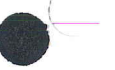


Land Use Element



THE LAND USE ELEMENT

"Perhaps you never saw a spot of earth so beautiful that the love of it would take from you all the enchantment of such a mining excitement as that of 1849...and cause you to settle down and turn a deaf ear to all the stories of bonanzas found and fortunes made! Perhaps no man living will ever see another such country!"

"Out West" Magazine on
Colusa County, 1902

ORGANIZATION OF THE LAND USE ELEMENT

The Land Use Element provides a description of current and proposed future land use patterns in Colusa County. The Element begins by identifying the characteristics of the county's communities, rural settlements, farms, and undeveloped areas. This discussion is followed by a description of future land use categories and policies for future development. Policies are expressed graphically on the Future Land Use Map, which shows where various categories of urban, agricultural, and open space uses are planned during the next 20 years.

The Land Use Element is followed by a separate chapter containing more detailed plans for seven individual communities and the Stonyford-Lodoga area. Each of the community plans is introduced with a history of the community to provide some perspective on how past development patterns have influenced the plan for that town's future. The histories are followed by an analysis of each town's current land uses and the opportunities and constraints to its growth. This discussion provides the basis for the plan maps which should be used to guide development during the coming years.

GENERALIZED COUNTY LAND USE PATTERN

INTRODUCTION

Existing land uses in Colusa County are shown in Figure LU-1 and are summarized in Table LU-1. The land use pattern is typical of the rural counties of the Sacramento Valley. A checkerboard of large acreage farms dominates the eastern half of the county, with land ownership and road alignments following square mile section lines. The land is flat and is covered by fields of rice, orchards, and row crops. Views are expansive, framed only by the rolling foothills of the Coast Range on the west and the jagged peaks of the Sutter Buttes on the east. As one moves west through the county, large farms give way to much larger cattle and sheep ranches, cultivated fields give way to arid rangeland, and the flat terrain transitions into rolling hills and spectacular upland valleys. Further west, the land becomes yet more rugged and wild, until finally reaching the summit of Snow Mountain in a wilderness area some 7,000 feet above the valley floor.

Table LU-1: Countywide Existing Land Use Summary

	<u>Acres</u>
Communities ¹	2,500
Rural Subdivisions ²	1,200
Orchards and Vineyards	38,200
Cropland ³	358,000
Undeveloped Bottomlands	9,300
Undeveloped Rangeland ⁴	244,800
National Wildlife Refuges	12,000
National Forest	<u>72,000</u>
T O T A L	738,000

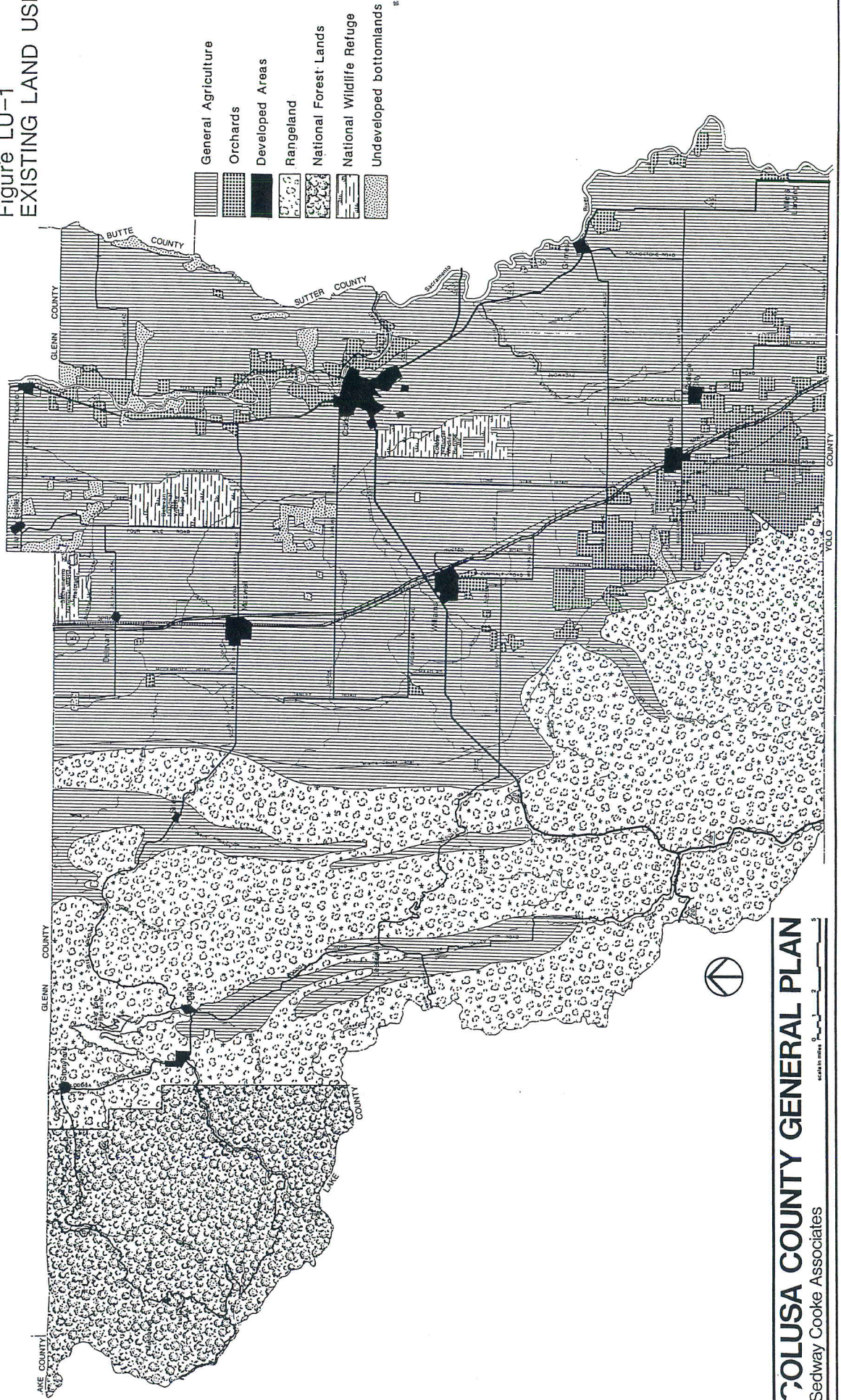
¹Includes vacant lots within developed area.

²Includes vacant lots within Century Ranch and East Park Lake View Areas.

³Total for cropland is greater than total reported by Agricultural Commissioner because non-productive cropland is included in this total.

⁴Includes Bureau of Land Management and watershed lands.

Figure LU-1
EXISTING LAND USE



Development patterns reflect the county's long-time reliance on agriculture and its ties to the river and railroad for shipping agricultural goods. The first towns to develop in the county--Colusa, Grimes, and Princeton--were loading points for barges carrying wheat down-river and overnight stops for stages making their way along the river road. Twenty years later, the next group of towns developed as the Northern Railway made its way up the valley from Sacramento. Meanwhile, in the foothills and mountains, several shortlived settlements thrived around mines and hot spring resorts in the late 1800s and early 1900s. By virtue of its designation as county seat, Colusa emerged early on as the largest city in the county.

CITIES AND TOWNS

The county's two incorporated cities--Colusa and Williams--encompass about 1,300 acres. Adjoining these cities in the unincorporated area are another 500 acres of developed acreage. The largest unincorporated town and third largest community in the county, Arbuckle, is almost as large as Williams. There are five other unincorporated communities in Colusa County, each originally laid out with narrow rectangular lots along a grid of right-angled streets. Maxwell is the largest of these communities, followed by Princeton, Grimes, Stonyford, and College City. Together, the six unincorporated towns cover 700 acres, bringing the total area in "urban" uses to about 2,500 acres. This is less than 1/2 of one percent of the county's land area. The "railroad" towns (Arbuckle, Williams, and Maxwell) and the "river" towns (Grimes, Colusa, and Princeton) cover roughly equal-sized areas.

Each of these eight communities is discussed in more detail in the following chapter.

RURAL SETTLEMENTS

The eight communities described above contain 75 percent of Colusa County's population. The remaining 3,800 people live on isolated rural homesites, in small settlements with permanent populations of under 100 people, and on roughly 600 farms. Some of the rural homesites are located on pockets of private land within the boundaries of the Mendocino National Forest. Others are scattered in the almond orchards southwest of Arbuckle, while still others are in the Century Ranch and East Park Lake View Acres rural subdivisions near Stonyford.

The small settlements include Sites, Delevan, Leesville, Sycamore, Lambertsville-Clarksville, Lodoga, and Millers Landing. Some of these communities were once considerably larger than they are today. With the growth of "agri-business", the decline of the railroad, and the tremendous savings in travel time brought on by the automobile, the smaller farm towns have not been able to keep pace with the larger communities. For example, Sites was initially developed to serve a nearby stone quarry and was the terminus of a rail line from Colusa from 1886 to 1916. The railroad was never completed to Clear Lake as planned, and the hotel and school in Sites were eventually abandoned. Today, the town has about ten homes, a general store, and a town park. Similarly, Delevan now consists of a rice dryer and grain warehouse and less than a dozen homes. Leesville was once a stage stop on the steep road between Williams and the resorts of western Colusa County. The Leesville Hotel, built in 1878 and now a private residence, is all that remains of the town.

Lambertsville was established as a duck hunting club and most of its 85 bungalows and trailers are occupied on a seasonal basis only. The dozen homes in adjoining **Clarksville**, also a duck hunting center, are occupied on a more permanent basis. **Lodoga** was initially developed as a strip of vacation cabins along the banks of Indian Creek. **Sycamore** was one of the county's first settlements but today is little more than a crossroads midway between Grimes and Colusa. **Millers Landing** consists of about a half dozen homes and a grain dryer along the river.

FARMS AND RANCHES

Stretching across the floor of the Sacramento Valley and into the foothills beyond are some 600 farms and ranches. Cropland occupies about 235,000 acres, or about one-third of the county's total land area. Nearly all of the cultivated agriculture is located in the Sacramento Valley, but some farming also takes place in the upland Indian, Antelope, and Bear Valleys. Ranches occupy about 200,000 acres, just over one-quarter of the county's land area. Agricultural land use patterns are documented in Tables LU-2 and LU-3.

* Rice is by far the dominant crop in Colusa County, covering 110,000 acres. The crop grows especially well in the poorly drained alkali soils of the Colusa Basin. In 1985, rice represented about 50 percent of the crop acreage and 42 percent of the agricultural income in Colusa County. In fact, more than one in every 7 acres in Colusa County is planted in rice. Wheat ranks a distant second in acreage planted, with about 21,000 acres. Most wheat is grown on the higher parts of the Sacramento Valley and in the dry upland valleys. Other dominant field crops include tomatoes, corn, sugar beets, dry beans, alfalfa, and safflower. Vine crops are also an important agricultural commodity.

Fruit and nut orchards occupy over 26,000 acres in the county and represent 10 percent of the agricultural income. Almonds cover the largest area, with 16,000 acres. About 95 percent of the almond crop is grown south and southwest of Arbuckle. Prunes and walnuts are grown along the Sacramento River and in limited areas near Williams and Arbuckle. With the additional water supply provided to the western edge of the valley by the new Tehama-Colusa Canal, additional acreage is likely to be planted in orchards in the future.

Livestock is the greatest consumer of the county's land resources, but represents just under 5 percent of the county's agricultural income. Most of the livestock is raised in the foothill and mountain areas. Milk and apiary products, also centered in the West County area, represent about 1 percent of the agricultural income.

The average farm size in 1978 was 748 acres. This figure is a bit misleading, since it includes very large acreage ranches in the hills. Table LU-4 indicates that 70 percent of the farms were actually smaller than 500 acres. Only 8 percent, or about 50 farms, contained more than 2,000 acres. This figure includes cattle and sheep ranches some of which are larger than 10,000 acres. At the other end of the spectrum, there are about 175 farms smaller than 50 acres. Most are orchards and are located southwest of Arbuckle and along the river. In 1978, over 90 percent of the county's farms were operated by families or partnerships.

Table LU-2: Agricultural Production Trends

	<u>1976</u>	<u>1985</u>	<u>Percent Change</u>
Field Crops - acres	245,665	194,020	-21
o Alfalfa	3,440	6,400	+86
o Barley	18,600	2,100	-89
o Beans, dry	9,375	8,600	-8
o Beets, sugar	12,800	8,800	-31
o Corn	16,000	10,500	-34
o Grain hay	1,200	2,250	+87
o Irrig.Pasture	12,000	3,000	-75
o Rice	108,000	110,000	+2
o Safflower	8,100	5,750	-29
o Sorghum	9,150	2,900	-68
o Sunflowers	0	620	--
o Tomatoes	8,000	12,100	+51
o Wheat	39,000	21,000	-46
Orchard Crops - acres	22,150	26,400	+19
o Almonds	13,600	16,000	+18
o Prunes	4,900	4,600	-6
o Walnuts	3,650	5,800	+59
Seed Crops - acres	6,145	13,285	+116
o Vine Crops	6,145	13,205	+114
o Onions	0	80	--
Range	200,000	200,000	0
Milk Production - Cwt produced			
o Market	56,600	63,000	+11
o Mfg	6,300	2,000	-68
Livestock-Head Produced			
o Cattle	10,500	20,100	+91
o Sheep	9,900	11,800	+19
o Hogs	500	0	--
Bees - numbers			
o Packages	12,200	8,600	-30
o Queens	4,500	22,200	+393
o Pollinizers	8,270	26,500	+320

Source: Colusa County Agricultural Commissioner reports

Table LU-3: Range of Farm Sizes

<u>Size Range</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>% of County Total</u>
Less than 10 acres	39	6
10 to 49 acres	135	21
50 to 179 acres	138	21
180 to 499 acres	147	23
500 to 999 acres	69	11
1,000 to 1,999 acres	68	10
2,000 acres or more	49	8

Average Farm Size: 748 acres

Source: U.S. Census of Agriculture, 1978

* * * * *

Table LU-4: Leading Agricultural Commodities - 1985

<u>Crop</u>	<u>Dollars</u>	<u>% of Total</u>
* 1. Rice	\$58,994,000	42
2. Tomatoes	\$17,725,000	12
3. Vine Crop Seed	\$12,531,000	9
4. Sugar Beets	\$6,618,000	5
5. Wheat	\$5,968,000	4
6. Almonds	\$5,760,000	4
7. Cattle	\$5,395,000	4
8. Dry Beans	\$4,025,000	3
9. Field Corn	\$3,748,000	3
10. Walnuts	\$3,654,000	3
Total Top Ten	\$124,518,500	88

Source: Colusa County Agricultural Commissioner

There are several non-farm uses that are widely dispersed across the valley. Grain drying and storage facilities are located at several points along existing and abandoned railroad lines. A golf course lies 4 miles west of Arbuckle, an "Indian Bingo" parlor lies between Colusa and Princeton, landfills lie south of Maxwell and Stonyford and on Hahn Road, and duck hunting clubs are located adjacent to some of the rice fields and wildlife refuges. There are also a number of electric power lines that traverse the valley floor and the upland areas, and numerous gas wells on widely dispersed small plots of land in the valley.

UNDEVELOPED AREAS

About 45 percent of the county consists of forested rangeland, National Wildlife Refuges, and Mendocino National Forest lands. Much of the rangeland is owned by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) or the Bureau of Reclamation. BLM Resource Management Lands are concentrated along the Lake County border, on the Cortina Ridge, and on the chaparral-covered hills between Lodoga and the Antelope Valley. The western part of the county once contained several hot spring resorts and small mining towns, but only Wilbur Springs remains today. Southwest of the springs, a number of mines are still active.

The Colusa, Delevan, and Sacramento National Wildlife Refuges cover about 12,000 acres of the low-lying Colusa Basin and provide a haven for wildfowl in the Sacramento Valley Flyway. The Colusa County portion of the Mendocino National Forest covers over 70,000 acres, or about 10 percent of the county's total land area. Developed uses in the forest include the Fouts Springs Boys Camp and recreational facilities at Letts Lake. Use of the National Wildlife and Forest lands are more thoroughly discussed in the Conservation and Open Space Elements of this plan.

FUTURE LAND USE PLAN

LAND USE CONCEPT

How Was The Plan Developed

The countywide land use plan has been based on seven considerations:

- (1) An analysis of existing land use patterns and committed developments.
- (2) A list of goals and objectives for the future prepared by the 56-member General Plan Committee.
- (3) Community input provided at a series of town meetings, written comments on preliminary land use plans, and comments made at Planning Commission adoption hearings.
- (4) An analysis of opportunities and constraints to development in each town, including natural factors (soils, flooding, etc.) and man-made factors (sewer, water, schools, etc.).
- (5) Population, employment, and housing projections for the county which indicate how much land is actually needed to support future development.

- (6) Recently adopted studies for specific areas, namely 14th Street near Colusa, the Williams and Colusa spheres of influence, the Interstate 5 Corridor, and Stonyford-Lodoga.
- (7) The availability of water in each community and in the county as a whole.

The overall concept for future growth was developed by looking at three alternative land use plans. All alternatives assumed the same level of population and employment growth between now and the year 2010, but the growth was distributed differently in each. The first alternative, **Colusa Growth Center**, would have resulted in public policies that channeled more than half of the county's future growth into Colusa. The second alternative, **I-5 Growth Corridor**, proposed policies which would focus growth heavily around Williams, Maxwell, and Arbuckle. Under this alternative, Williams and Colusa would be roughly equal-sized cities by the year 2010. The third alternative, **Dispersed Growth Centers**, would have resulted in more lenient policies about rural residential development and would have promoted growth in small towns like Princeton and Grimes. The **I-5 Alternative** was ultimately selected.

Each of the five General Plan subcommittees met independently to evaluate the alternatives and to consider which one best matched their vision of Colusa County in the year 2010. Support for the I-5 Alternative was based on the belief that it provided the most logical sites for business and industry and directed growth into those communities that were physically able to accommodate more people and jobs. Transportation and access were the most frequently stated reasons for channeling growth into the I-5 Corridor. There was also a recognition that public services in Maxwell and Williams had more capacity remaining than Colusa, as well less severe drainage problems and flood hazards.

Once the overall distribution of growth was determined, small area plans were developed for the eight communities mentioned above. In Colusa and Williams, the area plans looked primarily at the unincorporated areas. In each town, the most logical areas for growth were determined by considering community preferences and land capability. The general goal of protecting and preserving agriculture resulted in land use plans showing compact communities and very little new development outside city and utility district spheres of influence.

Growth Targets

Countywide. The General Plan uses a county population target of 23,500 for the year 2010. This represents about 8,500 people more than the 1987 population, and assumes that population will increase during the next 23 years at about the same rate that it did between 1980 and 1987. The projected growth rate is much faster than the rate of the 1970s, when the county had a net increase of only 36 people per year.

The projections assume that housing production will average between 120 and 150 units per year, comparable to the growth of the last five years, but more than double the housing growth rate of the 1970s. It is also assumed that job growth will occur at more than twice the rate of the early and mid-1980s, especially in the non-agricultural sectors. If the labor force participation rate (the percentage of county residents working or looking for work) remains the same for the next 23 years, about 110 new jobs will be created each year. This is still not as fast as the job growth rate of the 1970s.

The growth in jobs will probably be accompanied in a shift in employment composition. The number of persons employed directly in farming has dropped steadily over

the last two decades and will continue to do so in the future. Manufacturing jobs are likely to increase. Since most of these jobs will be in agricultural processing and distribution, the base of the county's economy will still be driven by agriculture. Even the new retail and service jobs created to serve the larger population will be indirectly dependent on agriculture.

Distribution of Growth. Associated with each of the three alternative plans evaluated by the General Plan Committee were different assumptions about where growth within Colusa County would occur between now and the year 2010. Based on the preferred alternative, the following population projections were used as the basis for the county plan:

Table LU-5: Population Projections

	<u>1987</u>	<u>2010</u>	<u>Total Change</u>	<u>Percent Change</u>
Colusa (including Sphere)	5,600	7,600	2,000	36 %
Williams (including Sphere)	2,000	5,400	3,400	170 %
Arbuckle	1,700	3,200	1,500	88 %
Maxwell	850	1,900	1,050	123 %
Princeton	300	400	100	33 %
Grimes	300	400	100	33 %
College City	150	200	50	33 %
Stonyford-Lodoga	800	1,000	200	25 %
Rural farm areas	3,100	3,400	300	10 %
TOTAL	14,800	23,500	8,700	58 %

The three communities in the I-5 Corridor are projected to capture 68 percent of the county's population growth between now and the year 2010. By contrast, these communities captured only 40 percent of the county's growth during the period 1970-1987. The assumption is that the county's efforts to encourage job growth in the I-5 Corridor will cause housing demand to shift west from Colusa towards Williams, Arbuckle, and Maxwell.

Plan Concept

Protection of Agriculture. The fundamental idea behind the land use plan is that Colusa County's growth should be concentrated in existing communities and not left to "leapfrog" into viable agricultural areas. The plan promotes the development of the vacant gaps within each town before allowing growth to encroach into farm areas. Once communities are fully developed, this Element's policies stress that growth should take place in an orderly manner, generally adjacent to existing urban areas. Large freestanding developments or scattered rural subdivisions should be prohibited. The plan also designates land in such a way that minimizes conflicts between different uses--be they agricultural and urban, or residential and industrial.

At the heart of the plan is the goal of preserving and enhancing agriculture. Colusa County farmland is an irreplaceable natural resource, as important to California as oil, natural gas, gold, or any other of the state's limited resources. Farming is more than the basis of the county's economy, it is central to its heritage and lifestyle. Agriculture directly employs 36 percent of the county's workforce and provides jobs

for many more persons who provide goods and services to the farm community. Were agriculture to decline or disappear due to a loss of the resource base, economic hardship would be experienced by most all county residents.

Growth Areas. At the same time, the land use plan provides room for growth. It is universally acknowledged by members of the General Plan Committee that change is inevitable in Colusa County. The county lies just an hour's drive from some of the state's fastest growing urban centers. Land and homes are inexpensive, the scenery is attractive, traffic is light, and the communities are pleasant. Although many are apprehensive about the side-effects of growth, there is a shared belief that if development is properly managed, the quality of life now enjoyed by county residents can be preserved or even enhanced.

There is a strong desire to diversify the local economic base and bring new, year-round jobs to Colusa County. There is a desire to provide new housing for a wide range of income groups. There is widespread support for efforts to promote downtown retailing and tourism in the county's communities. All of these goals imply that some level of growth and change are viewed as desirable and necessary in the county. The driving goal of the Land Use Element is to accommodate growth without diminishing the county's rural character or reducing the viability of its farms and ranches.

The year 2010 Plan envisions four population centers in the county, organized along the north-south axis of Interstate 5 and the east-west axis of Highway 20. These two transportation routes form the backbone of the county, much as the river did in the 1850s and the railroad did in the late 1800s. Colusa will remain the largest city and "hub" of the county, and retain its prominence as the center of county government, health care, human services, shopping, and entertainment. Williams will remain the county's second largest city, but the gap between its population and Colusa's will become much narrower as the years go by. By the year 2010, Williams is projected to have about as many people as Colusa does now.

Arbuckle and Maxwell are projected to remain the county's third and fourth largest communities, although their size relative to Colusa will increase. Each town is expected to approximately double in population. Areas for new industry are planned close to the interstate in both communities, and new residential areas are planned on the western edge of each town. The freeway interchanges in Arbuckle and Maxwell are envisioned as highway-oriented commercial areas, offering food, lodging, gas, and other services to both local and interstate travelers.

By virtue of the city's location at the crossroads of I-5 and Highway 20, Williams is projected to be the fastest growing community in the county over the next 20 years. The city is expected to more than double in population and will probably triple in land area. As in Arbuckle and Maxwell, the area along Interstate 5 is planned for industrial development, residential areas are planned south and west of the city, and commercial areas are planned around the freeway interchanges.

It is important that Williams and Colusa remain separate communities as they grow larger. Strip development along Highway 20 between the two cities should be prohibited, and the open space that separates Williams and Colusa should be retained. Areas of open space should also be retained between the communities in the I-5 Corridor. Although the preferred plan concentrates growth in the freeway corridor, the intent is not to create a linear city that merges Arbuckle, Williams, and Maxwell. Growth is to be concentrated close to the existing communities. At least 6

miles of farmland will separate Maxwell and Williams, while at least 8 miles of farmland will separate Williams and Arbuckle.

The four population centers--Arbuckle, Colusa, Maxwell, and Williams--presently contain 68 percent of the county's population. By the year 2010, they will contain 77 percent of the county's population. About 90 percent of the county's population growth over the next two decades is projected to occur in these four communities. The land use plans reinforce these projections by designating land in these towns for new development, and strictly limiting the supply of developable land elsewhere.

*1-5 Corridor Development. A notable characteristic of the land use plan is its concentration of industrial development in the narrow area between Old Highway 99 and Interstate 5. When the Interstate was constructed parallel to the highway, a substantial amount of land was left isolated between the two roadways. Farming this strip of land has become difficult for two reasons. First, because agricultural burning creates thick clouds of blowing smoke, it is virtually impossible to grow rice and burn hulls there without obscuring visibility on the Interstate. Much of the soil is poorly suited for other crops, and cannot be easily replanted. Second, because the strip of land is narrow and is bounded by power lines and the freeway, aerial spraying is impractical. This further constrains the feasibility of farming.

At the same time, much of the acreage between the Interstate and Old Highway 99 has qualities that are very attractive for development. The land is flat, clearly visible from the Interstate, and in many cases directly accessible to an interchange. On many sites the soil is alkali and only marginally productive. The Southern Pacific Railroad traverses most of the properties, providing a direct rail link to Sacramento and the Pacific Northwest. Moreover, Sacramento is just an hour away by truck.

The land use plan designates a number of these areas for future industrial use. Such areas are located adjacent to Williams, Maxwell, Delevan, and Arbuckle, at the Hahn Road and County Line Road freeway interchanges, and at the locations where Meyers Road and Harrington Road reach the Interstate. Each of these areas is envisioned as a "node" where future industry should be concentrated. The nodes that are located between the four communities may remain in agriculture for the next 20 years. When their development does occur, it is envisioned that agriculturally-related industry will be the primary use.

Rural Valley Areas. Beyond the industrial areas and four population centers, Colusa County in the year 2010 will look much as it does today. Some growth is planned in the communities of Grimes and Princeton, all within the existing service district boundaries. College City is to remain the same, although some new housing may be built on existing vacant lots in the original townsite and agricultural industry will be encouraged east of town. Delevan and Sites are to remain small rural service centers. New rural residential development on the valley floor is to be prohibited, except in those areas where past development or parcelization has already precluded the use of the land for agriculture.

Upland Areas. Growth in the western third of the county is to be limited to a handful of areas between Stonyford and Lodoga. The Land Use Plan incorporates the recommendations of a 1983 planning study for this area which places strict limitations on land subdivision. Further subdivision and lot splitting outside the Stonyford Water District is subject to slope regulations, minimum lot size requirements between 10 and 80 acres, and proof of water availability. Outside of Stonyford, Lodoga, Century Ranch, and East Park Lake View Acres, most land in the Indian Valley

will remain in farming or ranching. 10-Acre homesites are permitted in several areas, subject to water availability.

Other upland valleys are to remain in agriculture. Because of the limited availability of water, dryland farming and grazing will continue to be the primary uses in the Bear and Antelope Valleys. Rangeland and hillside areas are to remain undeveloped, although mineral extraction will be permitted subject to environmental study. Eventual rezoning of most upland areas to increase the 80-acre minimum parcel size is recommended. The present zoning would allow large ranches to be subdivided into scores of 80-acre parcels, each of which could support a single family dwelling. Such development would have a detrimental effect on transportation and community services and would increase the population of an area subject to severe fire and erosion hazards. Where subdivision of large ranches does occur, it is imperative that the primary use of the land remain farming, grazing, or open space.

Plan Map. The future land use plan is shown in generalized form in Figure LU-2. Table LU-6 presents the acreages in each land use category shown. The plan designates 419,000 acres for general agriculture, 183,000 acres for upland agriculture or rangeland, and 114,000 acres for resource conservation. To support the level of population and employment growth projected, about 13,700 acres are designated for "urban" and "rural residential" uses. This includes 3,700 acres of land that are already developed and 10,000 acres of vacant land. Total developable acreage in the plan still represents less than 1.4 percent of the county's land area.

Implementing the Plan. It should be emphasized that simply designating land for development on a map does not mean that development will actually occur. Williams will not grow faster than Colusa simply because the land use plan shows more land for housing there. The cities and county must take actions over the next two decades to encourage a development pattern that conforms to the land use plan. The zoning ordinance will need to be revised and the zoning map will need to be updated. Plans for expanded water and wastewater treatment facilities will be needed in the county's four largest communities. New roads, schools, parks, and local services must be provided.

By controlling where public investments are made, the cities and county can cause development to follow the direction outlined in this plan. It is also important that the county's economic development program target those communities identified in the General Plan as growth centers. In each town, the Land Use Plan establishes a direct relationship between the amount of land designated for development and the year 2010 population projection for that town.

In all cases the amount of land shown for future development exceeds the amount of growth projected for each community. The surplus is created to give the real estate industry some flexibility and to recognize that all landowners with property bearing an "urban" designation do not intend to sell or develop their properties in the next 20 or 25 years. Some of the land designated as "urban" is likely to remain in agriculture throughout the planning period.

Table LU-6: Land Use Plan Acreage Summary Countywide¹

<u>Land Use</u>	Acres Designated in Plan
Resource Conservation	114,200
Agriculture - Upland	183,100
Agriculture - General ²	419,100
Upland - Transition	4,200
Non-Urban Industrial (outside CPAs)	1,500
Rural Residential (outside CPAs)	1,400
Rural Service Center	100
Community Planning Areas (CPAs)	<u>14,400</u>
T O T A L	738,000

¹Additional Industrial and Rural Residential acreage is designated within the Community Planning Areas.

²Includes Designated Floodway areas.

This is especially true with industrial land in Colusa and the I-5 corridor. The area shown for future industry in these locations is much larger than the amount needed to meet future job growth according to the employment projections. A wide range of areas suited for industry have been selected so that companies have a greater number of choices when relocating or establishing in Colusa County.

How To Use The Land Use Plan

The county and community land use plans are not intended to be parcel-specific. The land use designations are general and should not be viewed as precise determinations for the use of property. As stated in the Introduction, the general plan map should not be confused with a zoning map. Zoning maps are parcel specific and zoning ordinances set forth specific standards for how land may currently be used. While the zoning map and general plan map must be consistent, their intent is different. Each general plan category permits a range of land uses and a range of residential densities. The plan is long-range and future-oriented. On the other hand, zoning decisions are made on a parcel-by-parcel basis and serve as the method of carrying out the policies of the general plan. The zoning map focuses on the immediate use of the land rather than its ultimate use. Upon adoption of this general plan, the county will begin the task of revising its zoning ordinance to ensure that it reflects new land use policies.

LAND USE CATEGORIES

The nine land use categories shown on the countywide plan map are described below. Additional land use categories are presented in the following chapter to describe different uses within Community Plan Areas (CPA) The land use plan depicts eight CPAs totaling about 14,000 acres. Each of these areas is covered by a more detailed plan map in the next chapter.

Agricultural Uses

Agriculture-General (A-G). Land carrying this designation is generally used for orchard and crop production. Residences in these areas are related to agricultural operations. Countywide, residential densities in A-G areas average one family per 100-400 acres. However, densities are considerably higher in the orchard areas near Arbuckle and Williams and along the Sacramento River. Secondary uses in A-G areas include oil and gas drilling, non-intensive recreation, agricultural industry (processing), and agricultural support uses, provided that these uses do not interfere with the viability of agriculture or create environmental hazards.

The A-G areas are presently zoned "Exclusive Agriculture" and are subject to a 10-acre minimum lot size requirement. The lot size requirement alone is not enough to prevent the conversion of A-G land from farming to very low density residential uses. For instance, 10-acre country homesites are highly marketable in Colusa County, particularly in the orchard areas where foliage is dense. In addition to the minimum lot size requirement, it is imperative that the zoning ordinance specifies agriculture as the primary use of these properties. Subdivision of farms into 10-acre non-agricultural parcels should be strictly prohibited.

In some A-G areas, it may be appropriate to raise the minimum parcel size requirement from 10 acres to 20 or 40 acres. Table LU-7 provides guidelines for rezoning based on the type of agricultural commodity raised. The table identifies the minimum acreage on which a particular type of farming operation is feasible, both for full-time operations and part-time operations. The figures are intended for general guidance only. They demonstrate the importance of maintaining parcels of at least 30 acres to ensure that land continues to be used for agriculture.

The A-G designation has been applied to 419,000 acres in Colusa County, encompassing most of the Sacramento Valley floor as well as the Indian, Bear and Antelope Valleys.

Table LU-7: Typical Acreage Requirements for Farm Operations

Primary Use	Acres Needed:	Acres Needed:
	Full-Time Operators	Part-Time Operators
Field Crops	50-100	10-15
Fruits and Nuts	30- 40	10-15
Apiary	80-100	10-15
Irrigated Pasture	100-200	10-15
Nursery Stock	30- 40	10-15
Vine Seed	50-100	10-15
Vegetables (Tomatoes)	50-100	10-15
Grazing	400-600	40-80

Note: Table is illustrative only and has no regulatory intent.

Agriculture-Upland (A-U). These lands are used for cattle and sheep grazing, and are intermixed with undeveloped, uninhabited forests, chaparral and grasslands. Soils are generally fair to poor and are not conducive to crop production. Residential densities presently average less than one family per 1,000 acres, although the homes are generally clustered along the few roads that traverse the upland areas. Natural constraints--especially wildfire, steep slopes , and the lack of water--make these areas poorly suited for more intensive development.

Land divisions for non-agricultural purposes should be discouraged in these areas to prevent conflicts with ranching and to minimize exposure to natural hazards. New parcels smaller than 80 acres should be prohibited. In some locations, it may be appropriate to raise the minimum lot size to 160 acres. Secondary uses in A-U areas include forestry, mining, and non-intensive recreation. Large-scale subdivision of ranchland into 80-acre parcels should be discouraged; where such development has already been approved, the primary use of the land should remain agriculture.

The A-U designation has been applied to 183,000 acres in Colusa County, encompassing most of the Coast Range foothills.

Upland-Transition (U-T). This designation is used to identify a limited number of areas near Stonyford and Lodoga. These areas are zoned UC-10 (Upland Conservation, 10-acre minimum) and are to be used primarily for ranching and grazing pur-

poses. Because U-T areas lie along the roads traversing the Indian Valley and occupy picturesque surroundings, there is some demand for these areas as large-lot homesites. If access is sufficient, water is available, and the parcels meet the county's slope-density requirements, very low density residences (one unit per 10 acres) are an acceptable use. The intent of the U-T designation is to create a transitional zone between rural-residential areas such as Century Ranch and Stonyford and the very large acreage ranches and wilderness areas. There are 4,700 acres in the county designated for this purpose.

Agriculture-Transition (A-T). This designation is defined in the next chapter. It has only been applied within the Community Plan Areas.

Conservation Uses

Resource Conservation (RC). The RC designation is applied to forests and forested rangelands under federal ownership, to watershed lands requiring management and protection, and to the National Wildlife Refuges. For the area within the National Forest boundary, this land use category complies with the 1986 Land and Resource Management Plan for the forest. Only a small portion of this land has been determined to be suitable for timber harvesting. Other areas are to be used for recreation, chaparral management, wildlife habitat, and wilderness. There are several privately owned parcels within the forest. In addition to forestry, acceptable uses on the private parcels include grazing, mining, non-intensive recreation and very low density residential uses. None of these uses should be permitted unless they are found to be compatible with surrounding uses and consistent with the resource protection objectives stated in the U.S. Forest Service Plan.

Also included as Resource Conservation Areas are the Colusa, Delevan, and Sacramento National Wildlife Refuges. Future use of these areas should follow federal wildlife preserve guidelines. About 20,000 acres owned by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) and 6,000 acres owned by the Bureau of Reclamation also are designated RC. Most of these areas are managed for watershed protection, plant and wildlife protection, and natural resource conservation. As in the National Forest, acceptable uses on this land include grazing, non-intensive recreation, and mining. All of these uses would be subject to a review of their environmental impact and compatibility with surrounding natural areas.

Designated Floodway (DF). Lands with this classification have been designated as floodways by the State Reclamation Board. Areas between the Sacramento River and the levees are included, as well as the Colusa Bypass between the Sacramento River and Butte Creek.

*Communities

Community Planning Areas (CPA). As described above, the plan designates 8 CPAs around Arbuckle, College City, Colusa, Grimes, Maxwell, Princeton, Stonyford, and Williams. Each of these areas contains a combination of residential, commercial, industrial, public, and agricultural land uses. Each CPA contains land that is already developed, land that will be available for development during the next two decades, and land that will remain agricultural during the next two decades.

Rural Service Centers (RSC). The plan designates rural service centers at Sites, Delevan, and Lodoga. These areas are very small, predominantly residential settlements. Growth potential in these areas is severely limited by the lack of urban services. However, all three communities contain a large number of existing vacant lots that are potentially buildable. Additional lot splitting in these areas is strongly discouraged. Commercial and residential uses are acceptable within RSC areas, provided such uses conform to the revised zoning map for each community.

Industrial (I). This category is defined in the next chapter. It is applied primarily to lands within the Community Plan Areas (CPAs) but appears at several locations along Interstate 5 outside the CPAs.

Rural Residential (RR). This category is defined in the next chapter. It is applied exclusively within Community Plan Areas with two exceptions: Century Ranch-East Park Lake View Acres and the area adjacent to the Arbuckle Golf Course.

LAND USE POLICIES

The following pages present general development policies and policies for various land uses in Colusa County. More geographically-specific policies are presented in the Community Plan Element.

General Development Policies

- LU-1 ✓ Colusa County should, through its land use regulations, ensure a supply of developable land sufficient to meet projected growth over the planning period.
- LU-2 ✓ Future development in Colusa County should be concentrated in the communities of Arbuckle, College City, Colusa, Grimes, Maxwell, Princeton, Stonyford, and Williams.
- LU-3 ✓ Future land use decisions should promote compact communities, generally filling in gaps of vacant land between already developed areas before growing outward. Development outside of current city and utility district spheres of influence should be strongly discouraged until the land is annexed to the sphere.
- LU-4 ✓ Agriculture and resource management should be the primary land uses outside of the designated communities. Freestanding subdivisions isolated from existing communities and lacking urban services should be prohibited.
- LU-5 The proposed development pattern should recognize non-urban areas which have already experienced some development; such as Century Ranch. Within these areas, service districts should be created or activated to provide services appropriate for their density.
- LU-6 Unless the development will adversely affect town character, higher-density uses should be promoted on vacant lots within existing communities. This will conserve open space outside the community, permit more efficient use of public services, and reinforce the idea that the towns are the center of activity in the county.

- LU-7 The proposed development pattern should protect the scenic values of Colusa County. More restrictive design standards should be developed within the communities to encourage visually attractive development and lessen the visual impact of existing non-conforming uses.
- LU-8 The location of lands designated for future development should be principally determined by natural features, such as soil, slope, and drainage, and by public service availability, such as sewer and water capability.
- LU-9 The proposed development pattern should protect the integrity of agriculture and shall not in any way create a hardship for the county's farmers. Lands presently in agricultural uses that do not adjoin existing communities should be protected through the county's land use regulations. In addition, the CEQA Initial Study checklist should consider the potential impact of proposed development on existing and adjoining agricultural operations and on water supply.
- LU-10 The historic character of Colusa County's towns should be protected. Future "infill" development should respect the architectural style, scale, and qualities of the existing community.
- LU-11 The downtown cores of existing communities should be promoted as the social centers of the communities. To the extent possible, new public facilities such as libraries, post offices, and community centers, should be located in the downtown core.
- LU-12 Potential conflicts between airports or landing strips and surrounding land uses shall be avoided by closely regulating future development in take off and approach zones.
- LU-13 The community land use plans should be used as the basis for public service planning, including schools, libraries, parks, water, sewer, drainage, police, and fire protection.
- LU-14 Appropriate sites for recreational uses should be provided in Colusa County, as long as the activities are compatible with the environment and surrounding uses. Local recreational facilities in unincorporated areas should be paid for by service districts or by developer fees.
- LU-15 The County General Plan shall incorporate all policies and land use plans for the Stonyford-Lodoga area contained in the Area Plan of December, 1983, and the policies and land use plans for the Interstate 5 Corridor study contained in that approved plan of 1985.

Conservation Area Policies

- LU-16 Rough, forested, or mountainous areas where access and services are minimal and good conservation practices are essential should be designated for resource conservation.

- LU-17 Multiple uses (grazing, forestry, and recreation) should be allowed on conservation lands so long as environmental resources are protected.
- LU-18 Public lands in the National Forest and Wildlife Refuges should be protected from encroachment by activities on adjacent lands that could damage environmental quality. Agriculture, in kind, should be protected from encroachment by activities on adjacent National Forest and Wildlife Refuge lands.
- LU-19 A hillside combining zone should be applied as an additional means of determining the minimum allowable lot size in the upland parts of the county. The zone should consider topography, geology, soils, vegetation, wildlife, water supply, recharge and movement of groundwater, septic tank limitations, fire hazards, access, and circulation.

Agricultural Area Policies

- LU-20 Lands designated for General or Upland Agriculture should continue to be used for agriculture for at least the duration of the planning period (1987-2010). Such period may be extended by future revisions of the plan.
- LU-21 The site planning, design, and construction of on-site and off-site improvements for urban development near agricultural areas should avoid adverse impacts on facilities used to supply water to agricultural operations. Where agricultural and proposed urban uses are competing for the same water supply, priority should generally be given to agriculture.
- LU-22 Rural-residential development should not be permitted in areas designated for General Agriculture.
- LU-23 Freestanding industries in agricultural areas shall be limited to those necessary to produce, process, and distribute agricultural commodities.
- LU-24 Low-intensity recreational uses may be permitted in agricultural areas as long as these uses do not interfere with the principal use of the land for agricultural purposes. Examples of low-intensity recreational uses include hunting, fishing, target shooting, riding, hiking, boating, and the exhibition of working farms or ranches.
- LU-25 Exploration and extraction of oil, gas, and other mineral resources should be conducted in such a way that conflicts with agricultural uses are minimized and permanent interference with agricultural operations is avoided, and in a way that is consistent with the land use compatibility requirements of the Williamson Act, for those lands that are now under contract.
- LU-26 Residential uses accessory to agriculture may be permitted in agricultural areas provided such housing is limited to family members or farm labor housing. Modifications to the county zoning ordinance should be undertaken to specify the number of dwelling units that may be constructed per full-time and part-time farm operation. Family member or farm labor residences should be located in the same immediate vicinity as the existing residence, if this is practical and environmentally sound.

Family member residences accessory to full-time operations should not be located on separate legal lots created for this purpose.

- LU-27 Farm labor housing which includes both annual and seasonal employees should be permitted in quantities appropriate to the type of agricultural operation and should not be located on separate legal lots created for this purpose. Proposals to construct farm labor housing shall require a use permit.
- LU-28 Preservation of agricultural land under the Williamson Act should be an option available to all those who qualify.
- LU-29 The county should work with property owners of small-lot "paper" subdivisions or partially developed townsites in agricultural areas to merge lots to meet minimum parcel standards.
- LU-30 The impacts of State environmental legislation on farming and future industry in Colusa County should be studied to determine options for apportioning the cost of water quality improvements and waste disposal.

Residential Land Use Policies

- LU-31 Sufficient vacant areas should be designated for residential development to meet the housing demand that can reasonably be expected from new local industry. To the extent possible, areas of future residential development should be located proportionally to those areas where future jobs are expected. This recommendation is made to reduce commute times and encourage a balance between new jobs and new housing in each community. Areas designated for future residential growth should include sufficient land for the dedication of school and park sites.
- LU-32 The following guidelines should be used when evaluating proposed residential development:

Rural Residential: Areas designated "rural residential" should not be developed until the following requirements are met:

- o the soil is determined to be suitable for septic tank use by the Environmental Health Department
- o groundwater is determined to be sufficient to support a well by the Environmental Health Department
- o the parcel can be made accessible from a public street
- o it can be demonstrated that the development will not have a detrimental effect on adjoining properties
- o the area is accessible for fire protection and can meet fire resistance guidelines if located in a high hazard area.

Urban Residential: Areas designated "urban residential" should not be developed until the following requirements are met:

- o the community utility systems, including water, drainage, and sewer, if available, can accommodate the added demand
- o the area has access to a major transportation route

- o the impact of the development on local streets can be mitigated
 - o adequate fire protection measures are provided
- LU-33 Clustering of housing and planned unit developments within communities should be encouraged so that larger areas of open space may be permanently preserved.
- LU-34 Areas designated for future residential development should be selected so that potential conflicts with agricultural operations are minimized.
- LU-35 Residential uses shall be discouraged in areas of excessive noise, smoke or dust, especially in those areas adjoining freeways. Transitional or buffer uses shall be encouraged between residential and industrial or agricultural uses.
- LU-36 All new parcels created for residential use should have frontage on a road built to county standards.

Commercial Land Use Policies

- LU-37 Areas designated "commercial" should not be developed until the following requirements are met:
- o the area can be readily hooked up to public water facilities;
 - o the community utility systems can accommodate the added demand;
 - o the area has access to a major transportation route;
 - o the impact of the development on local streets can be mitigated;
 - o adequate fire protection measures are provided;
 - o the development does not result in a commercial "strip".
- LU-38 Downtown retailing should be actively promoted. Development of vacant lots within existing commercial districts should be encouraged before shopping areas are built on the periphery of communities.
- LU-39 Commercial "strip" development should be permitted only in those areas where such development already exists.
- LU-40 Where possible, "heavy" commercial uses such as auto salvage yards, truck parking lots, and farm implement sales yards should be visually screened from residential uses. Concentrations of such uses on scattered parcels at the approaches to communities should be discouraged.
- LU-41 Interstate 5 freeway interchanges at Arbuckle, Maxwell, and Williams should be used for highway-oriented commercial uses. These uses, which include hotels, restaurants, and service stations, should be oriented to interstate travelers. Development at these interchanges should be planned so that traffic on local streets is minimized and traffic safety is ensured. Permanent highway commercial uses (excludes roadside produce stands, etc.) should be discouraged outside of existing communities.
- LU-42 Adequate off-street parking should be provided for all new commercial establishments. Parking standards in the county zoning ordinance should be reviewed to ensure that provisions are sufficient.

LU-43 Commercial buildings, landscaping, and signage should be designed to be compatible with surrounding uses and should not detract from the character of existing communities.

Industrial Land Use Policies

LU-44 The County Chamber of Commerce, Farm Bureau, Board of Supervisors and Economic Development Commission should work together to determine the types of business and industry appropriate to enhance the county's economy, and endeavor to bring such industries into the county. First priority should be given to businesses that are compatible with Colusa County agriculture and that enhance the quality of life in Colusa County.

LU-45 A supply of industrial land commensurate with the objective of attracting a wide array of manufacturing and agricultural support uses should be shown on the General Plan land use map.

LU-46 Areas designated "Industrial" should not be developed until the following requirements are met:

- o the area can be readily hooked up to public sewer and water facilities where these facilities are available, or to private sewer and water facilities where utilities do not yet exist;
- o if the industry uses community utilities, that community systems can accommodate the added demand;
- o if the industry is to be served by groundwater wells, that reliable, scientific data be presented that will assure that groundwater will be available under all conditions, including drought, that the wells will not have an appreciable adverse effect on the quality and quantity of existing domestic and agricultural water supplies, and that private sewage disposal systems meet Environmental Health Department standards;
- o the project will not significantly contribute to air, water, and noise pollution;
- o the area has access to a major transportation route;
- o the impact of the development on local streets can be mitigated;
- o the area is located within 10 minutes of a fire station or can provide its own fire protection independently.

LU-47 Future industrial development should be concentrated in areas with direct access to rail, interstate, air, or state highway transportation facilities.

LU-48 To the extent possible, future industrial development should occur within master-planned industrial park developments adjoining existing communities. These developments should be designed and landscaped so that they are integrated with their surroundings and do not reduce the visual qualities of the adjoining communities.

LU-49 New industrial uses shall be discouraged in established residential neighborhoods.

LU-50 Increases in public service costs that occur as a result of industrial development should be paid for by that development.

Land Use Implementation Policies

- LU-51 Following the adoption of this plan, the county zoning ordinance, development standards, and zoning maps shall be revised or created to conform to the updated plan.
- LU-52 Cooperation and coordination between the city councils of incorporated cities and Colusa County shall be encouraged. Proposed projects outside the primary spheres of influence but within three miles of the city boundaries of Colusa or Williams shall be jointly reviewed by the appropriate city and the county.
- LU-53 Annexation of land outside the spheres of Williams and Colusa should be prohibited during the time frame covered by this plan. Sphere of influence boundaries should be reviewed every five years to determine if boundary amendments should be considered.
- LU-54 The County and cities of Colusa and Williams should work cooperatively to develop consistent plans for the city spheres of influence.
- LU-55 The County General Plan shall be regularly updated and monitored to ensure that its policies still reflect public sentiment about the desired character of their communities.
- LU-56 The county should work closely with the cities, public utility districts, fire districts, and other special districts in developing programs for future capital improvements. Likewise, the cities of Colusa and Williams should work closely with the county in developing their capital improvement programs.
- LU-57 In those instances where development is appropriate as provided in Policy OS-1*, development shall occur only as planned developments or under specific plans (G.C. 65450). Nothing herein is intended to prohibit those uses defined in Land Use Policies LU-23 through LU-27 inclusively.

* Policy OS-1 (Open Space Element) indicates that areas designated for Resource Conservation, Agriculture-General, and Agriculture-Upland should remain in open space unless development would be consistent with community plans or land use policies (LU-1 through LU-56).

