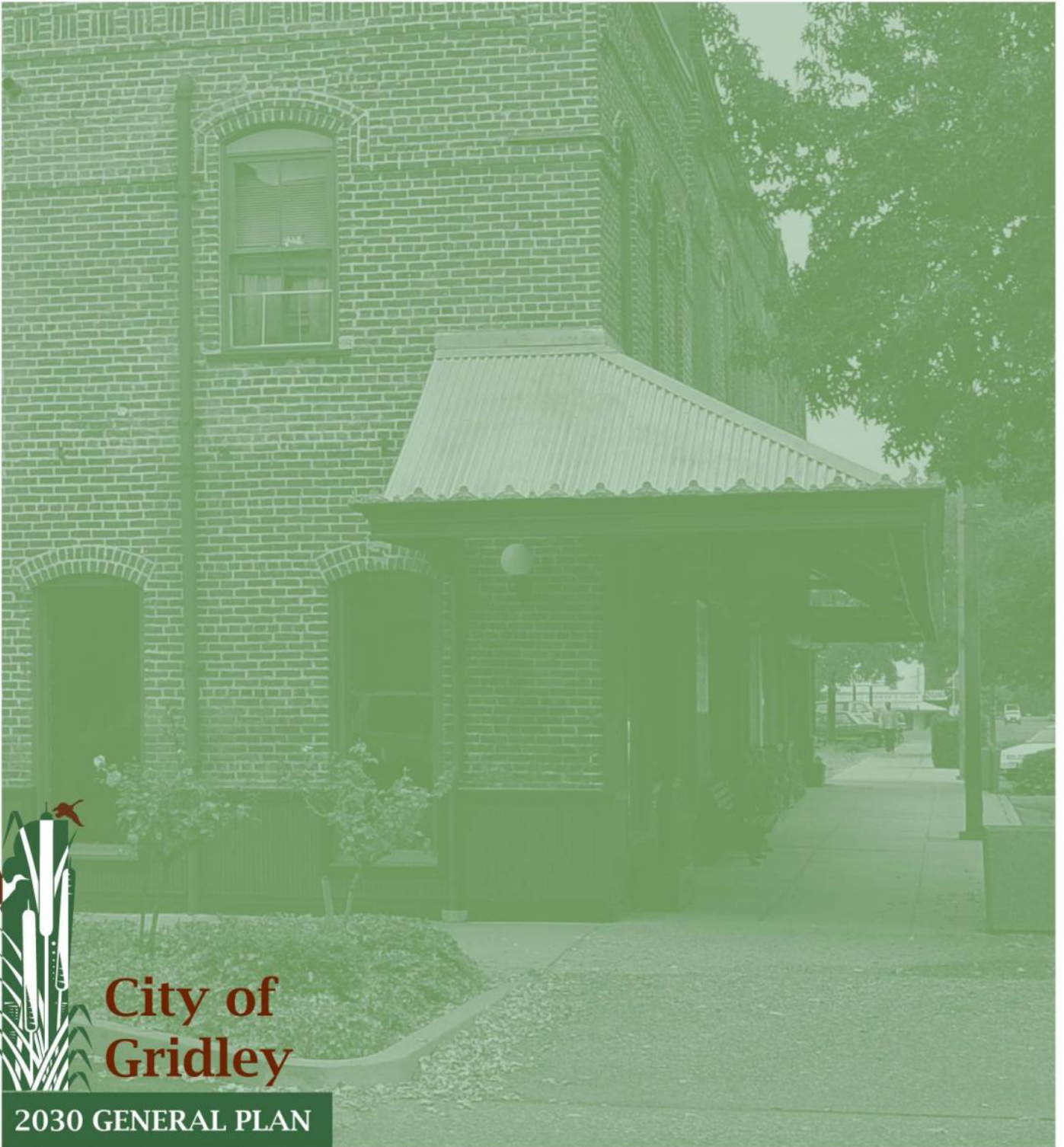
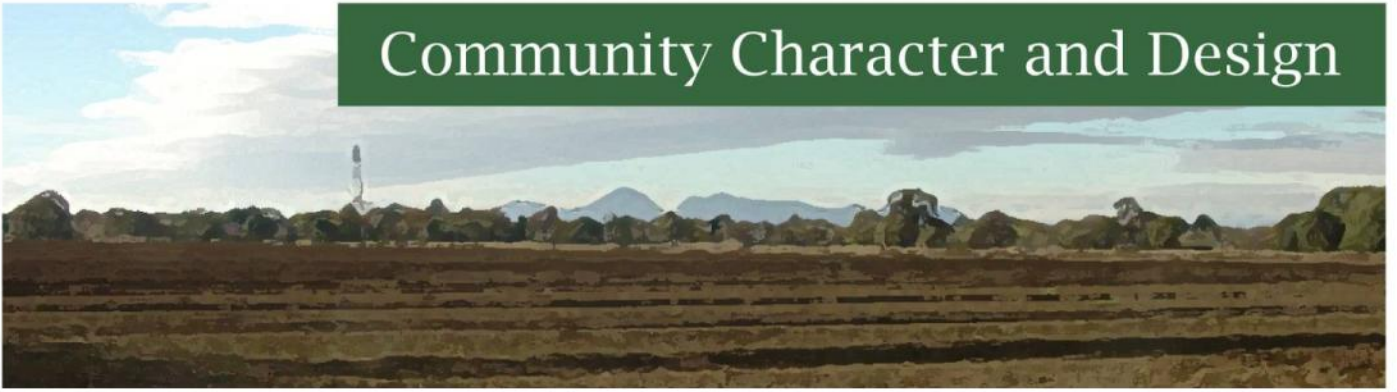


Community Character and Design



**City of
Gridley**

2030 GENERAL PLAN

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INTRODUCTION

The Community Character and Design Element is intended to preserve and enhance historic and other qualities of Gridley that contribute to its character and guide development to establish those qualities in new neighborhoods. These qualities include the layout, streets, and architecture of Gridley’s historic downtown and older neighborhoods; the City’s compact, small-town character and sense of connection among residents; the predominance of local businesses; the walkability of many neighborhoods with short blocks; neighborhoods anchored by schools and parks; a diversity of housing, tree-lined streets; and opportunities to enhance Highway 99 so that it looks and feels more like a community street.

Under State Law (Planning and Zoning Law, Government Code §65000 et seq.) community design is not a mandatory element of a General Plan. However, each community may decide the importance of including policies for community character and design in its general plan and the need for a separate, optional element to do so. Optional general plan elements may be prepared to address issues of particular local importance. During the 2030 General Plan update, Gridley citizens and decision makers have determined that community design and character is essential to the local quality of life. Gridley citizens expressed a strong desire for policies that will maintain and improve physical appearance of their community.

City staff conducted special public outreach to specifically address character and design issues. The results of this outreach showed strong community consensus for the goals and policies contained in this Element. One of the overarching themes from the public outreach was maintaining Gridley’s small-town character, even as the community grows. While small-town character means different things to different people, there is consensus on some basic elements. Extending the tree-lined, highly connected street network into the Planned Growth Area is a major component. Preserving the distinct urban-rural edge is also important. Consensus ideas related to Gridley’s character are presented as policy in this Element.

The goals and policies in this Element provide guidance in the review of development proposals and the investment of City funds for improvements to Downtown, Highway 99, and older neighborhoods. The illustrations within this Element provide guidance for urban design and site planning of projects proposed within the City of Gridley. The City will use this Element to review development proposals for consistency with the General Plan.

CONTEXT

There are several fundamental and important aspects of the City’s character that provide context for the goals, policies, and implementation strategies in this Element. Following is a summary of the City’s existing character, including the overall form

FORM AND SETTING

Gridley is one of several small agricultural towns located along railroad lines in the Sacramento Valley. Gridley was first linked to other communities by the Sacramento River, then later by the Central Pacific railroad when tracks were laid between Oregon and California. It was at this time, during the 1870s, that Gridley’s community form began to take shape. Gridley’s founder, George Gridley, was attracted to the area by its open spaces and suitability for raising cattle, which he did on his 960-acre ranch west of the City’s present day location. As gold mining opportunities faded at the turn of the 20th century, the area became more important for its agriculture.

L.C. Stone, Gridley’s first postmaster, built his home and store in 1874. The “Stoneblock” building was located on the southwest corner of Hazel and Virginia streets, and was a landmark downtown for over 100 years. Subsequent businesses, such as Wells Fargo & Company, were soon open for business and Downtown Gridley began to thrive. Residential areas, such as the quaint “Silk Stocking Row” located along the eastern entrance to Downtown, shaped the form and design of Gridley.



Exhibit Design-1. Orchards Surrounding Gridley

The layout and character of Gridley today is defined by its small town setting within an agricultural region. Surrounded by orchards and field crops, Gridley has distinct edges as its urban area meets the neighboring agricultural lands and open spaces (Exhibit Design-1).

The City is organized on a grid street pattern with large trees shading the homes that line street frontages. Commercial buildings were constructed with locally-made bricks that

formed a traditional downtown setting: two-story buildings located at the street frontages with large store windows that allow pedestrians to see into the shops. Gridley’s Downtown is surrounded on the east and west by historic residential areas. Newer commercial development is located along Highway 99 (Exhibit Design-2).

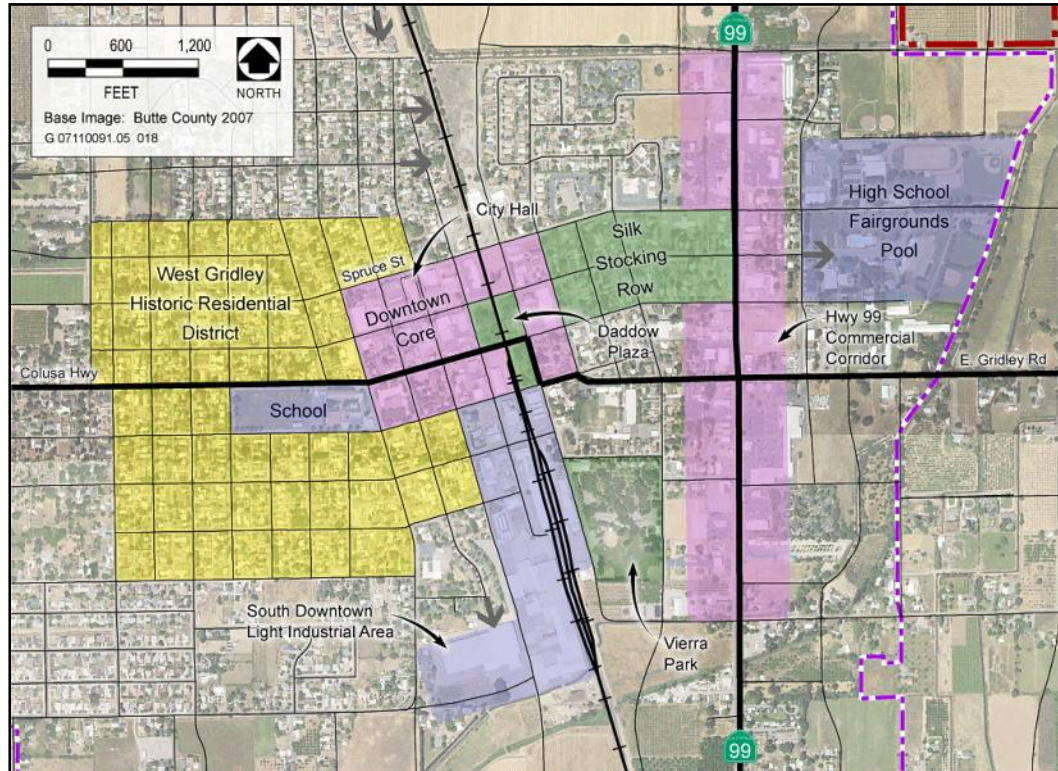


Exhibit Design-2. Community Design Context

In the early part of the 20th Century, following the passage of the first state highway bond (1910), Route 3 (later named California State Highway Route 99) was constructed from Sacramento north to the Oregon state line. Over time, with the favored transportation mode changing from rail to the private automobile, businesses began to locate adjacent to the new highway. This change in the dominant transportation mode affected not only the spatial layout of the town, but also its design, with surface parking lots becoming visually prominent, for example.

Through the decades and changes, Gridley has remained true to its historical roots and retains its quaint and charming ambience. Concerned about increasing rural residential development surrounding Gridley, community leaders worked with the County of Butte in the 1980s to address the subdividing of surrounding farmland into one-acre and larger lots intended primarily as residences. Although there are areas of smaller, county parcels just outside the city limits, the town still remains distinct with well-defined edges.

Gridley has chosen to grow in a compact form to allow efficiency of essential services, protect the city's fiscal health, and protect viable agricultural lands surrounding the City. Areas of new growth have been chosen as logical extensions of current development pattern.

The grid street pattern characteristic of Gridley (streets intersecting at right angles and relatively small blocks) was used in most U.S. cities through the 1950s. Curvilinear street patterns and cul-de-sacs became popular since the 1950s as more communities focused on accommodating automobiles. In recent years, the grid street pattern has been reintroduced as a more pedestrian-friendly and traffic-calming design with many cities encouraging, and in some cases, requiring a grid layout for new subdivisions. Gridley is fortunate that the majority of the community is served by street system organized around a grid. Short, walkable blocks with vertical curb and a parkway strip align many Gridley streets and contribute to the small-town ambience and overall character of the community.

Gridley is framed with linear corridors. In addition to the railroad, other major corridors are State Highway 99, Spruce Street, West Biggs-Gridley Road, Sycamore Street, Colusa Highway/East Gridley Road, Hazel Street (as the entrance to Downtown), and Little. Additionally, several irrigation and water laterals traverse the community reinforcing the linear pattern (Exhibit Design-3).



Exhibit Design-3. Agricultural Drainage Channel

PARKS



Exhibit Design-4. Manuel Vierra Park

Gridley is proud of its local parks – Manuel Vierra Park (Exhibit Design-4) with its recreational hall, ballparks, picnic facilities and beautiful open spaces; the Nick Daddow Plaza adjacent to Downtown, the linear parks along the railroad tracks; and the Feather River Boat Ramp adjacent to the City sanitation plant. Also a new skateboard-water park is in the planning stages along the east side of the railroad tracks bordering Downtown.

As Gridley continues to grow, providing additional parks and open space areas for public enjoyment is an important component of the General Plan Update. Opportunities for open space and recreation use have been identified within the new development area north of the current City boundary, adjacent to the linear edges of the railroad right-of-way and along the irrigation and drainage canals. These corridors can be designed for recreational use by pedestrians and bicyclists. They also serve to link the community with green spaces rather than pavement. Parkland is addressed in more detail in the Open Space Element.

AGRICULTURAL INDUSTRIES

Agricultural industries are interwoven in the fabric of Gridley. As early as 1891, surveying was conducted in the Gridley area to bring irrigation water to local farmers. The Sutter-Butte Canal Company completed the irrigation project that allowed farmers to irrigate pastures and diversify their crops. The growth of agriculture in Gridley was accompanied by the development of agricultural industries that processed, packaged, distributed, and marketed locally grown produce. The first fruit cannery was established in Gridley in 1896. Fruit drying yards, additional cannery operations, and an expanded range of crops characterized Gridley at the turn of the 20th century.

Agricultural industries, such as the Tri-Valley cannery and rice dryers, were conveniently located along the railroad right-of-way. Some of these sites are now being used for smaller-scale agricultural and related production and storage. Similar industrial uses continue along the railroad from the cannery location north to Sycamore Street. In addition to the railroad areas, agricultural-based industrial land is located on the north edge of town, east of Highway 99.

RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER ELEMENTS

The Community Character and Design Element works in tandem with the goals and policies of the other elements of the General Plan, particularly Land Use and Circulation, by providing a design framework to implement policies within those elements. This Element describes preferred characteristics of development, and how buildings, streets, and other improvements should be laid out, function, and relate to one another in the broader neighborhood and community context.

GOALS, POLICIES, AND IMPLEMENTATION

Following are Gridley's goals related to community character and design, policies that will be implemented to achieve these goals, and implementation strategies.

HISTORIC GRIDLEY

Unlike many cities that have lost much of their historic character over time, Gridley has maintained many architecturally and historically important structures. Historic buildings contribute to the small-town ambience and charm of the community, and help establish community identity. Many of the historic properties are located along Hazel Street at the entrance to Downtown and also within Downtown. Some structures, such as the Stone Block building, were demolished in the latter half of the 20th century.

Examples of success stories include the rehabilitation and reuse of the historic Hazel Hotel (Exhibit Design-5). Several buildings with historic value remain and provide an opportunity for reuse and rehabilitation to reinforce the historic setting of Downtown and surrounding residential districts (Exhibit Design-6).



Exhibit Design-5. Historic Hazel Hotel




Exhibit Design-6. Historic Residence along Hazel Street near Downtown

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Statements from Gridley's General Plan Guiding Principles relevant to historic preservation include:

- ✓ Gridley can grow without sacrificing the small-town character that we cherish.
- ✓ We believe that our long-term economic future greatly benefits from a unique, charming, small-town character.
- ✓ The City should take an active role in downtown revitalization, supporting existing business expansion, new business development, and housing, all consistent with downtown's historic character.
- ✓ The City should continue to invest in, and improve existing neighborhoods, even as new neighborhoods are constructed.

DESIGN GOAL 1	To retain and improve Gridley’s historic buildings for ongoing residential, retail, civic, and other uses and activities.	
DESIGN POLICY 1.1	The City will encourage the preservation, restoration, and renovation of historic buildings.	
DESIGN POLICY 1.2	When historic buildings are rehabilitated, remodeled, and restored, this work should be consistent with original proportions, dimensions, and other architectural elements, as required, to maintain historic registry status, as applicable.	
DESIGN POLICY 1.3	The City’s approach to historic preservation will combine financial and other incentives, regulatory relief, and guidelines for historic preservation.	
DESIGN POLICY 1.4	New buildings should incorporate elements of architectural styles, scale and massing, and other design features of adjacent or nearby historic buildings (Exhibit Design-7).	 <p data-bbox="800 1079 1232 1171">Exhibit Design-7. New Home (left) Uses Historic Style, and Incorporates Materials and Scale of Surrounding Historic Homes</p>
DESIGN POLICY 1.5	The City will promote awareness of Gridley’s history and an understanding of the economic and cultural benefits of historic preservation.	
Design Implementation Strategy 1.1	<p>The City will adopt a historic preservation program designed to maintain the physical reminder’s of Gridley’s rich history. This program may involve changes to various regulatory documents, zoning district designations, capital improvements planning, financial assistance (to the extent of available State and federal funding), education and awareness, and other actions. The City will seek an appropriate balance of incentives and development guidelines so that historic preservation makes economic sense for property owners and developers. The emphasis of the City’s program will be on voluntary participation and education to encourage historic preservation rather than mandatory regulation. The City will encourage the continued use of historic buildings and properties in a manner consistent with their historic status. The City will forge public/private partnerships to achieve mutual goals for preservation and the continued viable use of properties.</p> <p>This historic preservation program may include:</p>	

- ✓ **Development review.** The City will use its permit review process to encourage the protection of important buildings and other properties. The City would prefer that such buildings and properties not be removed or substantially altered unless there are no feasible alternatives and available incentives to ensure their economic viability and use.
- ✓ **An inventory of locally significant historic resources.** The City, in collaboration with community organizations interested in historic preservation, will conduct this inventory. The inventory could include residential and commercial buildings, bridges, monuments, parks, and other features associated with important elements of the community's past. Buildings associated with the agricultural history of Gridley such as rice dyers and processing plants could also be included on the local list. This inventory will serve as a record and acknowledgement of buildings and structures with historic significance to be considered in City actions or approvals involving these properties. The inventory work could also lead to the establishment of one or more historic districts within the City where features are especially concentrated.
- ✓ **Historic district overlay.** The City will coordinate with community organizations, locally knowledgeable preservationists and historians, and property owners to identify one or more areas of the City that might qualify as a historic district according to state and/or federal guidelines. With the agreement of property owners in such areas, the City may establish one or more historic overlay districts. Areas covered by this overlay would be based on the results of the inventory and collaboration with property owners and interested community organizations. Such areas could include portions of Downtown and surrounding residential neighborhoods. If created, one or more overlay districts would be incorporated into the City's Zoning Ordinance and include standards for proposals affecting potentially historic buildings that encourage preservation over changes to properties that may reduce their historic value.
- ✓ **Guidelines and regulatory incentives.** The City will evaluate a variety of other potential tools to encourage historic preservation. These tools include a landmark ordinance, a historic preservation commission, and use of the State Historical Building Code in place of the California Building Code. A City historic preservation commission could be permanently or temporarily established to review proposed demolition or exterior remodel work for consistency with City standards.
- ✓ **Funding for financial assistance.** The City will consider a variety of funding sources to provide financial assistance for historic preservation, including Redevelopment Agency

	<p>funding, nonprofit funding, and State and federal government funding. The City will consider funding sources and tax relief such as the Mills Act, Marks Historical Rehabilitation Act, the Seismic Bond Act, and the Community Development Block Grant Program.</p> <p>✓ Education and awareness. The City will promote awareness of the cultural and economic benefits of historic preservation by sponsoring or co-sponsoring workshops or similar public meetings.</p>
<p>Design Implementation Strategy 1.2</p>	<p>The City will review and condition projects, as necessary, to comply with Secretary of Interior standards for historic preservation and State Historical Building Code (§18950 to 18961 of Division 13, Part 2.7 of Health and Safety Code), as applicable.</p>

NEIGHBORHOODS

A focus of the 2030 General Plan update is planning for long-term growth within the 1,200-acre Planned Growth Area (see the Land Use Element for more information). The Planned Growth Area will include new neighborhoods with residences integrated with parks and other civic uses, small-scale commercial uses, and other appropriate land uses.

The character of neighborhoods comes from public and private elements:

- ✓ **Public elements** include streets, sidewalks, street trees, schools, and parks. A sense of place and community cohesion can be created within the public spaces.
- ✓ **Private elements** include homes, businesses, and other private property. In new neighborhoods, the overwhelming majority of properties will be residences. The quality of homes and the relationship they have to each other have a strong impact on the character of the community. The degree of diversity or monotony in neighborhoods is a defining characteristic. Many successful neighborhoods have a variety of housing types – including larger homes on larger lots, small homes and smaller lots, attached homes, and multi-family housing. Some neighborhoods have a variety of architectural types, colors, and building materials, creating visual interest. Other neighborhoods lack in architectural variety and in the range of housing types.
- ✓ The design of the **transition zone between public and private** elements is also very important. For example, the area between the sidewalk and the front of homes is an area of public/private transition and could include front porches or stoops. The design of the public/private transition areas is important to the feeling and function of the neighborhood. The safety of a neighborhood can be

enhanced when its design provides opportunities for residents to watch over its public and semi-public spaces. Within the transition area, the relationship between building setbacks, building size, and the streetscape is also very important. The right balance between building size, setbacks, street width, and street trees can provide a comfortable feeling for pedestrians, particularly as street trees mature.


Gridley's existing neighborhoods were built between the late 19th century and the present day. The oldest residential areas are clustered around Downtown. Through the decades, a variety of houses with different designs, styles, and types were constructed. The characteristics of residential areas are very important in defining the overall character of Gridley. The older neighborhoods have a welcoming charm with short, walkable blocks and mature street trees that add to the pedestrian experience. New neighborhoods can build on the existing historic character of Gridley by mirroring traditional design concepts that are now embraced as "New Urbanism." These concepts include neighborhood centers anchored by schools, parks, local businesses, and/or other gathering places; a diversity of housing types (single-family homes, duplexes, small apartments, second units, etc.), sometimes intermixed on one block; relatively small blocks, a grid or modified grid street pattern, narrower streets, and planting strips with street trees between the curb and sidewalk; and houses and porches oriented to the street with detached or set-back garages.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Statements from Gridley's General Plan Guiding Principles relevant to neighborhoods include:

- ✓ Gridley can grow without sacrificing the small-town character that we cherish.
- ✓ Growth will be according to our vision. Although Gridley is a small town, we insist on high-quality development, that meets our specific needs and preferences.
- ✓ Great small towns promote a feeling of connection among residents. New development should enhance this sense of connectivity. We should remove physical, economic, and social barriers that prevent us from being connected, whenever possible.
- ✓ We believe that our long-term economic future greatly benefits from a unique, charming, small-town character.
- ✓ A livable community is one with parks, schools, shops, and other destinations that are oriented to our neighborhoods and designed for people, rather than oriented toward busy roadways and designed exclusively for auto access.

- ✓ Our streets, neighborhoods, and civic spaces should provide many gathering places where we meet up with our friends and neighbors.
- ✓ We think that variety and cohesiveness in community design are important: cohesiveness through building styles that complement local architecture and timeless materials in new and old buildings; and, variety within each neighborhood with different sizes, types, styles, and colors.
- ✓ We believe that Gridley’s built environment should be distinct from new development in growing cities elsewhere in the Sacramento Valley.
- ✓ We need local housing options that accommodate our different households’ needs and preferences.
- ✓ We do not want our young people to have move away from Gridley to find appropriate and affordable housing.
- ✓ Growth and change should benefit Gridley’s existing and future residents.
- ✓ The City should develop in a compact way that is more efficient and less costly to serve, compared to a development pattern that is more spread out.

DESIGN GOAL 2	To ensure that Gridley’s neighborhoods are attractive and desirable places to live and visit.
DESIGN POLICY 2.1	New residential subdivision projects should include a diversity of color, building materials, floor plans, sizes, and types.
DESIGN POLICY 2.2	The architectural style, building materials, roof form, and other primary design features of homes should also be reflected in any accessory buildings, such as garages and secondary units (Exhibit Design-8).  Exhibit Design-8. Variety of Architectural Style, Size, and Floor Plans in Housing

DESIGN POLICY 2.3

New homes should be designed so that porches, stoops, windows, and other architectural elements provide "eyes on the street," helping to maintain community surveillance of public areas. Windows and active rooms should view onto yards, corridors, entrances, streets, and other public and semi-public places (Exhibit Design-9).



Exhibit Design-9. Home Design and Placement Allows Casual Surveillance of Street

DESIGN POLICY 2.4

New homes on corner lots should address both street frontages with windows, porches, stoops, entrances, active rooms, and other appropriate architectural elements (Exhibit Design-10).



Exhibit Design-10. Residence on a Corner Lot Addresses both Street Frontages

DESIGN POLICY 2.5

Fences should be designed to complement building design, color, and materials (Exhibit Design-11).



Exhibit Design-11. Fencing Color, Material Complements the Residential Structure

DESIGN POLICY 2.6

New home façades should be designed so that porches, stoops, and windows, are more visually prominent from the street than the garage door.

DESIGN POLICY 2.7

New residential development shall minimize the visual prominence of garages by setting garages back from the front façade of buildings or rotating the garage entrance (Exhibits Design-12, -13).



Exhibit Design-12. Discouraged: Street Frontage Where Garage Dominates



Exhibit Design-13. Preferred: Residential Frontage with Recessed Garage

DESIGN POLICY 2.8

The City will allow smaller front yard setbacks for new homes to encourage efficient use of land and improve surveillance of public areas from residences (Exhibit Design-14).



Exhibit Design-14. Small Front Yard Setback

DESIGN POLICY 2.9

The City will allow a variety of lot configurations, including alley-loaded projects (Exhibit Design-15).



Exhibit Design-15. Alley-Loaded Project

DESIGN POLICY 2.10

The City will encourage a variety of single-family housing types, such as cottages, clustered homes, and attached housing (Exhibit Design-16).



Exhibit Design-16. Examples of Compact Single-Family Home Designs

Clockwise (top left): cottage homes, attached single-family homes, "6-Pack" homes, and townhomes

DESIGN POLICY 2.11

Multi-family development should be designed to provide an inviting visual environment, where porches, balconies, windows, entrances, stoops, and other features are prominent and visible from the street and other public areas (Exhibit Design-17).



Exhibit Design-17. Porches, Stoops, Windows, and Entrances are Visually Prominent from the Street

DESIGN POLICY 2.12

Multi-family development should be compatible with adjacent development with similar front setbacks, similar building styles and architectural features, building massing and articulation, and a consistent landscaping approach.

DESIGN POLICY 2.13

Multi-family buildings adjacent to single-family homes should step down in height or use other design techniques to ensure compatibility.

DESIGN POLICY 2.14

Multi-family projects shall not be walled off from the surrounding neighborhood, but rather shall be connected to the surrounding neighborhood through multiple pedestrian and street connections.

DESIGN POLICY 2.15

The City will encourage parking placement behind or on the side of proposed buildings and buildings built adjacent to the street.

DESIGN POLICY 2.16

New developments that propose surface parking adjacent to the street frontage shall screen parking areas from public views with street trees and other landscaping, and/or low fences or walls.

Design Implementation Strategy 2.1	Following adoption of the General Plan, the City will review projects for consistency with the Community Character Design Element. The City will also consider preparation of a Design Manual or Design Guidelines to implement the Community Character and Design Element. This document would provide more detail for new development than policies in the Community Character and Design Element. The City’s Design Guidelines should have chapters illustrating the City’s design vision for single-family residential development, multiple-family residential projects, small- and large-scale commercial development, industrial development, Downtown Gridley, and other important areas of the City.
Design Implementation Strategy 2.2	The City will revise the Zoning Ordinance and Public Works Construction Standards, as necessary, to accommodate well-designed, compact development projects, consistent with the General Plan. For example, the City will consider amending the Zoning Ordinance to reduce the front yard setback to 15 feet or similar for the primary residence and 20 feet or similar for garages.
Design Implementation Strategy 2.3	The City will revise the Zoning Ordinance following the General Plan update. As a part of this revision, the City will provide new and/or revised zoning district descriptions to implement the Residential, High Density 1 and 2 land use designations and to facilitate the provision of well-designed, higher-density housing. The City will also encourage applicants to make use of the current Planned Development District application process to take advantage of the City’s flexible approach to land use mix, density, and development standards for high-quality projects.
Design Implementation Strategy 2.4	The City will continue to support neighborhood conservation and housing rehabilitation through the City’s Community Development Block Grant program.
DESIGN GOAL 3:	To provide neighborhood centers that integrate with, and contribute to well-designed neighborhoods.
DESIGN POLICY 3.1	Building placement and design in Neighborhood Centers shall prioritize pedestrian comfort and aesthetics.
DESIGN POLICY 3.2	Buildings in Neighborhood Centers should be built close to the front property line.

DESIGN POLICY 3.3

Developments within Neighborhood Centers should be designed to emphasize the public realm. These centers should contain one or more of the following: small parks; public plazas; wide sidewalks; spaces for entertainment, displays, exhibitions, and other community events; outdoor seating and gathering areas, retail and services; and/or, similar uses and activities (Exhibits Design-18, -19).



Exhibit Design-18. Outdoor Seating/Dining Area



Exhibit Design-19. Outdoor Public Gathering Places



DESIGN POLICY 3.4

Buildings in Neighborhood Centers that front on sidewalks should provide awnings or other overhangs for pedestrian shelter.

DESIGN POLICY 3.5

The City will provide and/or preserve existing street trees and constructed shade structures in parks, civic plazas, and other outdoor publicly-owned gathering areas to provide shade from the afternoon summer sun.

DESIGN POLICY 3.6

Neighborhood Centers and the supportive transportation network shall provide multi-modal, 360-degree access to and from the surrounding neighborhood (see also the Circulation Element) (Exhibit Design-20).

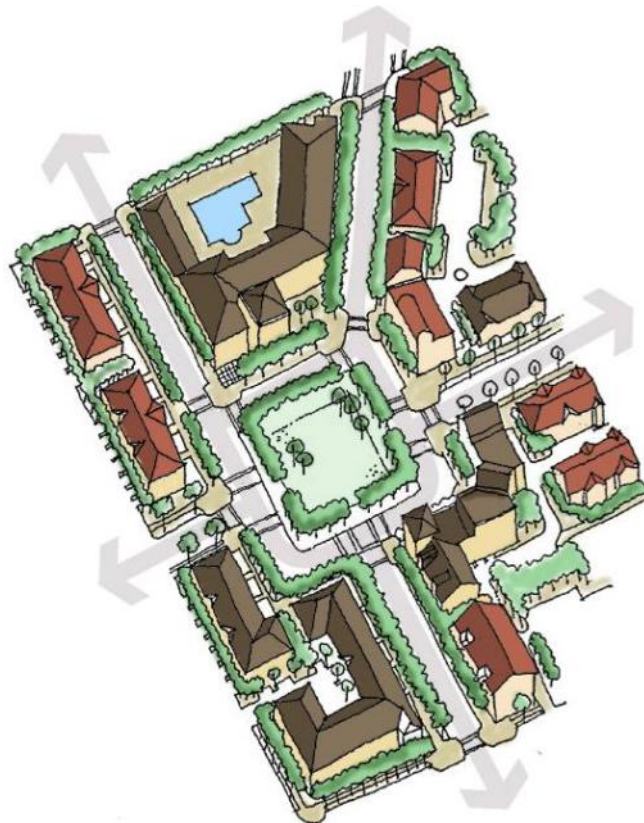


Exhibit Design-20. Neighborhood Center with 360-degree Access from the Surrounding Neighborhood

Design
Implementation
Strategy 3.1

The City will revise the Zoning Ordinance following the General Plan update and will revise the Public Works Construction Standards, as needed, to implement the General Plan. Among the revisions to provide consistency with the General Plan, the City will ensure that parking standards for Neighborhood Centers are minimized to encourage a pedestrian-friendly environment. The City will create a new zoning district designation to implement the Neighborhood Center Mixed Use land use designation, ensuring that outdoor dining and seating is allowed. The City will consider providing street design criteria that may be used in Neighborhood Centers for angled parking provision in-lieu of surface parking lots. The City will consider establishing standards requiring shorter block lengths and development standards allowing shallower setbacks within Neighborhood Centers to encourage a pedestrian-friendly environment.

DESIGN GOAL 4:	To ensure high quality, safe, and walkable parks and open space design in the Planned Growth Area.
DESIGN POLICY 4.1	Parks and open space corridors should be located and designed to be conveniently and safely accessible to pedestrians and bicyclists from residential neighborhoods (see also the Circulation Element and the Open Space Element).
DESIGN POLICY 4.2	Parks and open space in the Planned Growth Area should be within and near Neighborhood Centers, where residential densities are relatively high (see also the Land Use and Open Space Elements).
DESIGN POLICY 4.4	Buildings should front onto to parks and open space, wherever possible. The City will discourage residential developments that back up to parks or other public open spaces. Where it is necessary for residences to back up to parks or open spaces, public access at regular intervals should be provided (Exhibit Design-21).
	 <p>Exhibit Design-21. Buildings Front onto Parks</p>
DESIGN POLICY 4.5	Bicycle and pedestrian paths shall be well lit and will be located and designed to provide casual surveillance and security.
Design Implementation Strategy 4.1	The City will review the location and design of parks in the context of ongoing project review, in part, to ensure consistency with policies in this Community Character and Design Element.

DOWNTOWN

Gridley’s Downtown provides a strong “sense of place” and is a pleasant place to spend time with a pedestrian scale, tree-lined streets, a good stock of historic buildings, and locally owned businesses. Downtown is adjacent to the railroad, which bisects the community, and provides a central location to the surrounding historic neighborhoods. Residential uses abut both the east and west entrances into Downtown, with a transition to commercial uses signaling the entry into Downtown.

Downtown Gridley remains the “social and cultural heart” of the community. Downtown provides a place for the community to meet and hold city-wide events, such as Red Suspenders Days and the summer Farmer’s Market. The historic City Hall building

anchors Downtown, and this historic building, as well as other well-maintained historic buildings throughout the area is a reflection and source of civic awareness and pride.

A pleasant pedestrian environment is provided along Hazel Street and other areas Downtown. Buildings are located at front property lines along wide sidewalks. Downtown has short, walkable blocks within a grid street pattern with several historic buildings fronting its “main street” – Hazel Street. Storefronts provide a lively, pedestrian-oriented streetscape (Exhibit Design-22). Street trees provide affective shade for sidewalks and in other areas of pedestrian activity. Landscaped planters provide additional greenery, enhancing the aesthetic environment. The traveled portion of the roadway is relatively narrow, which calms traffic speeds. Parking is accommodated in angled spaces along the streets instead of surface parking lots, which further enhances pedestrian convenience and comfort.



Exhibit Design-22. Historic and Walkable Downtown Gridley

Source: City of Gridley. Streetscape Design Plan for Highway 99. 2002.

As noted previously, there is a strong desire among residents, property owners, and business owners to revitalize Downtown with more businesses, residents, and civic uses. When considering how to encourage revitalization Downtown, the City could leverage private investment with targeted public investments. Public investments in “catalyst” projects can help reduce risk and encourage private investment. Many cities prioritize certain vacant sites for redevelopment that could spur development nearby. (Please refer to the Land Use Element for more detail on the City’s approach).

Buildings and streetscape elements are most important aesthetic components Downtown, but signage also contributes to the visual experience. Signage can either enhance or detract from the attractiveness of Downtown. Given the historic setting, Downtown signage should be distinct from other commercial districts. Generally, monument signs are not found in Downtown areas. Most properties Downtown cannot accommodate free-standing signs. Wall, awning or canopy, and window signs would be more appropriate with the overall historic aesthetic environment Downtown. Internally illuminated plastic signs and portable, roof-mounted, and out-of-scale signs would detract from important architectural features Downtown.

Informational signs such as the Downtown information kiosk planned for the corner of Kentucky and Hazel Streets keep community members and visitors alike informed of important events and nearby resources. The Visitor Development Action Plan (2007) has good examples of Informational, Gateway and Directional Signage related to the Gridley Downtown.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Statements from Gridley’s General Plan Guiding Principles relevant to Downtown include:

- ✓ Downtown should remain our pedestrian-scaled, commercial and civic center in which we all take pride.
- ✓ Downtown must grow and change with the rest of the City. Decisions about commercial growth elsewhere in the city should support our downtown.
- ✓ The City should take an active role in downtown revitalization, supporting existing business expansion, new business development, and housing, all consistent with downtown’s historic character.
- ✓ The community should continue to invest in streetscape, infrastructure improvements, and other programs downtown that will encourage property owners to invest and re-invest in the area.
- ✓ All of our neighborhoods should be connected to downtown Gridley with safe and convenient pedestrian and bicycle routes.

DESIGN GOAL 5:	To maintain and improve Downtown as a vibrant, pedestrian-scaled, memorable place that is the social and cultural heart of the community and a visitor draw.
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DESIGN POLICY 5.1	Downtown development and redevelopment should reinforce the historic fabric of the Downtown streetscape through building placement and design: <ul style="list-style-type: none">✓ New buildings should be built to the front property line.
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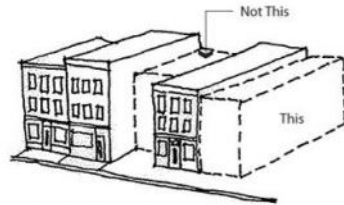
- ✓ Remodeled and new façade improvements should be designed for compatibility with adjacent historic buildings.
- ✓ New construction adjacent to older historical building should be constructed with similar or complementary materials; size, shape, and location of windows; building scale, and building height.

DESIGN POLICY 5.2

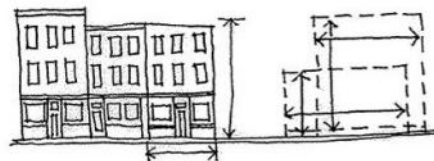
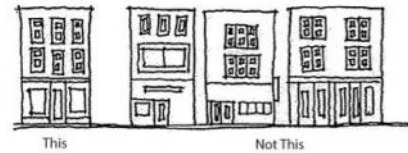
The portions of new buildings and additions along street frontages should be within 10% of the average height of structures on the same block.

DESIGN POLICY 5.3

New buildings and additions should be designed to maintain the alignment of rooflines or building cornices of adjacent existing buildings (Exhibit Design-23).



Facades should not be setback from the sidewalk



Maintain these proportions Not These

Exhibit Design-23. Maintaining Setbacks, Facades, and Scale Downtown

DESIGN POLICY 5.4

As funding is available, the City will increase the street tree canopy Downtown and add landscaped planters to enhance aesthetics and pedestrian comfort.

DESIGN POLICY 5.5

As users change and Downtown properties are redeveloped, the City will maintain pedestrian-oriented streetscape characteristics, such as large storefront windows and pedestrian-scaled signage (Exhibit Design-24).

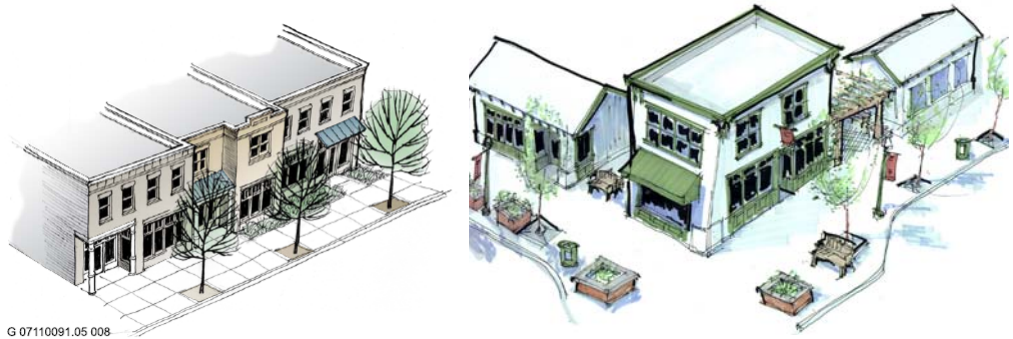


Exhibit Design-24. Preferred Examples: Downtown Storefront Design and Streetscape

DESIGN POLICY 5.6

The City will encourage a lively streetscape Downtown by encouraging outdoor dining to occur at the street level (Exhibit Design-25)



Exhibit Design-25. Outdoor Dining and Seating Areas

DESIGN POLICY 5.7

In general, residential development and office space Downtown should be located on upper stories of multi-story buildings. Residential and office uses could be accommodated at the street level so long as they maintain a storefront appearance. Large windows at the pedestrian level oriented toward the street are needed to ensure this appearance, and provide consistency with other uses Downtown.

DESIGN POLICY 5.8

In transportation planning and capital improvements planning for Downtown, the City will prioritize pedestrian and bicycle safety, convenience, and comfort.

DESIGN POLICY 5.9 Parking Downtown should mostly be provided on-street, including angled parking, and surface parking lots should be minimized Downtown.

DESIGN POLICY 5.10 Where surface parking is used Downtown, it should be public parking or shared by adjacent developments.

DESIGN POLICY 5.11 New surface parking should be located behind or on the side of proposed structures and not in the front of proposed structures, where possible.

DESIGN POLICY 5.12 Through public investment or in coordination with private redevelopment, the City will add angled street parking along the street, with wide sidewalks and buildings fronting the street (Exhibit Design-26).



Exhibit Design-26. Angled Parking, Wide Sidewalks, and Shade Trees

Design Implementation Strategy 5.1

The City will revise the Zoning Ordinance following adoption of the 2030 General Plan. As a part of these revisions, the City will create a zoning district or districts to implement the Downtown Mixed Use land use designation. The allowable land uses for the Downtown Mixed Use land use designation are described in the Land Use Element. Relevant design components are described in the Community Character and Design Element and Circulation Element. As a part of these revisions, the City will ensure that residential uses are allowed by right on second stories and above Downtown and on the ground floor when designed to appear as a storefront.

Design Implementation Strategy 5.2	Following adoption of the 2030 General Plan, the City will consult with Downtown property owners and consider adding flexibility in the entitlement process, as necessary, to encourage Downtown redevelopment. The City will consider eliminating unnecessary restrictions on land use and other unnecessary limitations. This may require revisions to the Zoning Ordinance, Public Works Construction Standards, and the Subdivision Ordinance. For example, the City will make revisions to the Zoning Ordinance necessary to encourage an active public realm by encouraging outdoor dining at the street level. The City may consider adopting a Design Manual or Design Guidelines, if needed, to provide additional illustrated examples of appropriate site planning and building design Downtown.
Design Implementation Strategy 5.3	The Zoning Ordinance may need to be revised or supplemented with design guidelines to provide illustrated examples of allowable project design. The City’s development review approach for Downtown should still include restrictions related to the specific use of land, but positive examples of the City’s vision could also be helpful to developers and property owners.
Design Implementation Strategy 5.4	The City will encourage or proactively participate in the redevelopment of the vacant site at the entrance to the Downtown on Hazel and Virginia Streets. Two-story construction and respect for the architectural details of the adjacent historical building including the window height and proportion should be encouraged for a new building or buildings on this site.

DESIGN GOAL 6: To ensure that signs identify downtown attractions and add to the historic setting

DESIGN POLICY 6.1 The City will encourage signs Downtown that are consistent with the historic character, including wall, awning or canopy, projecting, and window signs (Exhibit Design-27).



Exhibit Design-27. Hanging, Wall, and Projecting Signs

DESIGN POLICY 6.2 The City will discourage signs that are portable, roof-mounted, that are not complementary to the architectural features of a building, that are not pedestrian scaled and oriented, or that dominate the building without regard to proportion.

DESIGN POLICY 6.3 The use of internally illuminated, plastic cabinet/can signs is discouraged.

Design Implementation Strategy 6.1 Following adoption of the General Plan, the City will revise the City sign ordinance to include separate sign regulations for the Downtown. These regulations will be designed to reinforce the qualities that distinguish the central business district from other commercial areas within the community. The ordinance will be revised to ensure that signage enhances, rather than detracts from the attractiveness of Downtown.

Design Implementation Strategy 6.2 As funding is available, the City will construct pedestrian oriented way-finding signage Downtown with a consistent theme. Themes in Downtown way-finding signage should relate to signage used along Highway 99 to direct visitors Downtown.

URBAN LANDSCAPES AND STREETSCAPES

Much of a community's identity is formed by its landscape and streets. Mature trees adjoining a residential street frontage provide a shady ambience and a sense of history and permanence (Exhibit Design-28). A well-designed streetscape can provide one of the livelier and more memorable public spaces in the entire community.



Exhibit Design-28. Shady Residential Street in Gridley

Urban trees filter air, water and sunlight. They also moderate local climate and help shade homes and businesses which in turn conserves energy. Trees also produce oxygen and reduce carbon dioxide. The urban landscape distinguishes the City from the surrounding agricultural fields and orchards. Landscaping can also provide visual screening of parking areas to enhance the appearance commercial, industrial and multi-family developments.



Exhibit Design-29. Attractive Commercial Streetscape

Source: City of Gridley, Streetscape Design Plan for Highway 99, 2002.


Streets comprise the majority of the accessible public spaces in most communities. Streets and street corridors connect neighborhoods, connect us with the Downtown, and provide settings for planned or happenstance meetings among neighbors. The quality of the streetscape environment substantially affects the visual quality and function of neighborhoods. High-quality streetscapes along Gridley's commercial corridors will give visitors an immediate positive impression of the community and will encourage property owners to maintain and improve storefronts and other parts of their property (Exhibit Design-29).

The Circulation Element provides guidance for the circulation network itself. This Element focuses on aesthetic and design-oriented aspects of streets and streetscapes. Goals, policies, and design guidelines provided in this Element are aimed at balancing the needs of vehicles with the community's desire to create a sense of place.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Statements from Gridley’s General Plan Guiding Principles related to landscapes and streetscapes include:

- ✓ Trees shade us, clean our air, and are pleasing to the eye. A complete urban tree canopy that provides a pleasant and attractive streetscape is essential to our community’s character and quality of life.
- ✓ The community should continue to invest in streetscape, infrastructure improvements, and other programs downtown that will encourage property owners to invest and re-invest in the area.
- ✓ Streetscapes can be inviting, pleasant places to spend time, and these places should be designed with people in mind, not strictly to accommodate vehicles.

DESIGN GOAL 7:	To provide attractive and functional landscaping in neighborhoods	
DESIGN POLICY 7.1	Trees, shrubs, groundcover, and grass areas should be incorporated within neighborhoods to create an attractive and comfortable environment for residents and those viewing from public areas (Exhibit Design-30)	
DESIGN POLICY 7.2	Front yards should be landscaped in a way that is compatible with the associated home or multi-family structure.	
DESIGN POLICY 7.3	Front yard landscaping should emphasize visual openness to provide for visual surveillance of the street and sidewalks.	
DESIGN POLICY 7.4	To the extent feasible, existing mature trees and shrubs should be preserved and incorporated into the landscaping scheme.	
DESIGN POLICY 7.5	The City encourages the planting of California native trees and plants that are appropriate for the Gridley climate. The planting of non-native plants and trees that could become invasive is strongly discouraged.	

DESIGN POLICY 7.6

Native, low-water use ornamental plants and groundcover are encouraged as alternatives to turf grass (Exhibit Design-31).



Exhibit Design-31. Groundcover and Ornamental Plants as an Alternative to Turf Grass

Design Implementation Strategy 7.1

Following adoption of the 2030 General Plan, the City will review proposed projects for consistency in landscaping with policies in the Community Character and Design Element, conditioning projects, where necessary. The City will consider adopting new landscaping standards and/or street tree standards, as necessary, to ensure consistency with the Community Character and Design Element. The City will ensure flexibility in site design landscaping and open space standards, where necessary, to accommodate well-designed multi-family projects.

DESIGN GOAL 8:

To design streets that enhance the character and function of Gridley’s neighborhoods and business districts.

DESIGN POLICY 8.1

Street width should be proportional with building setbacks and heights to create the feeling of an “outdoor room,” emphasizing comfort of pedestrians and bicyclists (Exhibits Design-32, -33).



Exhibit 32. Preferred: Narrow Residential Street and Smaller Setbacks



Exhibit 33. Discouraged: Excessively Wide Local Street and Larger Setback

DESIGN POLICY 8.2 Streets should be located and oriented to define the edges of neighborhoods and oriented so that major views terminate in parks, natural landmarks (such as the Sutter Buttes), or civic landmarks, to greatest extent feasible.

DESIGN POLICY 8.3 Streets serving commercial districts will have well-marked travel areas for pedestrians and bicyclists with frequent street crossings, and a comfortable and a visually pleasing streetscape environment.

DESIGN POLICY 8.4 Loading areas should be located in less visually prominent areas to avoid being a dominant part of the streetscape environment.

DESIGN POLICY 8.5 Commercial streetscapes should provide attractive entryways into the City with street trees and other landscaping, street furniture, and other improvements.

DESIGN POLICY 8.6 Streets in industrial and commercial areas will provide for transit stops with shade and comfortable spaces at transit stops and between transit stops and employment locations.

DESIGN POLICY 8.7 Streets in industrial areas will provide low-maintenance, attractive landscaping (Exhibit Design-34).



Exhibit Design-34. Attractive and Low-maintenance Landscaping for Industrial Streetscapes

DESIGN POLICY 8.8 Benches, trash receptacles, drinking fountains, bus shelters, signage, and other improvements should be located and designed to enhance the visual streetscape environment, consistent with City historic lighting and directional signage (Exhibit Design-35).



Exhibit Design-35. Attractive Streetscape Improvements – Benches, Trash Receptacles, Lighting Standards, Brick

Source: Source: City of Gridley, Streetscape Design Plan for Highway 99, 2002.

DESIGN GOAL 9:	To provide a complete urban tree canopy
DESIGN POLICY 9.1	Existing trees, including orchard trees, should be preserved along street rights of way.
DESIGN POLICY 9.2	In the Planned Growth Area, tree preservation along future street rights-of-way will be combined with planting of new street trees to provide both a short- and long-term tree canopy.
DESIGN POLICY 9.3	Street trees should be regularly spaced to provide a continuous canopy at maturity and shade both the street and sidewalk (Exhibit Design-36).
	
Exhibit Design-36. Regularly Spaced Street Trees that Provide a Continuous Canopy	
DESIGN POLICY 9.4	The City will add street trees in existing developed areas, as feasible, with the goal of providing a complete tree canopy.
DESIGN POLICY 9.5	Street trees in commercial areas should complement building facades and signage and shade sidewalks and most of the street.
DESIGN POLICY 9.6	New parking lots, whether in multiple-family, civic, commercial, or industrial projects, shall be well-landscaped and shaded (see also the Circulation Element).
Design Implementation Strategy 9.1	Following adoption of the 2030 General Plan, the City will adopt new landscaping standards and street tree standards and/or off street parking regulations (with landscaping standards), and will revise the Subdivision Ordinance, as necessary, to ensure consistency with tree planting and landscaping policies in the Community Character and Design Element.
Design Implementation Strategy 9.2	Following adoption of the 2030 General Plan, the City will adopt a tree preservation ordinance. This ordinance can provide regulatory guidance on what types of trees can be removed and what permits are required in order to remove different types of trees. The ordinance will provide guidance on tree replacement requirements. Tree replacement requirements will be proportional to the number and/or size of trees removed. The ordinance can provide guidance on several General Plan policy topics, including but not limited to aesthetic benefits, biological benefits, and cultural/historic significance of trees.

HIGHWAY 99

State Highway 99 bisects the Gridley community from south to north. It serves as a route for traffic moving through the State and as an arterial for local residents. Like many other communities bisected by a major highway, commercial uses and services have located along its frontage. Commercial signage and surface parking lots are two of the most dominant parts of the visual environment along Highway 99 today. To capture drive-by business from motorists, retail uses were provided in large shopping centers with expansive parking lots adjacent to the highway or in “strip commercial” developments. Vehicle sales of new and used cars and trucks chose to locate along the highway. Signage was designed at a large scale with primary colors to catch the attention of the motorist. Most of the buildings along SR 99 are not built to the front property line, but set back with off-street parking located at the highway frontage.



Exhibit Design-37. Urban Design Concepts for the Main Entrance to Downtown: Hazel Street

Source: City of Gridley. Visitor Development Action Plan. 2007.

Highway 99 provides the main north and south entrances into Gridley. The highway frontage presents the initial visual impression of the City (see the section on “Gateways” at the end of this Element). Additionally, the highway provides entrances from the west into the Downtown (via Spruce and Hazel streets).

The City has been investigating design solutions for the Highway 99 corridor for several years. In 2002, the City of Gridley received a combination of Caltrans planning grant and Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) monies for public participation and design charrettes to address contextually sensitive street design for the Highway 99 corridor through Gridley. The City’s 2002 Streetscape Design Plan for Highway 99 describes a range of improvements to the highway corridor and adjacent buildings. Certain elements of the Streetscape Design Plan are reflected in the Circulation Element of this General Plan. The City’s 2007 Visitor Development Action Plan also addresses beautification of Highway 99 and entryways into Downtown (Exhibit Design-37). This Plan addresses building façade treatments, parking, landscaping and signage. The policies included below include some of the design and aesthetic components from both the Streetscape Design Plan for Highway 99 and the Visitor Development Action Plan.

There are a few changes that could be made in the Highway 99 corridor over time that would better address local transportation, economic, aesthetic, and public safety needs. Some of these changes could occur as a part of new development along the highway.

Other changes could be pursued proactively by the City or other public agencies in advance of development.

Additional landscaping along the highway corridor is essential for the aesthetic environment. Adding street trees and other landscaping would provide a more inviting environment for pedestrians, bicyclists, transit users, and drivers that patronize businesses here (Exhibit Design-38). This would provide a much more comfortable environment for people, and would encourage motorists to slow down.



Exhibit Design-38. Trees, Separated Sidewalk

Source: City of Gridley, Streetscape Design Plan for Highway 99, 2002.

There are costs and benefits associated with improving the street tree canopy and other landscaping. Costs include planting and maintaining the landscaping. There are safety and aesthetic benefits associated with this landscaping plan, but also energy savings, air quality improvement, stormwater runoff reduction, and property value increase. Beautification of the Highway 99 corridor would encourage property owners to maintain or improve their properties, and could encourage additional infill development. Aesthetic improvements, therefore, are an important of the City's economic development strategy for this portion of the City.

The aesthetic environment along Highway 99 could also be improved through changes to the built environment. Development along Highway 99 could be designed so that in the future, building façades become more visually prominent over time compared to surface parking lots and commercial signage.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Statements from Gridley's General Plan Guiding Principles relevant to Highway 99 include:

- ✓ Gridley can grow without sacrificing the small-town character that we cherish.
- ✓ Growth will be according to our vision. Although Gridley is a small town, we insist on high-quality development, that meets our specific needs and preferences.

- ✓ Great small towns promote a feeling of connection among residents. New development should enhance this sense of connectivity. We should remove physical, economic, and social barriers that prevent us from being connected, whenever possible.
- ✓ Unique, locally-owned businesses are a critical part of small-town character. The City should encourage preservation, expansion, and establishment of local business.
- ✓ We believe that our long-term economic future greatly benefits from a unique, charming, small-town character.
- ✓ We believe that Gridley’s built environment should be distinct from new development in growing cities elsewhere in the Sacramento Valley.
- ✓ Trees shade us, clean our air, and are pleasing to the eye. A complete urban tree canopy that provides a pleasant and attractive streetscape is essential to our community’s character and quality of life.
- ✓ We should invest in, and support improvements along Highway 99 that draw visitors downtown.
- ✓ Streetscapes can be inviting, pleasant places to spend time, and these places should be designed with people in mind, not strictly to accommodate vehicles.
- ✓ We believe that the entire community will benefit from improving the Highway 99 corridor to create an active, pedestrian-friendly area where trees, well-designed buildings, and street furniture are the dominant visual features.
- ✓ Growth and change should benefit Gridley’s existing and future residents.

DESIGN GOAL 10: To improve the visual environment along the existing developed portion of Highway 99

DESIGN POLICY 10.1 Development along Highway 99 in the area around Spruce Street and Hazel Street should mostly consist of multi-story buildings built near the front property line, to create an attractive and pedestrian-friendly environment (Exhibit Design-39).

Exhibit Design-39. Multi-Story Buildings along Street Frontages Create a Pedestrian-friendly Streetscape



Source: City of Gridley, Streetscape Design Plan for Highway 99, 2002.

DESIGN POLICY 10.2 Properties located at the main entrances to Downtown, Spruce and Hazel Streets, should have generous landscaping and should use signage that is complementary to Downtown entryway signage and the Gridley archway.

DESIGN POLICY 10.3 New development and infill development north of West Liberty Road and south of Ord Ranch Road should construct buildings close to the front property line (Exhibit Design-40).



Exhibit Design-40. Buildings Close to the Front Property Line Enhance the Aesthetic Environment along Highway 99

Source: City of Gridley, Streetscape Design Plan for Highway 99, 2002.

DESIGN POLICY 10.4 The Highway 99 corridor should be improved by adding street trees and other landscaping and a separated sidewalk.

DESIGN POLICY 10.5 Street trees should be located and tree species selected to prioritize shade for sidewalks, parking areas, bus stops, and any public gathering places.

DESIGN POLICY 10.6 Street trees should also shade travel lanes to the greatest extent feasible.

DESIGN POLICY 10.8 Surface parking for uses along Highway 99 should be distributed around the subject site and not exclusively focused in front of buildings along the Highway.

DESIGN POLICY 10.9

Surface parking should be screened with landscaping, low attractive fencing, planters, and/or low brick or masonry and wrought iron walls to improve views from Highway 99 (Exhibit Design-41)



Exhibit 41. Screening of Parking Areas from Highway 99

Source: City of Gridley, Streetscape Design Plan for Highway 99, 2002.

DESIGN POLICY 10.11

The City will provide incentives for property owners that enhance building facades, as funding allows.

DESIGN POLICY 10.12

Existing curb cuts along Highway 99 should be consolidated, where possible, and new development should have access to and from local streets or share existing access points to Highway 99 (see also the Circulation Element).

DESIGN POLICY 10.13

The City will coordinate with BCAG and other relevant transit providers to construct attractive, shaded transit stops along the existing developed portion of Highway 99.

Design
 Implementation
 Strategy 10.1

Following adoption of the 2030 General Plan, the City will consider implementation of recommendations from the 2002 Streetscape Design Plan for Highway that are consistent with the General Plan. The City will consider implementation of these documents through revisions to the Zoning Ordinance, adoption of the documents by resolution, or through separate ordinances. Streetscape improvements should be focused on the area north of West Liberty Road and south of Ord Ranch Road (see also the Circulation Element). The City will coordinate with the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) and the Butte County Association of Governments (BCAG) to improve Highway 99 within the existing developed City into a more attractive and pedestrian-friendly environment, consistent with the 2030 General Plan. This could be accomplished by adding street trees, separated sidewalks, improving pedestrian/bicycle crossings for safety and aesthetics, and other measures.

Design Implementation Strategy 10.2	The City will proactively seek state and federal grant programs and other financing that could be used to encourage facade improvements along Highway 99.
Design Implementation Strategy 10.3	The City will consider formation of a Highway 99 Beautification Committee composed of City staff, business owners, Caltrans, BCAG (Butte County Association of Governments) and other key stakeholders to review and make recommendations for gateway and signage improvements along Highway 99.
Design Implementation Strategy 10.5	Following adoption of the 2030 General Plan, the City will consider preparation of a conceptual plan for the Highway 99 corridor north of Ord Ranch Road and south of South Avenue. This conceptual plan should be crafted in coordination with California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) and the Butte County Association of Governments (BCAG), and should provide for the aesthetic environment entering Gridley from the north that is specified in the 2030 General Plan. This conceptual plan should guide context-sensitive improvements to Highway 99 and the Highway 99 corridor in the Planned Growth Area. The City will proactively seek grant funding to support this conceptual planning effort.

COMMERCIAL AND INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT

Commercial and industrial projects can have a profound visual impact on small town character.¹ There are several vacant or underutilized sites planned with commercial and industrial land use designations. The planning and design of these large commercial and industrial sites can contribute positively to the community’s character, image, and livability with implementation of the goals and policies that follow.

Industrial land use designations are less visually prominent in the core areas of the City. Nonetheless, some industrial properties are located in areas that would be visible from a number of public viewing locations (such as public rights-of-way), and therefore industrial development is addressed in the material that follows.

There are many large properties designated for commercial development along Highway 99, the community’s main gateway. Commercial development is often specifically located and designed to be visually prominent from public rights-of-way. Large commercial projects often include standardized designs that may not serve Gridley’s

¹ For the purposes of this Element, large commercial and industrial projects would generally include buildings of 50,000 – 150,000 square feet and would generally involve properties of five acres or more in size.

specific needs, and would not necessarily be consistent with General Plan goals. For example, commercial development often proposes a relatively tall one-story building without prominent entryways, windows, and with little façade interest. Many commercial developments are unattractive due to acres of parking located in visually prominent areas along the street frontage. Retail developments often propose parking in excess of local requirements, which can negatively affect aesthetics and pedestrian comfort. This Element anticipates and addresses the most important design issues for commercial development, including:

- ✓ The desired relationship with the surrounding built environment;
- ✓ Pedestrian safety and comfort;
- ✓ The appropriate amount and design of surface parking;
- ✓ Architectural design, color, and building materials; and,
- ✓ Landscaping.

Communications facilities may not take up as much acreage as other types of commercial facilities, but because communications towers are tall, they can be seen from many public viewing points within the community, and therefore could have a profound affect on community aesthetics. These facilities are also addressed below.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Statements from Gridley’s General Plan Guiding Principles relevant to large-scale development include:

- ✓ Gridley can grow without sacrificing the small-town character that we cherish.
- ✓ Growth will be according to our vision. Although Gridley is a small town, we insist on high-quality development, that meets our specific needs and preferences.
- ✓ A livable community is one with parks, schools, shops, and other destinations that are oriented to our neighborhoods and designed for people, rather than oriented toward busy roadways and designed exclusively for auto access.
- ✓ We believe that Gridley’s built environment should be distinct from new development in growing cities elsewhere in the Sacramento Valley.
- ✓ For safe and convenient travel, we need short blocks, connectivity, frequent through streets, extension of the historic grid, and ample on- and off-street pedestrian and bicycle pathways.

DESIGN GOAL 11: To provide for pedestrian safety and comfort in large-scale commercial projects

DESIGN POLICY 11.1 Commercial projects on properties of more than 10 acres in size shall break up blocks with public streets or small private streets (see also the Circulation Element).

DESIGN POLICY 11.2 Large-scale commercial projects should provide small-scale retail shops with separate entrances along the perimeter of the site to provide visual interest, easy access, and more diverse shopping opportunities.

DESIGN POLICY 11.3 New development shall not concentrate more than 60 percent of the total proposed parking spaces between the front building façade and the primary abutting street (Exhibit Design-42).



Exhibit Design-42. Parking and Loading Area Provided in Back of Building

DESIGN POLICY 11.4 New development shall provide shade trees or a combination of shade trees and constructed shade structures in surface parking lots (see also the Circulation Element) (Exhibit Design-43).



Exhibit Design-43. Parking Lot Shade Structure

DESIGN POLICY 11.5 The City will encourage new development to use constructed shade structures in parking lots for active solar systems by not counting these structures toward lot coverage maximums and by providing flexibility in landscaping standards.

DESIGN POLICY 11.6 Surface parking lots shall provide defined pedestrian walkways that directly connect parking areas with building entrances.

DESIGN POLICY 11.7

Pedestrian walkways through parking lots should be shaded by trees or shade structures (Exhibit Design-44).



Exhibit Design-44. Shaded Pedestrian Walkway

DESIGN POLICY 11.8

New commercial development shall provide comfortable outdoor seating areas available for public use, as appropriate (Exhibit Design-45).



Exhibit Design-45. Shaded Street Furniture for Public Use

DESIGN POLICY 11.9

New commercial developments shall provide secure locking of bicycles in visually prominent locations (Exhibit Design-46).



Exhibit Design-46. Secure Bicycle Storage

Design Implementation Strategy 11.1

Following adoption of the General Plan, the City will review projects for consistency with the Community Character Design Element, conditioning projects where necessary. The City will also consider preparation of a Design Manual or Design Guidelines to implement the Community Character and Design Element during General Plan buildout.

DESIGN GOAL 12: To ensure attractive site and building design in commercial projects.

DESIGN POLICY 12.1

Large commercial building walls that front public rights-of-way shall be articulated with wall recesses and projections, windows, balconies, awnings, a mix of color and materials, and other techniques that visually break up wall massing and perceived building scale (Exhibit Design-47).

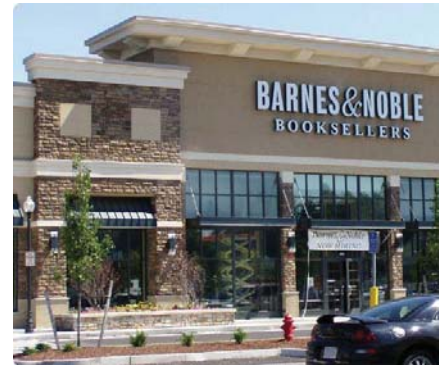


Exhibit Design-47. Windows, Wall Recesses, Mix of Color and Materials Break Up Wall Massing

DESIGN POLICY 12.3

Doors, windows, signage, and awnings should be scaled and located for pedestrians (Exhibit Design-48).



Exhibit Design-48. Doors, Windows, and Awnings at Pedestrian Level

DESIGN POLICY 12.4

Rooflines should be varied to add architecture interest to the building.

DESIGN POLICY 12.5

Rooflines shall be designed to screen rooftop mechanical equipment from view (Exhibit Design-49).



Exhibit Design-49. Varied Roofline

DESIGN POLICY 12.6

The use of parapets to hide flat roofs and equipment and the use of sloped roofs and entry roofs or canopies is encouraged.

DESIGN POLICY 12.7

New developments shall provide easily identifiable pedestrian-scaled building entrances (Exhibit Design-50).



Exhibit Design-50. Identifiable, Pedestrian Scaled Entry

DESIGN POLICY 12.8

New development should use subtle colors with low reflective value and high quality exterior materials such as brick, wood, native stone and tinted/textured concrete masonry units for sides of proposed buildings that front onto a public street (Exhibit Design-51).



Exhibit Design-51. High-Quality Building Materials

DESIGN POLICY 12.9

Trash and recycling receptacles used for new commercial development operations shall be screened from public view by landscaping, decorative walls, or fencing.

DESIGN POLICY 12.10

Site lighting shall be attractive and complementary to the building and designed to prevent glare. Lighting adjacent to Highway 99 shall be compatible with Gridley's historic lights (Exhibit Design-52).



Exhibit Design-52. Attractive Lighting Standard that Directs Light Downward to Avoid Glare

DESIGN POLICY 12.13	Commercial projects located adjacent to existing residential development should step down building height, where necessary, to reduce perceived scale.
DESIGN POLICY 12.14	Surface parking areas shall be screened from public street view with landscaping, low fencing, and/or low walls.
DESIGN POLICY 12.15	Pedestrian walkways connecting parking areas to building entrances should use special pavers, scored concrete or other decorative surfaces.
Design Implementation Strategy 12.1	Following adoption of the General Plan, the City will review new large-scale commercial projects for consistency with the Community Character Design Element, conditioning projects where necessary. The City will also consider preparation of a Design Manual or Design Guidelines to implement the Community Character and Design Element during General Plan buildout.

DESIGN GOAL 13:	To provide attractive industrial sites that are compatible with surrounding uses.
DESIGN POLICY 13.1	The arrangement or design of buildings to respect the scale of neighboring non-industrial buildings, including “stepping down” of proposed building heights in areas adjacent to existing smaller buildings.
DESIGN POLICY 13.2	New large industrial building walls that face public streets shall be articulated with wall recesses and projections, windows, a mix of color, murals, and/or the use of landscaped screening to visually break up wall massing and perceived building scale.
DESIGN POLICY 13.3	New industrial developments should distribute proposed parking around the project site and not concentrate a large amount of parking exclusively between the front building façade and the primary abutting street.
DESIGN POLICY 13.4	Signage for new industrial developments should be integrated with signage for nearby industrial uses, where feasible, and shall be designed to be compatible with the surrounding environment.
Design Implementation Strategy 13.1	Following adoption of the General Plan, the City will review new industrial projects for consistency with the Community Character Design Element, conditioning projects where necessary. The City will also consider preparation of a Design Manual or Design Guidelines to implement the Community Character and Design Element during General Plan buildout.

DESIGN GOAL 14:	To ensure that new communications facilities are sensitive to the local visual environment
DESIGN POLICY 14.1	Whenever possible, telecommunications facilities should be located in areas that are not prominently visible from public rights-of-way.
DESIGN POLICY 14.2	Telecommunications facilities should not be located in areas where prominent views of the Sutter Buttes would be interrupted.
DESIGN POLICY 14.3	Telecommunications facilities should be consolidated and co-located in order to reduce the visual impact to the community.
DESIGN POLICY 14.4	Telecommunications facilities should be designed to blend with the visual environment and disguised as trees, similar in type and height to surrounding trees, where feasible.

GATEWAYS

Gateways are key announcements of arrival into a city. These entrances can create a sense of civic pride and identity. Gateway corridors can be emphasized with landscaping, lighting, signs, public art, banners and/or gate markers. The placement and design of buildings can also contribute to the sense of arrival and departure.

There are a number of entrances into Gridley. Approaching the City from the south and north, Highway 99 serves as a gateway. From Interstate 5 and Colusa County, the Colusa Highway/Sycamore Street linkage provides entrance into Gridley from the west. West Biggs-Gridley Road with its connection to several Gridley streets including Spruce, Hazel and Sycamore allows residents to move between Biggs and Gridley. East Gridley Road connects Highway 70 to Highway 99 and Gridley.

Gateways can also be located within a city to highlight an important area of a community. The Visitor Development Action Plan identified Hazel Street at Highway 99 as a “gateway intersection” into Downtown. The City is currently implementing this recommendation for a Downtown gateway. Additionally, “wayfinding” signage along the highway is an important aspect for directing motorists to the interior portions of the City for public services and uses (City Hall, Post Office, Hospital, and Fairgrounds), Downtown retail businesses and destinations west of the City limits, such as Gray Lodge Wildlife Area.

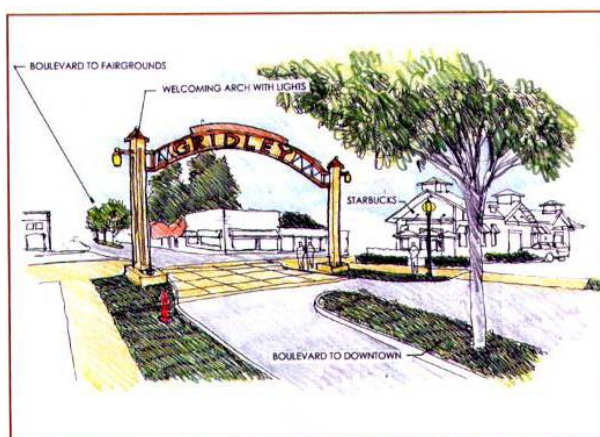


Exhibit Design-53. Gateways

Along the western and eastern edges of the town, agricultural uses give way to large parcel ranchettes and finally more dense residential development as one enters the City. These approaches signal an arrival into an urbanized area and may not require further delineation.

There are existing gateway signs into Gridley along Highway 99 from both north and south approaches. Both these signs and locations would be benefited with more graphically-pleasing design and enhanced landscaping as recommended in the Visitor Development Action Plan. A Highway Beautification Committee could initially work on basic design guidelines for these signs and wayfinding signage along the highway frontage as recommended in the action plan.

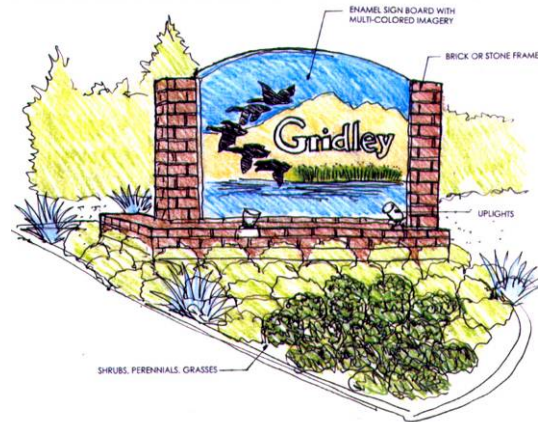


Exhibit Design-54. Gateway Sign

Travelers along Highway 99 experience a rural visual environment entering Gridley from the north. From the north, the large trees at the Gridley-Biggs Cemetery announce your arrival in the community. From the south, the rural transition is less apparent. Here, scattered orchard trees transition to billboards and commercial developments. While the City wishes to improve the stretch of Highway 99 between West Liberty Road and Ord Ranch Road to enhance the aesthetic environment, policies for the Highway 99 corridor outside the existing developed City seek to preserve the rural aesthetic environment on the north side of Gridley. The City wishes to beautify the appearance of the City from the south, as well.

This General Plan anticipates land use change north of the existing City in the Planned Growth Area (see the Land Use Element). As described in the Land Use Element, Open Space Element, Circulation Element, and in this Element, land use change north of the City will occur while preserving the visual transition from rural to urban along Highway 99. Orchard trees will be preserved, where possible. West of Highway 99, new trees will be planted along with earthen berms to visually screen new neighborhoods from the corridor. The aesthetic relationship with the agricultural landscape will also be preserved through new agricultural industrial development east of Highway 99 (see the Land Use Element). Compared to the aesthetic improvements anticipated along the existing developed portion of Highway 99, a more rural aesthetic will be perpetuated in the Planned Growth Area, even as new development occurs.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

One statement from Gridley’s General Plan Guiding Principles is relevant to gateways:

- ✓ We believe that the entire community will benefit from improving the Highway 99 corridor to create an active, pedestrian-friendly area where trees, well-designed buildings, and street furniture are the dominant visual features.

DESIGN GOAL 15:	To ensure that community gateways provide an immediate positive visual impression
DESIGN POLICY 15.1	Commercial signage in community gateway areas should be attractive and should not obscure community wayfinding signage.
DESIGN POLICY 15.2	Community gateways should have preserved vegetation and new and landscaping to enhance the aesthetic environment.
DESIGN POLICY 15.3	For developed properties in community gateway areas, attractive building façades, rather than surface parking or signage, should be the visually prominent features.
Design Implementation Strategy 15.1	The City will consider formation of a Highway 99 Beautification Committee composed of City staff, business owners, Caltrans, BCAG (Butte County Association of Governments) and other key stakeholders to review and make recommendations for gateway and signage improvements along Highway 99 (see also Design Implementation Strategy 10.3).
DESIGN GOAL 16:	To maintain the rural aesthetic transition into Gridley from the north and improve the visual entry to the City from the south along Highway 99
DESIGN POLICY 16.1	Developments in the Planned Growth Area shall preserve trees, including orchard trees, and provide additional landscaping and earthen berms west of the Highway for visual screening, where feasible.
DESIGN POLICY 16.2	The City will allow signage, consistent with the City’s directional and way finding sign program, along Highway 99 in the Planned Growth Area advertising businesses located in Neighborhood Centers in order to promote the viability of commercial operations in these areas.
Design Implementation Strategy 16.1	Following adoption of the 2030 General Plan, the City will examine opportunities to fund drainage, earthen berms, bicycle trails, landscaping, and related improvements on a fair-share basis by development in the Planned Growth Area along Highway 99 north of the City. Please refer to the Open Space Element for more detail.

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