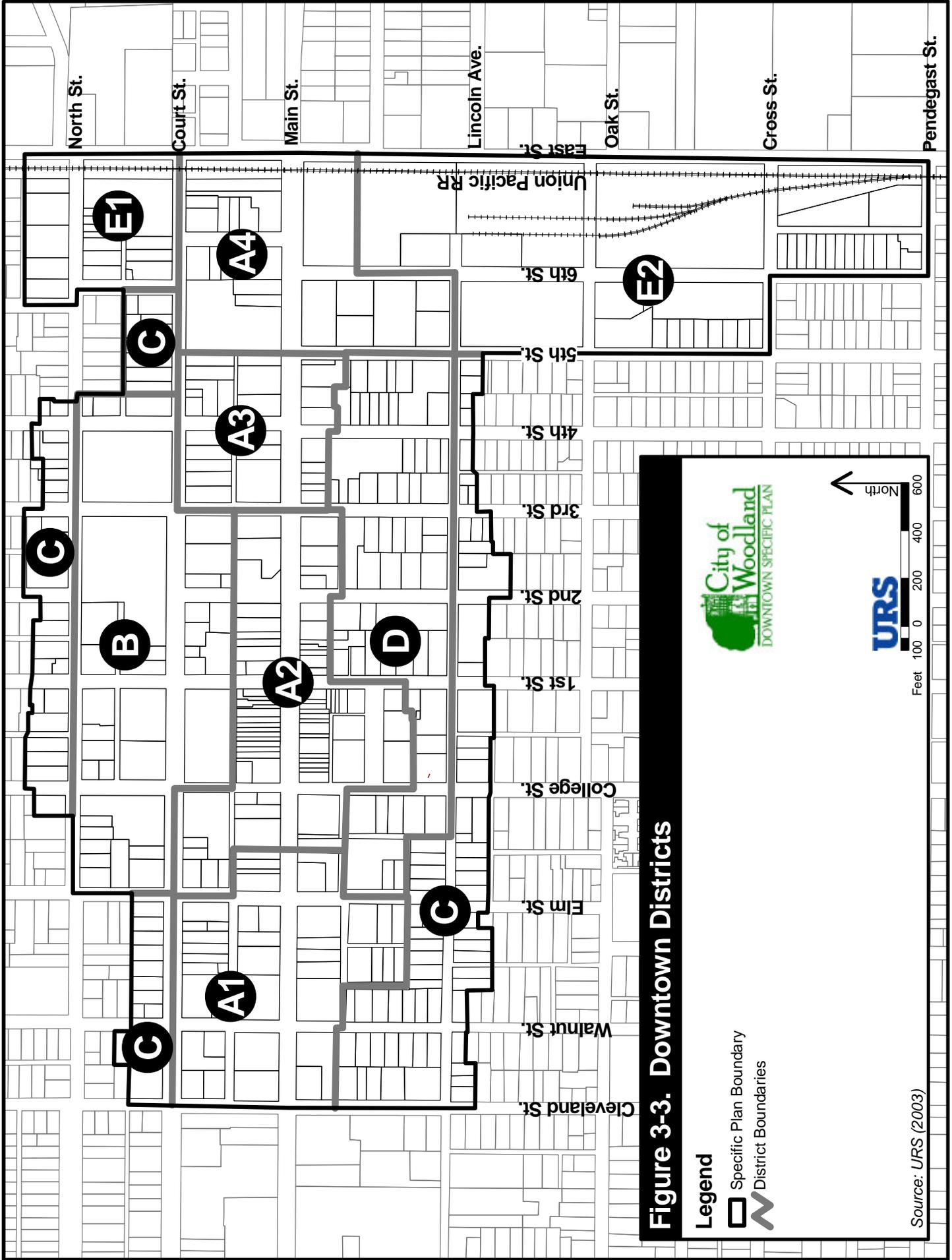


Figure 3-3. Downtown Districts

- Legend**
-  Specific Plan Boundary
 -  District Boundaries




Source: URS (2003)



- **District E2 – Gateway Revitalization.** Part of the 27-acre Gateway Revitalization area, this district contains a large, single-user office building at its north end, several underutilized/vacant industrial buildings, some residential units, and a County facility. The City’s new Police Station is planned for a 3.2-acre site at the north end of this district.

The remainder of this section provides additional details on each of the districts in the form of a two-page data sheet on each district. Each data sheet contains the following information:

- **Photographs.** Each data sheet starts with an aerial photograph of the district and some photographs of the district that illustrate typical buildings, facilities, or situations.

- **Setting.** This section provides an overview of current conditions and uses in the district.
- **Issues.** Based on community input and observation, a list of the primary issues that need to be addressed in the Specific Plan is provided.
- **Opportunities.** This section identifies the positive attributes of the district and highlights potentials that should be used in the development of the Downtown.
- **Vision.** Based on the information collected and input received, this section outlines a vision for each district’s future.



Please see the next page.

A1. Western Gateway (Main Street between Cleveland and Elm Streets)



Setting

District A1 is located at the western entrance to the Downtown area and is bordered approximately by Cleveland, Court, and Elm Streets, and the half block between Main Street and Lincoln Avenue. The primary land use in this district is auto-related commercial with some residential, institutional, and vacant land. The northwestern portion of A1 consists of office, single family and multi-family residential uses along Cleveland Street, and office uses along Walnut Street. The area north of Main Street between Walnut and Elm Streets includes two churches, an auto dealership, an auto parts store, and two commercial office buildings. Across Elm Street is a tire and rim shop. On the south side of Main Street, there is a large vacant lot and commercial uses including a gas station, two auto dealerships (new and used), a grocery store, a movie theater, and a parcel used to store

distressed vehicles that is situated between residences and the Ford dealership parking lot.

Issues

- No sense of entry into Downtown area
- Lack of continuity with the Downtown’s core area to the east
- Lack of identity
- Theater (State Theater) is isolated from the Downtown core, effectively precluding a pedestrian connection
- Exposure of auto repair bays and parts for sale on outdoor display
- Lack of streetscape elements



Opportunities

- Available vacant and underutilized land that is available for development
- Connection to streetscape improvements along Main Street to the east
- Continued utilization of State Theater. In addition to first run movies, the facility offers potential for use as a conference facility, a theater specializing in niche films or foreign language films, reuse as a community theater, art gallery, and so forth. An expansion of this facility could establish an anchor at this end of the Downtown, and utilize land that may become available if the auto dealers move to another area.
- Conversion of existing auto-oriented development along Main Street to other retail uses (if dealers choose to move to a new auto mall site)

Vision

A key to the future of this area will be the future decision of the auto dealers related to their location. If they move to an auto mall site, this area is opened up for revitalization. This relocation is assumed to occur during the life of the Specific Plan, allowing a change from an auto-oriented business environment to a higher density and lively mixed-use area that is better integrated with the rest of Downtown.

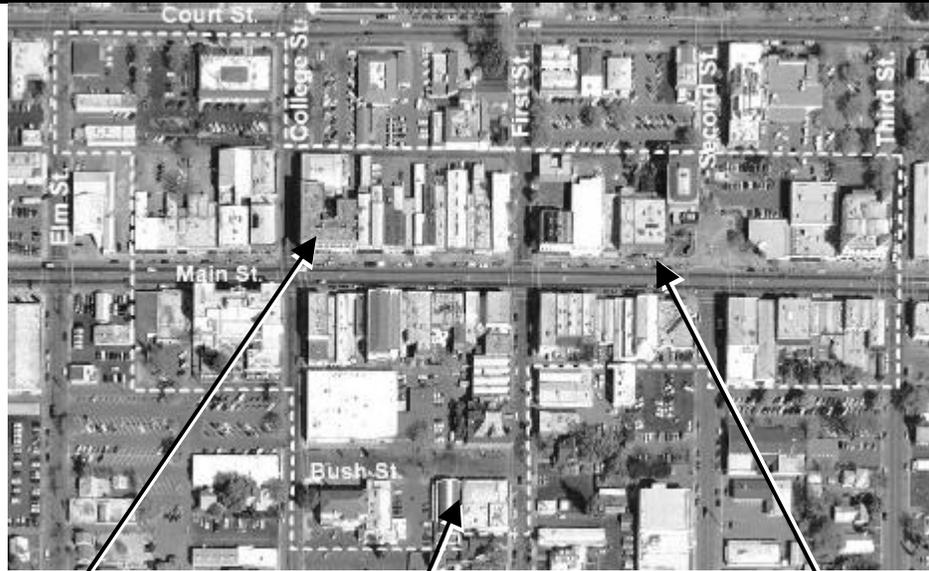
This area has the potential to be the western gateway into the Downtown, with new building standards in this Specific Plan designed to help newly constructed buildings blend in with the rest of the Downtown area to the east. A gateway element is also planned for the area.

The north side of Main Street between Elm and Walnut Streets is planned for reuse as a multi-story mixed use facility, with retail uses on the ground floor and residential units on the upper floors.

The south side of Main Street is expected to develop with retail uses, expanding the design elements found in the rest of the Downtown. A mix of office uses is also appropriate, and there is enough land to develop a large office building if desired.

While a new theater site is included in the alternatives presented in the plan, the continued use or expansion of the State Theater remains an allowed use in this district.

A2. Downtown Core (Main Street between Elm and Third Streets)



Setting

District A2, which is located between Elm and Third Streets, is the heart of the Downtown area. The uses along this portion of Main Street consist of one- to three-story structures housing a mix of retail and office uses. Residential uses are limited primarily to the Hotel Woodland, a Single Room Occupancy (SRO) facility.

The majority of the buildings in this district are zero lot line (i.e., no side yards) and directly front onto Main Street. Nearly all the parking for these buildings is located in the interior of the blocks and is accessed through alleys. Many of the buildings on the south side of Main Street have functional spaces in the rear of the building and some buildings have breezeways that provide attractive pedestrian walkways connecting the rear of the building with Main Street.

Issues

- Traffic congestion and speeds on Main and Court Streets
- Lack of nighttime activities/uses
- Perceived lack of parking for retail uses along Main Street (or parking not convenient to some shops)
- Heritage Plaza too small and exposed for large outdoor events
- High vacancy rates on upper floors (and high costs for renovation)
- Long, narrow buildings are challenging for retailers
- Underutilization of Bush Street area
- Need for better circulation behind shops
- Unattractive pedestrian spaces on several side streets

Opportunities

- Main Street has excellent historic framework and architecture. The City should emphasize its history with historic walks, tour guides and path markers, information kiosks, and plaques on historic buildings.
- Redevelopment of Dead Cat Alley and China Town site
- Expansion of Heritage Plaza into parking area (with loss of very few spaces)
- Large pool of employees and visitors to the County facilities along Court Street
- Develop plaza behind the buildings along Main Street between College and First Streets (north side of Bush Street) to allow for ready access to spaces, potential subdivision of buildings, and to create an outdoor restaurant area that builds on the success of Morrison's
- Expand the use of paseos/breezeways to connect Main Street with the rear of shops and parking
- Encourage office and residential uses in currently vacant upper floors
- Reuse of existing Police Station facilities for potential expansion of City Hall
- Potential for streetscape improvements with unified street furniture

Vision

Once the primary shopping location in town, the Downtown has lost this role over the last few decades as other shopping types moved into the community. But even with this loss, the

strength and beauty of the Downtown remains solid. The overall vision for this area is to again become a social gathering place and the main location in town for entertainment, dining, and specialty retail.

An initial step in achieving this vision is to improve and enhance the aesthetic characteristics of Main Street through such improvements as enhancement of existing building facades and streetscape improvements to include new street furniture and landscaping.

The second step is to create exciting and inviting pedestrian-oriented areas such as courtyards, plaza, and attractive sidewalk areas. The north side of Bush Street, between College and First Street, has tremendous potential as a commercial courtyard that can be modeled after the courtyard behind the building on the south side of Main Street between Second and Third Streets.

The City has the opportunity to expand Heritage Plaza as a focal point for social interaction. This would also include enhancing pathways from governmental buildings off of Court Street into the Downtown to increase patronage of the shops and restaurants. The last item is to encourage professional offices, educational facilities, and residential uses (e.g., live-work and senior housing) on the second and third floors of historic buildings.

A3. Core Expansion (Main Street between Third and Fifth Streets)



Setting

District A3 is located between Third and Fifth Streets along the Main Street corridor. The two blocks north of Main Street consist of commercial uses including auto-related commercial (auto dealership) and office uses (e.g. Department of Corrections) along with two residences on the corner of Court and Fifth Street. Parking for this block is provided in the interior of the block. The two blocks south of Main Street consist of service and retail commercial uses including restaurants, a furniture store, and a bar.

Issues

- Possible relocation of existing auto dealers and issue of reuse
- Possible closure of Fourth Street to develop site
- Vacant land and large automobile display lot is an impediment to pedestrian movement to the east
- Lacking streetscape amenities (street furniture, trees)

Opportunities

- Development of multiscreen cinema and plaza at site of existing auto dealer on Main Street
- Development of a multistory parking structure with ground floor retail/food court use
- Extension of Fifth Street north of Main Street with addition of on-street parking to better serve Freeman Park
- Area will be close to heavy office uses planned to the east (could spur additional restaurant or service commercial uses)

Vision

This area has tremendous potential to serve as a key to using the Downtown as a social/entertainment center for the community. Located one block from the Opera House (a very well established theater/entertainment venue), the development of a cinema in this district would provide a great concentration to support nighttime operations for restaurants and shops in the Downtown. These complementary uses would be attracted to this area of Main Street and add to the Downtown's nightlife.

A multi-story parking structure is also envisioned on the north side of this district. Being one block from the Opera House and one to two blocks from the County Courthouse and offices, this site offers an outstanding location for a parking structure that could be utilized both day and night.

To develop the cinema, the Specific Plan proposes to close Fourth Street between Main and Court Streets. To maintain access and provide for additional parking for Freeman Park, the reestablishment of Fifth Street between Main and Court Streets is recommended. Parking would be provided through diagonal parking on the east side of the street as a minimum, both sides if possible.

Alternative uses for this site would be infill with office uses with some limited first floor retail.

A4. Eastern Gateway (Between Fifth and East Streets)



Setting

District A4 is located on the eastern side of the Main Street commercial corridor between Fifth and East Streets. In the area just north of Main Street and west of Sixth Street, land uses consist of a two-acre City park (Freeman Park), two motel structures (one used as offices), an auto glass shop and a bicycle shop. To the east of Sixth Street is a Shell gas station (recently rebranded from a Texaco franchise) and two residential uses.

South of Main Street, the western end has a large, vacant lot on Main Street that is used to store new automobiles, a City-owned storage yard, and further south, two commercial uses (i.e., towing yard and furniture store) along Lincoln Avenue. The parcel on the southeast side of the section consists of a governmental use (Parks, Recreation and Community Services Department) with a large and mostly underutilized parking lot.

Issues

- Gas station located at main entrance to historic Downtown is out-of-character with area
- Auto repair shop with bays facing on Main Street
- Heavy traffic and high traffic speeds on Main and East Streets
- Long queuing of vehicles in eastbound direction blocking exit from Sixth Street
- Lack of streetscaping, including landscape elements
- Travelers on Main Street have a brief and limited view of Freeman Park
- Key lot used to store vehicles (gives land a low value appearance)
- Area contains a municipal water well and a communications tower

Opportunities

- Freeman Park could provide a nice entrance to Downtown if it had a larger frontage on Main Street
- Available vacant and underutilized property at corner of two busy streets (Main and East Street) providing easy access and visibility
- Relocation of Parks, Recreation, and Community Services Department from building at Main and Sixth Streets opens up for reuse a very attractive area along Main Street
- The City owns property in the district that can be leveraged to assist in developing the area
- Primary gateway to the Downtown
- Heritage oak tree on Main Street could be utilized as a gateway element, highlighting the heritage of the City

Vision

This district offers some of the most valuable and flexible land available for development in the Downtown. The south side of Main Street has the most undeveloped land. With the planned move of the Parks, Recreation, and Community Services Department (offices are at the southeast corner of Main and Sixth Streets on a City-owned parcel), a City-owned parcel along Fifth Street, and an underutilized parcel at the southwest corner of Sixth and Main Streets, the entire frontage would be available for development. The Specific Plan sees this area as containing a mix of two- and three-story office buildings with a small amount of retail/restaurants on the ground floor (about 5,000 square feet).

On the north side of Main Street, the mixed-use development theme that exists to the north (old Rice Mill buildings) can be extended southward along East Street on both sides of Main Street. The City could also extend Freeman Park eastward out to 6th Street to capitalize on its unique location as a relatively large downtown park.

The City will punctuate this concept through attractive signage, identifying the Downtown, on both sides on Main Street.



B. Government Center (Court Street between Elm and Fourth Streets)



Setting

District B is bordered by North Street to the north, City and County uses along Court Street to the south, Elm Street to the west, and extends one parcel to the east of 4th Street. This is Woodland’s government district, and includes City Hall, the main public library, and most of Yolo County’s government offices and buildings (including the County administrative offices and the County courthouse). There is also a commercial office building and church located to the north of the County buildings along North Street. Other uses include the Wayfarer Center at the northeast corner of 4th and Court Streets and a mixture of office commercial and residential uses on the western most block of this section. Approximately 40 percent of this block is vacant land that is owned by the City (northwest corner of College and Court Streets). The City started construction of a

surface parking lot on this site in the summer of 2002.

Issues

- Lack of design compatibility of two existing County Administration buildings with the adjacent County Courthouse and Woodland Public Library buildings
- Heavy traffic and high traffic speeds on Court Street
- Poor capture of employees and visitors to the County complex by businesses in Downtown
- Need to provide better connectivity to the Main Street corridor
- Lack of adequate parking near County buildings resulting in overflow parking in adjacent residential areas
- Reuse of Police Department headquarters once they move to their new facility

Opportunities

- Reuse of County administrative building parking lot for additional County offices/courts or a parking structure
- At the northwest corner of College and Court Streets, complete development of a surface parking lot with landscaping. In the longer term, look to developing this site for an office building or parking garage (depending on future demand)
- Develop pedestrian walkways from the Woodland Public Library, County Courthouse, and Administration Building to provide a direct linkage with the Main Street corridor

Vision

District B already possesses several positive characteristics such as the strong architectural features of several historic structures (Courthouse and library) and attractive, mature landscaping. The vision for this District is to continue with the existing theme by blending new buildings with its already attractive surroundings and to create stronger links between the government buildings southward toward City Hall and the Main Street corridor. This would be accomplished through careful design of future County Courthouse expansion (at the corner of 4th and Court Street) and office buildings and creating more inviting pedestrian pathways primarily through streetscape improvements.

A short-route trolley (small bus) system that services the County buildings and the Main Street corridor is another potential to encourage interaction.



C. Transition District (Court Street and Lincoln Avenue)



Setting

Area C consists of three areas located on the periphery of the Downtown Area. The first area lies along North, Fourth, and Court Streets adjacent to the institutional district to the south. Buildings in this area consist mostly of two-story Victorian or bungalow buildings occupied by a mixture of residential and office commercial uses. The area contains some underutilized land on the western border of the area along North Street and both vacant and underutilized land along 4th Street and Court Street. The second area lies on Court Street just north of the Main Street commercial corridor and serves as a transition from the residential neighborhoods to the north and the commercial and institutional uses to the south. The buildings consist of two-story Victorians and single-story Bungalows used primarily for professional office, with some residential uses. The third area consists of

land uses adjacent to the Lincoln Avenue corridor. This area serves as a transition between the residential neighborhoods to the south and the Downtown commercial corridor to the north. The land uses consist primarily of detached single unit Victorian buildings consisting of a mix of both residential and office commercial uses. Churches are clustered toward the eastern edge of this area.

Issues

- Heavy traffic on Court Street and Lincoln Avenue
- Visual clutter of rear yards
- Vehicle access from commercial uses into residential neighborhoods
- Lack of adequate parking near County buildings. Overflow parking occurs in adjacent residential areas
- Maintaining a true transition

Opportunities

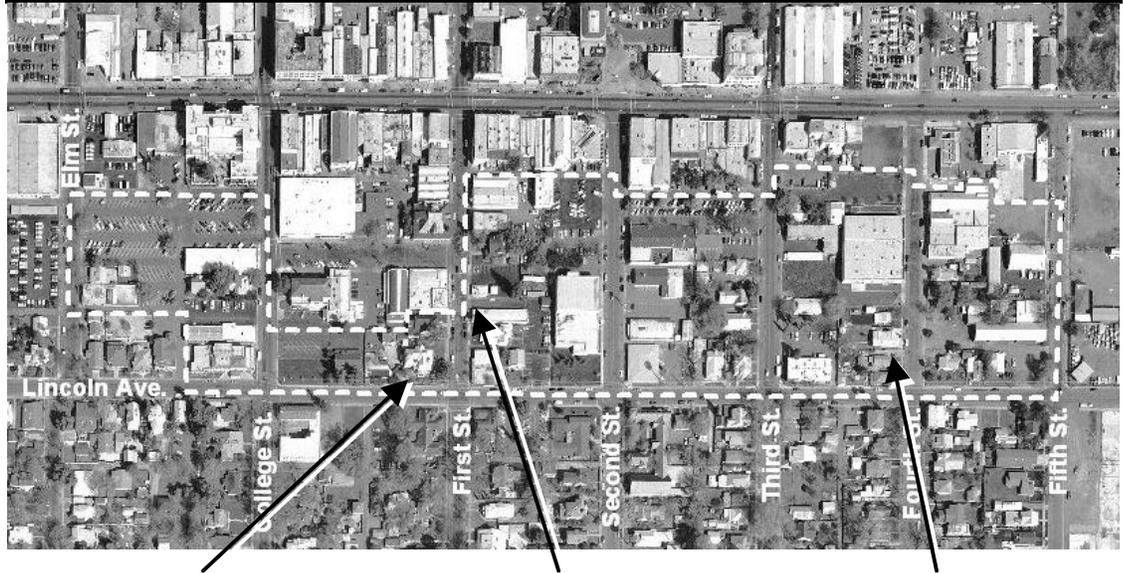
- Potential for historic preservation and rehabilitation of residences (i.e., Victorians)
- Courthouse and library provide well-defined edges for Downtown area
- Increase code enforcement to reduce visual blight in this District. Also opportunities for City, County, businesses, and residents to partner to increase security and code enforcement issues.
- Potential for streetscape improvements

Vision

The City's intent for District C is to maintain its role as a transition area between the residential neighborhoods and the main portion of Downtown. The office commercial uses in these areas will continue act as a buffer to soften the impacts of industrial, retail, and service commercial uses closer to Downtown. There are opportunities in these areas to develop scattered vacant and underutilized land and for adaptive reuse of residential buildings into office uses.



D. Mixed Use Area (Between Elm and Fifth Streets)



Setting

District D is located just south of the Main Street commercial corridor and north of Lincoln Avenue between Elm and 5th Street. This District consists of a mixture of commercial, residential, and institutional uses. Many of the commercial uses are located in large, square nondescript buildings (e.g., Pac Bell building). Many of the commercial buildings are supplied with abundant parking. Several single-family residential units consisting of one-story Bungalows and two-story Victorians are scattered around the eastern part of this District. Several churches are located on the southern border of the District primarily along Lincoln Boulevard.

Issues

- Visual attractiveness of corridor in some areas
- Some out-of-place residential uses (adjacent to incompatible land uses)
- Wide range of land use intensities in a small area

Opportunities

- Several underutilized lots provide opportunities for infill development
- Available parking in the area provides flexibility for events at facilities in this district
- Potential for historic preservation and rehabilitation of residences (i.e., Victorians)
- Streetscape improvements for First and Bush Streets to provide a more cohesive connection with the proposed plaza on the north side of Bush Street.
- Façade improvements to improve design consistency with Area A
- Possible conversion of existing residence on First Street and Lincoln Avenue to a bed and breakfast
- Conversion of existing residential area on eastern portion of Area D to light industrial uses
- Increase code enforcement to reduce visual blight of residential areas

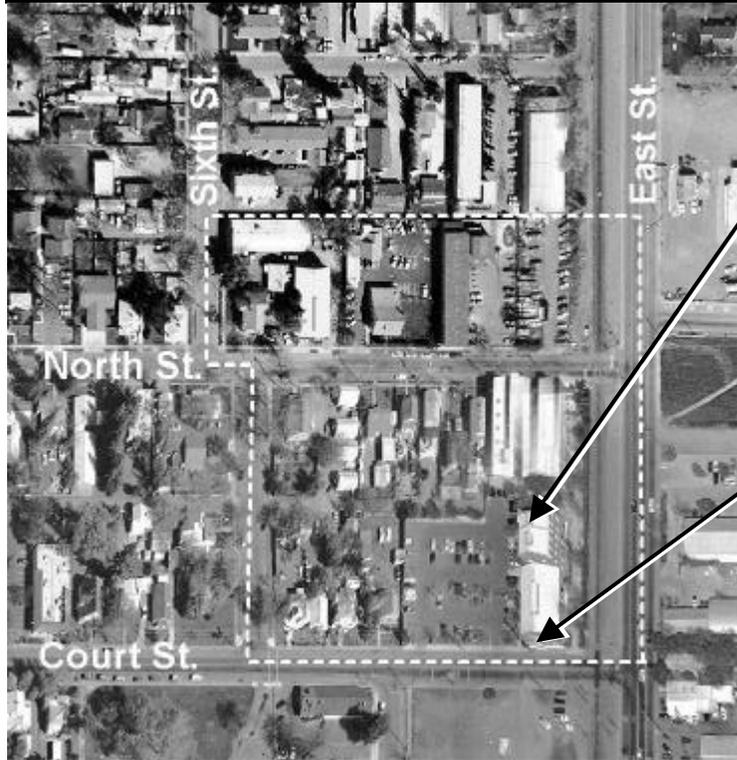
Vision

This area has a diverse mixture of land uses including residential, commercial, industrial, and institutional uses. The City envisions the consolidation of the uses into more distinct single use blocks. For instance, the eastern side of the District has a mixture of incompatible uses such as industrial and residential uses. Eventually this area will need to be transformed into an area entirely of industrial uses. District D also has several opportunities for new development since there are several vacant and underutilized lots.

This District will like see more transitional changes than any major shift in land uses.



E1. Mill District (North Street between Sixth and East Streets)



Setting

This area primarily consists of single-family residential development in the southwest, two multi-family developments and industrial uses located north of North Street, and a mixed-use complex at the northwest corner of Court and East Streets.

The mixed-use complex, the old Rice Mill building (the East Street Court development), provides an interesting mix of uses in a renovated historic structure. This building provides a great secondary entrance statement to many entering the Downtown.

Issues

- Existing housing is in poor condition
- Incompatible mix of multi-family and industrial uses
- Misalignment of North and Lemen Streets at East Street

**Opportunities**

- Opportunity for expansion of existing mixed-use development and new retail development
- Rehabilitation of single-family units
- Development of secondary gateway identification at Court and East Streets
- Cleanup and screening of existing industrial areas

Vision

This District offers the potential to expand the mixed-use Rice Mill development south between Court and Main Streets. Streetscape improvements (e.g., street trees) along East Street and North Street would provide an attractive entry point into the Downtown.

As part of the East Street Corridor Specific Plan, Lemen Avenue (which is perpendicular to East Street) will be realigned to improve traffic flow at the North and East Streets intersection. A traffic signal will also be installed at this intersection, and left turns from Court Street will be eliminated.

The City will need to work with industrial uses along the north side of North Street to provide screening of industrial uses.

E2. Gateway Revitalization (Between Fifth and East Streets)



Setting

District E2 is located on the southeastern edge of the Planning Area between Fifth and East Streets. Most of the site consists of vacant/underutilized land along the Union Pacific rail line. Other uses in the District include industrial uses at Sixth and Lincoln Streets, at the corner of Fifth and Oak Streets, and at the corner of Pendegast and Sixth Streets. There are also two commercial uses, including a large office commercial building (the Blue Shield building) on Lincoln Avenue and East Street and underutilized commercial uses on Sixth and Cross Streets. On the southern border of this District there is a mixture of single-family and multi-family uses.

Issues

- Desire by property owners to relocate the train depot
- Potential hazardous materials contamination along rail corridor
- Mix of underutilized and vacant buildings causing blight in the area

A more complete discussion of this area can be found in Chapter 7, "Gateway Revitalization Area."

Opportunities

- Future site for new Police Station
- Expansion of existing offices uses (Blue Shield) south of Main Street
- Existing underutilized and vacant land available for development of a business park along rail corridor
- Rehabilitation of existing housing stock and development of new housing utilizing Redevelopment set aside funds (as available)

Vision

District E2 will serve as the location for the new police station. The City also envisions a new business park to the east of the proposed police station site and the expansion of the residential uses south of Cross Street.

A complete description of the future uses planned for this area are provided in detail in Chapter 7, "Gateway Revitalization Area."

3. Land Use and Development



Please see the next page.