

# City of Willows

## DOWNTOWN REVITALIZATION PLAN

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City of Willows

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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In October 2002 a project to develop a downtown Willows revitalization strategy was launched. The Chico firm of Downtown Revitalization Consultants was engaged as primary consultant, working in conjunction with the staff of The Center for Economic Development, CSU Chico. The City of Willows and the Tri-County Economic Development Corporation (TCEDC) jointly served as Project Clients.

The Project was broken down into two components, as follows:

### Component 1:

1. The Consulting Team to carry out a review of background information such as relevant past plans and studies.
2. The Consulting Team to work with the Downtown Revitalization Task Force to develop list of key issues to be addressed within the strategy.
3. The Consulting Team to develop recommendations for a specific Downtown Commercial Marketing Strategy.

### Component 2:

1. The Consulting Team to prepare an inventory of empty buildings and commercial properties within the downtown area.
2. The Consulting Team to prepare a market value analysis for each of the properties identified within the vacant property inventory.
3. The Consulting Team to determine highest and best development options for each of the properties identified within the vacant property inventory.

After identifying the Project Ad Hoc Task Force, comprised of local business community leaders, numerous planning meetings as well as a public workshop were held during the project period. The following items, issues and recommendations resulted from this series of planning meetings.

An important aspect of this study involved the identification of "general issues of local concern". During the first planning meeting, these issues were identified and discussed in a traditional roundtable format. See page 7 for results of this effort.

The creation of a Downtown Willows Commercial Marketing Program was next on the agenda. Numerous marketing-related topics were planned for discussion and development, as follows:

- 1) It was agreed by the Consultants and the Task Force that there are three distinct markets that need to be addressed within the context of this marketing strategy document.
  - a) The Local Market: This market is made up of residents of the immediate Willows community. (approximately 9,000 total population). A "Shop Willows First" Program was suggested as a primary means of mitigating the current heavy loss of retail sales dollars to neighboring communities such as Chico and Yuba City. In that regard, a Willows Retail Sales Leakage Study was completed by The Center for Economic Development (see Appendix II, page 55).
  - b) The Regional Market: This market is made up of residents of the greater Willows area. (Those living within the general area bounded by Williams to the south and Orland to the north). The marketing program: "Come To Willows And Save" marketing campaign has been suggested as a means of attracting this specific market (see page 15, and Appendix IV, page 68).

- c) The I-5 Market: This market is made up of the approximate 44,440 daily motorists traveling through Willows on I-5. A "Welcome Travelers" marketing approach has been suggested for all local members of the hospitality industry such as businesses providing vehicle services, traveler services, food, drink, lodging and specialty retail, (see page 13).
- 2) Focused attention was paid to the two related marketing topics regarding what would be the most effective and appropriate new commercial marketing theme for downtown Willows as well as what possible graphic design would most effectively illustrate that marketing theme. The following themes were specifically supported by the Task Force:
  - a) Emphasize local natural resources such as wildlife and waterfowl.
  - b) Emphasize Willows agrarian heritage as it is associated with rice production.
  - c) Place emphasis on Willows small town atmosphere and friendly, family-oriented, personal service.
- 3) Civic beautification and directional signage was an issue which gained a great deal of the Task Force's attention. It was felt that additional signage along I-5 was necessary if the marketing strategy program is to be fully effective. Additionally, various civic beautification improvement projects would be essential to the marketing program's success.

A potential downtown facade improvement program was discussed at length, (see page 22 and Appendix VI, page 71).

- 4) The challenge of how to fill the large number of current commercial vacancies with the most desirable new businesses was a major concern of the Task Force. A Shopper Preference Survey was carried out to determine which possible new businesses might enjoy the strongest patronage from Willows residents, (see page 30, and Appendix XI, page 96).
- 5) The issue of how the above-recommended commercial marketing programs might be funded toward implementation was discussed at length by the Task Force. Several possible funding sources were discussed, among them financing obtained through the City of Willows as a public sector source, or private sector financing originating from either the Willows Chamber of Commerce and/or some other local business advocacy organization, or finally, a possible public/private sector partnership brought about by the establishment of either a downtown or citywide Business Improvement District (BID) (page 36, and Appendix IX, page 91).
- 6) The document concludes with several recommendations for future consideration. Among these recommendations are the further development and implementation of a creative and colorful commercial marketing program. The implementation of a downtown beautification and signage program that might include a public arts program as well as the construction of one or more entryway arches such as found in other communities within the region.
- 7) Finally, suggestions for assignment of responsibility for implementation of each program are provided in a table format within each section.

## **COMPONENT 1: SECTION 1 - INTRODUCTION**

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### **PROJECT INTRODUCTION**

Today, as in the past, the Willows downtown commercial area represents a valuable asset to its citizens, the business community and the municipality of Willows. The overall fabric of the traditional commercial area, its character, personality and history, and the interest of business, civic and community groups in its maintenance and enrichment, offers testimonial to the potential to further enhance the role of Willows Downtown commercial district as the unique historic focal point of the community.

This Downtown Willows Commercial Marketing Strategy Program is designed to be the vehicle providing easily implemented guidelines in the form of numerous individual programs that have been created as City Staff, TCEDC Representatives and business community leaders met in planning sessions over a period of five months. Furthermore, this program is designed to be merchant-driven. It is hoped that a long-term supply of fuel in the form of a dependable year-to-year funding source will become available through the effective cooperation of the public and private sectors.

These program recommendations will explore various improvement projects and funding sources. The continued close cooperation and bond between the business community and the City of Willows is seen as the most important means of guaranteeing funding for the ongoing economic and physical revitalization effort.

### **PROJECT SCOPE OF WORK**

As indicated above, within the Professional Services Agreement between Tri-County Economic Development Corporation, (Client), and Downtown Revitalization Consultants, (Consultant), the project Scope of Work was broken down into two distinct components, as follows:

#### **COMPONENT 1:**

1. Carry out review of background information such as relevant past plans and studies.
2. Work together with Downtown Revitalization Task Force to develop list of key issues to be addressed within the strategy.
3. Develop recommendations for a specific Downtown Commercial Marketing Strategy.
4. Provide a written report to TCEDC and the City of Willows.

#### **COMPONENT 2:**

1. Prepare an inventory of empty buildings and commercial properties within the downtown area.
2. Prepare a market value analysis for each of the properties identified within the vacant property inventory.
3. Determine highest and best development options for each of the properties identified within the vacant property inventory.
4. Provide a written report to TCEDC and City of Willows.

## ORGANIZATION OF THE PROJECT TASK FORCE

One of the first activities of this project was to solicit participation in the planning process on the part of local business community leaders. Interested individuals were informed that the project would involve five months of economic development planning meetings. (See Appendix I, page 53 for copy of original letter).

A diversity of business types was sought during the initial organization of this leadership group. It was acknowledged that all members of this Ad Hoc Committee/Task Force would, by nature, most likely be members of that traditional group of community leaders comprising 10% of the population while accomplishing 90% of local improvement programs and projects work; in other words, very busy, committed individuals. This group was ultimately composed of a wide range of individuals mutually committed to making Willows a better place to live through improvements in the local economy.

Task Force members included several City Council members, the current President of the Willows Chamber of Commerce, the owner of Willows' primary visitor attractor, the Thunderhill Raceway and several restaurateurs and retailers as well as a banker and a mortician. Throughout the planning process, members of this new Committee ultimately volunteered many hours as they met over lunch as well as during various evening public workshops.

Attendance was excellent throughout the length of the multi-month planning schedule with several workshop meetings involving a total of nearly forty Downtown business and property owners.

All Task Force members, as well as any other participating businesses, were supplied with extensive meeting notes within a few days of each meeting's adjournment. Additionally, bi-monthly project progress reports were supplied to Task Force members. The quality of Willows business community leadership demonstrated during the planning, development and completion of this marketing program, as well as during the completion of the tasks listed above, was exceptional.

This high degree of community leadership bodes well for future marketing program success if these same individuals, and others like them, can be kept involved during the all important program implementation phase. **The rationale offered within this recommended strategy is based upon existing members of the Project Task Force remaining active throughout the implementation phase.**

## COMPONENT 1: SECTION 2 - GENERAL ISSUES OF LOCAL CONCERN.

### DISCUSSION OF GENERAL ISSUES OF LOCAL CONCERN

One of the primary requirements of this project was to determine the "list of key issues" that were felt to be the most important aspects of any effort to revitalize the downtown Willows business district. As a result of initial group planning sessions, the following specific issues of concern were gathered and processed, as follows:

#### **1) Downtown Business Mix:**

- No more churches, government or non-profit uses are desired within the downtown area. More retail stores are needed.
- Consideration should be given to making the downtown district the primary Willows retail zone.

#### **2) Issues Regarding Directional Signage:**

- One specific sign on I-5 currently reads "Oroville-Highway 162" with no mention of Willows.
- A specific entryway or designated gateway to the downtown community is needed.
- Currently I-5 traffic by-passes Willows in favor of both Orland and Williams where much better signage is provided. Additional signage to get travelers off of I-5 and into Willows, and then into downtown is needed.

#### **3) There Needs To Be A Specific Commercial Marketing Program And Theme:**

- There is a need to create and implement a realistic and appropriate theme-based commercial marketing campaign. Willows history might be a good beginning.
- There is a need to create a market demand. I-5 travelers are currently by-passing the community. Drawing people into the downtown area is critical. Without being able to attract visitors and shoppers into the downtown area, Willows will continue to have a problem.
- There should be an effort to get people off of I-5 through niche marketing.
- A clear and consistent identification of the project area is currently lacking.
- Additional cross-marketing between Thunderhill Raceway and Downtown Willows is strongly suggested. Mutual advertising needs to be more developed and focused. Franco's Restaurant is benefited by those in town for the raceway since it can accommodate large groups.

#### **4) Local Retail Sales Leakage To Chico And Surrounding Communities:**

- Many local shoppers go to Chico for much of their goods and services. The business community needs to target Willows residents to keep community members shopping locally. The business community needs to develop an effective "Shop Locally" and/or "Shop Willows First" campaign that could be implemented as part of the overall new Willows Commercial Marketing Program.

#### **5) Limited Business Hours:**

- Inconsistent hours of business operation is a local problem. Store hours vary from business to business and is not consistent.
- It was noted that no auto parts stores are open on weekends.

#### **6) General Appearance Of The Downtown Area:**

- The sidewalks in the downtown area are in dire need of cleaning.

**7) Downtown Real Estate Issues:**

- Local commercial properties have been neglected and not kept up to date.
- There is a problem with getting potential investors and/or tenants interested in downtown's available buildings. Utilities, infrastructure of buildings needs to be updated.
- Underground water issues in some of the downtown buildings are also of great concern.
- Consider re-designing the downtown Willows mall, and other larger commercial buildings, by developing additional space for small businesses, similar to the new design of Chico's North Valley Plaza.
- The vacant Daughtery building is also a concern. This vacant building has been a chronic problem within the downtown area.
- Many downtown buildings are owned by out-of-towners. There needs to find a way to contact absentee owners and get them more involved.

**8) Commercial Recruitment Issues:**

- A balance of services and business types downtown is needed. Big Box retailers, such as Wal-Mart have a huge impact on the attraction of new businesses into the downtown area.
- Sponsorship of the development and implementation of an effective commercial recruitment program is needed.

**9) Local Housing Shortage Issues:**

- A problem to consider, and work to mitigate, is the current housing shortage in Willows. Many people currently working in Willows live out of town and spend the money they earn in other communities.
- Traffic studies have been done showing the heavy traffic on Hwy. 162 during commute hours reflects the large number of people coming in the morning, such as teachers, and leaving in the evening.

## **COMPONENT 1: SECTION 3 - DOWNTOWN COMMERCIAL MARKETING PROGRAM**

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### **TASK FORCE ISSUES AND SUGGESTIONS**

During one of the earliest meetings, the question "what would be the most appropriate and desirable new commercial marketing program?" was asked. The following commercial marketing concepts were discussed individually as each Task Force Member provided personal input:

#### **I-5 Related Suggestions:**

- Tourism attraction from I-5. Convert tourists and travelers into visitors and consumers.
- There must be more and better signage on I-5 directing travelers and visitors into the downtown area.
- Work to see that a southbound rest stop is developed on I-5.

#### **Sales Leakage Issues:**

- Slowing retail sales leakage to neighboring communities.
- Get local newspapers more involved in an organized effort to make the local community more aware of Shopping Willows.

#### **Commercial Recruitment Programs:**

- Attracting new businesses to fill vacancies.
- It is agreed that the downtown area needs a wider variety of shops if it hopes to attract more shoppers and visitors.
- Sponsor an aggressive commercial recruitment - promotion campaign.

#### **Signage and Entryway Issues:**

- Sponsoring a new directional signage program.
- Consider information kiosks.
- More and better signage into the downtown area.
- Work to improve and focus Caltrans signage on I-5.
- Change name of major entryway into Willows to "Gateway Boulevard".
- The possibility of using one or more entryway features that would welcome shoppers and visitors into the downtown area was supported by the Committee. These features might take the form of an entryway arch, entryway signage and/or monument.

#### **Issues Relative To Need For More Local Attractions:**

- Develop more attractors for visitors, sponsor theme-based festivals, etc.
- Place more emphasis on Thunderhill as a local attraction.
- Develop cross marketing programs between Thunderhill and downtown businesses.
- Place more emphasis on the Sacramento Wildlife Refuge as a local attraction.
- Develop a brochure, with a map, to promote local items and/or areas of special interest.

#### **Downtown Appearance:**

- Improving appearance of downtown Willows.
- Downtown needs to be made more attractive and "quaint".
- Existing vacancies need to be cleaned up.

- The issue of Downtown needing to be better maintained and cleaned up was discussed. This concern will largely be resolved upon the completion of the ongoing City of Willows plan regarding infrastructure improvements, sidewalk improvements, etc.

**Other:**

- Continue to develop the "Historic Route 99" program now being sponsored by the Chamber of Commerce.
- Review, and possibly improve, existing government planning and approval process to determine if there are hidden barriers to local entry or expansion of businesses.
- Work to resolve the current housing shortage within the community.

**COMMERCIAL MARKETS TO ADDRESS**

The following are definitions of the three Willows commercial markets identified by the Task Force, with examples of business types and marketing programs for each:

**THE LOCAL MARKET**

This market is made up of residents of the immediate Willows community.  
(approximate 9,000 total population)

1. Business types in this category: Community serving businesses such as gift stores, banks, hardware stores, grocery stores, automotive supplies, barbers and beauty salons.
2. Marketing Program: "Shop Willows First, Buy In Willows And Save" Campaign
  - Carry out a public relations program emphasizing the virtues and benefits of shopping locally
  - Produce a directory of locally provided goods and services
  - Use local advertising opportunities

**THE REGIONAL MARKET**

This market is made up of residents of the greater Willows area.  
(Those living within the general area bounded by Williams to the south and Orland to the north).

1. Business types in this category: Regional serving businesses such as auto dealerships, larger restaurants, appliance sales and other businesses providing goods and services consumers are willing to travel moderate distances for.
2. Marketing Program: "Come To Willows And Save"

**THE I-5 MARKET**

This market is made up of the approximate 44,440 daily travelers using I-5 including two separate sub-types of motorists:

1. Motorists using I-5 for business related travel.
  - Long-distance motor transport drivers or individual sales representative traveling from Portland to San Francisco, etc.

2. Motorists using I-5 for recreational-tourism related travel.

- Business types in this category: Members of the hospitality industry such as businesses providing vehicle services, traveler services, food, drink, lodging and specialty retail. Most of these businesses are currently located nearby I-5.
- Marketing Program: "Welcome Travelers"  
Example: A family traveling from the Pacific Northwest Region to Disneyland.

Note: There are categories of businesses that serve all three markets such as service stations and food service providers.

GENERAL ACTIVITIES RELATED TO PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT

- **Create marketing programs** intended to slow or eliminate the community shopper's habit of traveling to nearby Chico and Yuba City as well as larger metropolitan shopping alternatives in Sacramento and San Francisco.
- **Develop merchandising programs** designed to compete more effectively with national retail merchandising outlets offering warehouse provided goods and services.
- **Carry out public relations programs** intended to make the community shopper more sensitive to the need to support locally owned and operated businesses. Emphasize the community-wide benefits of sales tax revenues as a primary means of financial support for community services such as police and fire protection. Special emphasis should be placed on encouraging those hundreds of individuals who work in Willows but live and shop in other communities. They should be strongly encouraged to spend, and thus reinvest, the money they earned in Willows back into the community that provides their jobs.

COMMERCIAL MARKETING PROGRAM THEMES

After considerable group study and discussion, the following specific theme-based marketing concepts have won a strong majority of the study group's support.

1. **Wildlife: Waterfowl, Flyway, Migration, Mother Goose, Wildlife Refuge, Duck and Pheasant Hunting, etc.**

Possible marketing phrases:

- "Welcome to Willows and All the Natural Resources It Has to Offer"
- "Willows, On the Flyway Highway"
- "Willows, The Home of Mother Goose"
- "Willows, Where Water is King"
- "Winter Waterfowl Wonderland"
- "Experience the Wildlife of Willows"

2. **Agriculture: "Welcome To Willows, We're Wild About Rice"**  
(possibly promote wild rice)

3. **Small Town Atmosphere, friendly, family-oriented, personal service, "Friendly Family Serviceability"**

4. **Outdoors Activities: Hunting, etc.**
5. **Local Activities: Thunderhill Racetrack, Lamb Derby, etc.**
6. **History and Historic Architecture, downtown, Victorians, etc.**
7. **"Willows, Gateway to the Mendocino National Forest"**
8. **"Welcome to Willows, Visit And Enjoy Our Natural Resources"**
9. **"Willows, City of Murals"**  
(A wall mural program could illustrate any, or all, of the topics suggested in items 1 through 8, above).

### COMMERCIAL MARKETING GRAPHICS

Graphic artwork to illustrate the commercial marketing theme and program in a colorful and creative way will be necessary. The marketing program, when ready for implementation, could include design suggestions for the purpose of producing a thematic graphic illustration to be used as a primary marketing strategy tool. This artwork would also serve the purpose of a long-term theme/image tool to be used to accentuate and promote Willows architectural heritage and historic significance.

Possible specific details of the marketing design might include a turn-of-the century nostalgia concept, family scenes, examples of local architectural heritage and historic buildings, etc. This graphic artwork can also be used for the development of public relations oriented items such as posters, garments, postcards, placemats and newspaper advertising.

Furthermore, this design may also serve well as the subject of an oversized wall mural possibly located at the entrance of the traditional business community area, as is currently being done in many other cities striving to develop a marketing strategy theme.

During one recent program planning meeting, several examples of commercial marketing designs used by other cities with BID-sponsored marketing programs were displayed and discussed. The Committee was asked for any personal input concerning what design(s) might be used with the Willows Downtown commercial marketing campaign.

The following specific suggestions regarding the design of a commercial marketing graphic, and possible wall mural, were discussed by the Committee.

1. **Wildlife: Waterfowl, Flyway, Migration, Mother Goose, Wildlife Refuge, Duck and Pheasant Hunting, etc.**
2. **Agriculture: "Welcome To Willows, We're Wild About Rice", (possibly promote wild rice)**
3. **Friendly Small Town Atmosphere: Small town family-oriented community characterized by friendly, personal service.**

(See example of designs from other similar marketing themes in Appendix VII, page 78).

## COMMERCIAL MARKETING COMMITTEE

During Task Force planning sessions concerns were raised regarding the issue of who, or what group, specifically, will be responsible for picking the commercial marketing theme and possible accompanying graphic design.

Traditionally these decisions are made by a Commercial Marketing Committee whose membership is chosen for their interest, experience and creativity. This group usually tends to be one of the largest and most active of all committees delegated to carry out a Downtown Economic Revitalization Program.

Further questions were raised during Task Force meetings concerning the organizational structure of the program and how the marketing program might be funded. The answer to these important questions lies within the issue of whether a Business Improvement District (BID) is established to manage the programs as suggested by the consultant or whether some other and organizational structure is chosen. The establishment of a BID resolves numerous related program management issues including what organizational structure will be adopted, who will be responsible for program management and how the various programs will be funded, (see page 36, and Appendix IX, page 91).

## SPECIFIC COMPONENTS OF PROPOSED PROGRAM

### **TOURISM MARKETING PROGRAM**

The Commercial Marketing Program is designed to stimulate increased tourism activity. The Committee should focus on the creation of an aggressive campaign exploring ways and means of bringing more tourism activity into the traditional Downtown business community by developing and offering a theme that would work well when promoting the City of Willows on a regional basis.

A creative and colorful promotion program using outdoor advertising could potentially attract and retain a portion of the approximately 44,440 daily travelers as they pass through Willows on I-5. Caltrans most recent daily traffic count, combining both southbound and northbound traffic passing through Willows on I-5, is 20,200 vehicles per day. The general formula used to determine number of occupants per vehicle is 2.2, which results in a total of approximately 44,440 travelers per day. Therefore, if only 10% of them stopped in Willows that would add 4,440 new visitors and consumers daily. If the Willows marketing program was able to attract only 1%, this would equate to 444 new visitors, and potential consumers.

#### **Outdoor Advertising on I-5**

Hospitality Industry Marketing Themes: Targeting I-5 travelers.

Basic Theme...Willows Offers Affordable and Convenient Hospitality To The Traveler:

Several possible marketing phrases:

- 1) Welcome Travelers! Experience Affordable Willows Friendly Old Fashioned Hospitality as well as the Best Visitor Values in Northern California. Vacation for Less. Stop in Willows and Save.
- 2) Exit To Willows....A Community That Provides Affordable Accommodations For The Whole Family. Friendly Willows Offers Weary Travelers A Full Range Of Visitor Services, Quality Restaurants And Excellent Shopping.

- 3) Discover Friendly, Affordable Willows, Conveniently Located On I-5, Midway between Portland And Los Angeles.

Another possible means of traveler-oriented advertising discussed by the Task Force involved the placement of advertising at nearby rest stops along I-5. It is understood the Willows Chamber of Commerce is currently looking into this visitor-oriented marketing opportunity. (See Appendix V, page 69 for specific Caltrans signage requirements.)

#### **Advertising In Regional Travel Publications**

It is recommended that the marketing program sponsor a series of display ads in one or more of the most popular travel-related publications such as Sunset, Via and the Exit Information Guide.

#### **Possible Narrative For Willows Travel-Related Brochure**

"Welcome to Willows, gateway to northern California's scenic natural wonderland. Oasis-like Willows is situated within a cradle of natural features which includes the Sutter Buttes to the East and the Mendocino National Forest and the Coast Range to the West.

Additionally, of special interest to hunters and bird watchers is the annual Snow Goose Festival taking place in January of each year. Overall, this unique area of natural beauty and **ideal climactic conditions** offers visitors unlimited opportunities for hiking and hunting as well as simply relaxing in an area of scenic beauty that is unrivaled within hundreds of miles.

In addition to its scenery, natural resources and small town friendly atmosphere, Willows offers shoppers and visitors a balanced **diversity of goods and services** through its many locally owned businesses offering a **hometown ambiance, hospitality and personal service**.

Willows offers travelers its well-known local **hospitality** through its many restaurants, traveler services and lodging facilities."

#### **"Historic Highway 99" Tourism Attraction Program**

This marketing campaign is best defined as a multi-county traveler-related promotional concept.

The purpose of this program will be to create a forty-page newspaper style publication which highlights Historic Route 99 for the communities of Williams, Maxwell, Willows, Orland, Corning and Red Bluff. The purpose of this travel-related publication is to attract travelers on I-5 off of the freeway and down Historic Route 99. The casual traveler, being retired, or on vacation, is often looking for opportunities to see Northern California. Pulling these people off of the interstate will create an excellent opportunity to capture increased sales through overnight stays, meals and shopping. With all six Communities working to attract travelers, each town will receive promotional benefits that will be increased six-fold of their own individual efforts.

The magazine will feature general information on the front, back and inside covers. Each community will be allotted six pages and will be responsible for filling those pages. Four pages will be dedicated to historical and commercial opportunities in each community, with

the remaining two pages sold to advertisers. Items and ideas for inclusion are endless, such as a local town map, historical landmarks, museums, RV hookups and services, local attractions, annual events, town history, photography of key points of interest, the local wildlife refuge, scenic routes, (i.e.. early spring tour the almond blossoms/Sacramento River), libraries, parks, you name it!

Advertising can be sold for \$250.00 per quarter page, which generates \$12,000 for development, production and promotion of the newspaper. Allowing \$2,000 for Development and Promotion leaves \$10,000 for production. A \$10,000 production budget should produce 8,000 to 12,000 copies for distribution.

Distribution will be by each community through their motels, restaurants, Chambers of Commerce and service stations at no cost to the traveler. Additional distributions can be made through tourism centers and RV parks as well as the internet.

Now the tough question, how do we do it? A Historic Highway 99 Committee needs to be formed with two members from each community that will develop the theme, concept and design of the magazine. Back in their own communities, one will Chair a local committee which creates the content for their own four pages and the other will Chair an Advertising Committee to sell the two pages of advertising. Should initial start-up capital be necessary, a \$500 contribution from each city from their Economic Development budget should be sought, as well as potential grant opportunities.

## **LOCAL AND REGIONAL MARKETING PROGRAMS**

The Commercial Marketing Program is also designed to stimulate increased local and regional activity. The Committee should focus on the creation of an aggressive campaign exploring methods of bringing additional local and regional activity into the traditional Downtown business community by developing and offering a theme that would work well when promoting the City of Willows locally as well as regionally.

### **"Shop Willows First" Marketing Program**

From studying the Willows Retail Leakage Study located in Appendix II, page 55 it is estimated that approximately \$29.9 million in local shopping revenues is flowing out of the community and into the cash registers, and bank accounts, of nearby communities.

This suggested "Shop Willows First" program is intended to provide assistance with the development of a concept designed to promote the commercial diversity of the traditional business community through creation of a program emphasizing the range of goods and services provided within the Willows Central business district.

#### **General Program Goal:**

Reducing leakage of Willows shopping dollars to providers of goods and services in neighboring communities.

Specific Program Goals:

- 1) To educate all residents of the greater Willows area to the diversity of goods and services currently provided within the community. A traditional means of achieving this goal is to develop a directory of locally provided goods and services, and then to get that directory into the hands of as many local residents as possible. As a note of interest, currently the Corning Chamber of Commerce is producing an excellent example of such a directory.
- 2) To further raise the collective consciousness of Willows shoppers to the many benefits of patronizing local businesses as well as the negative aspect of spending their dollars with out-of-town providers of goods and services.
- 3) To make local business owners more sensitive concerning the need to compete more effectively and efficiently with surrounding communities and nearby regional malls.

Through development of a "Shop Willows First" campaign, the Commercial Marketing Committee will work toward the creation of a program to slow retail sales leakage. This program offers a great deal of incentive to the City as a successfully implemented program results in greatly increased sales tax revenues. (See Appendix IV, page 68 for "Shop Willows First" campaign statement.)

**Special Events, Fairs, and Festivals**

The Marketing Program will work toward development of an annual series of special events, fairs and festivals that are not necessarily retail-oriented, and in fact, may serve as successful program fund-raisers. This could include a well-managed and colorful program of special events and street fair activities intended to focus public attention and patronage on the overall commercial district as well as on the overall community. Examples of these activities include parades, festivals, fairs, seasonal events, farmers markets, concerts, holiday themes and celebrations, etc.

**Existing Traditional Local Special Events and Activities:**

- Willows Lamb Derby
- Thunderhill Raceway Activities
- Chamber of Commerce - Fire Department Steak and Lobster Feed
- Saturday Morning Farmers Market
- Annual Car Show

**Possible Additional Special Events and Activities:**

- Concerts
- Flea Markets
- Parades
- Historic Celebrations (Local Themes)
- Local Public School Theme Events
- Ethnic-Cultural Themes
- Food-Drink Fairs (...A Taste Of Downtown Willows...)
- Cooking Themes...Contests...Chili Cook-offs...BBQS... Etc.
- Health And Fitness Themes...Triathalons..10k Runs...Bike Races, Etc.
- Circus Events – Carnivals

The following information provides specific guidelines for the planning of local special events, fairs and festivals.

**Promotional Activities and Event Planning Timeline**

Lead Time	Event Description/Task
6 months in advance	Planning for major events such as festivals, fairs, concerts, wine tasting events, artisans fairs, summer concert series, etc.
6 months in advance	Christmas theme should be set by June in order for retailers to go to market with this information-retail market is traditionally July for Fall merchandise.
3 months in advance	City permit approval process for events such as street dances, sidewalk sales, concerts, etc.
3 months in advance	Any event requiring a specific (individual) graphic design should begin processing at least 90 days prior to use time.
2 months in advance	Any event requiring the use or give-away of flowers or produce such as watermelon give-away sidewalk sale or Valentine's Day.
2 months in advance	Any event based on a major give-away prize such as trips to distant lands ...arrangement for prizes is time sensitive and requires a fall-back position.
2 months in advance	Events requiring printing of tickets, coupons, paper banners, etc.
2 months in advance	The marketing organization's annual calendar of events and activities should be in the hands of participating merchants at least 60 days prior.

**Directory of Downtown Willows Goods and Services**

The Commercial Marketing Program should co-sponsor the publication of a "Directory of Downtown Willows Goods and Services". Businesses would be listed according to name, type of business and location. A brief description of each business will be provided as part of the listing. Local businesses would also be provided with copies of the Directory.

The Willows Chamber of Commerce has traditionally produced a Directory of Local Goods and Services originally designed to represent its specific membership. Recently there has been a hiatus in the Chamber's traditional annual Directory publication. The Task Force feels that currently Willows community members are not aware of the wide range of goods and services provided by locally-owner and operated businesses. With this in mind, the Task Force has suggested that, for the benefit of the new commercial marketing campaign, the Chamber resume its publication of this Directory with the inclusion of all Willows businesses.

**Extended Business Hours Program**

One item of concern which has come up on a regular basis with the Task Force is that downtown merchants are not being as competitive as possible due to an unwillingness to remain open past the minimum number of business hours.

A business schedule of Monday through Saturday, nine to five offers forty-eight hours per week when goods and services are available to the public. The competition in the form of big box discounters is open a minimum of eighty-four hours per week with several discounters currently remaining open twenty-fours each day, seven days a week. Sundays are one of their strongest sales days due to there being no competition from locally owned businesses.

The old adage stating, "If you are only open nine to five during the week, you are only open for the unemployed" is fitting for businesses that choose to maintain the minimum daily business hours. It is hoped that as the new marketing programs begin to produce results, and as the new commercial recruitment program possibly begins to convert commercial vacancies into active businesses, downtown merchants will be encouraged to consider longer service hours.

### **Business To Business Commercial Marketing Program**

All Willows businesses should be familiar with the wide range of services provided by other local businesses. The benefit of a program of local merchants supporting each other by always recommending local businesses, whenever appropriate, would help minimize the loss of shopping revenues that currently leave the community for neighboring markets.

The publication of a Willows Directory of Goods and Services, as described above, would be very helpful as a means of allowing local businesses to become more familiar with what goods and services are currently being provided by their fellow Willows merchants.

### **Cross Marketing Program**

A very effective inter-business cooperation can be achieved by the development of a local "Cross-Marketing" Program. There currently are occasional local ads sponsored by Thunderhill Raceway which promote their activities as well as services provided by other merchants such as food service-oriented businesses which are located within the downtown area.

The more complete development of a cross-marketing program would benefit all participating Willows businesses. An example of a very effective cross-marketing program that has been in effect in nearby Chico for some time is the informal agreement between downtown retailers and restaurants to share advertisements for "Sunday Brunch and Shopping". Restaurants place tent ads on each table which promote certain businesses which are open on Sunday afternoons in exchange for these retailers offering a 10% discount to any shoppers showing a sales receipt from a participating restaurant for that day.

Furthermore, in keeping with the cross-marketing concept, members of the Task Force felt that events and activities occurring at Thunderhill Raceway should be emphasized to a greater extent as a means of attracting additional visitors into the community. Similarly, additional emphasis should also be placed upon the Wildlife Refuge for the same reason.

It is understood that there is a current cross-marketing program underway involving Thunderhill and the local Farmer's Market Organization. The Farmer's market is attempting to make an appearance the first Sunday of each month at the racetrack as a way to possibly appeal to new segments of local, and regional, consumers.

An old-fashioned, and colorful, example of small town cross-marketing may be witnessed in rural southern communities that offer a shopper's discount on Sundays to any church member who brings their church bulletin into participating restaurants or retail shops.

## **IMPLEMENTATION OF COMMERCIAL MARKETING PROGRAM**

The Downtown Willows Commercial Marketing Campaign would be a local business promotion program developed for the purpose of strengthening existing businesses as well as attracting new investment into the overall Downtown Willows business community. The most basic steps toward full program development follows:

### **BASIC PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT STEPS**

#### **Step 1: Establishment of a Permanent Commercial Marketing Committee.**

Representatives from all locations and types of businesses should be asked to consider being active on a permanent Promotion and Advertising Committee, and to become involved with the planning and implementation of the Annual Commercial Marketing Program.

#### **Step 2: Development of the Marketing Program.**

This Commercial Marketing Program will be created to enable local businesses to compete more successfully and cost-effectively, for tenants and customers, with nearby commercial centers and malls, such as are found in Chico and Yuba City. This is to be accomplished by establishing a means of supporting the long-term and day-to-day needs of Willows retailers while aggressively attracting visitors and shoppers into the traditional central business district. Principally, the creation of a new image and theme for the commercial area will offer colorful and innovative marketing strategy approaches.

#### **Step 3: Development of a Creative and Colorful Theme-Based Commercial Marketing Campaign.**

Willows small town character and ambiance and the fact that the Willows business community is a friendly and courteous place has a great deal to offer in terms of both public relations and theme-concept development. Additionally, Willows historic significance and architectural heritage must be considered as a natural theme to be emphasized in a campaign to re-define the local image from a traditional historic point of view.

#### **Step 4: Obtain Dependable Year-To-Year Program Implementation Funding.**

Information regarding possible program funding options is provided within this document in Section 6, page 35 and Section 7, page 36.

### **RESPONSIBILITY AND TIMELINE FOR COMMERCIAL MARKETING PROGRAM**

Implementation of the commercial marketing program would primarily be a responsibility of the private sector, i.e., owners of downtown businesses and/or downtown commercial properties. It is not considered appropriate for the public sector in the form of the City of Willows to become involved with the commercial marketing of privately-owned for-profit businesses.

Step	Task	Suggestion Timeframe Of:	Responsibility
1.	Determine through group consensus which organization, agency or individuals will be primarily responsible for specific marketing program implementation. Entity determined to be most appropriate for primary program responsibility must concur with this decision prior to task being completed.	1 month	Private Sector
2.	Identify an Ad Hoc sub-committee of the permanent Commercial Marketing Committee which would be responsible for a "Shop Willows First" Program.	1 month	Private Sector
3.	Develop consensus re: a commercial marketing theme. Develop specific plans to implement the new Willows marketing theme.	3 months	Private Sector
4.	Develop Program budget.	3 months	Private Sector
5.	Pursue production of a Directory of Goods and Services provided by members of the downtown business community working in cooperation with the Chamber of Commerce.	3 months	Private Sector
6.	Notify the community that the marketing program development effort has been completed. Stimulate public participation. Invite interested community members to review and comment on the new Commercial Marketing Program Report.	3 months	Private Sector
7.	Develop a "Business to Business" program characterized by merchants and service providers participating in a local business referral program.... Emphasize the need for merchants to promote their neighboring businesses' goods and services whenever possible. Insure that participating merchants have copies of the Directory of Downtown Willows Goods and Services.	3 months	Private Sector
8.	Plan and implement a "cross-marketing" program involving cooperative advertising among downtown retailers and restaurants as well as Thunderhill Raceway and downtown businesses.	3 months	Private Sector
9.	Encourage and stimulate property owner involvement in the commercial marketing program. Sponsoring an aggressive campaign designed to get all property owners involved in this economic development program is essential to its ultimate success.	3 months	Private Sector
10.	Improve directional signage into the area. Examine all possible means of placing several billboards on 1-5.	6 months	Private & Public Sector
11.	Develop and implement an aggressive, colorful and creative annual program of special events, fairs and festivals.	6 months	Private Sector
12.	Achieve consensus regarding the development, production and use of a graphic design created for the purpose of illustrating the selected commercial marketing theme.	6 months	Private Sector
13.	Determine source of funding necessary for effective program implementation.	6 months	Private Sector

## **COMPONENT 1: SECTION 4 - DOWNTOWN CIVIC BEAUTIFICATION AND SIGNAGE PROGRAM**

The following projects could be given priority in developing a shopping environment that is visually pleasant and memorable to shoppers and visitors.

### **CURRENT DOWNTOWN INFRASTRUCTURE IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM**

Based on specific information obtained directly from the City Manager's Office, there is a City of Willows Downtown Infrastructure Improvement Program currently underway. This City-sponsored project is working towards improving the following specific downtown infrastructure features:

- Downtown aesthetics
- Pedestrian travel
- Roadway design and integrity
- Storm water drainage improvements

Specific project elements include the following improvements:

- a) Installation of thirty-two tree wells on Sycamore Street between Plumas and Tehama as well as thirty-one tree wells on Butte between Walnut and Oak.
- b) Replacement of deteriorated sidewalk surfaces in front of the following addresses: 123, 147 and 161 Butte Street as well as along Sycamore Street at 103 S. Plumas, as well as south of 123 S. Plumas and in front of 429 W. Sycamore St.
- c) Placement of new curb and gutter on both sides of Butte Street between Sycamore and Oak Streets.
- d) Reconstruction of S. Butte St. extending twelve feet from the curb on the east and west sides of S. Butte Street from Sycamore St. to Oak St.
- e) Connection of basement drains to the storm drain system at 202 W. Sycamore St., 111 S. Butte St., 148 W. Sycamore St., and 112 S. Butte St.
- f) New handicap ramps on each corner of Butte and Sycamore, Shasta and Sycamore and Plumas and Sycamore.
- g) Replacement of driveways at 147 S. Butte St., 124 S. Butte St. and 429 W. Sycamore St.

### **RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ADDITIONAL PROGRAMS**

It is recommended that the Task Force play the lead role in the planning and implementation of a Downtown civic beautification program. The purpose of this program would be the development of various appropriate commercial marketing-oriented civic beautification "special effects" projects.

If implemented the following cost-effective visual improvements would work additionally to beautify and promote the Willows business community's character, history and personality.

## **FACADE IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM**

The City is exploring the possible sponsorship of a **Facade Improvement Program** for the purpose of getting owners more involved with the appearance of their individual commercial properties as well as to improve the overall appearance of the downtown area. (See Appendix VI, page 71 for further details).

Subject to the availability of funding, the City of Willows may initiate a downtown Facade Improvement Program in the future. If this program is implemented, the City could potentially make low interest rate loans available to participating businesses and/or commercial property owners.

### **Program Details**

The Willows Downtown Facade Improvement Program would provide, to eligible property owners, a low-interest loan for any term not to exceed ten years in the form of a repayment for costs incurred for the improvement of the exterior appearance of any commercial/business structure within the Downtown District of the City. All applications would be submitted to the City of Willows City Manager's Office for approval.

#### **1) General Conditions:**

- a) This funding would be for exterior improvement and related costs only.
- b) All plans for the exterior renovation would be viewed in accordance with the City's planning and zoning ordinance and the design guidelines established for this program.
- c) Plans would be approved by an ad-hoc committee prior to submittal to the City in order to assure compliance to the Design Guidelines. The applicant would then process the plans through all applicable City permit procedures. Agency staff would provide assistance as necessary.
- d) Only business located in the Downtown District would be eligible for these facade grant funds.

#### **2) Eligible Improvement Projects Include:**

- a) Exterior rehabilitation based on the design criterion as provided within the City's Design Guidelines.
- b) Correction of non-conforming signage/clutter and/or other exterior code violations.
- c) Exterior painting or stucco applications.
- d) New, modified or additional signage conforming to the existing sign ordinance.
- e) Landscaping improvements.
- f) Such other improvements consistent with the Design Guidelines.

#### **3) Hiring of Contractor:**

Owner would have the sole responsibility, once the plans have been approved, of hiring a contractor to perform the agreed upon work.

This storefront rehabilitation program has proven to be effective in many California downtown communities striving to improve the appearance of their traditional downtown commercial districts while endeavoring to improve their regional market share. As an example, the Town of Paradise in nearby Butte County is currently embarking on an aggressive Façade Rehabilitation Program as a major component of it's own Downtown Revitalization Program. The Paradise program includes a free preliminary design option available to program participants which provides color samples and elevation sketches that can be brought before the Architectural Review Board for comment prior to program commitment on the part of the business owner.

## **PUBLIC ARTS/WALL MURAL PROGRAM**

As with the discussion regarding what design, or designs, might be most appropriate and effective for the commercial marketing program, the same design details are appropriate when considering specific subjects and themes for a possible downtown wall mural program.

The following list of what might be the most appropriate and effective subject, or subjects, of possible future downtown wall murals was the result of input from the Task Force:

### Graphic design features for a downtown wall mural:

- Wildlife
- Waterfowl
- Flyway, Migration
- Mother Goose
- Wildlife Refuge
- Duck and Pheasant Hunting, etc.
- Friendly, Small Town Atmosphere
- History and Historic Architecture, Downtown, Victorians, etc.
- Local Activities: Thunderhill Racetrack, Lamb Derby, etc.

### Marketing phrases for downtown wall mural:

- "Welcome to Willows and All the Natural Resources It Has to Offer"
- "Willows, On the Flyway Highway"
- "Willows, The Home of Mother Goose"
- "Willows, Where Water is King"
- "Winter Waterfowl Wonderland", (or festival)
- "Experience the Wildlife of Willows"
- "Welcome To Willows, We're Wild About Rice"
- "Willows, Gateway to the Mendocino National Forest"
- "Welcome to Willows, Visit And Enjoy Our Natural Resources"

## **Wall Mural Program Implementation Steps**

- 1) Hold meeting(s) to develop support for wall mural program.
- 2) Review available historic photos...select one or more after working through traditional committee approval process.
- 3) Tour project area for purpose of identifying one or more suitable locations for murals. Location should be those exposed to high pedestrian and vehicular traffic when possible.
- 4) After photo(s) is selected, meet with available artists.

- 5) Have picture enlarged, have photo reinforced with foam core or other backing.
- 6) Request to be on Planning Commission agenda, explain project, receive approval.
- 7) Acquire necessary permit(s).
- 8) Break down enlarged photo into grids, possibly 1" x 1"
- 9) Establish scale for photo, (1" to 1' is good also 1" to 2').
- 10) Develop contract with artist.
- 11) Develop agreement with property owner.
- 12) Establish "frame" size on wall.
- 13) Begin wall preparation, work with artist.
- 14) Paint wall into scaled grid.
- 15) Begin painting.

#### **PAINT-UP; CLEAN-UP; FIX-UP CAMPAIGN**

A possible annual civic beautification program would be the **Paint-up; Clean-up; Fix-up Campaign** for downtown buildings as well as neighboring residential areas. Many vacant buildings and commercial lots characterize the Downtown area. Ways and means of most effectively utilizing these areas needs to be developed.

#### **Paint-up; Cleanup; Fix-up Campaign Implementation Steps**

- 1) Elect event chairperson(s).
- 2) Issue public service announcements with local and regional media introducing campaign.
- 3) Sponsor a "most improved" property contest with two categories:
  1. Commercial,
  2. Residential
- 4) Identify sponsors from within the business community that relate to home improvement, (i.e., paint stores, cleaning supplies, building materials suppliers, cleaners, laundromats).
- 5) Use local supplies and suppliers. Ask that local suppliers provide materials, goods and services at a reduced cost if possible.
- 6) Ask local participating businesses to consider sponsoring a series of "How To" seminars, demonstrations and workshops, such as painting, wallpapering, landscaping, tiling, deck building, etc. Possibly hold the seminars during the first Saturday of the week-long campaign.

- 7) Get property owners involved. Program coordinators will need to develop a listing of local property owners as well as absentee owners.
- 8) Get local schools involved. Examine possibility of program being used as one or more class projects.
- 9) Set up a Saturday for all business owners to carry out a coordinated clean up day. Notify local media of this event.
- 10) Appoint a panel of judges for both commercial and residential categories. Possibly use local realtors as commercial property judges.
- 11) Consider using local-business gift certificates as prizes in most improved property contest.

### **IMPROVED AND EXPANDED SIGNAGE**

Improved and expanded Signage is needed to more effectively direct I-5 traffic into the Downtown Willows area. A general perception exists among Task Force members that the current Caltrans signage providing directions from I-5 into Downtown Willows is inadequate. It is felt that better, more uniform signage located along I-5 would bring more visitors and shoppers into Willows. (See Appendix V, page 69 for further details).

#### **General Perception of I-5 Directional Signage**

- 1) The signage on I-5 reads "Oroville-Highway 162" with no mention of Willows.
- 2) Currently I-5 traffic by-passes Willows in favor of both Willows and Williams where much better signage is provided. Additional signage to get travelers off of I-5 and into Willows, and then into downtown is needed.
- 3) A specific entryway or designated gateway to the downtown community is sorely needed.

#### **Actual I-5 Directional Signage**

Along I-5 from both the North and the South directions the following signage exists:

- 1) Willows Next Two Exits
- 2) Lodging Next Exit
- 3) Food Next Exit
- 4) Gas Next Exit
- 5) Oroville Next Exit, (Sign @ 162)
- 6) Oroville - Willows Next Exit

### **ENTRYWAY IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM**

The possibility of using one or more entryway features welcoming shoppers and visitors into the downtown area could be developed by the Task Force in combination with the Commercial Marketing Committee.

A primary goal of the Willows Entryway Improvement Program is to enhance the overall community image to visitors and travelers on I-5 while providing a clear indication of the most direct route into the historic downtown commercial district.

In Willows, the downtown area is the traditional heart of the city containing City Hall and the Greater Willows Chamber of Commerce as well as numerous banks and many assorted businesses providing a variety of goods and services.

It has long been felt by community leaders that a large majority of travelers passing through Willows on I-5 are unaware that there is a downtown area several blocks east of the I-5 corridor. With this in mind, it is felt that an entryway arch would make travelers more aware of the downtown area's existence as well as its location.

The ultimate success of the new Willows Downtown Commercial Marketing Program, depends on an improved visual image as well as an improved conceptual image. A primary goal of the overall marketing effort is to enhance the identity of the local business community as an attractive destination for visitors. Part of that identity can be conveyed by providing visitors with a sense of arrival by car. This desired sense of arrival would be greatly facilitated by the creation of a landmark such as a traditional entryway arch.<sup>1</sup>

A freestanding archway over the street could be designed to incorporate local materials to symbolize the architectural style and cultural heritage of Willows. Numerous similar communities are currently examining the possibility of creating entryway features that were in regular use during the 1930's, 1940's and 1950's. The nearest examples of entryway arches can be found in nearby Orland as well as in Williams and Marysville.

It was suggested that the Task Force, working in concert with City Management, support the construction of a traditional entryway arch, or similar monument, to be located at the primary downtown intersection of Butte and Sycamore Streets.

It is further suggested that this edifice be designed so that it would also serve as a platform for community notices, and special events. As can be seen on page 27, other communities use their entryway arches in various colorful and creative ways. A brief history of entryway arches in Northern California can be found in Appendix VIII, page 88.

### **Entryway Arch Project Design Recommendations**

- **Original design**

Task Force members agreed that a Willows arch should be an original design and not based on the Marysville, or other, arch designs. Creative design possibilities include the use of waterfowl and/or rice as a means of emphasizing Willows rich heritage of natural resources. An additional design feature which would promote Willows traditional agrarian heritage would be the creation of a means of illustrating Willows involvement with rice farming, and the waterfowl that are associated with rice production.

- **Design to be multi-purpose**

As was stated earlier in this section, it is further suggested that this edifice be designed so that it would also serve as a platform for community notices, and special events. As illustrated in the table below, other communities utilize their entryway arches in various colorful and creative ways.

- **Cost-effective**

Arches which have been used as examples in this study have ranged from a low of \$15,000 to a high of nearly \$200,000. A good example of a cost-effective archway design is the Marysville arches that span the length of "D" Street in the downtown area. These arches cost approximately \$25,000 each and were constructed by Yetter Steel Company of Marysville. See Appendix VIII, page 88 for additional archway information.

- **Lightweight, yet strong**

Wind resistance would need to be minimized. Keep arch framework as open as possible, i.e. structural steel rather than solid concrete, wood or wall-type design that is seen in several photos provided.

- **Arch height**

The overall height would have to be similar to any standard traffic signal or freeway underpass.

**Design Details Used In Other Archway Projects**

As a result of considerable research into similar entryway arches, the following design details might be considered for a Willows arch structure.

<b>Design Details</b>	<b>Location</b>
Illuminated from within	Pleasanton, Fairfield, Modesto
Painted steel structure	Marysville, Santa Clara, Sacramento
Use of local theme design and/or materials	Loomis, Lodi
Stone-masonry base	Santa Clara, Williams
Design emphasizing local agrarian heritage	Lodi, (grape design)
Flag on top. Seasonal decorations	Marysville
Used for community events banner	Pleasanton
Suspended light	Marysville
Clock incorporated into design	Santa Clara

**IMPLEMENTATION OF CIVIC BEAUTIFICATION PROGRAM**

**RESPONSIBILITY AND TIMELINE FOR CIVIC BEAUTIFICATION PROGRAM**

Implementation of any downtown Willows visual improvements program would become the shared responsibility of the City of Willows representing the public sector and the business community representing the private sector.

An example of this shared program sponsorship could be illustrated through a public arts wall mural program in which approval by the Planning Commission and then by the City Council would be required prior to program initiation.

Another example of public and private sector involvement in a major downtown civic beautification effort would be provided by the suggested downtown Facade Improvement Program wherein possible long-term low interest rate loans might be made by the City to participating owners of downtown businesses and/or commercial properties.

In order to move into this project area further, the Task Force should consider taking a lead role in seeing that many of the private sector civic beautification programs and projects described in this document are initiated.

Step	Task	Suggested Timeframe of	Responsibility
1.	Determine which organization, agency or individuals will be primarily responsible for specific program implementation.	1 month	Public & Private Sector
2.	Develop program budget.	3 months	Public & Private Sector
3.	Determine source of funding necessary for effective program implementation.	6 months	Public & Private Sector
4.	Begin active consideration and possible sponsorship of a Downtown wall mural public arts program. Plan to sponsor a wall mural and public arts slide show and discussion open to the community.	6 months	Public & Private Sector
5.	Consider construction of an entryway arch to be located on Butte and Sycamore Streets as well as other possible entryway demarcation monuments, arches or signage at both the East and West entries into the traditional downtown area.	6 months	Public & Private Sector
6.	Consider sponsorship of a Downtown Facade Improvement Program.	6 months	Public & Private Sector
7.	Consider sponsorship of clean-up, paint-up, fix-up campaign.	6 months	Public & Private Sector
8.	Support the implementation of other private and public beautification projects and programs as described in this report.	Continuous	Public & Private Sector

## **COMPONENT 1: SECTION 5 - DOWNTOWN COMMERCIAL RECRUITMENT & RETENTION PROGRAM**

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### **CONCEPT INTRODUCTION**

The downtown district presently has a large number of commercial vacancies as described in Component 2, Section 1, page 37. In order to address this issue it is recommended the City of Willows and the Willows business community, engage in an aggressive Downtown Commercial Recruitment Program. This proposed economic development program will include working toward achieving the highest and best use of all available commercial properties within the project area.

The City of Willows is a strong supporter of commercial recruitment programs as it stands to benefit greatly through the advantage of substantially increased sales tax revenues.

Commercial recruitment is a common goal shared by many business districts as they strive to carry out economic development programs. That common goal and purpose is the desire to both improve the image of their areas through reduction of the number of commercial vacancies that are seen by shoppers and visitors as well as to improve the overall business mix of the area by attracting the most desirable new businesses.

Efforts on the part of downtown areas throughout the country to attract desirable new businesses into their traditional central business districts have led to the development of a new real estate-oriented art and science with its own doctrine as well as its own failures and success stories.

### **COMMERCIAL RECRUITMENT PROGRAM ACTIVITIES**

- 1) Sponsor a comprehensive community preference survey to be distributed throughout the community for the purpose of determining what new businesses Willows shoppers would support. See Appendix XI, page 96 for sample survey.
- 2) Establish a Commercial Recruitment Committee. This group should include members of the Project Committee, downtown business owners, downtown property owners, representatives from the Willows Economic Development Commission and representatives of the commercial brokers profession.
- 3) Hold commercial recruitment orientation workshops to familiarize participants with the concept as well as to confirm overall program goals. Assign roles and responsibilities.
- 4) Sponsor a series of public and private workshops to gather input from downtown business owners, property owners, commercial brokers, community leaders, etc.
- 5) Establish a coordination agreement between the program sponsor and community commercial real estate brokers and leasing agents.
- 6) Develop and promote business development incentives.
- 7) Continual updating of the current downtown property inventory.
- 8) Compile an up-to-date listing of all existing businesses and commercial vacancies.

- 9) Continue to identify and analyze potential downtown development sites.
- 10) Develop a Commercial Recruitment Program Information Package to be used as a marketing tool for distribution to potential new businesses and investors. Local information to be included in this package:
- Area-wide economic profile and demographics
  - A listing of all vacancies presented as "commercial opportunities"
  - A listing of incentives offered to new businesses
  - A report of results from recent shopper preference surveys
  - Testimonials from successful local business owners
  - A directory of business support services, such as the City of Willows and the Willows Chamber of Commerce as well as the Downtown Revitalization Task Force
  - A narrative extolling the benefits and virtues of doing business within the project area
  - A description of economic development programs and projects currently under way within the business community area
- 11) Create an advertising campaign for the purpose of marketing Willows "commercial opportunities". Consider placing advertisements in the Sacramento Bee "Business Opportunities" and "Business To Business" sections of the classified ads. Furthermore, consider taking out one or more display ads for the purpose of promoting business opportunities within the project area.

Suggested classified sections for placement of commercial recruitment ads:

**Possible classified ad categories:**

- Business Opportunities
- Commercial Investment Opportunities
- Retail Space Available, For Rent, Lease or Sale
- Restaurant-Bars-Cafe Opportunities

**Possible ad wording:**

"Excellent retail opportunity available immediately. 1500 sq. ft. fronting on ground floor location at the intersection of Butte and Sycamore Streets in historic Downtown Willows. Opportunity to participate in aggressive new downtown commercial marketing program which includes creative group advertising and colorful special events campaign. Low rent with excellent lease benefits."

- 12) Establish a means of tracking the rate of program success in relation to contacts made.

**TASK FORCE / COMMUNITY PREFERENCE SURVEY RESULTS**

The Commercial Recruitment Program should provide an expanded series of shopper and community member preference surveys to determine the most desired new businesses to fill existing vacancies or vacancies as they occur. These surveys could be carried out through additional workshops as well as through shopper interception questionnaires. (See Appendix XI, page 96 for sample survey).

The following list of preliminary preferences was compiled from approximately 40 surveys submitted by Task Force members as well as various interested community members participating in the Community Workshop held November 13, 2002.

**Question: What New Businesses, Or Business Types, Are Most Needed In Willows?**

**1) Clothing:**

- women's
- men's
- youth's
- business and professional
- better, more upscale

**2) Any and all retail businesses:**

- clothing
- shoes

**3) Any and all recreation-entertainment businesses and services:**

- bowling
- arcade
- amusement

**4) Service-oriented businesses:**

- jeweler
- bakery
- cleaners
- shoe sales and repair

**5) Auto dealer:**

- new and used auto sales

**6) Individual general suggestions:**

- Locally grown health food and produce
- Businesses which generate a high traffic volume
- Businesses related to the local dairy industry
- Any new business that offers employment to those of mixed-background and qualification levels that might be able to utilize existing facilities and/or infrastructure

Interesting to note was the lack of responses requesting new restaurants which is a traditional favorite response with this type of shopper preference survey.

**OTHER SUGGESTIONS RELATED TO COMMERCIAL RECRUITMENT PROGRAM**

**POSSIBLE BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT INCENTIVES**

A "hypothetical" list of incentives designed to encourage the establishment of new businesses to fill existing vacancies, or vacancies as they occur, is as follows:

**1) Aggressive and creative marketing programs are in place as a means of promoting the use of the area's businesses, such as:**

- retail-oriented promotion programs
- image building campaigns for the overall business area
- a marketing strategy program
- institutional (public relations) advertising programs

**2) Low interest rate commercial loan programs are available**

- 3) Competitive entry rental and lease rates are available
- 4) Business support organizations, services and programs are available
  - Downtown Willows Revitalization Task Force
  - Willows Chamber of Commerce
- 5) City Administration and Staff are able and willing to assist in any way possible. (Mike Mistrot will be the contact person acting as liaison on the part of the City)
- 6) Civic beautification, aesthetics and streetscape improvement programs are underway.
- 7) Support and commitment for the business district on the part of the City is strong.

**Hypothetically, if a BID is formed, additional incentives are strong for possible new local investors, such as:**

- 8) An ongoing funding mechanism is in place to insure that Downtown Willows marketing programs will continue on a year-to-year basis. The recent successful establishment of a Downtown Business Improvement District (BID) under Calif. SB 1424 is an excellent example of this sort of ongoing funding tool.
- 9) Technical assistance is provided by the new BID Program and is available to new businesses for the purpose of:
  - networking among area businesses
  - assisting with business management plan development
  - developing advertising programs
  - assisting with sponsoring marketing and merchandising seminars
  - possible assistance with lease negotiation
  - possible assistance with business financing, such as:
    - technical assistance with the completion of loan applications
    - low interest rate loan pools available to new businesses
    - financial counseling programs available

#### **INVOLVEMENT OF WILLOWS COMMERCIAL BROKERS AND LEASING AGENTS**

The involvement of commercial brokers and leasing agents is critical in an effective commercial marketing program. Suggestions include:

- 1) Develop a good working relationship with commercial real estate brokers and leasing agents who have local downtown knowledge of properties and/or who have substantial retail and commercial clients.
- 2) Work with these brokers and agents by including them in planning sessions, workshops and promoted "Business Opportunity Expositions".
- 3) Serve as a clearing house function regarding appropriate marketing information relevant to the project area. Provide this information to brokers and their clients.
- 4) Insure that the commercial recruitment effort of the Committee is not viewed as competitive by the real estate brokerage profession.

### **SHORT-TERM UTILIZATION OF COMMERCIAL VACANCIES**

A short-term solution to the universally unattractive nature of commercial vacancies is to implement a program that will create activity in that space to prevent the look of emptiness.

Suggestions for temporary uses of vacant storefronts include:

- 1) A "Phantom Art Gallery" program was used very effectively in downtown Eureka during a period of 25% commercial vacancies shortly after the new regional mall was opened nearby.
- 2) A window display program, possibly in connection with a local window decorations contest or seasonal theme illustration.
- 3) Leasing to temporary retail outlets not in competition with existing downtown merchants.
- 4) Leasing to seasonal shops such as Christmas decorations boutiques.
- 5) The temporary expansion of local, possibly contiguous, stores that need additional display areas.

### **IMPLEMENTATION OF COMMERCIAL RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION PROGRAM**

#### **RESPONSIBILITY AND TIMELINE FOR COMMERCIAL RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION PROGRAM**

Implementation of this program will have to be the shared responsibility of the public and private sectors including the City and the downtown Willows business community. The Task Force will need to develop a structured organization of commercial property owners and managers as well as real estate brokers for the purpose of most effectively marketing available commercial properties.

The City of Willows undoubtedly will play a major role in providing the funding necessary for the development of a comprehensive Downtown Commercial Recruitment and Retention Program. This necessary funding traditionally comes from a CDBG Planning and Technical Assistance Grant which the City would either apply for itself, or enlist the assistance of Tri-County Economic Development Corporation for grant preparation.

<b>Step</b>	<b>Task</b>	<b>Suggestion Timeframe of:</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>
1.	Determine which organization, agency or individuals will be primarily responsible for specific program implementation.	1 month	Public & Private Sectors
2.	Carry out an extensive "Shopper Preference Survey" for the purpose of identifying which new businesses would-be most desired, and patronized, by local community members.	1 month	Public & Private Sectors
3.	Develop program budget.	3 months	Public & Private Sectors

Step	Task	Suggestion Timeframe of:	Responsibility
4.	Continue to develop and update the commercial property inventory as well as new space use analysis of commercial properties within the project area..	3 months	Public & Private Sectors
5.	Continue to compile an up-to-date listing of all existing businesses within the project area for the purpose of identifying possible opportunity niches which there is currently an unmet need for.	3 months	Public & Private Sectors
6.	Continue to up-date the newly developed listing of all commercial vacancies referred to as "commercial opportunities." Develop marketing-oriented information regarding these vacancies that is sufficient to "sell" the use of this space to potential investors.	3 months	Public & Private Sectors
7.	Determine source of funding necessary for effective program implementation.	6 months	Public & Private Sectors
8.	Develop a <u>Commercial Recruitment Program Information Package</u> to be used as a marketing tool for distribution to potential new businesses and investors.	6 months	Public & Private Sectors
9.	Create an advertising campaign for the purpose of marketing Willows "commercial opportunities" in the Sacramento Bee "Business Opportunities" and "Business To Business" sections of the classified ads.	6 months	Public & Private Sectors
10.	Establish a means of tracking the rate of program success in relation to contacts made.	6 months	Public & Private Sectors
11.	Sponsor merchandising programs and workshops, such as "How To Compete More Effectively With National Discount Businesses", or "Seven Secrets To Small Business Success" as a means of assisting existing local businesses.	12 months	Public & Private Sectors
12.	Identify and work with existing businesses that might desire to expand and/or relocate into a more central area within the project boundaries.	12 months	Public & Private Sectors

## **COMPONENT 1: SECTION 6 – PROGRAM FUNDING OPTIONS**

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It is strongly recommended that the Task Force and the City join together in a coordinated effort to explore the local feasibility of various program funding options.

The issue of how the above-recommended commercial marketing programs might be funded toward implementation was discussed at length by the Task Force. Several possible funding sources might be considered, among them would be financing obtained through the City of Willows as a public sector source or private sector financing originating from either the Willows Chamber of Commerce and/or some other local business advocacy organization or finally, a possible public-private sector partnership brought about by the establishment of either a downtown or citywide Business Improvement District, or BID.

### **PROGRAM FUNDING OPTIONS**

#### **VOLUNTARY PROGRAM FUNDING**

This approach is most traditionally associated with local Chambers of Commerce. It is known that the Willows Chamber of Commerce, while being as active as possible in the marketing of the community, is limited in its ability to fund either short-term or long-term aggressive commercial marketing plans and programs.

#### **REDEVELOPMENT AGENCY (RDA)**

A Planning and Technical Assistance Grant was recently approved for the purpose of carrying out a feasibility study relative to the creation of a Willows Redevelopment Agency. The creation of a Redevelopment Agency is an arduous and lengthy process. Typically, the cost of establishing a RDA to fund downtown improvements would cost more than it was capable of producing during the first years of existence. Additionally, if any current or future charges, taxes, levies, or assessments are to be associated with the RDA, the approval process by the voting public may fall under the restrictions of Proposition 218 requiring the approval of 2/3 of voters, which during times of fiscal conservatism, can be difficult to obtain. If approved, eligible Redevelopment Agency expenditures would include public infrastructure improvements in the Downtown District and Façade Improvement Loans.

#### **BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT (BID)**

The Business Improvement District is a private sector funding opportunity which provides the year-to-year financing necessary to give merchants the means to carry out downtown commercial marketing and organizational management programs.....and economic success. The BID functions as a self-initiated benefit assessment fee traditionally based on type of business, size and location as a means of determining the most fair and equitable charge method possible.

One of the most attractive aspects of the BID concept is the fact that the local business community is entirely in control of how the annual benefit fee is collected and what programs are to be funded. Control of these critical issues is insured by the election of a BID Advisory Board which must be made up entirely of downtown business owners. This Advisory Board makes all decisions concerning how the funds are to be most effectively used to stimulate the downtown business economy. The BID is seen as being primary a commercial marketing program and must be re-approved by a majority of participating businesses each year.

## COMPONENT 1: SECTION 7 – CONSULTANT’S RECOMMENDATION FOR PROGRAM FUNDING

### BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT

As mentioned earlier in this report, one of the highest priorities associated with the implementation of a successful Downtown Commercial Marketing Program would be the establishment of a dependable, year-to-year funding source for programs implementation.

Considering all possible annual programs funding options available, it is the consultants recommendation that establishing a Downtown, (or Citywide), Business Improvement District be taken under consideration. There are currently numerous successful BIDs within the greater Willows region which were established for the sole purpose of funding aggressive commercial marketing campaigns for their respective downtown, or citywide, local commercial areas. Several of those are listed below.

BIDs currently existing within the region:

- Chico: Downtown
- Marysville: Downtown
- Yuba City: Downtown
- Corning: Citywide
- Anderson: Citywide
- Redding: Downtown
- Red Bluff: Downtown
- Gridley: Citywide
- Davis: Downtown

In comparison to the BID option, it is the consultant’s opinion that other possible sources of program implementation financing are not as viable or dependable on a year-to-year basis.

The City of Willows does not have the financial resources to be able to fund the implementation of downtown revitalization programs. In any case, it is not appropriate for the public sector to fund private sector benefit programs such as advertising and promotion.

Furthermore, the City does not have a Redevelopment Agency in place at this time, although they have received a grant to fund a RDA Feasibility Study.

The Willows Chamber of Commerce is chronically strapped for funds with which to implement their own specific business community improvement and marketing programs on behalf of their membership. The City funds the Chamber to a small extent annually.

In summary, the possible funding sources discussed above do not currently have the necessary financial resources and there is no "new" money available from any of those sources. The only form of "new" money would come from the establishment of a BID where there is none presently. Funds gathered through this new source would bring program implementation money into circulation for the first time. See Appendix IX, page 91 for additional information regarding Business Improvement Districts.

## **COMPONENT 2: SECTION 1 - VACANT PROPERTY INVENTORY & DEVELOPMENT OPTIONS**

### **VACANT PROPERTY INVENTORY**

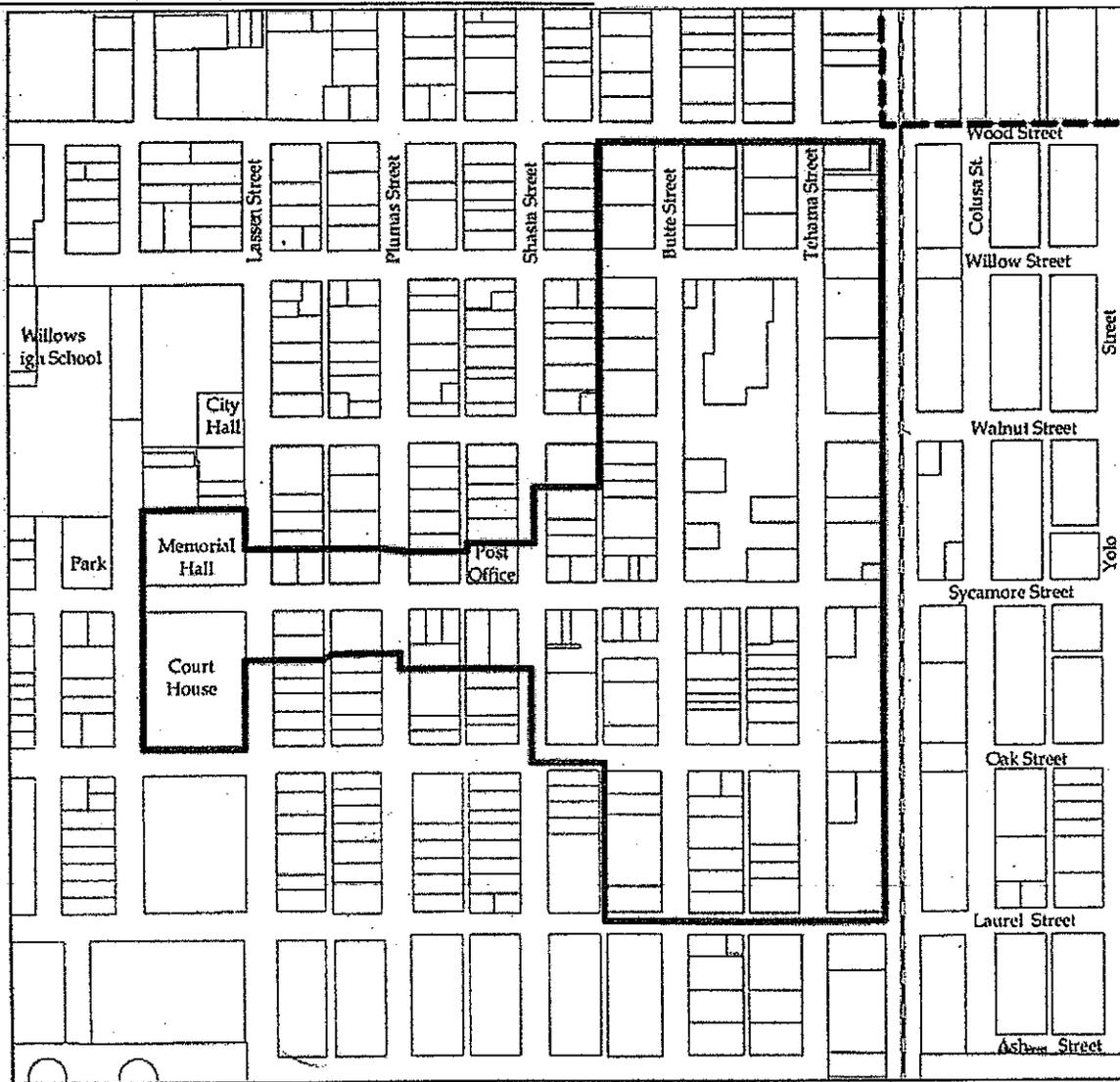
The following section describes vacant buildings and lots in the downtown revitalization area as defined by the City of Willows. A physical survey of properties was conducted and a database constructed showing the following for each vacant building and lot:

- 1) Status (vacant building or vacant lot)
- 2) Estimated market rental rate
- 3) Square footage of property and buildings
- 4) Type of space (retail, office, eating/drinking, etc.)
- 5) Physical address
- 6) Qualitative determination of building condition

The Center for Economic Development (CED) also prepared a market value analysis of each of the properties identified in the vacant building and lot inventory. The determined value was the property's value assessed for taxation.

The Downtown Willows study area was identified in the Community Vision and Action Plan prepared in January 2000, (see Figure 1, page 38 for map of study area).

**FIGURE 1 – DOWNTOWN WILLOWS STUDY AREA**



## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

There are properties available in Downtown Willows to facilitate most types of commercial development. Specifically, the following types of locations are readily available in Willows:

- 1) Spaces for small retail stores
- 2) Spaces for large retail stores
- 3) Small vacant lots
- 4) Large vacant lots

Throughout this section, the location of each vacant building and lot available for development are shown on a map. Refer to the map for the location of each of these properties.

Very few small vacant building spaces are available in Downtown Willows that would be suitable for retail. However, several spaces are available that are currently non-retail, such as 201 and 250 W Sycamore St. (vacant building spaces 4 and 6, respectively), that could potentially be converted to retail use after an engineering study has been completed.

Large retail spaces include 111 W. Sycamore St. (vacant building space 11, the former Daughtry's Department Store) and, potentially, 311 N. Butte St., (vacant building space 1), a warehouse currently being converted to a space where the owners will build to suit a tenant.

There are many small vacant lots available for retail development. The three with the greatest potential for retail are 332 W. Sycamore St., 222 W. Sycamore St., and 161 S. Tehama St. (vacant standard lots 5, 6, and 10).

There are also many large vacant lots available for larger development stores and complexes. These include all vacant properties between Tehama Street and the railroad tracks (all vacant Union Pacific lots), the two properties on the southwest corner of Butte and Willows Streets (vacant standard lots 1 and 2, no street addresses), and the two properties on the northern corners of Sycamore and Plumas Streets (vacant standard lots 3 and 4, no street addresses) between the Post Office and the county government buildings.

Action plans laid out in this document will encourage development of properties with the greatest potential in Downtown Willows.

### Land Uses Outside of the Scope of Study

There are several land uses that exist in Downtown Willows that are outside of the scope of this study. These uses include the following:

- 1) **Residential properties:** Residential properties in the Downtown Willows study area may eventually be converted to commercial uses because of zoning codes. However, these properties were residential as of the timeframe for this study and are, therefore, not considered to be within its scope.
- 2) **Public property:** Public lands are not considered to be available for private development.
- 3) **Parking lots:** Customers need places to park at or near existing and future businesses. This study assumes that current parking lots will remain in the future and are, therefore, not available for development.

4) **Occupied buildings and spaces:** While existing buildings may be improved, altered, or demolished and rebuilt, occupied buildings and spaces are not considered to be open for development at the time of this study.

5) **Vacant neighboring lots:** Vacant lots that share ownership with an adjacent developed lot are considered available for expansion of an existing neighboring business, rather than for new development. These lots are treated as if they are assimilated with neighboring lots with the same owner.

#### **Components of Development Potential**

Development potential is a function of the estimated monthly rental rate per square foot (value per square foot in the case of vacant lots), building condition, size of vacant building space, lot size and dimension, and levels of street and pedestrian traffic. Each of these factors is explained below.

**Lot Size:** Calculated by CED using lot size determinations in the Glenn County Assessor's parcel maps.

**Vacant Building (Square Footage):** Square footage of the building as estimated by the Glenn County Assessor's Office. Adjustments were made in the case of the existence of a basement. The estimated square footage of the basement is not included, only square footage at street level and in upper floors.

**Value per Square Foot:** The value per square foot was calculated for vacant lots by dividing assessed valuation by square footage of the lot. The equation for determining value per square foot follows:

$$\frac{(\text{Assessed Valuation})}{(\text{Square Footage of Property})}$$

Thus, a 10,000 square foot property with an assessed valuation of \$50,000 would have a value per square foot of  $\$50,000 / 10,000 = \$5.00$  per square foot.

**Assessed Value of Vacant Square Footage:** The assessed value of the property multiplied by the percentage of the building that is vacant. Commercial property values in Willows through 2002 are not expected to have risen to a great extent beyond the annual increase in assessed valuation. The equation for determining assessed value of vacant square footage follows:

$$(\text{Assessed Valuation}) \times \frac{(\text{Square Footage of Building})}{(\text{Square Footage of Vacant Building Space})}$$

Thus, a 10,000 square foot building with an assessed valuation of \$100,000 and 5,000 square feet of vacant space would have an assessed value of vacant square footage of  $\$100,000 \times (5,000 / 10,000) = \$50,000$ .

**Estimated Monthly Rental Rate (per Square Foot):** The cost approach was used to determine the monthly rental value of each vacant building space and vacant land. The cost approach evaluates the assessed valuation of the property, or portion of the property in some cases, and assumes that rental income would replace the assessed valuation of the property over a standard of 10 years. Thus, the value per square foot was divided by 10 years, then divided again by 12 months.

In cases where a vacant space is part of a larger building or lot, the assessed value of the vacant area is the proportion of the total value of the building or lot that is vacant. For example, if 50 percent of a building is vacant space, assessed value of vacant area is 50 percent of the assessed value of the building or lot.

The equation for determining the estimated monthly rental rate per square foot follows:

$$\frac{(\text{Assessed Value of Vacant Square Footage})}{(10 \text{ Years}) \times (12 \text{ Months}) \times (\text{Vacant Square Footage})}$$

Thus, a building with 5,000 square feet in vacant square footage and an assessed value of vacant square footage of \$50,000 would have an estimated monthly rental rate of  $\$50,000 / (10 \times 12 \times 5,000) = \$0.08$  per square foot.

**Building Condition:** A subjective determination of the condition of vacant building spaces. A building in “good” condition indicates that it is fairly up-to-date and has the look of a relatively new building both inside and out. A building in “fair” condition has the basic qualities of occupation after cleaning, but ideally, some if not many improvements to the space or the building are necessary for long-term occupation and long-term health of the building. A building in “poor” condition is not worthy of occupation at all without major improvements to the space or the building.

**Building Setup:** Specifies whether a vacant commercial building space is currently set up for retail, office, or some other non-retail use. Most non-retail buildings have the potential to be converted to retail with some interior alterations. However, a building inspector must determine whether there are structural issues regarding this conversion such as the removal of load-bearing walls.

**Basement:** Indicates whether or not the building contains a basement.

**Traffic Designation:** Four traffic designations have been defined for Downtown Willows. Designations identify street (vehicular) and pedestrian traffic in three terms relative to downtown: greatest, moderate, and least. Greatest traffic means that the street has the greatest amount of street or pedestrian traffic in the downtown area, least traffic means that the street has the least amount of traffic downtown, and moderate indicates that traffic is about average.

Street and pedestrian traffic designations follow. These street and pedestrian traffic designations are indicated for each of vacant buildings and lots in the data tables in this section.

- A: Greatest street and pedestrian traffic
- B: Greatest street traffic, least pedestrian traffic
- C: Moderate street and pedestrian traffic
- D: Least street and pedestrian traffic

Sycamore, Tehama, and Wood Streets carry the greatest amount of street traffic, though the only substantial pedestrian traffic is on Sycamore Street west of Tehama Street. Portions of Butte and Willow Streets contain moderate amounts of street and pedestrian traffic. Traffic designations by street segment are shown in Figure 2, page 42.

**FIGURE 2 – TRAFFIC DESIGNATIONS**



**VACANT BUILDINGS**

There were 14 building vacancies in the study area as of January 2003. A building vacancy is any vacant space in one building or on one parcel. In one case, there were multiple vacancies in one building. Table 1 contains detailed information on each property and Figure 3 shows the location of each property. The map reference number ("Map Ref. No.") in Table 1 corresponds to the property number in Figure 3.

**TABLE 1 -- BUILDINGS WITH VACANT SPACES**

Map Ref. No.	Physical Address	Lot Size (sq. ft.)	Vacant Building (sq. ft.)	Assessed Value of Vacant Sq. Ft.	Estimated Monthly Rental Rate (per sq. ft.)	Building Condition	Building Setup	Base-ment	Traffic Desig-nation	Notes
1	311 N Butte	/1	17,800	\$ 152,000	\$ 0.07	Poor	Build to Suit	No	C	This building is a former warehouse that is currently undergoing conversion to office and storage use. Conversations with the one current tenant indicate that the developer does not yet have final plans for this building—that the developer is more interested in build-to-suit—yet the exterior structure is not ideal for retail at this time because of a lack of windows for display. Its location is somewhat suited for retail, being adjacent to the community's large retail center. A large or small retailer can occupy all or part of this vacant space. Because of its build-to-suit nature, the rental rate per square foot is likely to be much higher after a custom remodel than that indicated.
2	258 N Butte	2,650	4,000	\$ 121,257	\$ 0.25	Good	Retail	No	C	This is a small retail space; one of the few currently available in Downtown Willows. This building is in good shape, but it is one of the more expensive buildings per square foot. The building includes an owner-occupied upstairs residence. Pedestrian and street traffic is lower here than on Sycamore Street, therefore, establishments in this location should not rely on passersby for business.
3	121 N Butte	7,575	17,000	\$ 132,600	\$ 0.07	Fair	Office	No	C	A three-story office building, this is the old Masonic lodge. It has the potential for ground-level retail with upper-level offices. There is a ballroom located on the third floor. It is located in the heart of the commercial area, and thus is a prime candidate for conversion. Rental rates may also be favorable, but may increase if the lower level of the building is converted to retail.
4	201 W Sycamore	3,750	3,620	\$ 95,506	\$ 0.22	Fair	Office	No	A	Located on a street corner in the heart of the downtown business district, this is the most ideally situated small vacant space in Downtown Willows, benefiting from high traffic and high visibility.

/1 Portion of a larger lot or building

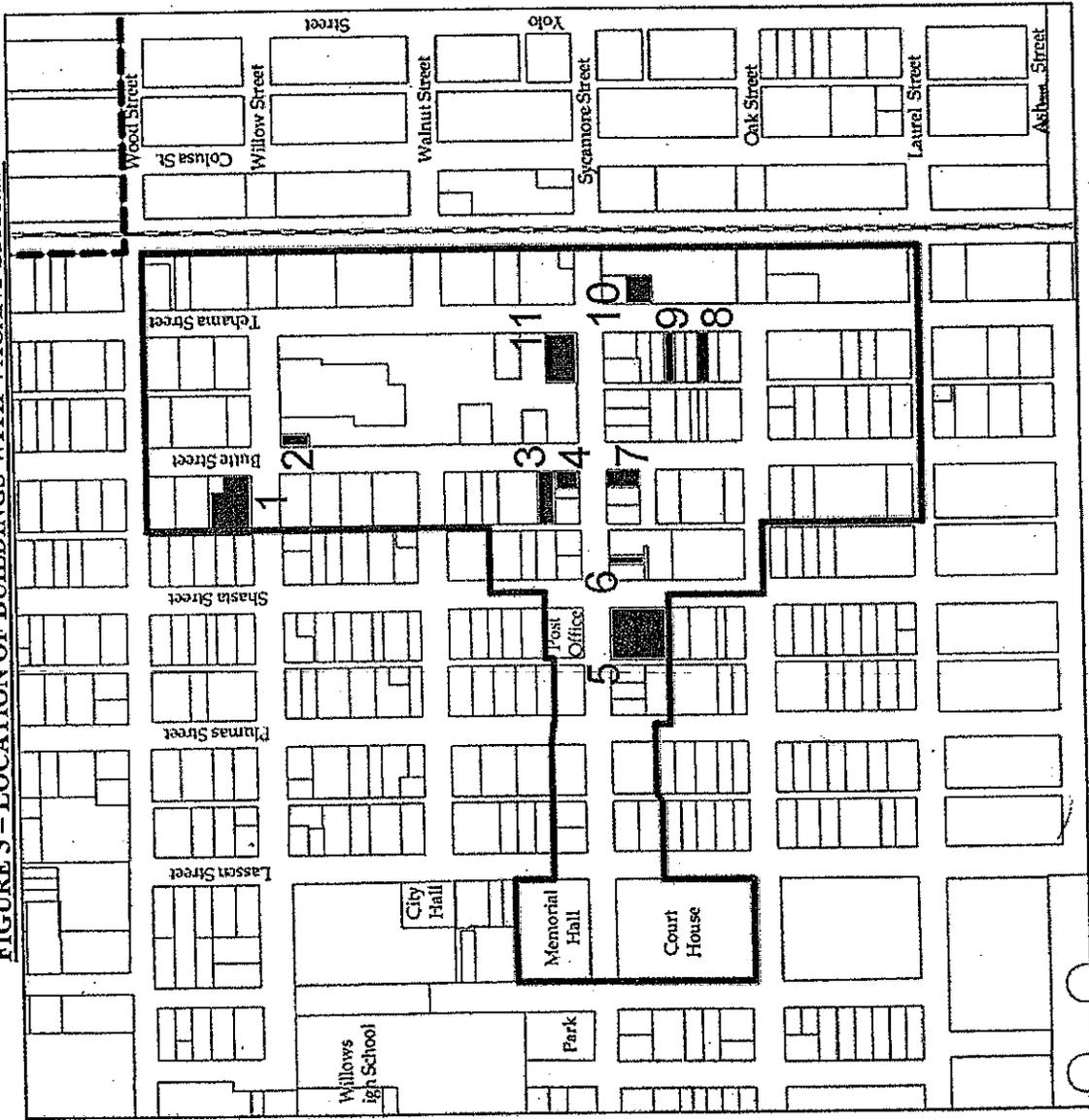
**Table 1 -- Buildings with Vacant Spaces (continued)**

Map Ref. No.	Physical Address	Lot Size (sq. ft.)	Vacant Building (sq. ft.)	Assessed Value of Vacant Sq. Ft.	Estimated Monthly Rental Rate (per sq. ft.)	Building Condition	Building Setup	Base-ment	Traffic Designation	Notes
5	322 W Sycamore	26,250	10,221	\$ 30,600	\$ 0.02	Poor	Theatre	No	A	A former theatre, this building has been vacant for years and significant improvements are needed to the building and infrastructure before commercial use could be possible. This lot includes vacant land area that housed the parking lot for the old theatre, but may be available for new commercial development.
6	250 W Sycamore	/1	2,650	\$ 142,800	\$ 0.45	Fair	Office	No	A	A second office space in the same building as a title company office, this building may have an obsolete technology infrastructure, evidenced by the appearance of a four-prong phone connection.
7	109 S Butte 208 W Sycamore	/1	1,250	\$ 9,428	\$ 0.06	Poor	Office-Retail	Yes	A	This is the old Bank of America building on the corner of Butte and Sycamore. There one vacant retail space in this building. This unit is in need of repair with substantial cracks in the ceiling and on the interior and exterior walls. Further analysis by a building inspector is recommended. The upstairs portion of this building includes several vacant office spaces. Conversations with tenants indicate that basement flooding contributes to the difficulty of upgrading the information technology infrastructure in this building.
8	151 S Tehama	3,900	1,575	\$ 59,160	\$ 0.31	Poor	Tavern	No	B	This building's configuration as a tavern increases its value; however, given its poor condition, this building may be over-valued at the moment.
9	131 S Tehama	3,750	4,793	\$ 119,723	\$ 0.21	Poor	Retail	Yes	B	Located on a narrow space on Tehama Street, this two-story retail space is in need of repair. There is too little pedestrian traffic and too limited visibility for street traffic for establishments here to rely upon for business.
10	No street address	9,932	/2	\$ 37,317	n/a	Fair	Car Wash	No	B	An unused car wash, classification of this property was complicated. The car wash structure is not technically a building, thus no estimate of square footage, yet the property could not be considered a vacant lot because of its presence. In the short term, the car wash may be operable with some repair. In the long term, this land may become part of larger plans to develop the entire block upon which it is located (see Vacant UP Lots).
11	111 W Sycamore	15,000	30,000	\$ 205,193	\$ 0.06	Fair	Retail	Yes	A	This is the former Daugherty's Department Store. This is a large retail space that is currently available for occupation. Minor improvements may be needed in the interior of the building, but it's low estimated rental rate per square foot makes this space competitive in Willows. A larger retailer may do well here if there is a market for such a facility. A group of local retailers may also wish to occupy this building in a collaborative effort.

/1 Portion of a larger lot or building

/2 Not technically a building

**FIGURE 3 - LOCATION OF BUILDINGS WITH VACANT SPACES**



## VACANT LOTS

Vacant lots are parcels on which there are no buildings. Some vacant lots have potential for development, while others do not. This distinction will be made in this section. Many vacant lots may have an environmental constraint to development; however, more studies in this matter are needed.

Not all properties that appear to be "vacant" are, indeed, vacant lots. Some lots in the Downtown Willows area have a building on one portion, while the rest of the property remains vacant. Examples include the lot at 156 S. Butte Street, where a grocery store covers the southern half of the lot while the northern half of the lot remains vacant, and the theatre at 236 W. Sycamore Street where there is vacant land to the east and to the south, both of which are part of the same parcel. It is assumed that, in these cases, vacant land exists for the expansion of existing businesses and is not available for new development. These are classified as "Neighboring Vacant Lots" and are not included in this study. There is enough vacant property in Downtown Willows that encouraging landowners to split and sell their property is unnecessary.

Vacant lots are subject to development, retail and non-retail. The discussion in this section focuses on retail development. However, environmental studies may be needed on vacant properties before any commercial development takes place.

### 1) Vacant Lots

Vacant lots, with the exception of vacant neighboring lots, in the Downtown Willows study area are considered to be available for commercial development, as opposed to residential, industrial, or other development.

There are 11 vacant lots in Downtown Willows with sizes varying from 5,000 to 15,000 square feet and with locations varying from busy street corners to narrow spaces between existing buildings. Values range from less than \$1.00 to over \$5.00 per square foot, and value is not necessarily an indication of development potential.

Table 2 contains detailed information on each vacant standard lot and Figure 4 shows the location of each property. The map reference number ("Map Ref. No.") in Table 2 corresponds to the property number in Figure 4.

**TABLE 2 – VACANT LOTS**

Map Ref. No.	Street Address	Lot Size (sq. ft.)	Assessed Valuation	Value per Sq. Ft.	Traffic Designation	Notes
1	No Street Address	11,250	\$ 25,300	\$ 2.25	C	This property is located off of the main trafficways, but the property is large and it is across the street from the downtown mall. Development of a larger retail store that is not dependent upon passersby, may be suitable here.
2	No Street Address	11,250	\$ 25,300	\$ 2.25	C	This property is adjacent to, and shares ownership with, vacant lot 1
3	No Street Address	15,000	\$ 8,941	\$ 0.60	A	Located next to the post office on Sycamore Street, this lot experiences a lot of pedestrian and street traffic and could house a new retail space dependent upon such traffic. This property may be the best value downtown if there are no environmental constraints to development.
4	No Street Address	15,000	\$ 29,739	\$ 1.98	A	This lot may not enjoy as much pedestrian traffic as vacant lot 3, but shares the same potential for street traffic.
5	332 W Sycamore	5,175	\$ 16,547	\$ 3.20	A	This lot is sandwiched between a title company and the school district office. These neighbors would generate some, but not likely a significant degree of foot traffic. Its location in the middle of a block limits its visibility from the street, which also may limit the potential for retail dependent upon street traffic.
6	222 W Sycamore	5,000	\$ 26,514	\$ 5.30	A	While this lot is not located on a street corner, it is currently adjacent to vacant property on a partially-developed lot and is, therefore, somewhat visible to eastbound traffic on Sycamore Street. There is a slightly higher degree of pedestrian traffic at this location than in vacant lots 3, 4, or 5 because of the proximity of many small businesses on this block and the location of an automatic teller machine across the street.
7	117 S Butte	7,500	\$ 9,361	\$ 1.25	C	Some property maps indicate this land as a public right-of-way, but the official Glenn County parcel map indicates private ownership. Ownership should be confirmed before development is planned. This property was used as a storage place for construction materials for the city's street rehabilitation and could have environmental constraints to development. It is on a less-traveled section of Butte Street with less pedestrian traffic than vacant lot 6.
8	No Street Address	7,500	\$ 13,474	\$ 1.80	D	While technically vacant, this property, along with vacant lot 9, is currently being utilized as a storage yard. If development of these parcels were planned, it is likely that environmental constraints would be an issue because of their current use. There is little street or pedestrian traffic on this section of Butte Street.
9	220 S Butte	15,000	\$ 26,955	\$ 1.80	D	This property is adjacent to, and shares ownership with, vacant lot 8. In addition, its current use is the same as vacant lot 8.
10	161 S Tehama	7,350	\$ 14,000	\$ 1.90	B	Partially paved, this lot shares ownership with a neighboring parcel that serves as a parking lot. There is a taco wagon stationed on the neighboring parking lot. This lot currently provides additional parking for customers visiting the taco wagon, but since the property is not neighboring to a permanent existing use, it may be available for commercial development. The lot is also next to a vacant tavern and is on a main street. If the neighboring lot with the taco wagon remains undeveloped, a building on this lot would be well visible by northbound traffic on Tehama Street.
11	141 S Tehama	7,500	\$ 13,655	\$ 1.82	B	This lot is on the opposite side of the tavern from vacant lot 10. A youth center run by an auxiliary of a local law enforcement organization fronts this lot's north side. New landscaping adorns this lot, indicating that it may not be available for development. It is located on a main street, but a building here may be less visible because of buildings fronting each side of the property.



## 2) Vacant Union Pacific Lots

Most vacant land in Downtown Willows is owned by one company: Union Pacific Railroad (UP). This company owns some of the occupied and all of the vacant property between Tehama Street and the railroad tracks. With all property fronting Tehama Street, the greatest potential for new large-scale commercial development in Downtown Willows is on UP property. Land prices are average for Willows.

Property owned by the railroad company is not subject to property tax and, therefore, the Glenn County Assessor does not have information on these properties except for a parcel number. UP was contacted to obtain information on and development plans for their property. UP property was appraised in 2000 and the appraised value is included in Table 4.

According to Charlie Gee, a realtor for this property representing Union Pacific, the railroad company is interested in sales and lease arrangements for its property. Any inquiries regarding UP property can be made to Mr. Gee at 530-865-9088.

The official Glenn County Assessor's parcel map was used to define boundaries in this survey. UP parcel maps, however, are not consistent with assessor's parcel maps. UP records break out their property in Downtown Willows into nine parcels, rather than five, and include property that clearly is not owned by UP. Property claimed by UP includes the property on the southeast corner of Tehama and Sycamore Streets that houses a restaurant and an abandoned car wash. Information from the assessor's office indicates that this property is owned privately and that the property is assessed for taxation. In addition, UP records indicate that they own the property between vacant UP lots 1 and 2 on Tehama Street across from Willow Street. Both the assessor's map and the City of Willows claim that this is a public right-of-way. These inconsistencies between assessor's maps and UP maps may cause confrontations in the future if not addressed by the city.

One UP property is already developed: a bank building is located on the northeast corner of Tehama and Walnut Streets. This property (immediately south of vacant UP lot 2) is leased from UP, but since it is a developed property, it is not included in this analysis.

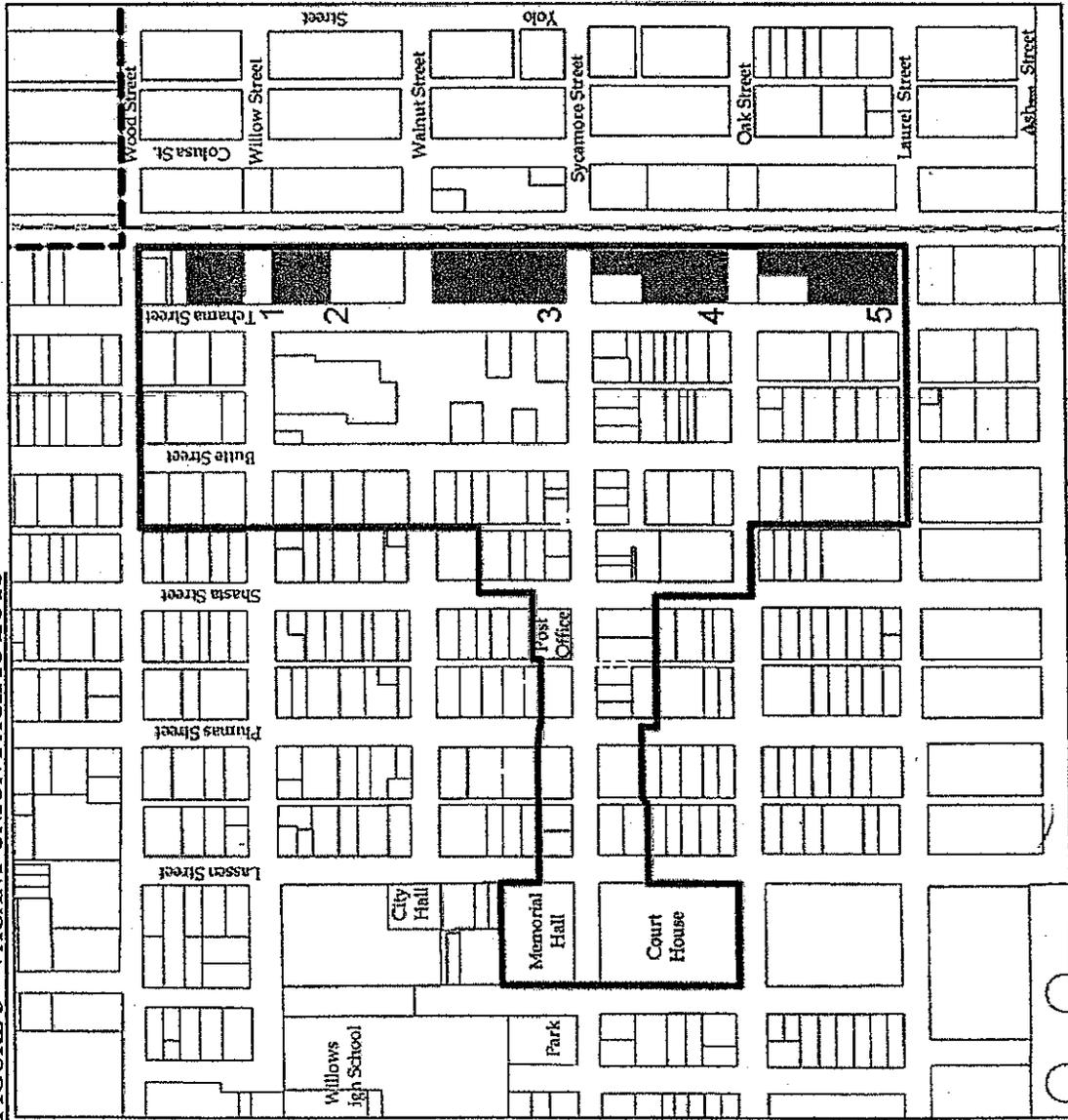
Any UP property may have, at one time, housed industrial land uses. Environmental studies will be required for this property before development plans could commence.

Table 3 contains detailed information on each vacant UP lot and Figure 5 shows the location of each property. The map reference number ("Map Ref. No.") in Table 3 corresponds to the property number in Figure 5.

**TABLE 3 – VACANT UNION PACIFIC LOTS**

Map Ref. No.	Street Address	Lot Size (sq. ft.)	Appraised Valuation (2000)	Value per Sq. Ft.	Traffic Designation	Notes
1	No Street Address	27,555	\$43,913	\$1.59	B	This property has a neighboring vacant parcel to the north that shares ownership with built lots on the corner of Wood and Tehama Streets which might add to the development potential of this property if these parcels were combined.
2	No Street Address	31,407	\$50,052	\$1.59	B	A bank building on Union Pacific land fronts this lot on the south. The volume of traffic generated by the bank increases the potential of this property.
3	125 E Sycamore	66,000	\$120,000	\$1.82	B	There are many issues concerning this lot. The northern third of the lot contains a gravel parking lot. The middle third is a small park with grass and trees. The southern third once housed a gasoline station and so there are likely to be environmental contamination concerning its development. The southeastern corner of this lot contains a small building housing a cab company. This lot is the largest centrally located lot in Downtown Willows and with the existence of the park already on this property, this could be the ideal location of a downtown community gathering place.
4	136 S Tehama	58,060	\$93,224	\$1.61	B	This lot is adjacent to and behind a Chinese restaurant and an abandoned car wash in the property on the corner of Tehama and Sycamore Streets. The property is across the street from several small commercial buildings. This property has the greatest potential to develop a set of other small commercial spaces abutting Tehama Street to complement, and possibly to enhance, existing business located across the street by providing more traffic for the area.
5	101 E Laurel	51,159	\$87,000	\$1.70	B	This lot is surrounded by more industrial uses and so commercial development may be more difficult here. An auto supply and repair store is located off of the northeastern corner of this property. The close proximity of other auto repair and auto parts stores give this property the potential to house an auto dealership if it is determined to be feasible in Willows. Such a use, however, would not likely be compatible with a motel located across Tehama Street on the corner of Laurel Street.

FIGURE 5 - VACANT UNION PACIFIC LOTS



## **Conclusion**

There are many types of retail spaces available in Downtown Willows. Prospective tenants can move into existing small and large retail and non-retail spaces and prospective builders have a wide range of properties with varying prices and traffic levels to suit differing preferences.

Enough vacant land and vacant building spaces are available in the study area to make a downtown revitalization effort by the City of Willows a success.

The information about specific vacant buildings and lots in Component 2 could be included in the City's Commercial Recruitment and Retention program outlined in Component 1, Section 5, page 29.

**APPENDIX I: COPY OF LETTER DISTRIBUTED TO PROSPECTIVE TASK FORCE MEMBERS**

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See attached letter.

# City of Willows

201 North Lassen • Willows, California 95988 • (530) 934-7041 • FAX: (530) 934-7402



October 24, 2002

Dear \_\_\_\_\_ :

The City of Willows has been awarded a grant for the development of a Downtown Revitalization Strategy. Dave Kilbourne, Director of Downtown Revitalization Consultants, a Chico-based firm, has been retained to facilitate completion of the study. It is anticipated that this project will be completed by the end of February 2003.

One of the essential elements associated with the Downtown Revitalization Strategy is the creation of a Task Force of approximately fifteen individuals representing key community organizations and business interests.

On behalf of the City, I would like to request your participation as a member of the Task Force. Your participation will allow you direct input into the development of the revitalization strategy and provide the City the benefit of your experience and expertise in developing a meaningful and realistic plan that can be implemented.

Task Force activities will be limited to approximately four to six meetings over the next four months. It is anticipated that each of these meetings will be held over the lunch hour and limited to a one-hour session. The initial Task Force meeting is scheduled for noon, November 5, 2002, at Franco's restaurant, 610 South Tehama.

Please join us in this significant effort to benefit the traditional downtown district of our City. If you are able to participate, please advise at your earliest convenience.

Sincerely,

Mike Mistrot  
City Manager  
(530) 934-7041

bcc: Rose Marie Thrailkill  
Suhail Khan  
✓ Dave Kilbourne

## APPENDIX II: WILLOWS RETAIL LEAKAGE STUDY

Retail leakage, also referred to as unmet potential retail sales, is an estimate of the amount of taxable retail dollars that could be captured in a community, but are not. Leakage is retail potential minus retail capture. Retail capture is the amount of retail sales that actually occur in the community and retail potential is the total amount that could be captured. These will be quantified and analyzed.

This analysis is only statistical in nature; no survey research or primary data collection has been performed to verify the results of this analysis. These estimates for unmet potential retail sales are for the corporate boundary of the City of Willows. The analysis was conducted by the Center for Economic Development at California State University, Chico.

### SUMMARY

The total unmet potential for taxable retail sales in the City of Willows tops \$29 million per year. A combination of improved marketing, expanded product lines, new retailers, and annexation of unincorporated commercial lands will help the local community capture more of its taxable retail sales potential within the Willows City Limits.

There is significant potential in the City of Willows for the development of several types of retail stores or retail goods, including:

- High-order (high-end) general merchandise
- Eating and drinking places
- Home furnishings and appliances
- Auto supplies
- Service stations

There may also be potential for specialty products catering to niche markets that does not show up in this analysis. The existence of Wal-Mart in the city is a complicating factor. Wal-Mart provides many basic specialty goods and most likely captures all of the potential sales for community-serving businesses selling these goods. However, Wal-Mart does not provide higher-end, higher-value goods demanded by some city residents and visitors.

### REASONS FOR UNMET POTENTIAL

There are three major reasons for unmet potential.

- 1) **Businesses not open outside of normal business hours:** Many Willows businesses are not open during times of the day and week when potential customers are in demand of products and services. This includes travelers on I-5 and participants at Thunderhill Park Raceway, many of whom travel through Willows outside of normal business hours, as well as local employees who commute to other communities to work and are not in town during normal business hours to shop.
- 2) **Lack of businesses selling some of the types of goods or services demanded:** While there may not be enough potential to support many higher-order goods, there are many feasible business sales opportunities that have not been taken advantage of in Willows. These include tapping demand for

different types of restaurants for I-5 travelers, auto parts and supplies for Thunderhill participants, home furnishings for local residents, and goods for local businesspeople.

- 3) **Existing local businesses capturing potential located outside of the Willows City Limit:** In order for the local community to fully benefit from taxable sales, it is best for businesses within the community to be within its incorporated boundaries. There are several businesses operating in the community outside of the corporate boundary of Willows. Incorporating commercial lands within the community would provide additional local funding, as well as improved capture analysis in the future.

## **SOLUTIONS TO CAPTURE UNMET POTENTIAL**

Four actions taken by businesses and local government that could result in capture this unmet potential.

- 1) **Increased marketing for existing businesses:** The difficulty for some existing businesses to capture potential markets can be lessened by increasing their local marketing effort. It is easier for many residents and travelers to Willows to buy locally rather than travel to neighboring communities to shop; however, local businesses must continuously remind residents and visitors of their existence and willingness to serve their customers. Individual businesses can advertise separately, or groups of businesses can collaboratively advertise in a "shop local" campaign. Advertising can be done through local newspapers, billboards, radio, community event sponsorship, or a combination of all of the above.
- 2) **Expanded product lines for local businesses:** Much of the unmet potential can be captured by existing local businesses through the expansion of product lines. Local stores that sell products categorized in Table 1 as "general merchandise" can offer products and services not available at larger retail chain stores. Local home furnishings and appliance stores can sell both furniture and appliances, where traditionally these goods are found in separate stores.
- 3) **Development of new retail businesses:** While Willows does not have enough market to attract most of the big-name chain stores that are usually targeted in a retail recruitment plan, Wal-Mart will capture the potential for most of these stores. There is potential for supporting new, local entrepreneurs with innovative concepts for successful businesses, including new retail product lines and new ways to sell retail products. The following are examples of several local organizations offering help to small and emerging entrepreneurs:
  - a. **Butte College Small Business Development Center (SBDC):** The SBDC offers one-stop assistance to small businesses by providing one-on-one counseling, entrepreneur training, and a wide variety of information and guidance.
  - b. **Tri-County Economic Development Corporation (TCEDC):** TCEDC manages small business loan funds designed to finance businesses and help them create jobs.
  - c. **Center for Economic Development (CED) at California State University, Chico:** CED provides market intelligence to new and existing businesses looking to expand markets for their products.
- 4) **Annex unincorporated commercial lands in the community:** Annexing commercial lands within the unincorporated areas of the community would provide additional local funding to the City of Willows as well as improved capture analysis in the future.

## QUANTITATIVE ANALYSIS OF UNMET POTENTIAL

Table 1 shows actual taxable retail sales, potential sales from three sources, and the total unmet potential for taxable retail sales. The methodology used to prepare the table may be found at the end of this section.

**General merchandise:** Retail leakage in general merchandise consists exclusively of products and services that would normally be sold in stores listed under general merchandise, but not provided by Wal-Mart. While unmet potential (retail leakage) exceeds \$1 million, this would not be enough to support an additional general merchandise store. However, there are other local businesses that operate in these retail sectors that can expand their product lines to include items not found elsewhere in the community. This primarily includes higher-order, higher-end goods such as fine apparel, for example.

**Musical instruments; mobile homes, etc.; and boats, etc.:** These sectors are included because there are no retail stores in the City of Willows categorized under these sectors and, therefore, data for these sectors are not held confidential by BOE. There is a dealer of trailers within the community, but located outside of the corporate boundary of Willows. An industry study would be needed to determine if there is enough potential for a musical instrument or a boat, motorcycle, or plane dealer to operate in Willows. The potential for sales in these categories can be captured through local businesses expanding their product lines.

**Other specialty stores:** There are few stores in Willows that operate under the retail sectors included in this category. Because of this, few conclusions can be made about potential in this category. The fact that there is a surplus in this category adds to the uncertainty, although it is likely that the inclusion of fuel and ice dealers in this category is responsible for all of the surplus because of the demand for fuel by local farms. Leakage in any of the other sub-categories cannot be determined and fuel and ice dealers could not be excluded from this category due to confidentiality of data.

**Food stores:** This analysis only covers taxable sales and many of the goods offered by food stores are not taxable. However, many of the goods that are not taxable are basic, unprepared foods, most of which are perishable (dairy products, etc.). Therefore, the demand for the goods in this category not subject to taxation are usually met locally. The \$0.5 million plus that does leak out of the community is less than substantial and can likely be captured through expanded product lines and lower prices at existing food stores.

**TAXABLE RETAIL SALES CAPTURE ANALYSIS, THOUSANDS OF DOLLARS**

	Taxable Sales, 2001	Potential from Willows Residents	Potential from I-5 Travelers	Potential from Thunderhill Participants	Total Potential Sales	Retail Leakage
General Merchandise Stores /2	\$ 27,202	\$ 19,039	\$ 0	\$ 9,361	\$ 28,400	-\$ 1,198
Musical Instruments	\$ 0	\$ 228	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 228	-\$ 228
Mobile Homes, Trailers, and Campers	\$ 0	\$ 618	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 618	-\$ 618
Boat, Motorcycle, and Plane Dealers	\$ 0	\$ 488	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 488	-\$ 488
Other Specialty Stores /3	\$ 2,258	\$ 1,180	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 1,180	\$ 1,078
Food Stores	\$ 4,151	\$ 4,745	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 4,745	-\$ 594
Eating and Drinking Places	\$ 9,282	\$ 5,661	\$ 7,285	\$ 3,744	\$ 16,690	-\$ 7,408
Home Furnishings and Appliances	\$ 159	\$ 2,135	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 2,135	-\$ 1,976
Building Materials and Farm Implements /4	\$ 6,035	\$ 6,368	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 6,368	-\$ 333
Auto Dealers and Auto Supplies	\$ 2,879	\$ 8,989	\$ 0	\$ 6,241	\$ 15,230	-\$ 12,351
Service Stations	\$ 10,996	\$ 4,151	\$ 7,096	\$ 5,242	\$ 16,489	-\$ 5,493
<b>Total Potential</b>	<b>\$ 62,962</b>	<b>\$ 53,603</b>	<b>\$ 14,380</b>	<b>\$ 24,588</b>	<b>\$ 92,571</b>	<b>-\$ 29,609</b>

/2 - General Merchandise Stores includes

- Men's, Women's and Family Apparel
- Shoes
- General Merchandise Stores
- Drug Stores
- Sporting Goods
- Photographic Equipment and Supplies
- Stationery and Books
- Jewelry
- Office, Store, and School Supplies
- Other Specialties
- Farm and Garden Supplies

/3 - Other Specialty Stores includes

- Florists
- Packaged Liquor Stores
- Gifts, Art Goods, and Novelties
- Second-hand Merchandise
- Fuel and Ice Dealers

/4 - Building Materials and Farm Implements includes

- Lumber and Building Materials
- Hardware Stores
- Plumbing and Electrical Supplies
- Paint, Glass, and Wallpaper
- Farm Implement Dealers

**Eating and drinking places:** There is unmet potential for sales in all types of eating and drinking places, except fast food. There is potential for differing varieties of eating places catering to travelers on I-5 and visiting Thunderhill Park. Surveys of these customers may help determine the types of eating places in demand. There is also potential for the development of drinking places for local residents and visitors to Thunderhill. The City can support clean, friendly, and fun places where people can go to safely enjoy themselves and spend money.

**Home furnishings and appliances:** The City of Willows captures very little of the potential in this category. Residents are spending about \$2 million on these goods at stores in other communities. Either existing stores need to increase their local marketing efforts and/or expand their product lines or new stores that can sell expanded product lines are needed in Willows.

**Building materials and farm implements:** It is expected that the demand for farm implements is largely met with retail surplus captured from neighboring communities, and that building material and hardware stores experience a greater leakage value. BOE cannot release data for farm implements separately from building materials because there are too few dealers within Willows' incorporated boundary. The combined leakage of building materials, minus the capture at of farm implement dealers, is not significant and further analysis would require more farm implement dealers to be located in the City of Willows.

**Auto dealers and auto supplies:** The greatest estimated leakage in this analysis is in the auto dealer and auto supply retail sector, partially because it combines two sources of retail leakage, from both auto dealers and auto supplies. At least \$5 million is spent by local residents outside of the incorporated community on motor vehicles. A new vehicle dealer in Willows has the potential to capture a large amount of sales, but a specific industry study is needed to determine if there would be enough sales to support a dealership. In addition, the unmet demand for auto supplies, largely from participants at Thunderhill, likely tops \$6 million. Increased marketing and operating hours of local auto parts stores could tap into this unmet potential, but note that some of this potential is captured by Wal-Mart. Auto supplies could not be included in general merchandise because of confidentiality restrictions in the auto dealers sector.

**Service stations:** Much of the unmet demand for taxable sales at service stations is from I-5 travelers. The analysis assumes that Willows can receive its "fair share" of traffic from I-5; however, the existence of highly developed travel centers in nearby communities, such as in Corning, will always inhibit Willows' potential. While there is not enough potential travel sales for a similar travel center in Willows, improved signage on I-5 informing travelers about what they will find if they exit on State Highway 162 will help new and existing businesses capture more of this potential. In addition, improved marketing at Thunderhill may increase capture of participants as they pass through town.

## METHODOLOGY

### 1) Willows Retail Market Area:

The taxable retail sales capture analysis assumes the Willows Retail Market Area to be zip code tabulation area 95988 from the 2000 Census, a boundary generally defined as Stony Creek to the west, County Road 33 to the north, County Road V to the east, and the Colusa County line to the south. The Willows Retail Market Area is the area in which people live where Willows is the primary source of local retail goods.

### 2) Potential Taxable Sales from Willows Residents:

In order to estimate local demand for taxable retail goods, a model retail good consumption pattern is necessary. CED used the consumption of goods purchased in Butte and Glenn counties combined, referred to as the Butte-Glenn Region. The Butte-Glenn Region provides a good model due to their local nature and the fact that this region captures greater than 99.5 percent of its retail potential.

CED utilized 2001 taxable sales data by retail sector available from the California Board of Equalization (BOE) as well as 1999 per capita income and 2000 population for zip code tabulation area 95988 and for the Butte-Glenn Region from the U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census.

There are only 12 retail sectors that can be analyzed separately in Willows using taxable sales in 2001. The primary complicating factor is the existence of Wal-Mart. BOE will only disclose taxable retail sales for a retail sector when there are four or more retail establishments in that sector and no establishment is responsible for 80 percent of the sales or more in that sector. Because of the large volume of taxable retail sales at Wal-Mart, and because the existence of Wal-Mart has limited the development of retail sectors in Willows, data disclosure was a challenge. CED worked with BOE over the period of a month in order to gather the most detailed information on taxable sales in the City of Willows that could be made available.

are Orland and Williams, respectively. The I-5 segment between Orland and Williams is 40 miles, meaning that the middle 20 miles constitutes the segment for which Willows would get its "fair share." Twenty miles is 7.1 percent of 280, indicating that 7.1 percent of traveling vehicles should be stopping in Willows. This translates to an annual average of 926 vehicles per day potentially making a travel stop in Willows.

During a travel stop, each vehicle would spend an average of \$21.00 for gasoline (12 gallons at \$1.75 per gallon) and \$21.56 for food (2.2 persons at \$9.80 per person). Over a year, 926 travel stops per day multiplied by 365 days in 2001, multiplied by \$21.00 for gasoline equals a potential \$7.096 million in sales to service stations and multiplied by \$21.56 for food equals a potential of \$7.285 million in sales to eating places.

The following formulas summarize the methodology for estimating taxable retail potential for travelers on I-5:

(2001 annual average daily traffic (AADT) I-5 = 21,600) X (60% traveling traffic) = (12,960 AAD traveling vehicles)

(Average speed = 70 mph) X (4 hours between travel stops) = (280 miles between travel stops)

(Length of I-5 between Orland and Williams = 40 miles) / (2) = (20 miles in Willows I-5 service segment) / (280 miles between travel stops) = (7.1% of traveling vehicles stopping in Willows) X (12,960 AAD traveling vehicles) = (926 AAD traveling vehicles stopping in Willows)

(Average price for a gallon of gas in 2001 = \$1.75) X (Average fill-up of 12 gallons) = (\$21.00 per vehicle to service stations) X (926 AAD traveling vehicles stopping in Willows) X (365 days in 2001) = (Potential \$7.076 million to service stations)

(Average spending on food per person = \$9.80) X (Average persons per vehicle = 2.2) = (\$21.56 per vehicle to eating places) X (926 AAD traveling vehicles stopping in Willows) X (365 days in 2001) = (Potential \$7.265 million to eating places)

#### **4) Potential Taxable Sales from Thunderhill Park Participants:**

Thunderhill Park Raceway, a facility operated by the San Francisco Region of the Sports Car Club of America, attracts over 126,000 visitors per year to the Willows area. Most spend 3 or more days in the area, resulting in an estimated 416,000 visitor-days to Willows according to David Vodden, CEO of the raceway.

Each visitor potentially spends \$9.00 at restaurants, \$12.60 at service stations, \$15.00 at auto supply stores, and \$22.50 for general merchandise every day they visit. This does not include the potential for auto repair and accommodations, neither of which are considered retail trade and are, therefore, not covered in this section.

Potential spending of Thunderhill participants totals \$3.7 million per year to eating places, \$5.2 million per year to service stations, \$6.2 million per year to auto supply stores, and \$9.4 million per year to general merchandise stores.

#### **5) Taxable Retail Sales Leakage:**

In order to estimate taxable retail sales leakage, the potential spending of local residents, I-5 travelers, and Thunderhill participants in each retail sector were subtracted from actual taxable sales captured in the City of

Willows in 2001. If the sum of potential is greater than capture, there is leakage. The formula for calculating total potential taxable retail sales for each sector in Willows is as follows.

$$S_{o(s)} = T_{w(s)} - R_{w(s)} - I5_{(s)} - P_{(s)}$$

**Where:**

- $S_{o(s)}$  = Total surplus (if positive) or leakage (if negative) for each retail sector in Willows
- $T_{w(s)}$  = Taxable sales in 2001 in the City of Willows for each retail sector
- $R_{w(s)}$  = Potential taxable sales from the residents of the Willows Retail Market Area for each retail sector
- $I5_{(s)}$  = Potential taxable sales from travelers on I-5 for each retail sector
- $P_{(s)}$  = Potential taxable sales from participants at Thunderhill Park for each retail sector

Taxable retail sales leakage is the total estimated taxable retail sales dollars that can potentially be captured by Willows retailers.

### **RECENT EVENTS AND TRENDS**

It is likely that, over the last year, retail leakage from local residents has increased slightly due to the further development of Chico's retail centers, where most Willows residents do their out-of-town shopping. However, it is likely that capture of I-5 travelers and Thunderhill participants has increased slightly with the continued development of the travel center around the State Highway 162 interchange. Overall, the changes in Willows and competing communities over the last year has not been enough to invalidate the above analysis.

### **APPENDIX III: PSYCHOGRAPHIC PROFILE OF THE WILLOWS RETAIL MARKET**

Psychographics, literally the combination of psychology and demographics, is used to estimate spending patterns of the local population. This is done through the process of grouping individuals within a neighborhood based on certain general characteristics of its population such as age, ethnicity, family type, income, home value, and occupation. The theory is that groups with similar demographics also have similar psychologies, which directly translates to similar spending patterns.

Psychographic data is used by businesses to identify spending patterns within their local markets. The data can also be used to find other communities in the nation that are likely to spend money at a particular business.

In the Willows Retail Market Area, there are 9 types of neighborhoods. Some of the populations of these neighborhoods will have overlapping consumer preferences, such as for certain types of automobiles and outdoor recreation equipment.

The table below shows the number of households in each psychographic profile within the census zip code tabulation area 95988, estimated for 2002. The following table is the result of analysis of Environmental Systems Research Institute (ESRI) data for 2000 and 2001 and census data for 2000.

#### **Households by Psychographic Profile (Zip Code Tabulation Area 95988)**

Psychographic Profile	Total Households	Percent of Total
Baby Boomers with Children	51	1.6 %
Pacific Heights	324	10.2 %
Older Settled Married Couples	496	15.6 %
Newly Formed Households	785	24.8 %
Southwestern Families	17	0.5 %
Middle America	632	19.9 %
Rural Industrial Workers	3	0.1 %
Prairie Farmers	380	12.0 %
Hearthand Communities	484	15.3 %
Total	3,170	100.0 %

*Source: Center for Economic Development at California State University, Chico using ESRI ACORN.*

**Data Source:** ESRI Business Information Solutions (ESRI BIS) produces a database called ACORN™ (A Classification of Residential Neighborhoods). The ACORN database includes lifestyle segmentation information, also referred to as psychographic profiling.

The ACORN system divides all U.S. residential areas into 43 clusters based on demographic characteristics such as income, age, household type, home value, occupation, education, and other consumer behavior characteristics. Nine of these clusters can be found in the Willows Retail Market Area.

The ACORN Area Profile classifies a market by neighborhood lifestyle segment categories and describes the socioeconomic quality of the immediate neighborhood. The ACORN Lifestyles report includes current details about each summary group and segment.

The following are characteristic descriptions for ACORN psychographic segments found in the Willows Retail Market Area. All dollar values and home prices in this section are as of year 2000.

### 1) Baby Boomers with Children (1.6%)

**Demographic:** Approximately two-thirds of the households are married couples, most with children, over 50 percent more than the national average. Their median age is 31.2 years; more than 35 percent of the population is under the age of 20, while 34 percent of the householders are between the ages of 25 and 44 years. Many are mobile, still moving to find the best jobs or location in which to live.

**Socioeconomic:** This young market has very high employment rates including a high proportion of dual income families, but they are not affluent. Their median household income is \$48,000. Some have graduate schooling, but this group is less likely to have completed a graduate or professional degree.

**Residential:** They live in single-family homes built during the 1970s. Most of their homes are owner-occupied with a median home value of \$95,700.

**Preferences:** Baby Boomers with Children represent family- and home-oriented consumerism. They enjoy do-it-yourself home projects and go camping, fishing, and hunting. They rent videos; grow vegetables; use their PCs; and visit museums, zoos, and theme parks. They own pets and spend their discretionary income on swimming pools, outdoor grills, campers. They own multiple cars, minivans, and sport utility vehicles.

### 2) Pacific Heights (10.2%)

**Demographic:** Pacific Heights are predominantly Asians and Pacific Islanders but there is a significant Hispanic minority at nearly 14 percent. Almost 35 percent are foreign-born, and half speak a language other than English at home. The segment's age profile is almost identical to that of the U.S. overall. A greater proportion of adult children live with their parents.

**Socioeconomic:** This upscale consumer market has a median household income of \$48,400. One of every two households earns \$50,000 or more annually. Their sources of income include self-employment, interest and dividends, wages, and salaries. Education is a priority: half of the adult population over age 25 attended college or have received a bachelor's or graduate degree. Another 10 percent are presently enrolled in college.

**Residential:** There is no housing in the Willows Retail Market Area that fits the housing profile for Pacific Heights. Usually, these neighborhoods are high-rent districts. With median home values around \$250,000, ownership is below average (50 percent). Twelve percent of the owner-occupied units are condominiums. Most of the housing is in multi-unit complexes with five or more units. Population density is high, with over 15,000 persons per square mile.

**Preferences:** Pacific Heights own few cars, and when they do, they'll buy a foreign, subcompact model. To keep in touch with relatives, they spend a disproportionate share of their income on foreign trips and long-distance phone calls. They watch TV, listen to the radio, gamble at casinos, play the lottery, go skating, and play billiards. They are inclined to invest rather than to save their money.

### 3) Older, Settled Married Couples (15.6%)

**Demographic:** Older, Settled Married Couples are middle-aged married couples who have settled into their neighborhoods and surroundings. Although many households include school age or adult children, their age profile is slightly older with a median of 37.2 years. The population is predominately white.

**Socioeconomic:** The income distribution reflects a degree of comfort earned by working couples age 45–64 years. Almost half earn \$50,000 or more. The median net worth of this segment is \$69,000. Almost 20 percent of these households are drawing retirement income.

**Residential:** Older, Settled Married Couples live in older, single-family homes owner-occupied with a median value of \$95,100.

**Preferences:** Older, Settled Married Couples are likely to own stock, savings accounts, bonds, IRAs, and other securities, but may also have debt from loans and credit cards. They spend money on home improvements, furnishings, and outdoor equipment. They watch TV; listen to jazz and golden oldies; and read newspapers and lifestyle, health, and home magazines.

### 4) Newly Formed Households (24.8%)

**Demographic:** Newly Formed Households have a median age of 33.9 years and many of them are between the ages of 20 and 34 years. The mix of household types includes single parent, single-person, and shared households, in addition to below national level but still sizable percentage of married couple households with and without children. Eighty-five percent of this market is white.

**Socioeconomic:** These households are moderate-income with a median household income of \$35,300. Unemployment and poverty are low. Half work in the manufacturing and service industries.

**Residential:** Newly Formed Households live in affordable housing in older, single-family homes, and duplexes. Their median home value is \$73,500.

**Preferences:** Newly Formed Households visit zoos, use tobacco products, play cards, gamble at casinos, play the lottery, and go camping. Most of their TV, radio, and print preferences are near the U.S. average, except for the popularity of certain TV sports events and sitcoms, and several women's and science magazines.

### 5) Southwestern Families (.5%)

**Demographic:** These families portray the Hispanic culture characteristic of the Southwest. While about 20 percent are foreign-born, most of these families have lived in the U.S. for generations. Most speak Spanish at home. Demographically, Southwestern Families are large with an average family size of 3.7 persons. Their median age of 28.4 years reflects their emphasis on children and family.

**Socioeconomic:** The Southwestern Families market has a median household income of \$25,600. Half of the adult population has not completed high school. Unemployment and poverty rates are about twice the national average. Employment for males is comparable to the U.S. figure but opportunity for female employment is well below average. Jobs are primarily part-time with almost 7 percent of the labor force working in farming.

**Residential:** They live in predominantly urbanized, older areas with relatively high vacancy rates. Most of their homes are single-family or mobile with a median value of \$56,800.

**Preferences:** Not surprisingly, Southwestern Families lead a family-oriented lifestyle. Most households have at least one car and many own a dog. They usually buy family necessities such as baby products, children's clothing, over-the-counter medications, vitamins, and groceries. They watch dramas, science fiction programs, and movies on television, and frequently rent videos.

## 6) Middle America (19.9%)

**Demographic:** The demographic profile of these communities is similar to that of the U.S. population as a whole; they're just a little older, more family-oriented, and white. Their median age of 36.8 years is slightly older than the national average with more householders age 45–64 and fewer under 35 years. Seventy percent are married couples. The distribution of children is similar to the national average at 3.1 persons per family.

**Socioeconomic:** Their median household income is \$40,400. Almost 40 percent of these households earn less than \$30,000, but few are below the poverty level. Employment is average, unemployment below average. Most work in manufacturing or farming.

**Residential:** Middle America households are located in non-farm rural neighborhoods. Single-family and mobile homes dominate the landscape. Over 15 percent are mobile homes. Their homes are owner-occupied and valued at an average of \$82,700. Most were built after 1970.

**Preferences:** Middle America lives are busy and centered around home and the outdoors. They hunt and fish; do needlework; grow vegetables; listen to country music; and read country, family, or hunting and fishing magazines. Many families own powerboats, satellite dishes, campers, chain saws and other tools, and pets such as dogs and cats.

## 7) Rural Industrial Workers (.1%)

**Demographic:** Primarily composed of older families with older children, the Rural Industrial Workers population is fairly stable. Born and raised in the same state, they are not inclined to migrate to a different county. Most are married couples with school-aged or adult children living at home. Their median age is 36.6 years. This neighborhood type is mostly white, but also has a share of blacks and American Indians.

**Socioeconomic:** Rural Industrial Workers live in economies that are dependent upon manufacturing and sustained by farming. Employment is below average, especially for women, and unemployment is high. Almost 45 percent of the adult population do not have a high school degree. The median household income is less than \$28,000, with over 50 percent earning less than \$30,000.

**Residential:** Single-family houses make up over 70 percent of the housing and many are mobile homes. More than 70 percent are owner-occupied while 13 percent are vacant. Their median home value is \$52,800.

**Preferences:** This market's lifestyle is rural, but not remote. Commuting long distances to work is a way of life. Most households own two or more vehicles, usually trucks, vans, or sport utility vehicles and prefer American-made cars. They hunt, fish, and listen to country or gospel music. They also enjoy urban conveniences like eating fast food and renting videos. They own pets, satellite dishes, powerboats, and chain saws; have personal loans; and watch movies, dramas and sitcoms on TV.

## 8) Prairie Farmers (12.0%)

**Demographic:** Prairie Farmers are aging and financially stable as their children mature and move away. Most households are families made up of married couples with or without children. Few householders are under the age of 35; almost 40 percent are 45 or older. The younger householders have school-age children, which lowers the median age of the population to 37.7 years. The population is over 95 percent white.

**Socioeconomic:** Farmers dominate the Prairie Farmers work force: about 30 percent of households are self-employed farmers. Their median household income is \$32,100. The incidence of poverty is just above the national average, but few households receive public assistance. Sources of household income are self-employment in farming and non-farming occupations, interest and dividends, and Social Security. Most have graduated from high school, though few have college degrees.

**Residential:** Prairie Farmers usually live in older, single-family homes. The housing is supplemented by a large number of mobile homes. There are few renters. Over 64 percent of the housing is owner-occupied and one-fifth is vacant, including about 5 percent of the units held for seasonal use. The median home value is \$54,000.

**Preferences:** Prairie Farmers are more inclined to have checking accounts, savings accounts, and loans than to invest their money. They are well insured with health and home policies and apportion little of their budget for luxury items. Active outdoors, they hunt, fish, hike, and go camping. They also enjoy dancing, needlework, watching television, and spending time with their pets.

## 9) Heartland Communities (15.3%)

**Demographic:** Heartland Communities are older, with a median population age of 41 years. Few younger householders or children are in this market. As the population age 65 and older grows, this market becomes more dependent. Households are still predominantly made up of families, but married couples with no children at home and singles are becoming increasingly common in the Heartland Communities.

**Socioeconomic:** Their median household income is \$27,000. Employment is low, especially for women, due in part to retirement or the lack of opportunity. Over 40 percent of the households are receiving Social Security income. However, wages and salaries are not the only source of income because many in this market are self-employed in farming or other businesses. Heartland Communities are active financially, with investments, savings, and loans. Nearly one-third did not finish high school.

**Residential:** Their homes are usually older, single-family, and owner-occupied. Single-family houses account for most of the housing. Over 60 percent are owner-occupied, and 13 percent are vacant. The median home value is \$54,900.

**Preferences:** Heartland Communities enjoy their surroundings by camping, hunting, fishing, and growing vegetables. They also do needlework; read country, home, and outdoor magazines; listen to country music; and spend time with their pets. Their big-ticket purchases include American-made large-model cars, campers, satellite dishes, outboard motors, chains saws, and other tools.

#### APPENDIX IV: SAMPLE "SHOP WILLOWS FIRST" PROGRAM CAMPAIGN STATEMENT

Currently millions of shopping dollars leave the Willows business community each year. If each of the approximately 10,000 members of the greater Willows community spend only \$100 per year shopping in other communities, the total retail sales loss would amount to \$1,000,000. In reality, the current loss of shopping revenues is much more in the neighborhood of \$29.9 million! The negative economic impact of this amount of loss of disposable income leaving the community each year is twofold:

1. When Willows residents don't support their local providers of goods and services, the overall economic health of the business community is diminished resulting in increased commercial vacancies, loss of income, loss of sales tax revenues and loss of locally-provided employment opportunities.

Past studies reveal that every dollar spent locally, with a locally provider of retail goods or professional services, tends to re-circulate eight times. For example, a Willows resident shops in the local clothing store which allows that clothing store owner to spend their earnings in a local auto repair shop. The auto shop owner then takes his family out to dinner at a local restaurant which allows the restaurateur to use a local insurance agency...and the dollars keep re-circulating in a self-sustaining, nurturing cash flow that keeps the local economy strong and your friends and neighbors in business.

2. The loss of shopping dollars further translates into a loss of sales tax revenue for the City of Willows. Money that might have been used to provide police and fire protection as well as community facility maintenance and maintenance of public properties within the business community. One cent of every dollar spent in Willows goes toward financing needed City services such as police and fire protection. This recommended "Shop Willows First" campaign requires the participation of every Willows resident as well as the involvement of as many dedicated business and service-providers from throughout the entire community as possible.

Willows residents perform a significant community service by patronizing their locally-owned businesses. Their shopping dollars help to finance necessary city services such as fire and police protection not to mention street sweepers and street lights. We all need to make a special effort to purchase our needed goods and services within Willows whenever possible. Your support of the Willows business community helps to keep important sales tax revenues in town as well as create new jobs, and possibly new businesses, here in our community. It makes good sense to give your neighbors the business.

## APPENDIX V: CALTRANS SIGNAGE POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Following an aggressive campaign on the part of City Councilperson Rose Marie Thraikill, the following information was provided by Caltrans regarding their policies and procedures concerning directional signage on I-5.

As directed by Assembly Bill 1257 (1992), Caltrans conducts a logo signing program to inform motorists of roadside services on freeways in rural areas. A rural area is an area designated by the United States Bureau of the Census as having a population of less than 5,000. The program is available to those businesses in the "Fuel", "Food", "Lodging" and "Camping" categories and is intended to supplement, not restrict, the use of private business signing. The individual Logo Panels are provided by the business and are mounted on Service Signs installed and maintained by Caltrans.

There are fairly strict program guidelines that must be met by any participating businesses such as the following examples:

Service Stations must be located no more than one mile from the freeway where the sign is located.

- Must provide a range of vehicle services including fuel, oil, tire repairs, battery and radiator water, etc.
- Must provide a public restroom with minimum amenities
- Must provide drinking water for the public
- Must provide a public telephone, etc.
- Must be open for business at least sixteen consecutive hours each day, seven days each week

Restaurants have much the same restrictions such as the following:

- Must be within three miles of the freeway where the sign is located.
- Must provide a public telephone.
- Must provide public restrooms.
- Must be open a minimum of twelve consecutive hours daily, beginning no later than 7:00 AM, six days a week. Furthermore, the restaurant must serve breakfast, lunch and diner. (It would seem that this restriction alone would disqualify some food service businesses hoping to participate in the Caltrans signage program).

For the use of interested local businesses, a summary (excerpt) of several required steps in the Caltrans Signage Program application process is outlined below:

1. Complete, sign, and date the two-page application labeled "APPLICATION AND PERMIT PART I". The returned application must be completed signed and dated by the business owner or responsible operator of the business facility.
2. Attach a deposit of \$1,000.00 to the completed application. The \$1,000.00 must be a check or money order made payable to the "Department of Transportation".
3. Return the application and \$1,000.00 deposit to the Caltrans office via the mail service. The original application and signature must be on file in this office.
4. An inspection of the business facility will follow to verify the business facility meets the criteria of the Specific Services (Logo) Sign Program. A letter will be sent notifying the applicant either of approval or of items of deficiency that need to be rectified for qualification.

5. When the business facility has met the criteria of the Specific Service (Logo) Sign Program, a second letter will be sent instructing the applicant to prepare a logo sketch and submit it, along with a copy of the Caltrans Sign Specifications to a sign vendor of their choice. The logo design must match the business sign attached to the business facility. When the sign vendor has completed the logo draft, they can either mail or fax it back to Caltrans office for approval.

6. After design approval, the logo draft will be faxed back to the sign vendor with instructions on the number and sizes of logo panels to fabricate, and where to ship them once they are done.

For further program information, contact: Ronee Gray, Business Logo Coordinator, (530) 741-5763 regarding the Service Sign (Logo) Program.

## **APPENDIX VI: PROPOSED FAÇADE IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM GUIDELINES**

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The following sample guidelines from another community offering a façade improvement program is provided for informational purposes only.

### **1) Commercial Property Rehabilitation. A Primary Key to Downtown Willows Economic Future.**

The condition of its primary commercial area has often proven to be a key element to a city's future. The central commercial district can be a major contributor to a city's prosperity, or it can be a severe resource drain. All taxpayers benefit from a successful downtown area in which businesses prosper.

### **2) Who is Eligible?**

Commercial property owners are eligible for loan assistance.

### **3) The Loan System**

Your exterior improvement construction costs are reduced by the grant funds in the following percentages:

\* 55% Loan (up to \$5,500) of eligible costs to one business on a block. For example: On \$2000 worth of improvements, the business person contributes only \$900.

\* 65% Loan (up to \$6,500) of eligible costs to each of three or more businesses on a block participating at the same time.

\* 75% Loan (up to \$7,500) of eligible costs per business to entire blocks (minimum of four businesses) participating at the same time.

### **4) Appropriate Design Requirements**

Your facade improvement designer or architect must abide by the current guidelines established by this Facade Improvement Program if you desire to obtain a loan under this program.

### **5) How to Apply**

Simply contact the City of Willows. They'll be happy to mail you an application or to meet with you personally. Information and forms are also available from the Downtown Willows Business Association through its (possible) new BID program.

### **6) How the Process Works, Six Easy Steps:**

1. **OBTAIN FORMS** and contact others if you want a larger loan. Proceed as shown under the "How to Apply" section above. If others in your block are also applying, you may be able to qualify for a larger loan.

2. **SUBMIT APPLICATION AND OBTAIN INDICATION OF APPROVAL.** Submit your application to the City, and receive an Indication of Approval and Award of your loan by the City.

### 3. DEVELOP YOUR DESIGN

You may be able to obtain the services of a participating volunteer AIA architect through this program

### 4. OBTAIN BIDS

From ideas provided through the details of this program, or through additional local services available, obtain bids from three different competitive contractors.

5. OBTAIN DESIGN APPROVAL You submit final plans and specifications to the City of Willows Design Review Board for approval. Upon approval, obtain a building permit, if necessary.

### 6. OBTAIN YOUR LOAN

Upon project completion, submit your paid bills to the City and receive your loan on a specific costs reimbursement basis.

## Program Details Willows Facade Improvement Program

The Willows Downtown Facade Improvement Program will provide, to eligible property owners, a low-interest loan for any term not to exceed ten years in the form of a repayment for costs incurred for the improvement of the exterior appearance of any commercial/business structure within the Downtown District of the City. All applications are to be submitted to the City of Willows Community Development Department for its processing approval.

### The Following Conditions Shall Apply:

#### **General:**

- 1) The maximum amount the City may approve for the loan program is traditionally \$10,000. This funding shall be for exterior improvement and related costs only.
- 2) All plans for the exterior renovation will be viewed in accordance with the City's planning and zoning ordinance and the design guidelines established for this program.
- 3) Plans are to be approved by the ad-hoc committee prior to submittal to the City in order to assure compliance to the Design Guidelines. The applicant must then process the plans through all applicable City permit procedures. City staff will provide assistance as necessary.
- 4) Only those businesses that are located in the Downtown District are eligible for facade loan funds.
- 5) Only the owner, may submit plans for review under this program. Owner's representative must have written authorization from the owner prior to submittal of the plans to the Department.

#### **Program Related:**

- 1) **Cost Estimates:** Owner shall submit an itemized estimate of the cost of labor and materials and a proposed work schedule. Note that the estimate shall be limited to the storefront and publicly viewed sides of the building only.
- 2) **Eligible Costs For Repayment Are:**
  - a) Exterior rehabilitation based upon the design criterion as provided within this program's guidelines.
  - b) Correction of non-conforming signage/clutter and/or other exterior code violations.
  - c) Exterior painting or stucco applications.
  - d) New, modified or additional signage conforming to the existing sign ordinance.
  - e) Landscaping improvements.
  - f) Such other improvements consistent with the Design Guidelines.
- 3) **Submittal Of Incurred Costs By Owner:** To receive repayment for eligible costs associated with the project the applicant must submit the following:
  - a) Receipts /invoices and canceled checks for the completion of eligible work
  - b) Documentation of the mitigation of exterior code violations
  - c) Labor and/or materials lien release(s)

Reimbursement may be distributed once an inspection has been made to determine that all improvements, pursuant to the approved plans, have been properly made and are in place.

- 4) **Hiring of Contractor:** Owner shall have the sole responsibility, once the plans have been approved, of hiring a contractor to perform the agreed upon work.
- 5) **Work Competition:** Upon completion of the work to be reimbursed, owner shall deliver to the Agency original invoices or suitable vouchers showing that payment for the work has been paid in full. The Agency shall verify completion and quality of work and if acceptable shall pay to the owner, by way of reimbursement, the cost of the work as approved.
- 6) **Exclusions to Program:**
  - a) Projects and project improvements started or completed prior to the implementation of the program.
  - b) Exterior improvements not approved by the Agency.
  - c) Improvements installed without proper documentation, invoices, receipts, etc.
- 7) **Documentation Required For Receipt Of Loan Funds:**
  - a) Facade Easement Agreement and recording document of final labor and material lien release(s) from all contractors, subcontractors and suppliers must be submitted to the City Manager's Office.
  - b) Final inspection release from Building and Public Works Departments.
- 8) **Program Stipulations:**
  - a) Applicant agrees to install all improvements as specified in the application, approved and/or stamped plans and Agency recommendations.
  - b) All work will conform to the design guidelines established for the program.
  - c) Applicant may be required to submit additional drawings or other submittals that further illustrate the improvements as proposed. These additional items may include, but not limited to the following; paint chips, color charts, palette of materials to be used, additional drawings that more fully illustrate or support the proposed facade improvements.
  - d) Completion of all required program work pursuant to, and consistent with, the agreed upon deadlines.

The above requirements are designed to assist the applicant in understanding the nature of the City of Willows Facade Improvement Program. Their purpose is to assure that the project is completed in a timely and expeditious manner.

Any questions regarding this program should be directed to: Mike Mistrot, Willows City Manager, 201 N. Lassen, Willows, CA., 95988, or call (530) 934-7041.

■ See BIKES, 8A

# Town sweetens its downtown facade improvement plan

By GREG WELTER  
Staff Writer

PARADISE — Up to \$1,250 for minor storefront improvements will be available to business owners in the downtown revitalization zone, if council members approve it Tuesday.

The money won't have to be paid back.

A similar program begun in April offers business owners up to \$10,000 for larger renovation projects, but half of that amount is a low-interest loan.

The program has attracted only two takers, leading officials to conclude it has little appeal for businesses with a minor facelift in mind.

Town Manager Chuck Rough calls the new plan a "paint-up, fix-up" program intended for exterior painting projects, awnings and improved business signs.

The town will provide up to half the cost of projects not exceeding \$2,500.

Only \$55,000 was made available for facade renovation programs this year, but the new scheme is expected to make the money go a lot further.

“I'm an advocate of making it more accessible; I think peer pressure will work.”

Ray Dalton  
councilman



Bill Husa/Enterprise-Record

Walt's Sports and Trophies completed a major remodel (above) last month, using facade renovation funds for part of the project. Photo below shows the building before the facelift.

## FACADE

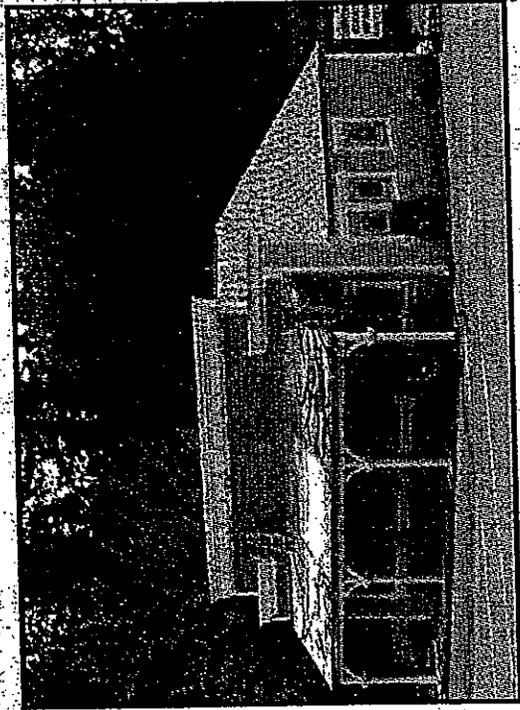
From 1A

“This augments the plan to make it more feasible for smaller businesses to participate,” said Councilman Ray Dalton, a member of the revitalization committee.

“I'm an advocate of making it more accessible; I think peer pressure will work, Dalton said.

Members of the revitalization committee will continue to promote the original renovation program through letters to downtown business owners.

Walt's Sports and Trophies



last month, using facade renovation funds for part of the project.

The program is funded through community development block grants.

■ See FACADE, 8A

# Grants, 4 percent loans now available to downtown Paradise merchants

By GREG WELTER  
Staff Writer

PARADISE — Property owners and merchants in the downtown revitalization area can now apply for facade renovation grants and low-interest loans through the town.

Up to \$10,000 may be available for storefront fix-ups such as new doors and windows, awnings, canopies and signs. Half of that may be a grant merchants don't have to pay back. The remainder is a loan at 4 percent, repayable in 3 to 5 years.

The amount requested can't exceed half the total cost of the renovation project.

The town has about \$80,000 available for help with facade renovations this year and hopes to have the same amount next year.

Applications became officially available Wednesday night at a meeting among town officials, merchants and downtown property owners.

They can also be obtained for no cost at Town Hall, 5555 Skyway, Monday through Thursday.

The revitalization zone occupies 120 acres between Skyway and the Memorial Trailway, from Pearson to Elliott roads.

"Only businesses within that area will be eligible for the grants," said Town Manager Chuck Rough.

Owners must agree to renovations that follow downtown design guidelines and agree to maintain the property to standards higher than applied in other areas.

The help is only available for existing developed properties, not new construction.

Rough said several merchants have already shown interest in the program. One, Walt's Sports and Trophies, applied for a grant/loan combination of \$10,000 on Thursday.

According to store manager Dan Newman, the building will get a new, redesigned roof and major interior improvements worth about \$60,000.

The business will close for about a month beginning next week.

Help from the town was definitely a factor in proceeding with the work, said owner Mica Gilkey.

Walt's is on Pearson Road, the first downtown street scheduled for major improvements as part of the 10-year, \$10 million revitalization effort. The road will get a traffic signal at Black Olive Drive and landscaped median strips.

At Wednesday's meeting, a potentially dicey problem arose that left town officials equivocating.

Business owner Pam Funk wanted to know if labor charges on renovation projects would have to be documented by receipts, or if merchants could do the work themselves.

"We want to encourage some sweat equity," said Assistant Town Manager Dennis Ivey.

On the other hand, he noted there are some jobs the average person may not be qualified to do.

"We pretty much decided projects would be considered on a case-by-case basis as to how much labor can be done by the business or property owner," Ivey said. He noted that using grant and loan

money through the program — which is funded by the Department of Housing and Urban Development — may also trigger prevailing wage rules applying to government-funded projects.

"If owners do construction projects worth more than \$2,000, paying prevailing wages to contractors may become an issue," he said.

"We really don't want merchants billing us for their time," said Town Councilman Ray Dalton.

He said money not spent on labor can go to better use on materials.

Rough took Wednesday's meeting as an opportunity to promote a redevelopment agency in Paradise.

He said money from an RDA could accelerate the downtown revitalization effort. While redevelopment money can't legally be used to fund a new town hall, it could be used for new police and fire facilities, Rough observed.

Town officials must have an approved redevelopment plan in place by June of next year, when property values in the RDA area would be made a benchmark.

Redevelopment revenues from the state are based on the escalating value of land within the zone. The money can be used for a variety of projects including infrastructure improvements and subsidies to encourage new business.

Rough said he used a conservative 4 percent per year increase in values to project future revenues from redevelopment. He said the town could net up to \$60 million by the year 2047, when the RDA would automatically expire.

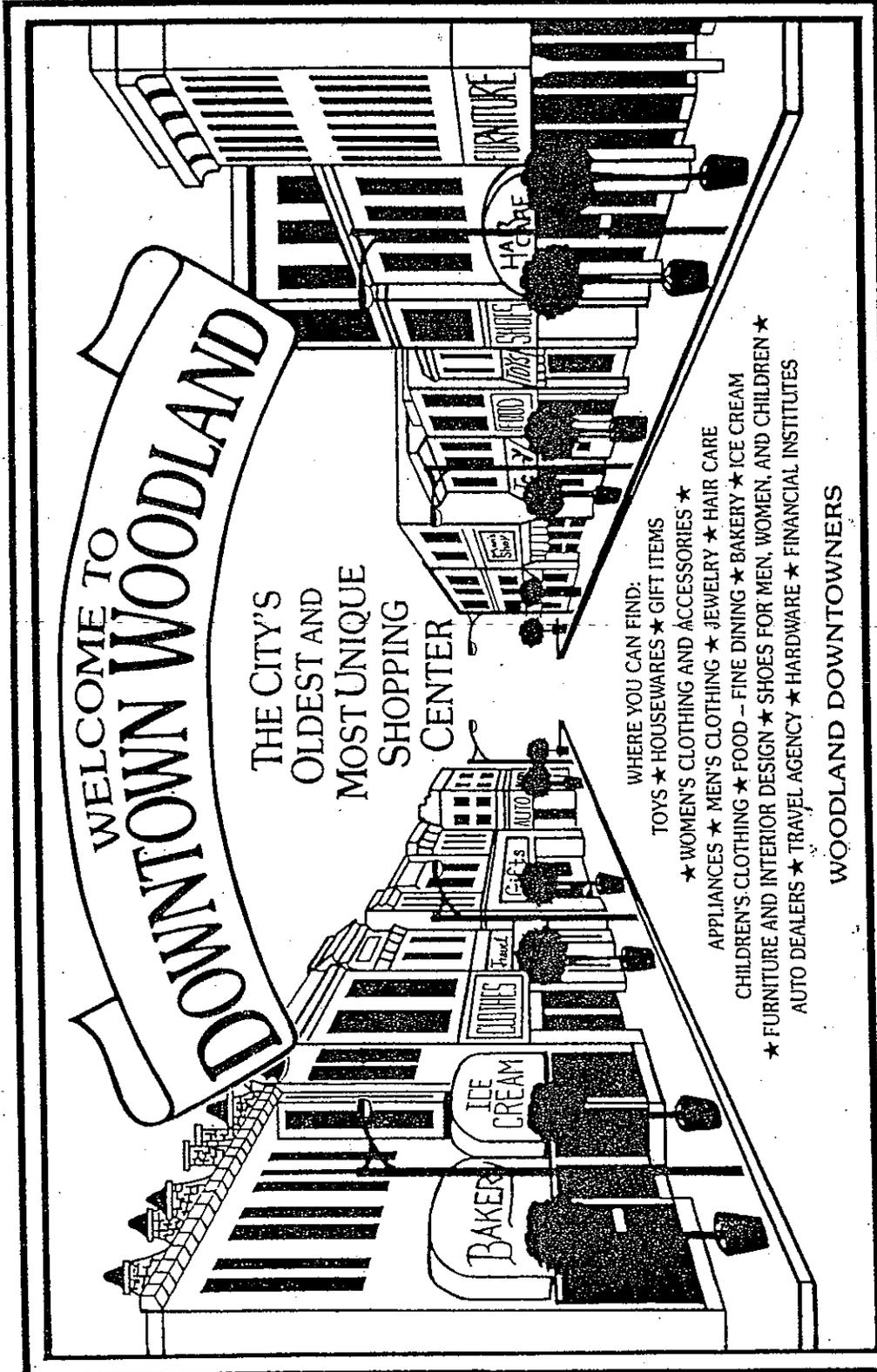
**APPENDIX VII: EXAMPLES OF OTHER COMMERCIAL MARKETING THEMES**

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See attached examples.

# WELCOME TO DOWNTOWN WOODLAND

THE CITY'S  
OLDEST AND  
MOST UNIQUE  
SHOPPING  
CENTER



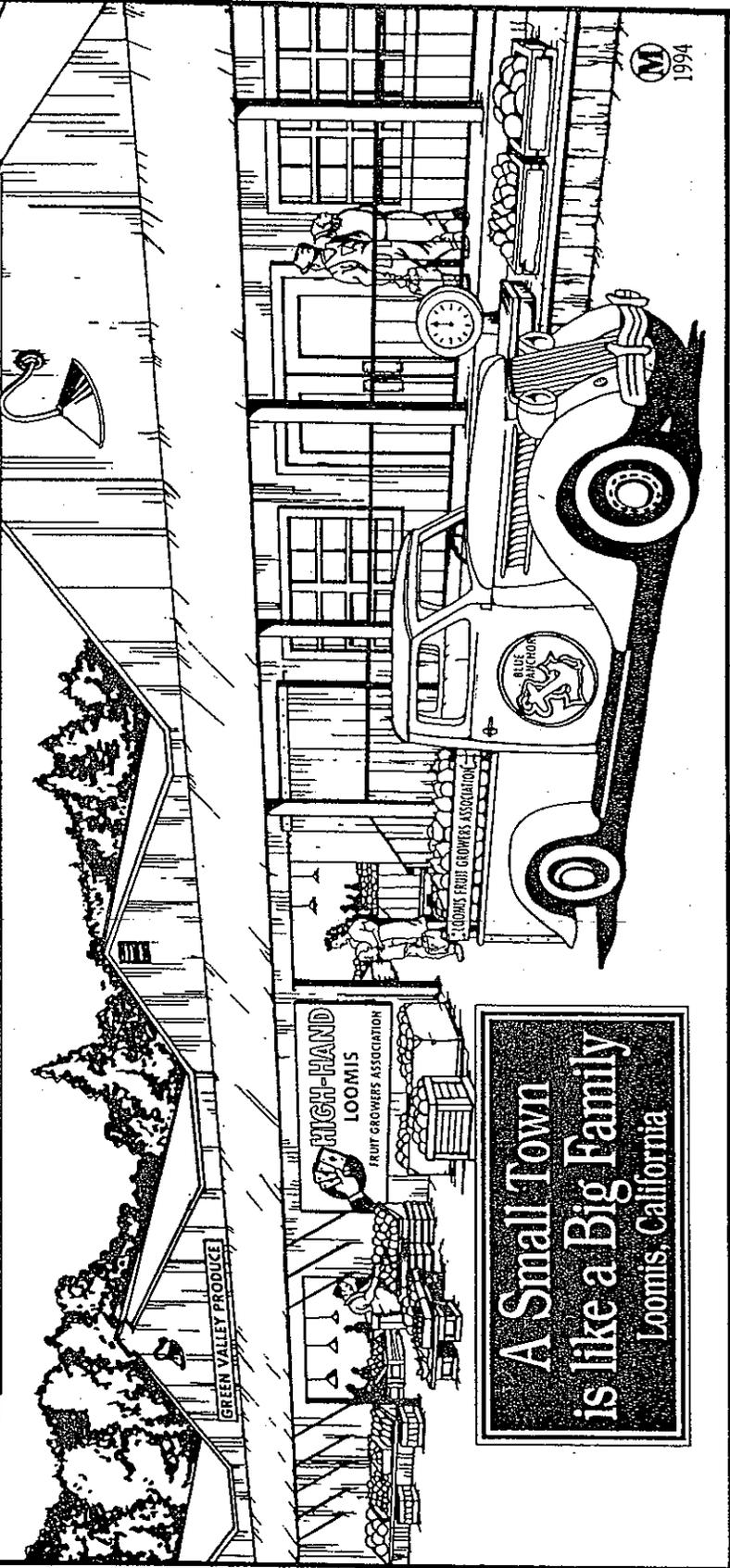
WHERE YOU CAN FIND:

- ★ TOYS ★ HOUSEWARES ★ GIFT ITEMS
- ★ WOMEN'S CLOTHING AND ACCESSORIES ★
- ★ APPLIANCES ★ MEN'S CLOTHING ★ JEWELRY ★ HAIR CARE
- ★ CHILDREN'S CLOTHING ★ FOOD -- FINE DINING ★ BAKERY ★ ICE CREAM
- ★ FURNITURE AND INTERIOR DESIGN ★ SHOES FOR MEN, WOMEN, AND CHILDREN ★
- ★ AUTO DEALERS ★ TRAVEL AGENCY ★ HARDWARE ★ FINANCIAL INSTITUTES

WOODLAND DOWNTOWNERS

# WELCOME TO LOOMIS

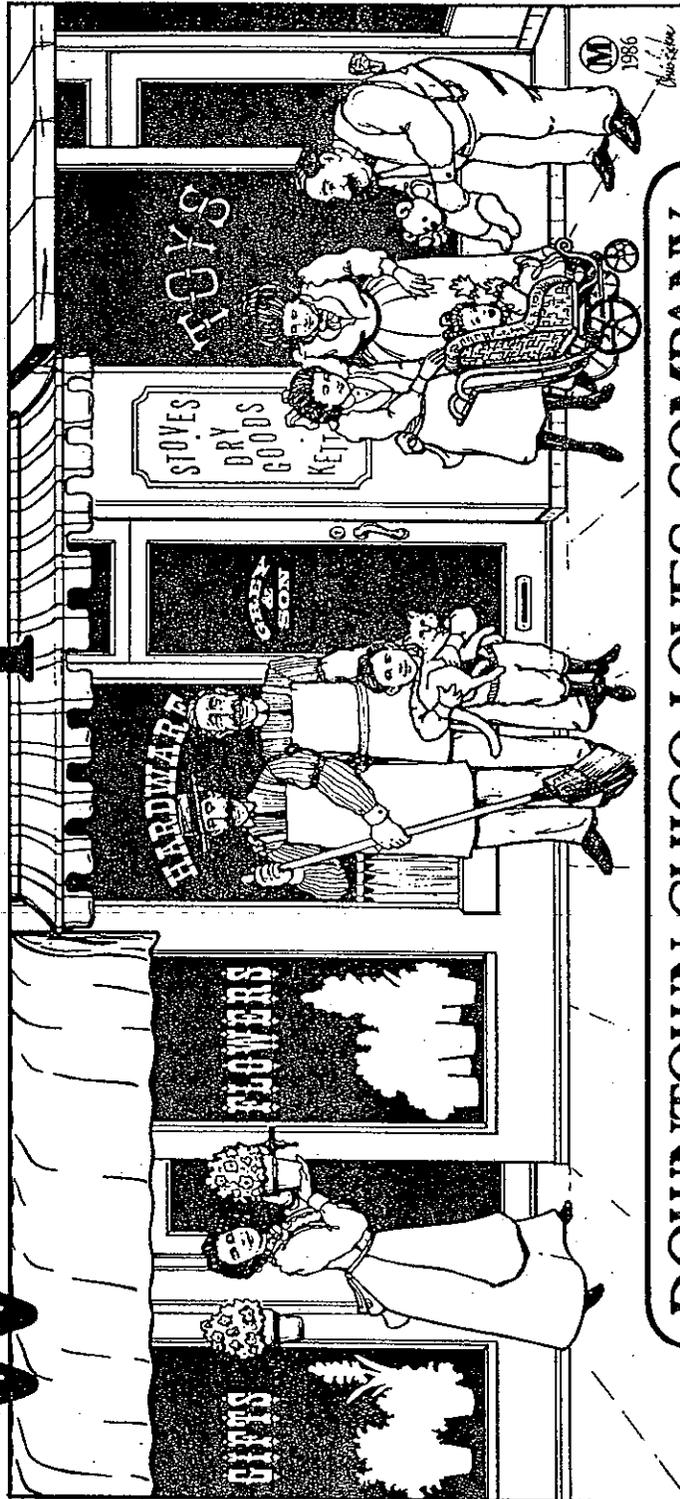
A FRIENDLY OLD FASHIONED RURAL COMMUNITY



A Small Town  
is like a Big Family  
Loomis, California

M 1994

# WELCOME FRIENDS



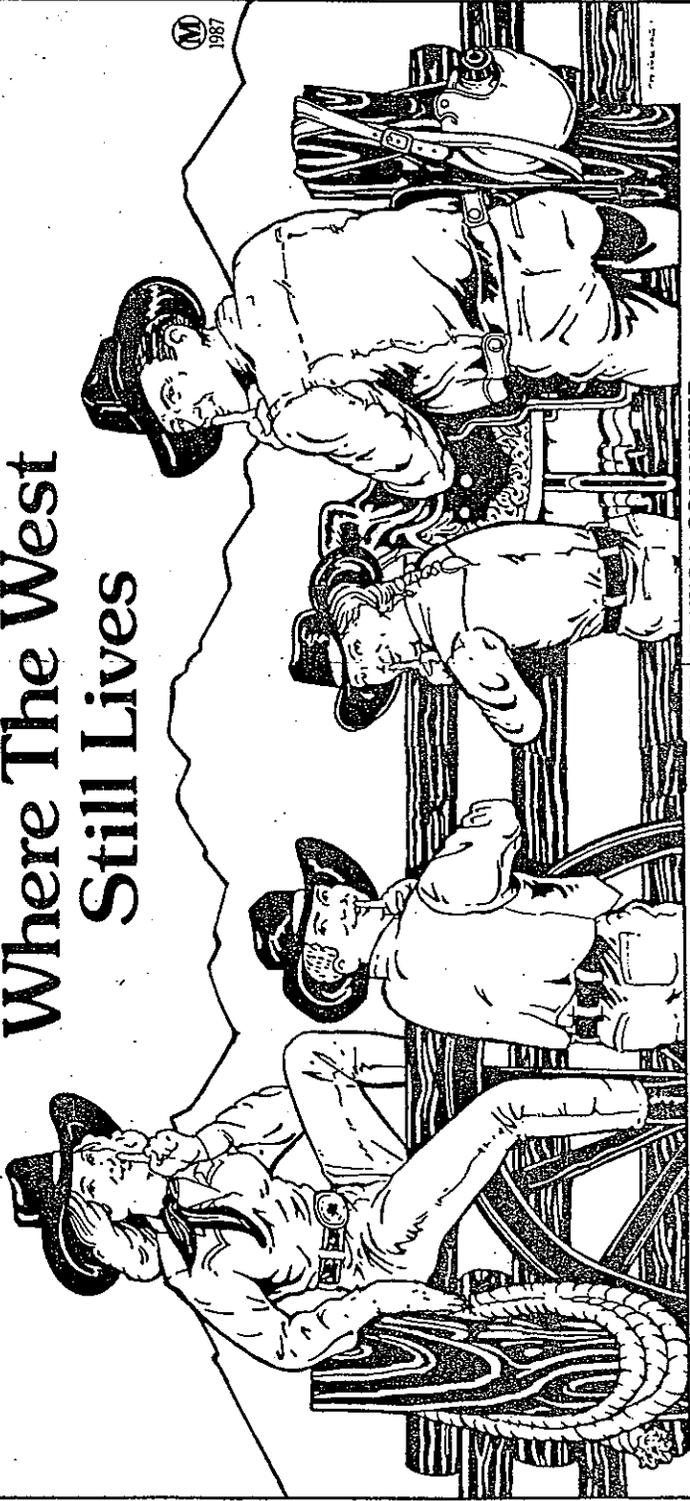
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ADDITIONALLY DOWNTOWN OFFERS A FULL RANGE OF PROFESSIONAL SERVICES, BANKING FACILITIES, LODGING, CULTURAL ACTIVITIES & ENTERTAINMENT

DOWNTOWN CHICO BUSINESS ASSOCIATION

Visit California's Best Kept Secret  
**ALTURAS & MODOC COUNTY**

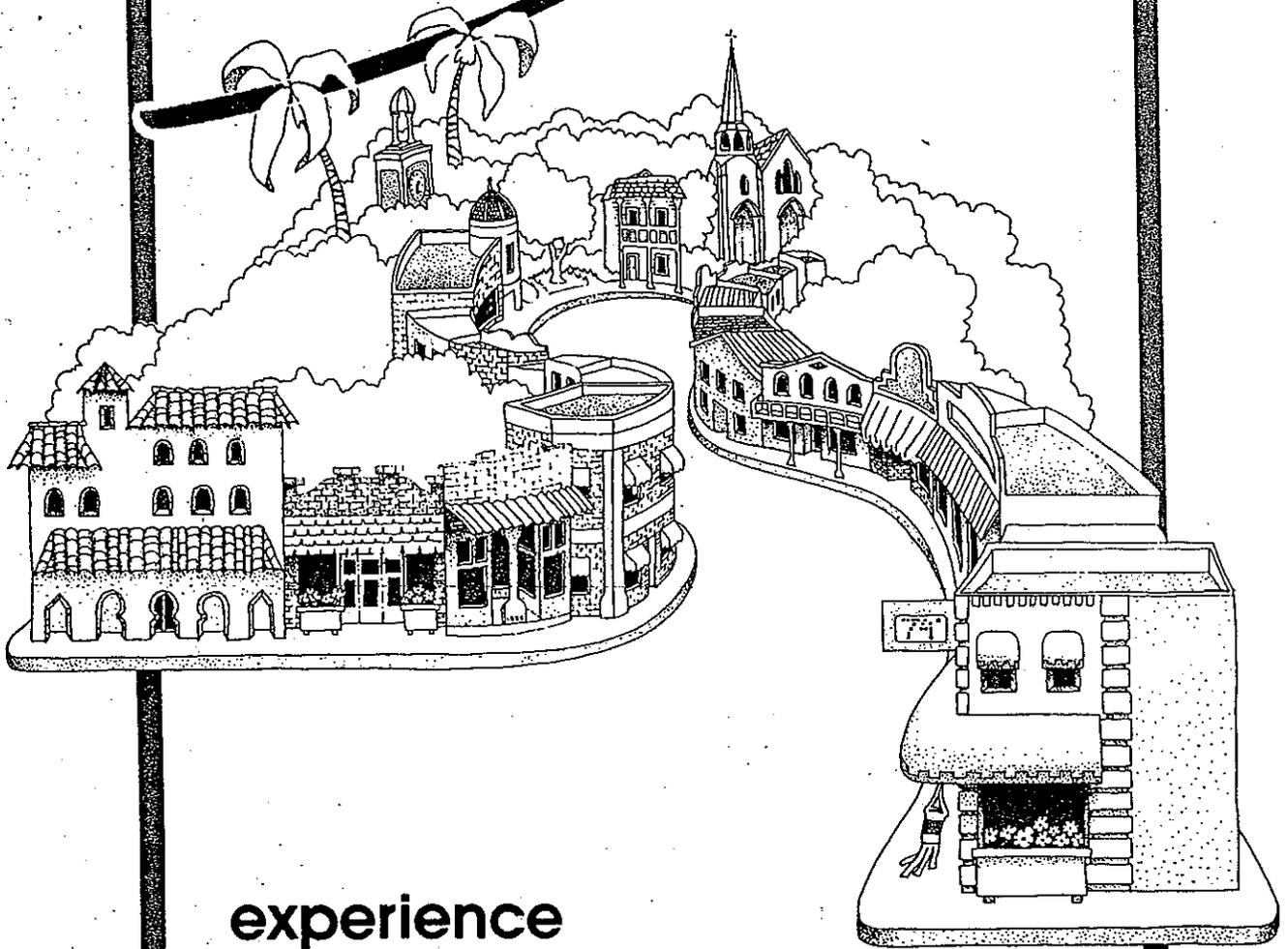
Where The West  
Still Lives



GREATER MODOC COUNTY REVITALIZATION COMMITTEE

visit historic downtown

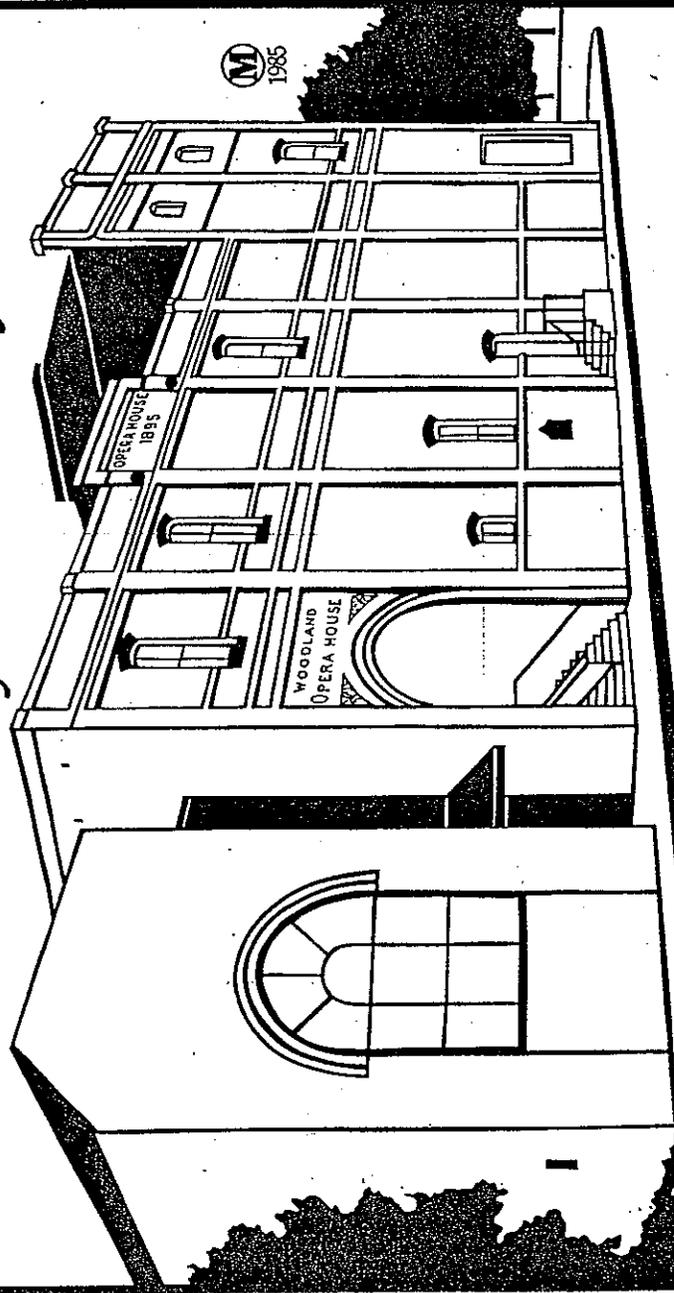
# Sonora



**experience  
our unique  
character and personality**

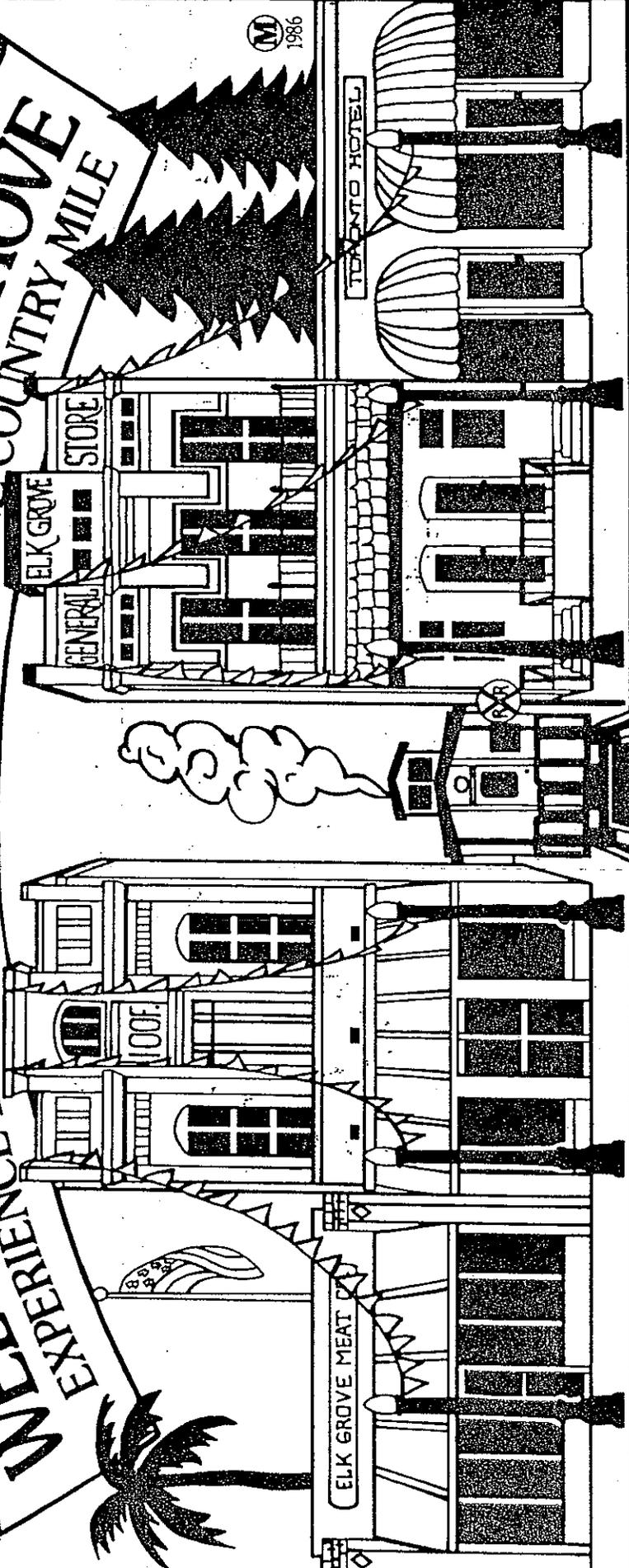
SONORA AREA BUSINESS ASSOCIATION

# Downtown Woodland has Character, Personality and History



Established 1853 Woodland's Oldest Business District  
LOCALLY OWNED STORES PROVIDE PERSONAL SERVICE. SHOPPING AT HOME IS SHOPPING DOWNTOWN.  
WOODLAND DOWNTOWNERS.

**WELCOME TO OLD TOWN ELK GROVE**  
EXPERIENCE 100 YEARS OF HISTORY IN ONE COUNTRY MILE

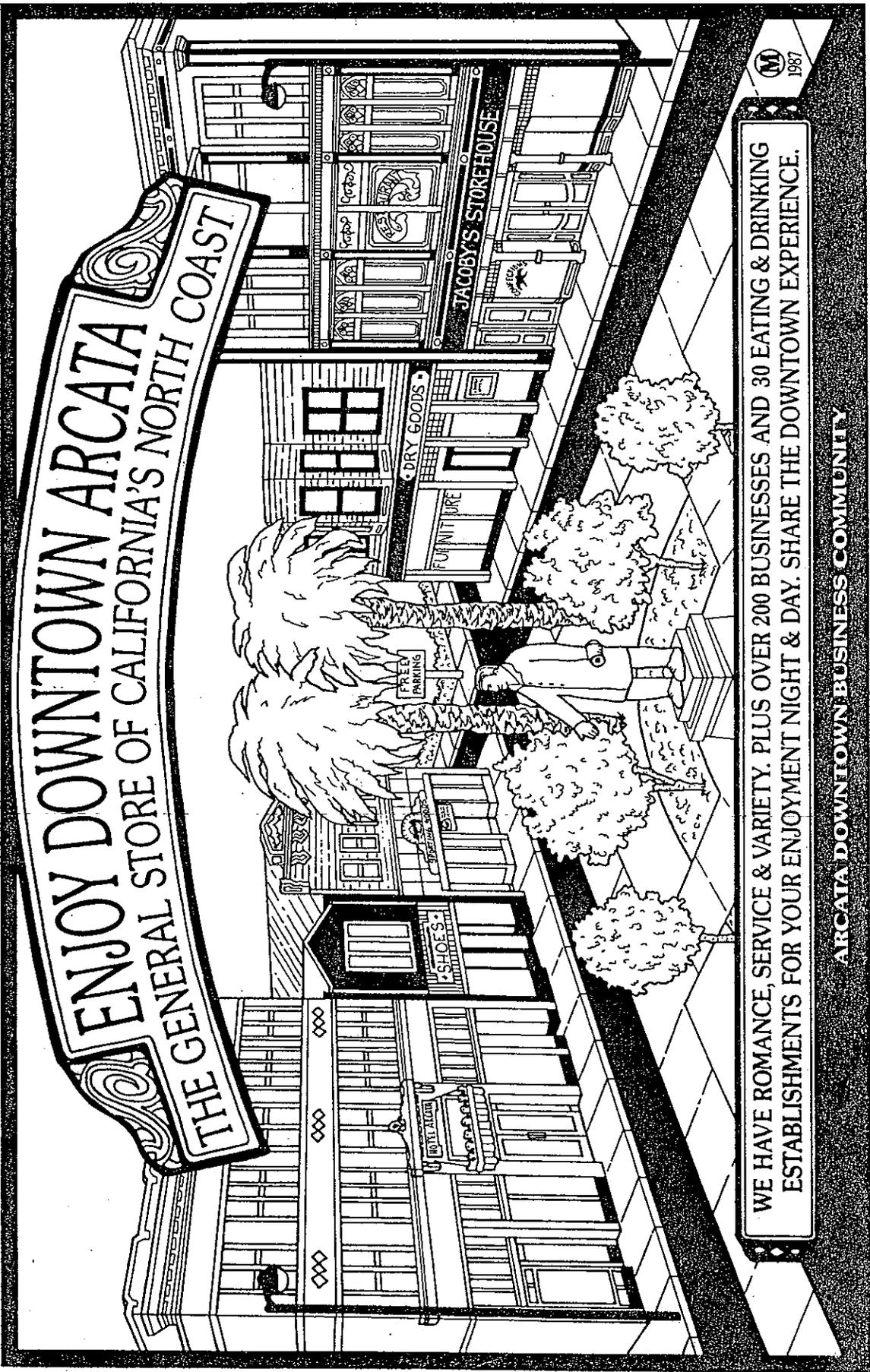


**AN OLD FASHIONED COUNTRY WELCOME OFFERED WITH A LARGE VARIETY OF GOODS AND SERVICES  
COME ENJOY OUR QUALITY RURAL COMMUNITY.. VISIT AND SHOP IN OLD TOWN ELK GROVE**

**OLD TOWN ELK GROVE MERCHANTS ASSOCIATION**

# ENJOY DOWNTOWN ARCATATA

THE GENERAL STORE OF CALIFORNIA'S NORTH COAST

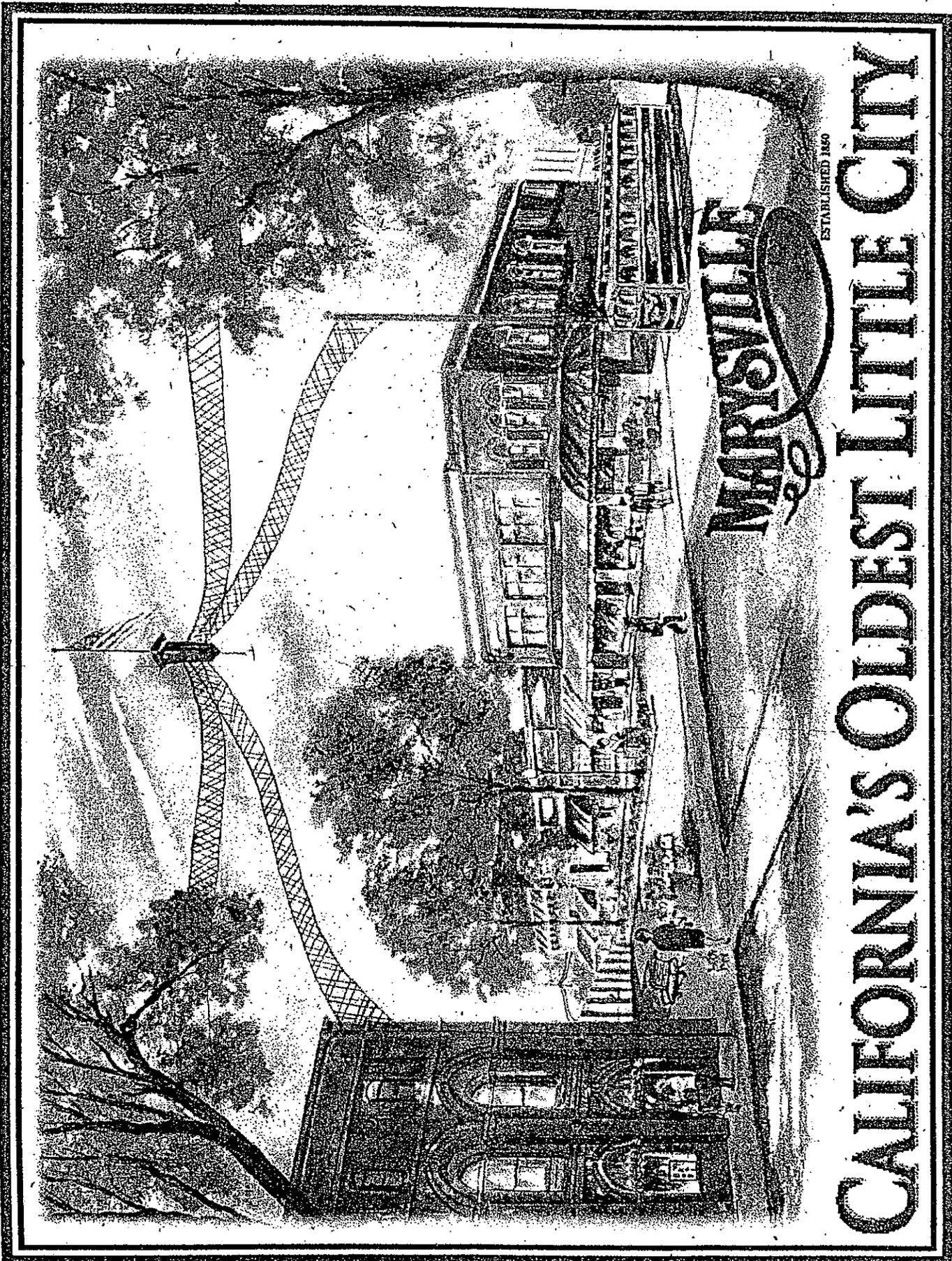


WE HAVE ROMANCE, SERVICE & VARIETY. PLUS OVER 200 BUSINESSES AND 30 EATING & DRINKING ESTABLISHMENTS FOR YOUR ENJOYMENT NIGHT & DAY. SHARE THE DOWNTOWN EXPERIENCE.

ARCATA DOWNTOWN BUSINESS COMMUNITY



1987



ESTABLISHED 1860

MARYSVILLE

CALIFORNIA'S OLDEST LITTLE CITY

## APPENDIX VIII: BRIEF HISTORY OF ENTRYWAY ARCHES IN NORTHERN CALIFORNIA

Arches have been used throughout California and the country since the turn of the century with a strong growth in use occurring in the 1930s and 1940 as communities strove to establish their individual identities.

Streetwide entry arches provide the ultimate form of entryway demarcation serving as a local landmark. Several excellent examples of the use of the arch landmark structure are provided by Modesto, Fairfield, Lodi and Marysville as well as nearby Williams and Orland.

Modesto's entryway arch was built in the early 1900's as a means of emphasizing that community's primary entrance into the downtown area. The City Fathers decided that the arch could make a statement to visitors as they entered the central area from the West. A contest was held throughout the community regarding the wording of that statement with the winner being offered an all expense paid trip to Sacramento. Times, and grand prizes, have changed.

Although the phrase chosen by civic leaders was, "Modesto...Water, Wealth, Contentment, Health," the phrase more favored by the populace, and the local goat growing farmers contingent was, "Modesto.... They'll Never Get Our Goat." This phrase was supported by many in the community although the City Fathers, who made up the self-appointed Selection Committee, made the final decision.

The historic "Lodi Arch" dates back to the beginning of the Tokay Grape Carnival in 1907. Local traditions such as Lodi's architectural heritage and historic significance are excellently demonstrated through this highly recognized community landmark. The arch was built to serve as the centerpiece landmark for the historic Tokay Grape Carnival. Located on Pine Street as it leads into the downtown business district, this arch has been a popular local landmark for over ninety years.

The Marysville arches, located at several of the primary intersections of "D" Street constructed three years ago, are closely modeled after the series of seven arches, constructed from 52,000 pounds of steel, which were in place in 1912. Unfortunately, these arches were subsequently either given away, for example, to nearby Rio Linda, or dismantled. It is reported that they were taken down in 1920 due to the possibility that they would interfere with the new electric trolley car system.

## COST OF DOWNTOWN MARYSVILLE ARCH

The following information is provided to the City of Willows only for the purpose of comparison.

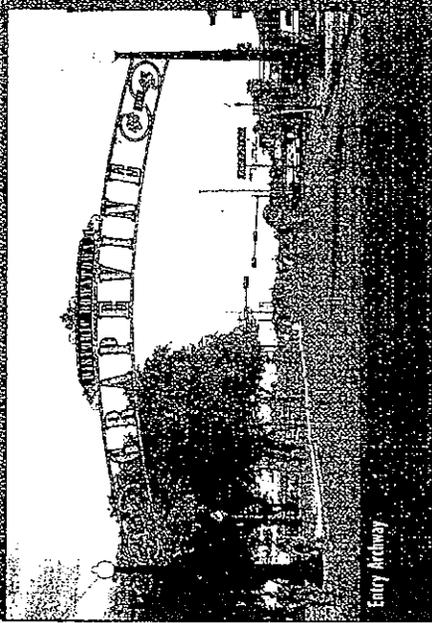
<b>Marysville's Material Costs:</b>	<b>Total</b>
Base Price of Arch	\$14,545
Extra detail to structure	\$2,413
Light Strips (no electrical)	\$1,910
Weld to existing anchor bolts	\$825
Flag Mounts	\$134
Preparation & Painting	\$6,850
<b>Total Paid to Yetter Steel</b>	<b>\$26,677</b>
Engineering Cost- Landmark Engineering	\$2,200
Construction Cost- Cooper Construction	\$2,785
Electrical Cost- Mallory Electric & Lighting	\$2,140
<b>Total Cost</b>	<b>\$33,802</b>

This cost outline does not include necessary permits.

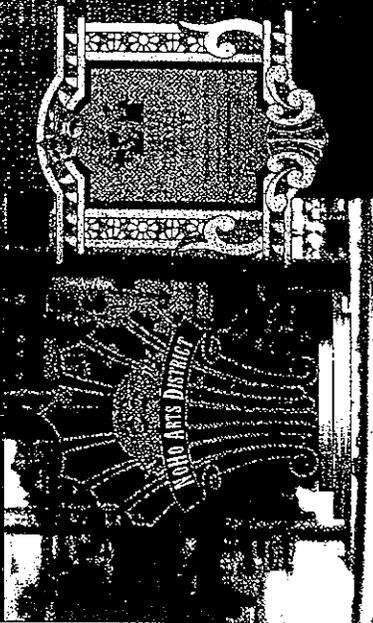
Recent discussions with Yetter Steel, indicate estimates for a similar type arch today would cost closer to \$50,000. Yetter Steel can be contacted at (530) 742-0151 to obtain cost quotes specific to the Willows archway project.

AFFORDABLE DESIGN FOR LOCAL GOVERNMENT

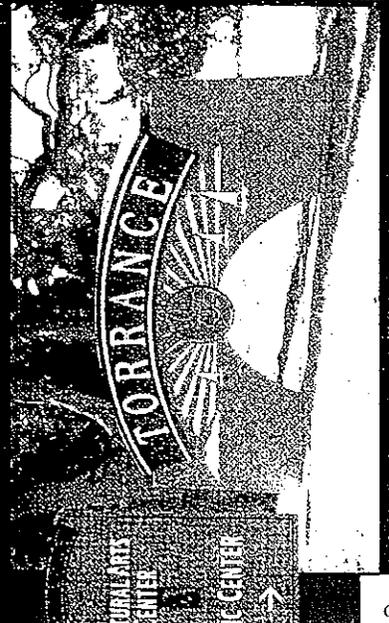
WELCOMING



Entry Archway

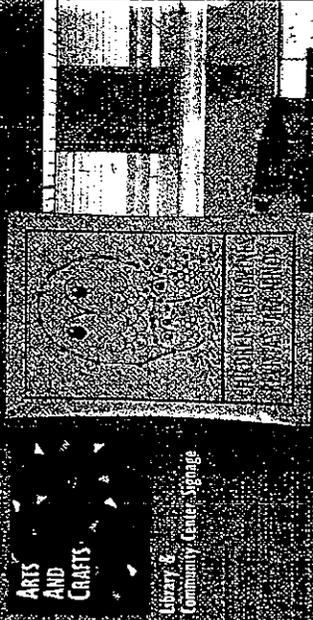


District Identity & Interpretive Graphics

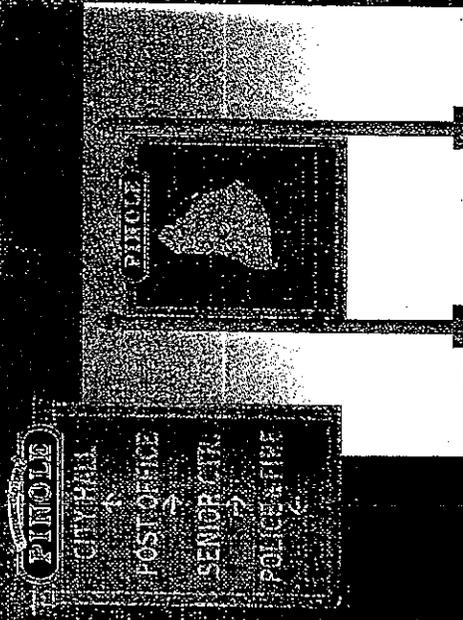


Entry Monumentation & Way Finding

INFORMING



Library & Community Center Signage

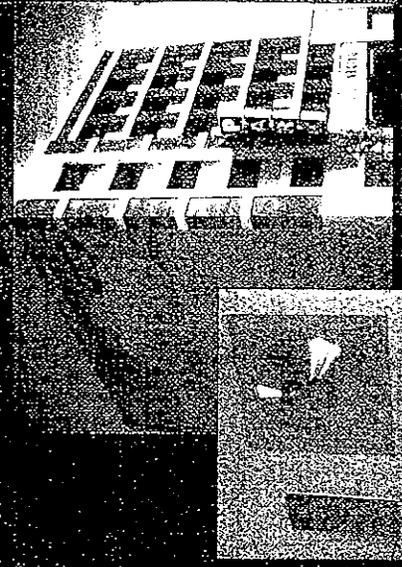


Vehicle & Pedestrian Way Finding System



Transit Identity & Way Finding System

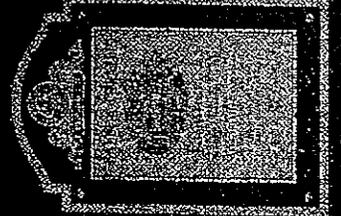
REVITALIZING



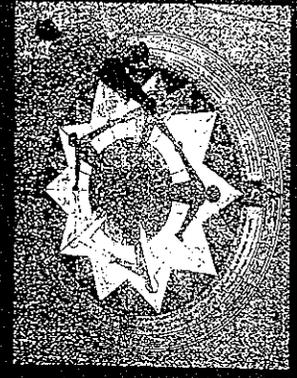
Public Parking Signage & Graphics Program



Civic Plaza "Place Making" & Interpretive Graphics



Interpretive Plaque



Donor Recognition Pavement Graphic

## **APPENDIX IX: BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT OVERVIEW**

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### **WHAT IS A BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT?**

The Business Improvement District is a private sector funding opportunity which provides the year-to-year financing necessary to give merchants the means to carry out downtown commercial marketing and organizational management programs and economic success. The BID functions as a self-initiated traditionally based on type of business, size and location as a means of determining the most fair and equitable charge method possible. This benefit fee is traditionally weighted in favor of retailers and restaurateurs as the BID is seen as being primary a commercial marketing program.

The BID, which is formed under California SB 1424, is one of the most useful funding mechanisms for specific downtown, or citywide, economic development program funding available to Cities, Downtown Associations and Chambers today. It is estimated that over 200 BIDs are currently serving cities within California. In addition to California, most other states have similar legislation allowing for the establishment of downtown improvement program funding districts.

### **WHY ARE BIDS ESTABLISHED?**

Three traditional downtown problems which serve as catalysts to inspire and motivate the business community... often leading to the formation of a BID:

Loss of Market Share: Retail sales leakage to malls, neighboring metropolitan shopping districts, national discounters and the new factory outlet centers, such as is found in nearby Chico and Yuba City, create a compelling need to develop and implement a downtown-specific commercial marketing program and strategy.

Commercial Vacancies And/Or Unsatisfactory Mix Of Businesses, such as a high percentage of commercial vacancies or too many of one type of specific business.

Need For Physical-Visual Improvement in the form of civic beautification, streetscape improvements, downtown aesthetics, etc. A need for project area "Special Effects" such as entryway arches, monumentation and signage, awnings, public arts programs, flowers, plants, trees, flags and banners, street furniture and other pedestrian amenities.

### **BASIC INGREDIENTS NECESSARY FOR SUCCESSFUL BID ESTABLISHMENT**

- a) Successful BID establishment requires committed leadership within the business community as well as a strong consensus that there is a need for improvement within the proposed BID area.
- b) The BID Ad Hoc Establishment Committee must be committed for a period of at least six months with numerous planning and strategy development meetings occurring during that time, especially during the first three months of the BID establishment process.
- c) The BID Establishment Committee must make an extraordinary effort to inform and educate the general business community regarding the benefits and virtues of BID establishment.
- d) There must be a desire on the part of the City Management Team as well as City Council to see that the new BID is formed and nurtured.

### **HOW A BID WOULD BENEFIT THE COMMERCIAL MARKETING PROGRAM**

- a) The new BID would, first and foremost, serve as a very effective catalyst to bring the Willows business community together in an effort to work cooperatively for the purpose of accomplishing one common goal, that of building a stronger local commercial economy.
- b) A newly established Willows BID would provide basic funding for the implementation of the new Downtown Willows Commercial Marketing Program.
- c) The BID would strive to mitigate retail sales leakage by allowing Downtown Willows to compete more effectively for regional business through the generation of greater marketing resources and strengths.
- d) The BID would support businesses in the central area through commercial recruitment, retention and promotion as well as through the sponsorship of "Shop At Home" and image-building campaigns.
- e) A BID would create a strong unified voice to represent business interests to local government agencies.
- f) A BID would help fund other projects as suggested by business owners including entryway signage and monumentation projects, public arts programs, civic clean-up programs, benches, lighting, decorations, parks, fountains and special events.

### **PROCEDURE FOR ESTABLISHMENT OF A BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT**

A Business Improvement District can be established at the request of local business owners. The City Council must first adopt a resolution stating the merchants' intent and the requirements of State law. The resolution must describe the proposed boundaries as well as set the time and place for a public hearing. Notice of the public hearing on the proposed Business Improvement District must be published in the newspaper and mailed to all business owners in the area. The City Council must then hold a public hearing to consider all oral and written protests regarding the formation of the Business Improvement District.

If a majority protest is not filed, the City Council may establish the proposed Business Improvement District by adopting an ordinance to that effect. City Council cannot add territory to the boundaries or change the annual benefit fee of the area without notifying business owners of that change, and then only after holding a full and formal public hearing. The adopted ordinance must include the method and basis of levying the benefit fees and the time and manner of collecting the fees.

If written protests are received by owners of businesses within the proposed area which will pay 50% or more of the benefit fees proposed, a Business Improvement District cannot be pursued for one (1) year. If the majority protest is only against the furnishing of a specific type or types of improvement or activities, those types of improvements or activities must be eliminated.

### **ISSUES OF LOCAL BID FEASIBILITY**

- **Consider a citywide BID rather than a downtown-specific BID.** Due to the size of the Willows business community and the possible funding limitations that might be placed on a downtown-only BID, it is suggested that consideration be given to the establishment of a citywide BID rather than a

downtown-specific BID. It is understood that there are currently approximately 250 businesses located within the Willows city limits.

- **Adequate annual funding available for effective programs:** It is estimated that a citywide BID might generate approximately \$50,000 per year if each business was assessed the amount of approximately \$8.00 to \$16.00 per month. It is understood that smaller businesses might pay less than \$100 per year while larger businesses might pay more.
- **Improvement Programs are needed and desired:** It has been shown numerous times throughout the course of this Study that there is a definite need for a creative, colorful and aggressive commercial marketing program for the community of Willows. Furthermore, there is an equally intense need for an aggressive commercial recruitment program to serve as a means of filling the numerous commercial vacancies that currently characterize the downtown area.
- **Level of BID Program support among local business community unknown:** The issue of either downtown or citywide support among the local business community has not been established at this point. Although it is unanimously agreed that there is a definite need for improvements within the business community, whether local business owners would be willing to participate in the financing of these needed improvements is not known at this time.

#### **TRADITIONAL BID PROGRAMS LISTED IN ORDER OF MOST COMMONLY SPONSORED**

##### **A) Commercial Marketing:**

(Goal: Attracting more shoppers and visitors).

- Establishment of a permanent Commercial Marketing Committee.
- Development and implementation of a commercial marketing strategy and image building theme.
- Stimulation of tourism activity.
- Development of a "shop locally" campaign as a means of offsetting existing retail sales leakage.
- Development of a coordinated annual program of retail-oriented promotions, events and activities.
- Development of an annual program of special events and activities.
- Publication of a "Directory of Downtown Goods and Services."

##### **B) Civic Beautification Programs and Projects:**

(Goal: Physical image-building).

- Streetscape improvement projects such as street furniture and street trees.
- Development of a program of visual amenities such as flags, banners and decorations.
- Establishment of public arts projects such as wall mural programs.
- Development of improved, more aesthetic, public-private signage.
- Development of entranceway monumentation, signage, arches and decorations.

##### **C) Commercial Recruitment and Retention Program:**

(Goal: Filling commercial vacancies with the most desirable new businesses).

- Carry out surveys to determine most desired new businesses to fill existing vacancies or vacancies as they occur.
- Encourage successful existing businesses to re-locate and/or expand into stronger locations within project area.
- Attempt to strengthen desired existing businesses that may be weak or failing.

## **APPENDIX X: OVERVIEW OF IMPLEMENTATION RESPONSIBILITY**

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First and foremost, with regard to the development of an effective downtown revitalization program, a determination of which local agencies or organizations will be responsible for program implementation must be made.

This issue regarding who will be responsible for implementing specific commercial revitalization programs was discussed by the Task Force at length. It is agreed that potential sources of implementation in the form of local individuals, agencies or organizations which currently are active within the community are limited and would include the following entities of which the first three represent the private sector and the fourth, the public sector.

1) **The Project Task Force** has been strongly encouraged to remain active after the initial planning portion of this project is completed and the Implementation Phase begins. As is the case with so many similar communities, the Task Force is made up of many of the same business community leaders whom are constantly drafted to serve in the planning of many community improvement projects and programs.

2) **The Willows Chamber of Commerce:**

- The Willows Chamber of Commerce is currently heavily involved in the Highway 99 Project.....part of a group effort with other area Chambers of Commerce.
- The Chamber formerly published a directory of locally provided goods and services and recently has been urged to reactivate that service on behalf of all local businesses, Chamber members and non-members alike.

3) **The Downtown Business Community In General:**

A currently untapped source of programs implementation assistance may come in the form of the downtown business community in general. It is understood that a number of more active downtown businesses have been participating in "Block Parties" in an attempt to organize and co-ordinate their specific commercial marketing efforts.

These small group marketing events typically occur at, or near, the intersection of Butte and Tehama Streets and are sponsored by a variety of nearby businesses and service providers. The street is closed annually to facilitate the marketing events and activities.

4) **The City of Willows**

Traditionally the City has been an active partner in the economic development of the overall community.

The City of Willows is currently embarking on a Downtown Physical Infrastructure Improvement Project. This City-sponsored project will improve the following specific downtown infrastructure features:

- Downtown aesthetics
- Pedestrian travel
- Roadway design and integrity
- Storm water drainage improvements

As mentioned earlier in the document, this project will include the installation of thirty-two tree wells on Sycamore Street between Plumas and Tehama as well as thirty-one tree wells on Butte between Walnut and Oak.

Furthermore, the replacement of deteriorated sidewalk surfaces in front of the numerous downtown businesses as well as the placement of new curb and gutter on both sides of Butte Street between Sycamore and Oak Streets will occur.

The City of Willows is also examining the possibility of sponsoring a Downtown Facade Improvement Program as a means of improving the appearance of many downtown commercial buildings.

Finally, the City intends to embark on an aggressive civic signage program which will greatly improve access to the traditional downtown area. This signage will be developed on I-5 as well as at all major entrances into the downtown area.

**APPENDIX XI: SAMPLE SHOPPER'S PREFERENCE SURVEY**

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See attached sample shopper's preference survey.

**WILLOWS**  
**BRIEF COMMUNITY OPINION SURVEY**

**Please List What You Feel Are Willow's Three Greatest Strengths.**

- 1) \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- 2) \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- 3) \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Please List What You Feel Are Willow's Three Greatest Weaknesses.**

- 1) \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- 2) \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- 3) \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Please Tell Us What You Feel Would Be The Best Commercial Marketing Theme For Willows.**

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Thank you for participating in this brief opinion survey. Results of this survey will be available to all participants. If you need add'l space for you answers, please use the back of this page.**

name \_\_\_\_\_, business \_\_\_\_\_ (optional)

Please list the key issue (s) that you feel is most important regarding the economic development of downtown Willows:

**Key Issue:**

1) \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Secondary Issues:**

1) \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

2) \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Thank You

Name/Phone: (optional) \_\_\_\_\_

**DOWNTOWN WILLOWS  
COMMERCIAL RECRUITMENT AND MARKETING  
PROGRAM SURVEY**

A) Please list, (by order of preference), what you feel would be the most desirable new businesses, or business types, for Willows.

1) \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

2) \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

3) \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

B) Please list, (by order of preference), what you feel would be the most appropriate and effective commercial marketing programs for Willows: For example, a focus on attraction of tourists and visitors, slowing retail sales leakage to neighboring communities, attracting new businesses to fill commercial vacancies, development of a new directional signage program and/or improving the appearance of downtown Willows, etc.

1) \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

2) \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

3) \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Thank you for participating in this brief survey. Results of this survey will be available to all participants. If you need additional space for your answers, please use the back of this page.

name \_\_\_\_\_, business, \_\_\_\_\_ (optional)