



# Town of Esparto Community Plan

2019



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The staff would like to thank the Esparto Citizens Advisory Committee and all the community members who participated in the workshops and public meetings for their hard work and genuine concern about the future of their town.

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# 1. INTRODUCTION

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## Purpose

The purpose of this Community Plan is to protect the characteristics which make Esparto a pleasant place to live and to specify the changes which should occur to correct existing problems and to improve the quality of life. This Community Plan seeks to allow additional development that will help provide the services, housing, and commercial opportunities desired by the residents, while preserving and enhancing the town's character.

## Organization of the Plan

The Esparto Community Plan consists of seven chapters summarized below:

**Chapter 1** introduces the Community Plan's purpose and describes legal requirements, organization, relationship to the County General Plan, and the process.

**Chapter 2** describes the Community Plan's environment and extents including the Community Growth Boundary and a brief history of the community.

**Chapter 3** is a statement of the community's vision and compilation of the Goals and Policies described in the plan brought front and center for ease of use.

**Chapters 4 through 7** are the body of the plan addressing specific areas of concern to the community including Land use and Community Development, Transportation and Circulation, Economic Development, and Resiliency and Services. Each chapter describes existing and desired conditions in regards to each area of focus.

## Legal Authority

The Esparto Community Plan is consistent with California State law which permits cities and counties to adopt specific plans for the "systematic implementation of the general plan" (Government Code Section 65450 et. Seq.). The law requires that a specific plan shall include a text and diagram or diagrams which specify all the following in detail:

- The distribution, location, and extent of the uses of land, including open space, within the area covered by the plan.
- The proposed distribution, location, extent and intensity of major components of public and private transportation, sewage, water, drainage, solid waste disposal, energy, and other essential facilities proposed to be located within the area covered by the plan and needed to support the land uses described in the plan.
- Standards and criteria by which development will proceed and standards for the conservation, development, and utilization of natural resources where applicable.
- A program of implementation measures including regulations, programs, public works projects, and financing measures necessary to carry out the above referenced requirements.
- The specific plan shall include a statement of the relationship of the specific plan to the general plan.

California Government Code Section 65452 provides that the specific plan may address any other subjects which in the judgment of the planning agency are necessary or desirable for the implementation of the general plan.

## Relationship to the Yolo County General Plan

The Esparto Community Plan supplements the Countywide General Plan. It provides guidance specific to Esparto which may not be relevant to other parts of the County. On the other hand, most of the goals and policies in the Countywide General Plan have some application to Esparto.

The focus of the Yolo County General Plan is to retain the rural character of the County, while directing urban development to existing cities and unincorporated communities such as Esparto. In order to retain a separate identity for these towns, Community Growth Boundaries are identified and development is to be located and designed in such a way as to protect, preserve, and perpetuate the small town characteristics and qualities of unincorporated communities.

The 2030 Countywide General Plan includes the following goals and policies that are directly applicable to the Esparto Community Plan:

### Community Character Element

**Goal CC-2** lists 16 policies to enhance community planning including off-street paths, increased density and mixed use development at town centers, parks, and sustainable design standards.

**Goal CC-3** has policies to update the Esparto Plan and rebalance the jobs to housing ratio.

**Goal CC-4** includes policies to further sustainable development and “smart growth” planning principals.

### Economic Development Element

**Goals ED-1 & 3** identify policies to diversify local economies and revitalize communities by ensuring that there is an adequate supply of commercial and industrial land, supporting infill, and improving town center street corridors to protect historical aesthetics and stimulate economic activity.

**Goal ED-4** seeks to expand local economies through a variety of tourism and recreational opportunities with an agricultural and open space emphasis.

### Circulation Element

**Goals CI-1 through 6** deal with comprehensive and balanced transportation system through policies which provide alternatives to automobile use by providing direct routes for bicycles and pedestrians which are comfortable, convenient, and safe.

### Public Facilities and Services Element

**Goal PF-3** sets policies including providing 5 acres of park per 1,000 residents in towns and creating greenbelts to connect schools, residential areas, and parks.

### Conservation Element

**Goal CO-2** includes policies to protect and restore biological resources including riparian habitat such as sloughs.

### Housing Element

**Policies HO-1.6 and HO-1.11** call for coordination with the Yocha Dehe to expand workforce housing opportunities in Esparto and to encourage the development of large rental and for-sale units (containing three or more bedrooms) that are affordable for very-low and low-income households.

**Goal HO-4** focuses on the need to provide housing for special groups such as seniors and farmworkers.

## Governmental Jurisdiction

Since the town is unincorporated, the Yolo County Board of Supervisors has the primary responsibility for providing most of the local government services, including planning and development regulations, review, and approval.

In addition to the County, several special districts are involved with shaping Esparto's future. The implementation of this plan will require a coordinated effort among these different public agencies. The Esparto Community Services District provides sewer and water service as well as maintaining street lights and open space and some parks in town. The Esparto Fire Protection District provides fire protection and emergency response for the town. The Esparto Unified School District provides education facilities and services. The California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) has jurisdiction over State Route 16 which runs through the town of Esparto. Thus, the real implementation of this plan will require a coordinated effort among these different public agencies.

## Process

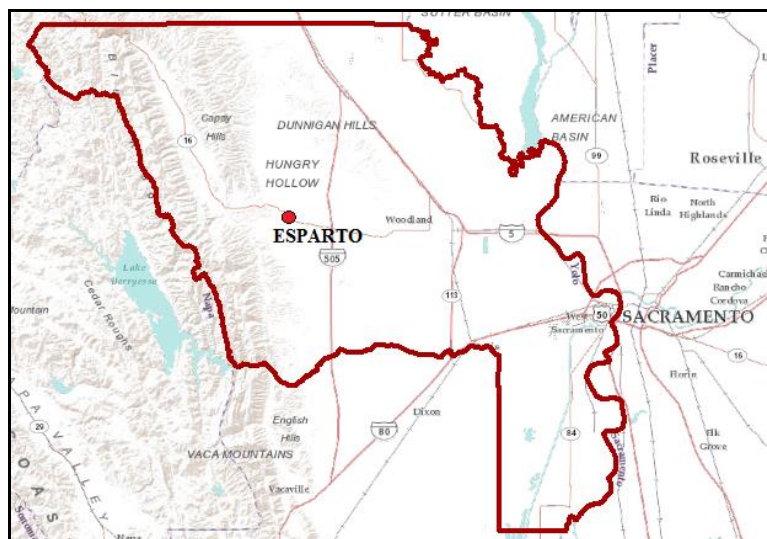
This plan is an update of the Esparto General Plan originally prepared in 1982 and previously updated in 1996 and 2007. The 2019 Esparto Community Plan builds on the previous plans and was prepared in collaboration with the Esparto Citizen Advisory Committee (ECAC) and included a series of public meetings at the Esparto Library between February 2018 and December 2018.

# 2. THE COMMUNITY PLAN AREA

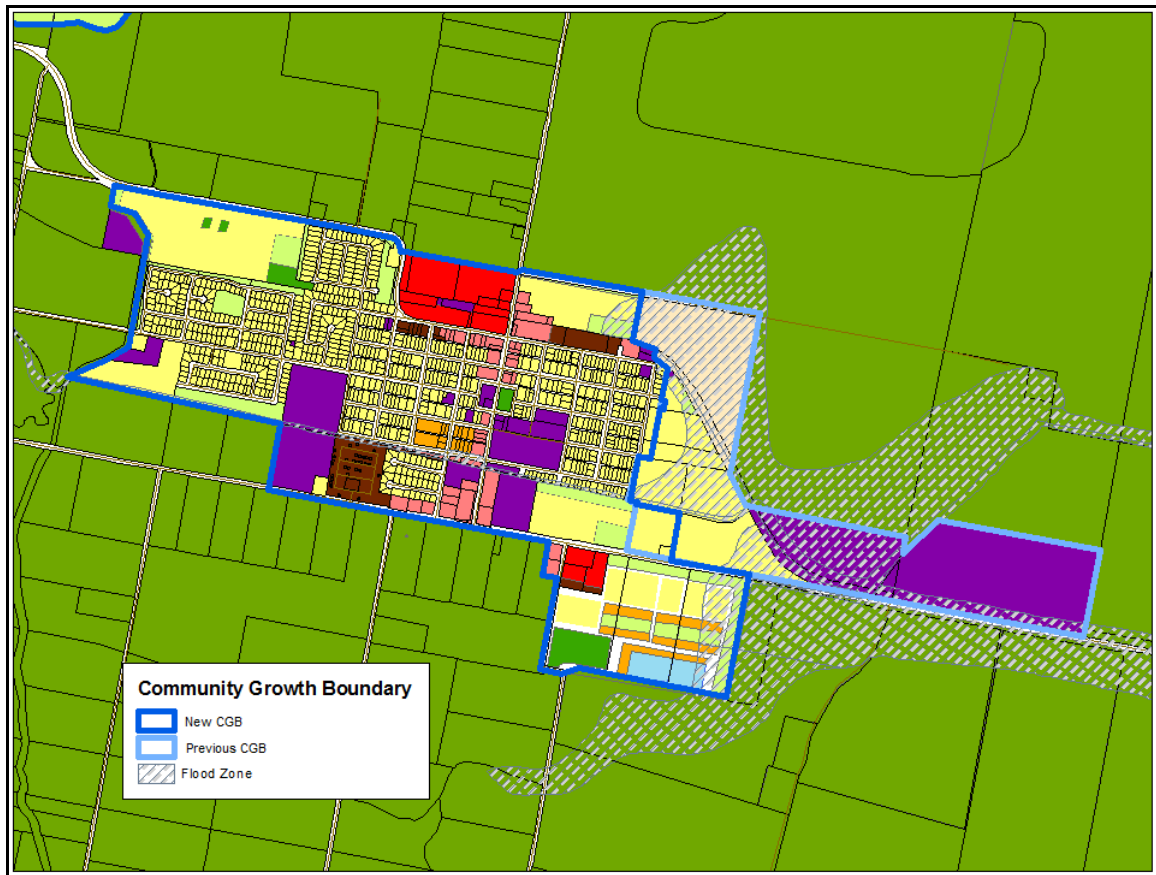
## Location

Poised as the Gateway to the Capay Valley, Esparto is located at the western edge of the fertile Sacramento Valley where Cache Creek flows from the Coast Ranges (See Figure 1). State Route 16 runs through the center of Esparto and connects the Capay Valley and Yocha Dehe lands and casino to Interstate 505 and east of that to the County Seat of Woodland and Interstate 5. Within the community, SR 16 becomes the town's main street, Yolo Avenue.

**FIGURE 1. COMMUNITY LOCATION**



**FIGURE 2. COMMUNITY GROWTH BOUNDARY WITH FLOOD AREAS**



## Community Boundary

The Esparto Community Plan focuses on the area within the Community Growth Boundary of Esparto which currently consists of approximately 620 acres between the Winters Canal to the west and the Esparto Community Service District’s wastewater treatment ponds to the east. State Route 16 partly defines the southern boundary east of Yolo Avenue including 75 acres south of SR 16 and east of County Road 86A. The northern boundary aligns with County Road 20X and SR 16. The Community Growth Boundary serves to mark a clear separation between the urban development of the community and the productive agricultural land which surrounds the community on all sides. The new Community Growth Boundary is slightly smaller to remove areas within flood zones.

## History

The earliest human use of the area goes back long before the arrival of Europeans. The first people here fished, hunted, and gathered plants as well as established trails and village sites. The ancestors of these native peoples including the Southern Wintun tribe persisted after Mexican land grants appropriated most of the territory and today the Yocha Dehe Wintun have tribal lands within the Capay Valley and operate one of the biggest employers in the area, the Cache Creek Casino Resort.

The arrival of European and American settlers in the mid-nineteenth century saw the establishment of an agrarian empire. In 1842, the Mexican government granted William Gordon two leagues of land (the Guesissosi grant) on both sides of Cache Creek from the western hills to the Sacramento River. Livestock and grain farming were the mainstays of the region’s developing agricultural economy, although several small vineyards and orchards offered promise. In 1887, several San Francisco investors incorporated the Capay Valley Land Company, composed chiefly of officers of the Southern

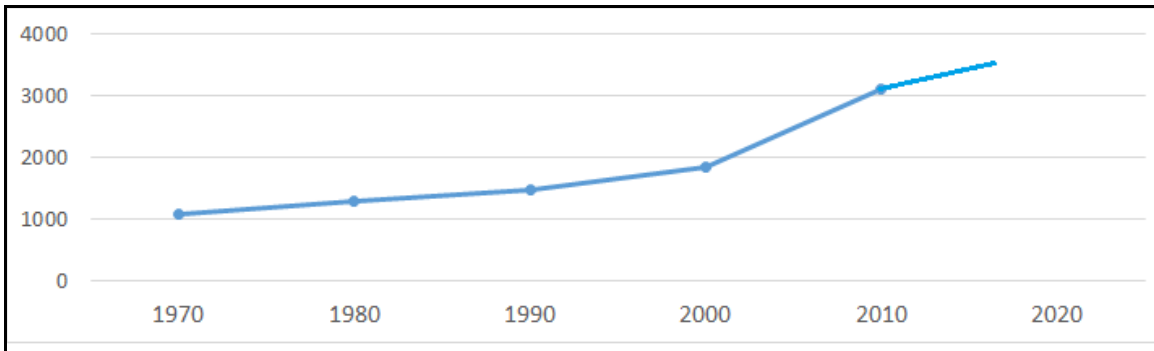


Pacific Railroad. The company planned to divide several large land holdings into 10- to 40-acre parcels for fruit farming and to establish town sites along the length of the coming railroad.

The Vaca Valley and Clear Lake Railroad which began rail service between Winters and Madison in 1877 was extended to the north end of the Capay Valley in 1888 as a subsidiary of Southern Pacific Railroad. Along the route, the town of Esperanza was laid out that same year. Esperanza was renamed Esparto, the Spanish word for feather grass, with the establishment of the Post Office in 1890. Esparto grew quickly. Within a few years, the new town featured a three-story hotel complete with gaslights, a pressurized water system, and electric bells (the hotel was torn down in 1935.) In 1893, Yolo County's second high school was established in Esparto and later expanded by a 1939 WPA project. In 1959-60, the Esparto School District closed the last of the small elementary schools dotting the district and provided expanded school bus service to a consolidated elementary school in Esparto.

As with many small towns, change came to Esparto with the rise of the automobile. From 1937 to 1941, the railroad removed the tracks beyond Esparto and passenger service to Esparto ended in 1957. Although Esparto continued to see moderate population growth, first exceeding 1,000 residents around 1970 and then growing to 1,800 residents over the next thirty years, main street businesses dried up with even the one remaining gas station closing in the 1990's.

**FIGURE 3. POPULATION GROWTH**



Despite the loss of local businesses, the first decade of the twenty-first century saw a housing boom. A burst of growth increased the population of Esparto by 40% from 1,858 to 3,108 residents. In 2016, the population was estimated to be 3,618 residents (See Figure 3). A red hot housing market saw the addition of four new residential subdivisions in Esparto between 1997 and 2006 adding approximately 300 new homes. Four more subdivisions were approved for an additional 340 homes, but the economic downturn starting in 2007 has left those developments in limbo.

The impetus of the 2007 update was a sense that the traditional character of the town was being lost with the burst of large residential subdivision development and deterioration of historical buildings on Yolo Avenue which remained empty and unmaintained. The economic downturn over the last decade has put development in town on hold, but that long quiet period appears to be ending. The current update is intended to strengthen the Town's commitment to revitalizing Yolo Avenue and identify issues to make a more resilient community.

### **3. VISION, GOALS, AND IMPLEMENTATION**

#### **Vision**

The guiding vision for this community is to enhance the quality of life and maintain the "small town" ambiance, community character, design and scale of Esparto for present and future generations of residents while fostering economic viability.

## Goals and Policies

The Esparto Community Plan consists of a Land Use Map, which designates the locations of different types and intensities of land uses, along with community goals, policies, and programs. Goals are statements about the desired condition that the town is aspiring toward. Policies give direction toward accomplishing those goals. Programs are implementation actions needed to help make the plan come about.

Following is a compilation of the goals and policies for the Community Plan. They are all gathered in this chapter to facilitate review by community members, Yolo County staff, and members of the development community. Further information on the intention and reason for these policies can be found in the chapters that follow. The underlined heading gives the relevant chapter's name and the italicized bullet point gives the desired outcome discussed in that chapter with a page number in parentheses. The resulting policies are listed under the desired goal and numbered sequentially for each chapter.

### Land Use and Community Character Chapter Goals and Policies

- ***The Community Growth Boundary shall protect agricultural land and urban development by defining a sharp boundary around areas that are safe for development (p. 25)***

E-LU.1. Esparto's Community Growth Boundary shall not include areas where natural conditions such as Flood Hazard areas are likely to pose a threat to public safety or produce excessive maintenance costs. The Community Growth Boundary shall not incorporate Agricultural or Rural Residential land uses (Figure 2).

E-LU.2. The comprehensible and compact scale of the town shall be maintained with businesses, schools, parks and social centers within walking distance of residences.

E-LU.3. All development within the Community Growth Boundary shall be required to obtain water and sewer service from the Esparto Community Services District. New development shall pay its fair share of providing additional public services needed to accommodate such development.

E-LU.4. New development within the Community Growth Boundary shall be required to install curbs, gutters, and sidewalks, or to secure the installation of such improvements.

- ***Seek a better balance of land uses to provide for more diverse housing and job opportunities (p. 25)***

E-LU.5. The land use designations for Esparto shall be as shown on Figure 4. The zoning for parcels shall be consistent with the land use designations of the Community Plan.

E-LU.6. Low density residential use shall compose less than half of the Community's total area.

E-LU.7. Residential density around the town center and along Fremont Street shall be increased to encourage the creation of smaller, more affordable lots.

E-LU.8. Job providing Commercial and Industrial uses shall compose at least a fifth of the Community's total area.

- ***Provide a variety of opportunities for commercial development on the town's main street (p. 26)***

E-LU.9. Yolo Avenue, including the Town Square at Grafton Street, the Historic Business District, and the Esparto Depot District shall remain the community and business center of Esparto; residential neighborhoods shall have clearly identified, walking routes to the town's main street.

- E-LU.10. Encourage denser residential uses and cottage businesses around the Town Square.
- E-LU.11. New commercial development and tourist-oriented services shall only be located along SR 16 from County Road 21A to Antelope Street. Expansion of commercial zoning outside this corridor shall not be permitted.
- E-LU.12. All new Commercial development shall make use of the adopted Yolo County Commercial Design Guidelines. Additionally, all commercial development shall meet the following community design standards:
- All lighting shall be shielded, downward directed, and located to prevent spillover light on adjacent properties.
  - Rooftop and ground-level mechanical and service equipment shall be screened from public view.
  - Existing mature trees shall be incorporated into the design of the project to the extent feasible.
- E-LU.13. The town shall identify a location for a future community center. Potential sites might include a new facility built at the Park and Aquatic Center or the existing fire station should the fire station relocate out of the town center.
- E-LU.14. Replace the DMX zone with differentiated development guidelines for the Historic Business District and Esparto Depot District.

➤ ***Restore the Historic Business District (p. 27)***

- E-LU.15. New development in the Historic Business District shall reflect the form, spacing, height, and materials of the historical structures, and should incorporate the following elements:
- New or renovated buildings shall have a maximum front and side setback of 10 feet. The rear setback shall be a minimum of 10 feet unless adjacent to residentially zoned property where 20 feet shall be required.
  - New buildings shall be two-stories or a minimum of 22 feet tall.
  - Building frontage of new or renovated structures shall be 80% to 100% of the frontage measured from side property line to side property line. From 40% to 75% of a commercial building frontage shall be clear windows that allow views of indoor space or product display areas. The windows shall be no more than 3 feet above the sidewalk with a vertical surface between 4 and 8 feet tall.
  - No more than 30 feet of horizontal distance of a street facing wall shall be provided without architectural relief such as windows.
  - Commercial buildings shall have a primary entrance door facing Yolo Avenue. Entrances at building corners may be used to satisfy this requirement. Building entrances may include doors to individual shops or businesses, or a lobby, plaza or courtyard which accesses shops or businesses.
  - Off-street parking shall be prohibited in the area generally bounded by Grafton Street and Woodland Avenue for the parcels fronting Yolo Avenue unless located behind the buildings and not accessed by a driveway from Yolo Avenue.
- E-LU.16. The first floor of commercial buildings in the Historic Business District shall be reserved for retail, restaurants, and offices with higher visitor use. Second floor residential use is encouraged as a means for providing additional housing and to assist in achieving financial feasibility of ground floor commercial development, and promote community viability.

➤ ***Coordinate a comprehensive mixed use plan for the Esparto Depot District that builds on its unique history and character (p. 27)***

- E-LU.17. The Esparto Depot District includes the parcels north of Woodland Avenue between CR 87 and SR 16. Projects located there are encouraged to include a mix of residential and nonresidential uses. Retail uses are strongly encouraged on the ground floor and other uses such as residential, office, or services, are encouraged on upper floors or behind the retail area. Residential uses should be accessory to commercial uses and cover less than half of

the ground floor area.

E-LU.18. The architecture and design of structures should be coordinated throughout the site to accent the historic Esparto Depot building and compliment the adjacent Historic Business District.

E-LU.19. Projects should include public amenities such as gathering areas, public art, or landscaped open space.

E-LU.20. Development of the northern parcels shall include a road consistent with Caltrans highway standards linking CR 20X to SR 16. The County is encouraged to work with Caltrans to reroute SR 16 using this route so that Woodland Ave may be returned to local road status.

➤ ***A variety of housing types and prices is needed in Esparto, but new residential development must be in character with the existing town (p. 28)***

E-LU.21. Monument signs identifying residential subdivisions shall not be allowed. New residential growth in Esparto shall be integrated seamlessly as part of the community as a whole.

E-LU.22. Construction in new residential subdivisions shall follow Yolo County Residential Design Guidelines and additionally, provide a front porch. Porches and other parts of a residence with the exception of the garage may encroach 10 feet into the 20-foot front setback for Low Density Residential zoning.

E-LU.23. A variety of residential types such as townhouses, attached housing, split lot duplexes, or small apartments and condominiums shall be integrated into new low density residential subdivisions and not concentrated in separate zoning districts. In all subdivisions or housing projects with at least 50 lots/units, the developer shall set aside a minimum of 10% of the gross area to be available for higher density rental residential units.

E-LU.24. Areas zoned for Medium Residential (R-M) neighborhoods shall include a variety of residential unit types such as townhouses, attached housing, split lot duplexes, or small apartments and condominiums. To facilitate these types of developments, setback for R-M zoned parcels in Esparto shall have no required side yard setbacks.

E-LU.25. The design of multifamily housing shall compliment surrounding development and provide one covered parking space per unit.

➤ ***To provide employment opportunities and economic development, land will be designated solely for non-retail light industrial use on the land southeast of the intersection of SR 16 and CR 86A (p. 29)***

E-LU.26. New industrial development shall be encouraged in the area on the south side of Highway 16, and east of County Road 86A, as shown by Figure 4.

E-LU.27. Land designated for industrial development shall not permit listed Commercial and Service Uses in Article 7 of the County Zoning Code.

E-LU.28. Local organizations including the New Season Community Development Corporation, Capay Valley Vision, and the Esparto Chamber of Commerce, shall actively promote, pursue, and attract appropriate industrial development. Of special interest is industry related to agriculture such as meat processing or nut hulling.

E-LU.29. Access to new light industrial development fronting Highway 16 shall limit encroachments and make use of County Road 86A to the extent feasible.

E-LU.30. All new industrial development shall make use of the adopted Yolo County Industrial Design Guidelines.

➤ ***Sufficient park land is available to every part of the community (p. 29)***

- E-LU.31. Design stormwater detention areas to provide recreational opportunities and parks where uses do not impede utility.

**Economic Development and Downtown Revitalization Chapter Goals and Policies**

➤ ***Restore and revitalize main street businesses on Yolo Avenue (p. 30)***

- E-ED.1. The New Season Community Development Corporation shall continue to renovate the properties they acquire and guide owners in renovating other historical buildings.
- E-ED.2. Commercially zoned areas shall include existing structures and infill areas including renovated historic buildings, brownfields, and remodeled residences near the main street for live/work and a variety of commercial opportunities.
- E-ED.3. The County is encouraged to work with Caltrans to reach an agreement to waive encroachment permit requirements or abandon part of the SR 16 right of way along Yolo Avenue so that street amendments such as tree planting, benches, and other amenities may be added to Yolo Avenue to enhance the appeal of the district.

➤ ***Identify community strengths and business opportunities in the town (p. 31)***

- E-ED.4. The County is encouraged to help find funding for the non-profit New Season Community Development Corporation that was formed to assist in economic development.
- E-ED.5. Economic development shall draw on Esparto's agricultural heritage to provide more opportunities to buy local food in town for residents and visitors. These might include a farmers market, restaurants, and produce markets.
- E-ED.6. Esparto should make use of its origins as a railroad town and agricultural center to identify and recognize historic buildings and investigate the possibility of a local museum.
- E-ED.7. Economic development shall make use of Esparto's location as a Gateway to the Capay Valley and Berryessa Snow Mountain National Monument to encourage agricultural and recreational tourism such as farm visits, bicycling, rafting, camping, and hiking.
- E-ED.8. The Esparto Chamber of Commerce shall identify more potential seasonal events to increase community pride and bring economic benefit.
- E-ED.9. The community should highlight, in particular, the need for locally desirable businesses such as a grocery store, laundromat, gas station, ice cream store, and restaurants.

➤ ***Improve broadband services (p. 32)***

- E-ED.10. The community is encouraged to work with the County and Capay Valley Vision toward creating a regional broadband system for the entire Capay Valley.
- E-ED.11. The County is encouraged to work with local internet services providers to make community Wi-Fi available for the length of Yolo Avenue.

**Circulation and Transportation Chapter Goals and Policies**

➤ ***Improved safety on Yolo Avenue and SR 16 (p. 33)***

- E-CT.1. The County is encouraged to coordinate with Caltrans to incorporate active traffic calming measures to protect pedestrians where SR 16 passes through town as Yolo Avenue. This may include Caltrans abandoning part or all of their right-of-way through town to allow the county to incorporate hardscape to ensure resident safety.
- E-CT.2. Safety measures on Yolo Avenue should include some of the following approaches:

- Narrowing traffic lanes
- Pedestrian refuges
- Vehicle activated speed limit signs
- Stop and yield to pedestrian signs
- Embedded pavement light systems
- Off-street pedestrian crossings over Lamb Valley Slough

E-CT.3. The Yolo Avenue bus stop shall be relocated to mid-block to improve pedestrian safety at intersections.

E-CT.4. Evaluate the use of County Roads 21A to 85B as a designated route for large truck traffic and casino buses. Extensive safety improvements to the intersection of 21A and 85B would be required.

➤ ***Maintain the grid system to distributed circulation within town (p. 35)***

E-CT.5. New local streets shall be consistent with Policy CC-2.16 of the Land Use and Community Character Element of the Countywide General Plan which sets a maximum block length of 600 feet, requires a street grid oriented in the cardinal directions, and multiple connections through the community with existing and proposed development.

E-CT.6. New development adjacent to Lamb Valley Slough shall be required to provide pedestrian crossings of the Slough to connect with the grid.

➤ ***Improve active transportation and public transit facilities and routes through town and regionally (p. 35)***

E-CT.7. The County is encouraged to identify a funding mechanism to provide a complete sidewalk system for the entire town.

E-CT.8. A multi-use path shall be established around the town for errands, to link principal school routes, and for recreation. Such a trail system shall also provide a link to other routes that lead to Cache Creek, Madison, and to the Capay Valley.

E-CT.9. A trail the length of Lamb Valley Slough shall be pursued to provide east to west access for non-motorized traffic.

E-CT.10. Yolobus is encouraged to add direct service between Esparto and Winters.

**Resilience and Services Chapter Goals and Policies**

➤ ***Mitigate flood risks from Lamb Valley Slough (p. 38)***

E-RS.1. New development shall provide a 50-foot drainage easement over Lamb Valley Slough with additional 25-foot maintenance and trail easements along each side of the drainage easement.

E-RS.2. New development shall preserve and enhance existing riparian and wetland habitat along Lamb Valley Slough and other small canals in the planning area, unless the need for flood protection and maintenance prevents such preservation and enhancement.

E-RS.3. Caltrans and the County are strongly encouraged to improve the Yolo Avenue and Fremont Street bridges respectively to withstand 100-year flood events.

E-RS.4. Prior to approval of any major development projects, the County shall require project-by-project stormwater runoff mitigation through a variety of onsite retention strategies.

➤ ***Use of green infrastructure to aid in stormwater retention and urban cooling (p. 39)***

E-RS.5. Drainage infrastructure for new developments should make use of pervious pavement, curb

cuts into sunken planter strips, and similar methods to capture stormwater.

E-RS.6. Widespread tree plantings shall be encouraged to reduce urban heat effects and retain water. New residential development shall require one 15-gallon low water tree per 3,500 square feet of lot area for each lot. Plantings shall be required to be watered and maintained by the developer at least 2 years until establishment. Plants that are lost during this period shall be replaced and maintained for a minimum two year period until establishment.

➤ **Ensure that all structures are safe in the event of an earthquake (p. 40)**

E-RS.7. Renovation of seismically vulnerable historical buildings in Esparto shall include upgrades to the latest and highest appropriate seismic retrofit standards under the Uniform Building Code.

➤ **Maintain local educational, emergency, and healthcare services (p. 40)**

E-RS.8. Outbuildings used for the middle school classrooms should be replaced with permanent structures.

E-RS.9. Health care and emergency services should be expanded in Esparto. One ambulance is available in the community, but backup service is needed.

E-RS.10. The Esparto Fire Department should continue to train members as Emergency Medical technicians.

## Implementation

Implementation of the Esparto Community Plan depends on both public and private participants. There are many challenges to revitalizing a small, unincorporated town, including the identification of funding for infrastructure improvements, phasing of improvements, and the coordination of multiple responsible agencies. Public expectations vary, and there are often competing interests. Community building occurs one step at a time and adoption of this Community Plan will not result in immediate change. The process does not end with the adoption of this document and it is important to continue with the steps necessary to bring about the vision of the Plan. Periodically, it is desirable to reexamine the Community Plan's goals; the plan is intended to be a living document that can be changed and updated as local conditions change.

The plan identifies a number of programs listed below to be achieved in the next five years and the next ten years. These programs are summarized in Table 1. They represent measurable milestones by which the success of the plan can be periodically evaluated.

## Implementation Programs

1. The County will amend its zoning ordinance and district map to reflect the land use designations of this Community Plan. DMX zoning will be removed from the Zoning Code.

Responsible Agency:	Planning Division
Timeframe:	2019
Funding:	General fund
Monitoring:	Planning Division

2. The town shall identify a location for a future community center. Potential sites might include a new facility built at the Park and Aquatic Center or the existing fire station should the fire station relocate out of the town center.

Responsible Agency:	Esparto Citizen Advisory Committee
Timeframe:	2024
Funding:	none

**Esparto Community Plan**

Monitoring: ECAC

3. Local organizations including the New Season Community Development Corporation, Capay Valley Vision, and the Esparto Chamber of Commerce, shall actively promote, pursue, and attract appropriate industrial development. Of special interest is industry related to agriculture such as meat processing or nut hulling.

Responsible Agency/Department: Various local organizations  
Timeframe: ongoing  
Funding: private  
Monitoring: ECAC

4. The Esparto Chamber of Commerce shall identify more potential seasonal events to increase community pride and bring economic benefit.

Responsible Agency/Department: Esparto Chamber of Commerce  
Timeframe: 2022  
Funding: COC  
Monitoring: ECAC

5. The County is encouraged to coordinate with Caltrans to incorporate active traffic calming measures to protect pedestrians where SR 16 passes through town as Yolo Avenue. This may include Caltrans abandoning part or all of their right-of-way through town to allow the county to incorporate hardscape to ensure resident safety. The Yolo Avenue bus stop shall be relocated to mid-block to improve pedestrian safety at intersections.

Responsible Agency/Department: Community Services Department  
Timeframe: 2020  
Funding: General fund  
Monitoring: Planning Division

6. The County will update and expand the Bicycle Transportation Plan to address walking, bicycling, and transit facilities for Esparto and the western county.

Responsible Agency/Department: Community Services Department  
Timeframe: 2023  
Funding: General fund  
Monitoring: Planning Division

7. The County will identify a funding mechanism to provide a complete sidewalk system for the entire town.

Responsible Agency/Department: Community Services Department  
Timeframe: 2022  
Funding: General fund  
Monitoring: Planning Division

8. The County will update the previous drainage study to set improvement and restoration standards for Lamb Valley Slough. Improvements for the two noncompliant bridges over the slough should be included.

Responsible Agency/Department: Community Services Department, YCFCWCD  
Timeframe: 2025  
Funding: Developer, assessment district, general fund  
Monitoring: Planning Division



9. Esparto Community Service District will ensure that revenue covers all services provided including detention area maintenance by updating their zone of benefit.

Responsible Agency/Department: Esparto Community Services District  
 Timeframe: 2019  
 Funding: ECSD  
 Monitoring: ECSD

**TABLE 1: SUMMARY OF 5-YEAR AND 10-YEAR OBJECTIVES**

Within 5 Years	Within 10 Years
<p>Amend zoning ordinance and map.</p> <p>Complete Yolo Avenue safety improvements</p> <p>Complete renovation of historic buildings in the Historic Business District</p> <p>Adopt a trail plan to connect Esparto to Madison, Capay, and Cache Creek</p> <p>Annex the light industrial parcels south of SR 16 into the ECSD</p> <p>Complete drainage study and restoration plan for Lamb Valley Slough</p>	<p>Find permanent occupants for all the renovated historic buildings on north Yolo Avenue</p> <p>Adopt improvement and restoration program for Lamb Valley Slough</p> <p>Bring Yolo Avenue and Fremont bridges up to required standards</p> <p>Construct trails to connect Esparto to Madison, Capay, and Cache Creek</p> <p>Attract agricultural and/or clean industrial development to area south of SR 16</p>

## **4. LAND USE AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT**

### **Existing Land Use Conditions**

As discussed in the Community Plan Area section, Esparto was founded as a railroad town, which means that it was platted following a standard pattern that had been developed by the railroad companies as they spread westward over the country: a grid of blocks of 50-foot by 150-foot lots separated by 60 to 80-foot wide roads and 20-foot wide alleys spreading from one side of the railway. In Esparto, the old train depot, now restored, still stands at the top of Yolo Avenue. Originally, the 50-foot wide business lots along the main street only provided opportunities for small businesses that would not challenge the railroad monopoly in town. Over time, however, wealthier investors consolidated the lots and built larger business blocks like the historic buildings which remain on Yolo Avenue north of Capay Street.

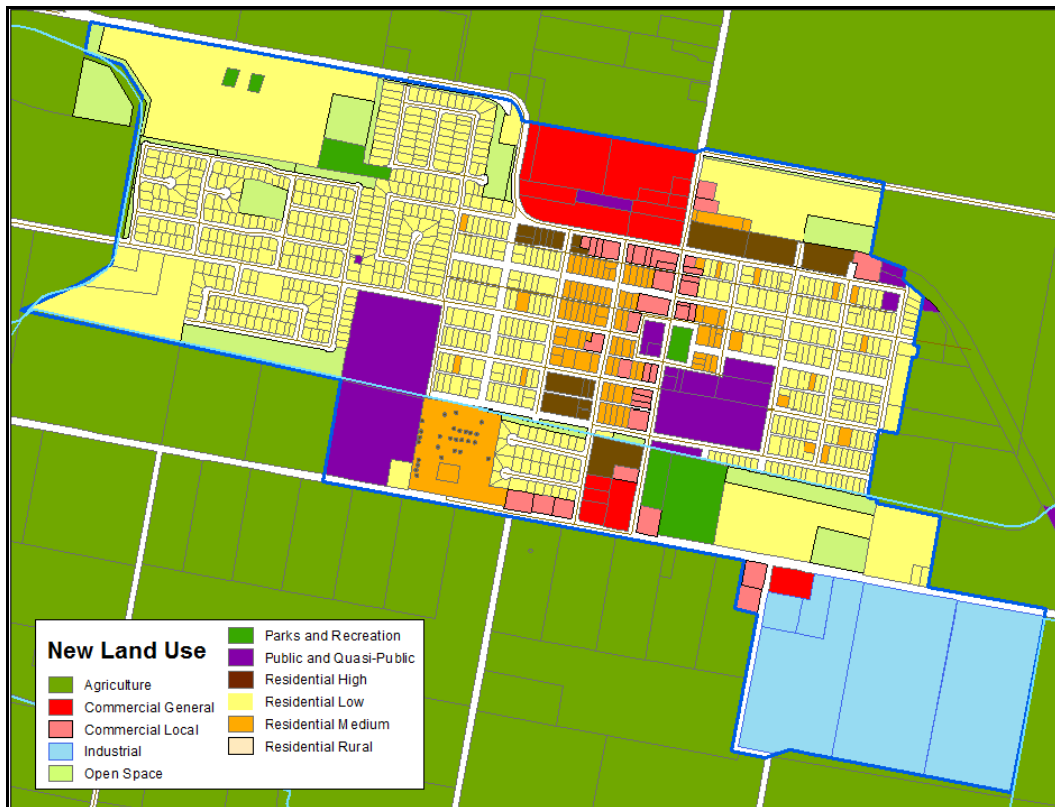
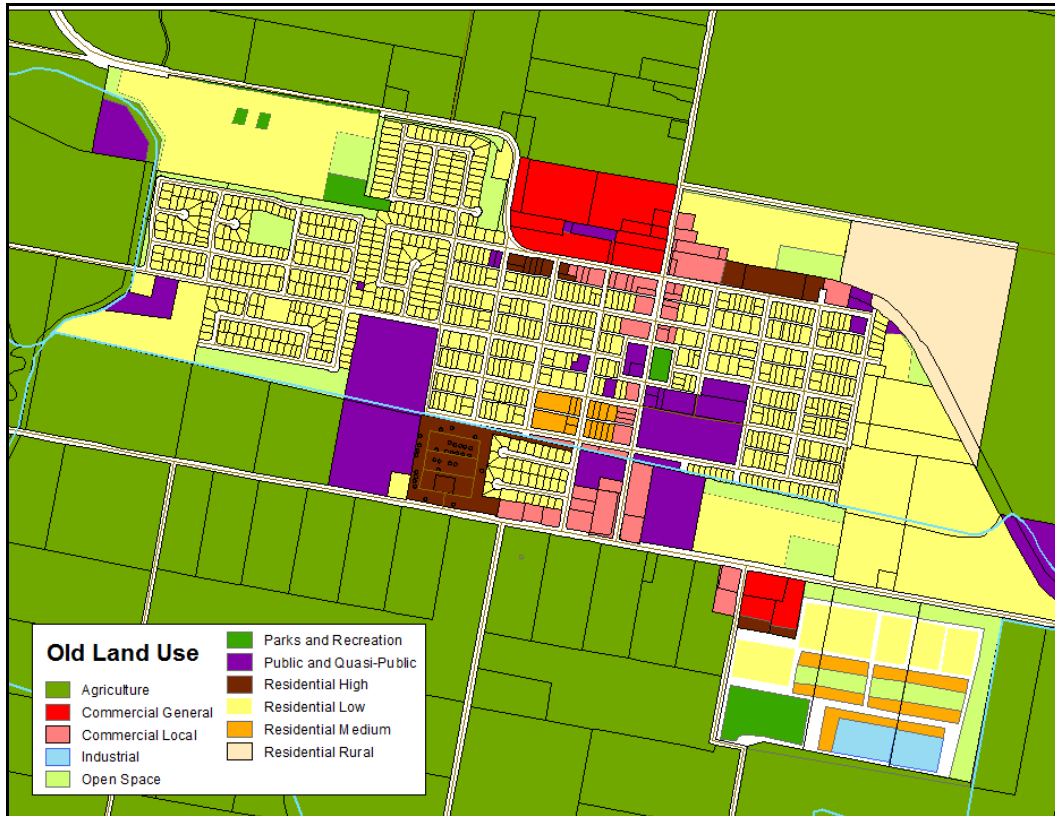
At the time of the 1996 plan update, Esparto had not expanded significantly from the original 8 block by 4 block grid laid out by the railroad. An elementary school and the new Country West subdivision pushed development west of Omega Street and other new development had jumped the slough to reach CR 21A between Yolo Avenue and Omega Street. The old railyard north of Woodland Avenue was identified as industrial use. Commercial uses were limited to the historical downtown at the north end of Yolo Avenue and east on the south side of Woodland Avenue, and at the south end of Yolo Avenue and east on the north side of CR 21A.

The 1996 update designated over 70 acres of light industrial use south of SR 16 and changed the designated industrial areas around the old train depot to commercial use. New low density residential areas were expanded to the Winters Canal on the west side of town and east to the old railroad alignment. This was followed by the 2007 update which created a new Downtown Mixed Use zone for the commercial land around north Yolo Avenue and the train depot and put together community design guidelines.

The 2030 Countywide General Plan Land Use element identified growth boundaries to centralize non-agricultural land use. Land use within Esparto's Community Growth Boundary (CGB) is designated by ten general types of use under the 2030 Countywide General Plan (See Table 2). General Plan designations for land within the CGB include various residential and commercial types, as well as industrial, public, recreational and open space uses. Additionally, a Mineral Resources Overlay applied to State designated gravel mining resources along Cache Creek covers the northwest corner of land within the Esparto growth boundary area.

Zoning is guided by the General Plan's land use designations with eleven zoning districts present within Esparto's prior boundary: Rural Residential (RR-5); Low, Medium, and High Density Residential (R-L, R-M, R-H); Local Commercial (C-L), General Commercial (C-G) and Downtown Mixed Use (DMX); Light Industrial (I-L); Public/Quasi-Public (PQP), Parks and Recreation (P-R), and Public Open Space (POS) (Table 2). Additionally, there are two overlay zones present: Sand Gravel Reserves Overlay Zone (SGR-O) and Planned Development Overlay (PD-#). The Sand Gravel Reserves overlay the northwest corner of the Community Growth Boundary and are State designated mineral resource zones included in the Cache Creek Off-Channel Mining Plan. The Planned Development Overlay Zone allow for more flexible and efficient land use in project site design. Most of the modern residential subdivisions in Esparto have a PD Overlay Zone including: Country West I (PD-42), Country West II (PD-48), Parker Place (PD-49), Esparanza Estates (PD-53), Lopez Subdivision (PD-57), Orciuoli (PD-59), E Parker (PD-60), and Story (PD-61). The Story, E. Parker, and Orciuoli subdivisions have been approved, but the final maps have yet to be recorded.

Figure 4: Old and New Land Use Designations



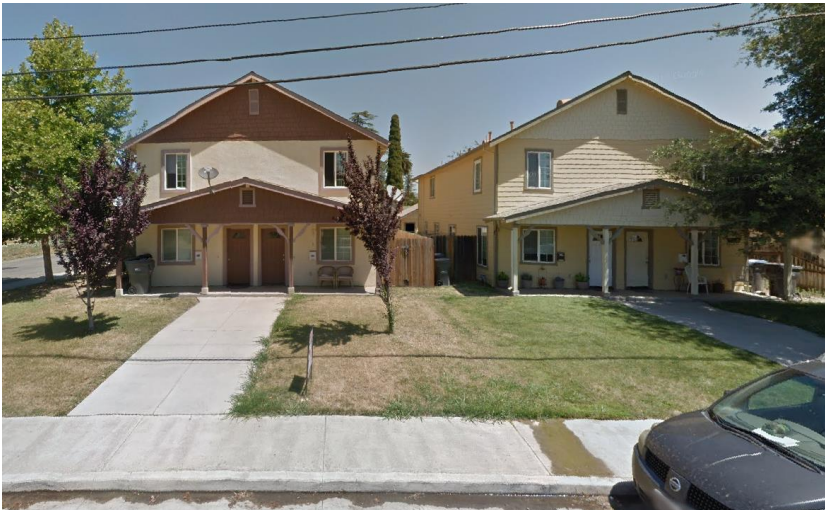
**TABLE 2: GENERAL PLAN LAND USE DESIGNATIONS AND ZONING CONSISTENCY**

General Plan Land Use Designation	General Description	Consistent Zoning Districts
Residential Rural (RR)	Single-family dwellings on estate size lots. (2 acre minimum)	RR-5
Residential Low (RL)	Single family dwellings on urban size lots. (4 to 10 dwelling units per net acre)	R-L and R-L/PD
Residential Medium (RM)	Single and multi-family dwellings on urban size lots and mobile home parks. (10 to 19 dwelling units per net acre)	R-M
Residential High (RH)	Multi-family dwellings on urban size lots. (20 or more dwelling units per net acre)	R-H
Commercial General (CG)	Larger retail and other businesses that serve the everyday needs of the region, including grocery, restaurants, offices, and like uses.	C-G
Commercial General (CG)	Maintain “main street” character of downtown; protect historical buildings. Allows a wide range of uses, including visitor serving shops, restaurants and specialty retail	DMX
Commercial Local (CL)	Small local retail, service, and office uses that serve the everyday needs of nearby residents.	C-L
Industrial (IN)	Light industrial and service commercial businesses including those that serve the needs of agriculture.	I-L
Public/Quasi-Public (PQ)	Public services and facilities, including government offices, schools, libraries, and community infrastructure.	PQP
Parks and Recreation (PR)	Developed park facilities, play grounds, sports fields, and public pools.	P-R
Open Space (OS)	Public open space, water bodies, agricultural buffer areas, and habitat.	POS

**Figure 5: Examples of Land Uses**



**5a: Low Density Residential**



**5b: Medium Density Residential**



**5c: High Density Residential**



**5d: Local Commercial**



**5e: General Commercial**



**5f: General Commercial (Downtown Mixed Use)**



**5g: Public/Quasi-Public**

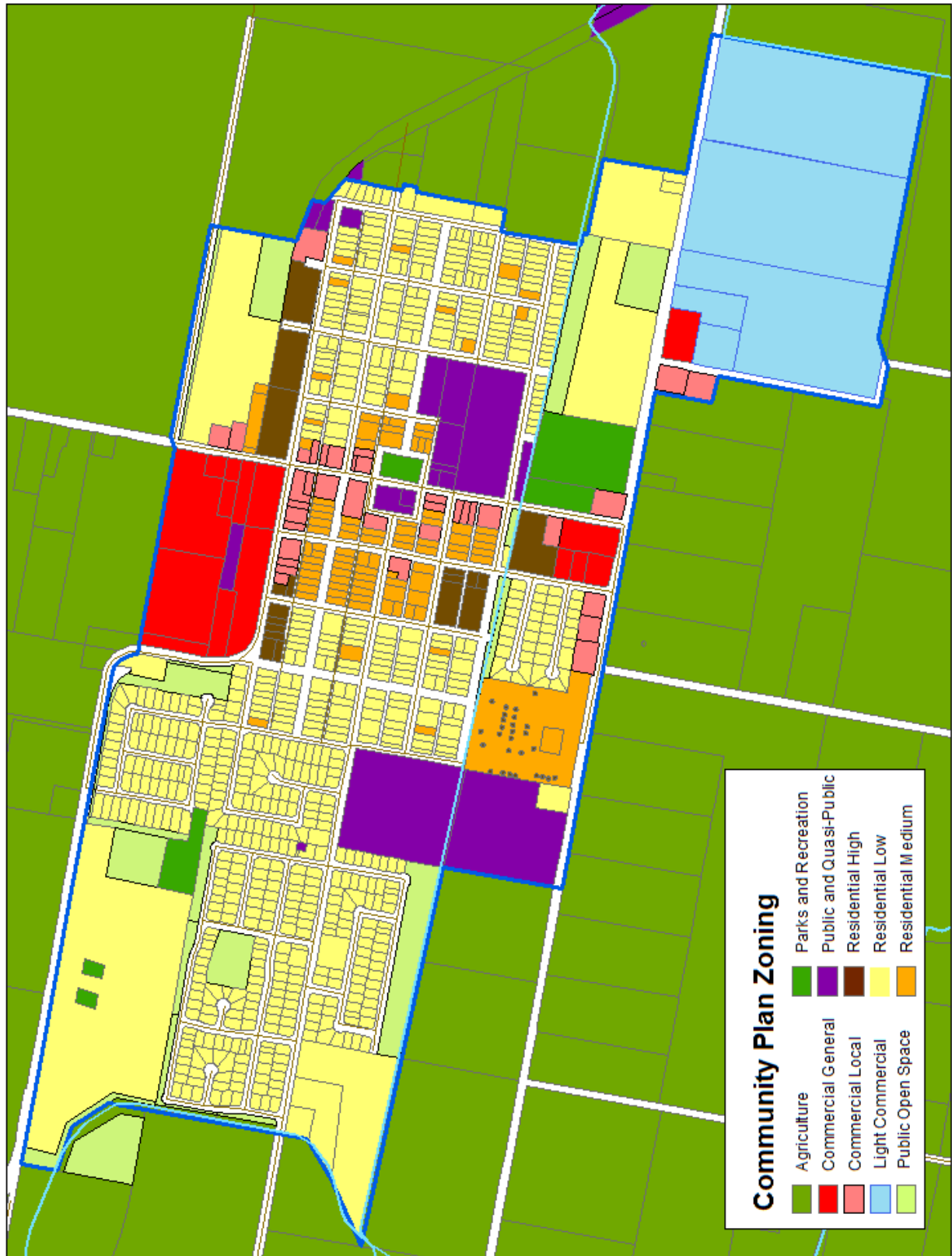


**5h: Parks and Recreation**



**5i: Open Space**

Figure 6: Zoning Map





## Desired Land Use Conditions

- ***The Community Growth Boundary shall protect agricultural land by defining a sharp boundary around areas that are safe for development***

In order to preserve and protect agricultural lands, Esparto has a Community Growth Boundary (CGB) which centralizes non-agricultural, urban development in a compact area. Likewise, in order to protect life and property, the Countywide General Plan calls for areas of significant hazards or resources to be prohibited from CGBs. The Esparto CGB currently includes areas east of Alpha Street which are a FEMA designated floodplain (see figure 2). These areas include 30 acres of Rural Residential (RR-5) zoned land currently in agricultural production at the northeast corner of the CGB and land designated as Low Density Residential east of Alpha Street. The three parcels adjacent to Alpha Street between Capay Street and Madison Street and parcel adjacent to SR 16 which are outside the flood area will retain Low Density Residential (R-L) zoning. The rest of the parcels within the flood zone will be removed from the growth boundary and returned to an agricultural designation to prevent residential development in the floodplain and encroachment on the Esparto Community Service District’s sanitation facilities.

- ***Seek a better balance of land uses to provide for more diverse housing and job opportunities***

The community feels that Esparto has become primarily a bedroom community where residents must travel to larger communities to work and shop. There is concern that few services and jobs are available in town. The current community plan has a majority of the land designated for lower density housing (Table 3). In fact, over half of the land within the CGB is designated for low and rural density residential (52%). The next highest amount of land is zoned for Public uses (22%) and at much smaller amounts Commercial Uses (10%), Medium Density Residential (5%), Open Space including stormwater retention areas (3%), and finally High Density Residential and Parks and Recreational at less than 1%. The 2007 Esparto Plan had a moderate amount of land designated for Industrial (12%), but that was sharply reduced by a later update to 1%.

**TABLE 3: LAND-USE COMPARISON**

Land-Use	Current Acreage	Proposed Acreage	Current % of Area	Proposed % of Area
Rural Residential (RR)	33.5	0	5%	0 %
Low Density Res (RL)	308	202	48%	45%
Med Density Res (RM)	17.8	29.4	5%	7 %
High Density Res (RH)	6.4	14	<1%	3 %
Local Commercial (CL)	20.4	16.3	1%	4 %
General Commercial (CG)	6.1	29.3	9%	7 %
Industrial (IN)	8	75.5	1%	17 %
Public/Quasi-Public (PQ)	138.3	40.7	22%	9 %
Open Space (OS)	32.7	31.3	3%	7 %
Parks and Recreation (PR)	9.1	13.4	<1%	3 %
Total	620	451		

With the removal of the eastern low density residential areas in the flood zone from the community and a conversion to denser residential zoning around the community center, the percentage of land designated very low and low density residential land is reduced to 45%. However, there remains plenty of housing capacity due to the three subdivisions pending buildout and increased residential capacity around the town center.

The lots platted for the original railroad settlement are typically 50 feet wide and 150 feet long

compared to more recent development where lots are more likely to be slightly wider, but shorter with few measuring greater than 100 feet long. The historical lots are 7,500 square feet compared to more recently platted lots for low density residential development which range from approximately 4,000 to 7,000 square feet. These larger lots present an opportunity to increase density by dividing them into smaller lots where appropriate. The Yolo County Land Use Code requires a minimum lot size of 3,500 square feet for Low Density Residentially zoned land and 1,500 square feet for Medium Density which presents the potential for infill residential development. Over 35 duplex lots already exist in the old town area and in particular, end lots have been encouraged to subdivide into 2 or 3 separate lots of 3,000 or 2,000 square feet. Rezoning to Medium Density Residential around the Town Square could bring more density and therefore weight to the heart of the town as well as make better use of the available transit, parks, and community services. The community should encourage denser infill development around the town center.

The designation of the 75 acres south of SR 16 at 86A back to industrial use provides opportunities for economic development and job for 17% of the community's area. Commercially designated area remains about the same and focused on Yolo and Woodland Avenue. Currently, Downtown Mixed Use zoning (DMX) is not a General Plan land use designation, but a zoning allowed under the General Commercial designation. The uses allowed within this zoning are a mixture of those typically allowed in General Commercial and Local Commercial zones. The total amount of commercial land remains about the same.

The land designated as Public/Quasi-public was the most reduced area from 22% to 9% mainly by the removal of the wastewater treatment area from the Community Growth Boundary and reclassification of the new Park and Aquatic Center from the Public/Quasi-public land use designation to Parks and Recreation. This reclassification also increases the amount of land in Parks to 3%. The amount of Open Space remained essentially the same, but with the reduction of total community area, the percentage of community area designated as Open Space increases to 7%.

➤ ***Provide a variety of opportunities for commercial development on the town's main street***

The previous Esparto plan update sought to focus commercial development on the underutilized aging buildings along Yolo Avenue between Grafton Street and Woodland Avenue and the mostly undeveloped land around the old train depot northwest of the corner of Yolo and Woodland Avenues. A major component of that plan was the development of Downtown Mixed Use (DMX) zoning for these areas. This zoning district was intended to maintain the main street character of downtown Esparto by allowing a diverse range of uses including local businesses, visitor services, and residential use. The adopted ordinance set design guidelines such as maximum front setbacks and a minimum building height and various specific design guidelines which differ between the Historic Business District and the Esparto Depot District.

The permitted land uses in the DMX zone are a mix of General Commercial and Local Commercial zones. DMX most resembles Local Commercial zoning, but is less restrictive of several more intensive land use such as large retail, alcohol sales, hotels and conference centers, entertainment venues, and hospitals typical of General Commercial zoning. These higher intensity uses more appropriate to General Commercial would seem less compatible for mixed residential uses due to scale, noise, and hours of activity. The Yolo County Zoning Code currently allows mixed residential uses in both General Commercial and Local Commercial zones and the recommended design guidelines for the separate Historic Business and Esparto Depot Districts are more appropriate in the Esparto Community Plan than the County Zoning Code. Therefore, the DMX zone should be removed and specific design guidelines for each district included here with the parcels zoned for the appropriate commercial zoning: Neighborhood Commercial for the Historic Business District and General Commercial for the Esparto Depot District.

➤ **Restore the Historic Business District**

**Figure 7: Historic Business District**



The Historic Business District should remain the focus of commercial development in Esparto. The New Season Community Development Corporation should continue to acquire and renovate buildings in the district and find new tenants to purchase and occupy the buildings. Design Guidelines for remodels and new construction in the Historic Business District should blend with the existing structures following required maximum setbacks, minimum height, and architectural styles and features. These were currently defined in the County Zoning Code, but are now included in the Esparto Community Plan. The specific area of the Historic Business District has been reduced to the 13 lots along SR 16 (Yolo and west Woodland Avenues) between Grafton Street and Fremont Street. Ten of the lots have existing buildings: four of the buildings would meet design standards and are occupied (DO)

including the historic IOOF/Lindberg building and Clarence Johnson home and shop; two buildings would meet the district design standards, but are unoccupied and dilapidated (D); and four buildings are occupied, but do not meet design standards (O) (See Figure 7).

The community has expressed concern with this focus on the north end of town and wishes to balance the northern emphasis with new development occurring at the south end of Yolo Avenue. The community has said that it would like to see the Town Square at Grafton Street serve as the town center as it has historically. This can be achieved by meeting the 2030 General Plan policies that call for higher levels of use and density within downtown areas. To achieve this, denser residential designations and some local commercial has been expanded to all areas between Fremont and Bonyng Streets and Capay and Plainfield Street. Parcels near CR 21A between Yolo and Fremont Avenues would have a more flexible General Commercial designation though they would still be required to use the County Commercial Design Guidelines. A future community center could be located at the location of the fire house or new Park and Aquatic Center as well.

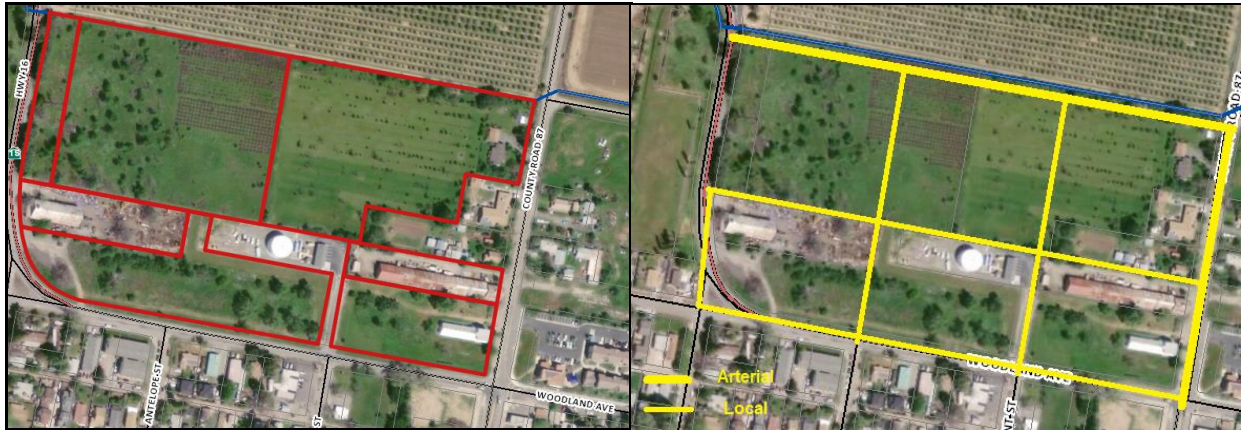
➤ **Coordinate a comprehensive mixed use plan for the Esparto Depot District**

As previously mentioned, the mostly undeveloped land around the old Esparto train depot north of Woodland Avenue between CR 87 and SR 16 is currently designated General Commercial use with a zoning of Downtown Mixed Use although the zoning states that the design guidelines for this area only apply to parcels over an acre in size which would exclude 3 smaller parcels on the east side of the area (see Figure 8 below).

The area would perhaps best be developed under one large comprehensive master plan; however, this will be difficult due to the fact that the area consists of 11 separate parcels with each parcel under separate ownership. Regardless, the County will coordinate development if the parcels are not consolidated so that projects are coordinated and meet specific design guidelines for the area. The site also faces a challenge in that SR 16 turns west from Yolo Avenue to Woodland Avenue and north along the Orleans Street alignment. This serves to further isolate the site from the community. When

the site is eventually developed, the County will work with Caltrans to route SR 16 along the east and north boundaries of the site to facilitate connection of the development to the community.

**Figure 8: Esparto Depot District and Street Grid**



- ***A variety of housing types and prices is needed in Esparto, but new residential development must be in character with the existing town.***

Esparto has become primarily a residential community. In 2016, it was estimated that 3,618 people were living in approximately 1,200 housing units. Most units are single family homes on lots ranging in size from 5,000 -10,000 square feet of which many are original town lots measuring 50 by 150 feet. The neighborhood streets are arranged in a grid, with alleys located mid-block. Many of the homes were constructed in the 1950's and 1960's and reflect a variety of architectural styles and materials; a few homes were built around the turn of the last century and can be considered representative of Victorian period architecture. The tree-lined streets and period architecture all contribute to Esparto's character.

Rising housing costs in Sacramento and surrounding communities has resulted in increased development pressures on outlying communities, including Esparto. New residential development in Esparto has been predominantly detached single-family dwellings. While these new houses are generally affordable when compared to many other surrounding communities, they are still beyond the means of many residents of Esparto. For this reason, new residential development should include more attached housing types and some housing priced to be affordable to lower income households with an eye toward special populations. In particular, the senior population of Esparto has been growing steadily over the past decade. There is a need to provide senior housing in town as well as affordable rental apartments.

While new development is seen as desirable by the local residents in order to provide additional housing, make more local services feasible, and to boost the local economy, there is also a concern that the small town character and lifestyle currently enjoyed could be lost or diminished if new development is not properly managed. Residents are concerned that new development may not reflect the size, scale, and materials of the existing neighborhoods and thus diminish the character of the town.

In an effort to address state-wide housing needs, the State of California requires regions to address housing issues and need based on future growth projections for the area. The California Department of Housing and Community Development allocates regional housing needs to regional councils of governments throughout the state. The Regional Housing Needs Plan (RHNP) for Yolo County is developed by the Sacramento Area Council of Governments (SACOG), and allocates to cities and unincorporated counties their "fair share" of the region's projected housing needs, or the Regional Housing Needs Allocation (RHNA). The needs plan allocates the needs allocation based on

household income groupings over an eight year planning period.

The intent of the RHNP is to ensure that local jurisdictions address not only the needs of their immediate areas but also fill the housing needs for the entire region. Additionally, a major goal of the RHNP is to assure that every community provides an opportunity for a mix of affordable housing to all economic segments of its population. Unincorporated Yolo County is responsible for 1,890 units for the 2013-2021 planning period though 1,528 of those units are to be provided by the University of California- Davis. Of the 362 remaining units, the County is on track to meet or exceed the required number with 288 units built by 2018. As the only community in the unincorporated county that has public water and sewer and lies outside of a flood zone, Esparto is providing most of the housing for the unincorporated County. The County has already exceeded its housing requirements for Very Low and Low Income units in large part through the Mercy Housing project. An additional 65 Low to Moderate Income units are included in the 320 units pending for the three approved subdivisions below.

**TABLE 4: PENDING RESIDENTIAL PROJECTS**

<u>Project</u>	<u>Total Units</u>	<u>Inclusionary Units</u>
Castle/Orciuoli	180 SF units	18 low/18 mod
Emerald/Storey	78 SF units	8 low/8 mod
Emerald/E. Parker	62 SF units	6 low/7 mod
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>320 units</b>	<b>32 low/33 mod</b>

Even with the removal of low density residential areas in the flood zone from the community area, Esparto still has plenty of potential for various types of residential development. The pending residential subdivisions provide a variety of single family homes and through increases in allowed density around the town center of Esparto, smaller more affordable attached or detached homes and apartments will become available.

- ***To provide employment opportunities and economic development, land will be designated solely for non-retail light industrial use on the land southeast of the intersection of SR 16 and CR 86A.***

A policy of Yolo County’s General Plan is for communities to provide 1.2 jobs per household. Currently that would mean over 1,300 local jobs for Esparto. With only the school district and a handful of businesses as local employers, Esparto is in need of many new jobs. The town’s Community Plan must provide for land where job producing businesses would be able to easily locate. Restoration of the 75 acres of industrially designated land south of SR 16 is one strategy for providing a large area for some sort of industrial or research campus. The location has excellent access to SR 16 with improvements to make it safer and more accessible underway. The parcel will also be connected to public water and sewer with pending development on the northern side of SR 16 making it more favorable for development.

- ***Sufficient park land is available to every part of the community***

The amount of Parks and Recreation designated land for unincorporated communities is uniquely specified by the 2030 General Plan. Policy CC-2.13 requires 5 acres of neighborhood parks per 1000 people. With approximately 3,500 residents, Esparto should have over 15 acres of parks. Current park facilities include the 1-acre Community Park in the town center and approximately 9-acre Park and Aquatic Center. The pending residential subdivision would add enough housing for another 1,000 residents requiring another 5 acres of parks. The approved tentative maps for these subdivisions provide approximately 3.5 additional acres of park area. Although the schools have a number of athletic fields, there is not currently the required amount of park lands available to the general public.

Required park areas should be located throughout town and of appropriate size. Parks should also be connected to trails and contiguous where feasible to maximize recreational area. Currently, existing park areas are located in the central and south central parts of the community. The northern part of the community and in particular, the newer western part of town do not have any recreational areas other than walking paths around large open detention basins. Given the compact nature of the community within the growth boundary, it will be difficult to find the land needed for parks; however, with over 30 acres of the community zoned as open space for detention basins and buffering Lamb Valley Slough, identifying recreational uses that are compatible with detention basins would allow more efficient use of areas to meet the recreational needs for the community.

## **5. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

### **Existing Conditions**

The origins of Esparto's economy lie in its establishment in 1888 by the Capay Valley Land Company as a railroad town supporting agricultural production in the Capay Valley. At the time, the mainstays of the region were livestock and grain, but the investors divided large holdings in the area into smaller plots for vineyards and fruit farms. Agriculture continues to be the major business of Esparto and the Capay Valley with numerous crops including tomatoes, almonds, alfalfa, grapes, peaches, apricots, berries, organic produce and even recent interest in cannabis production with the State's decriminalization of its use. The region's most renowned product is celebrated each spring with the Almond Festival.

Business within the town however, has been in slow decline for some time. Although Esparto's population has remained stable and even grown over the last half of the twentieth century, its businesses have dried up with the bank and last remaining gas station closing in the 1990s.

In 2007, the New Season Community Development Corporation was chartered to bring jobs, vitality, and commerce to downtown Esparto. In the past decade, New Season has had a number of successes. Although the iconic Wyatt Building was demolished in 2009 due to safety concerns, New Season has successfully renovated the historical Lindberg (IOOF) and Adams buildings and found tenant businesses. The organization continues to work on cleaning up the Wyatt building site so that it can be redeveloped. Other than these renovated buildings, three other businesses have been started in the DMX zoned area, El Toro Market, Hog Canyon Café, and Ravine Bar and Grill, though none have renovated their buildings to comply with the DMX design requirements.

Despite a growing population, Esparto lacks in jobs for residents. Locally, the Esparto Unified School District with 101 employees and agriculture-related jobs are the main work opportunities. The nearby Cache Creek Casino which currently has over 2,800 employees and expects to hire 500 more when the hotel expansion is completed, is the largest single employer in the Capay Valley. Otherwise, residents must commute to Woodland, Davis, or even Vacaville and Sacramento for jobs.

Today, Esparto could be on the verge of an economic renaissance. The Cache Creek Casino Resort continues to grow and draw visitors from throughout northern California. The popular rise of food culture has brought increased awareness to the numerous organic farms and quality products produced in the Capay Valley. Finally, the establishment of the Lake Berryessa Snow Mountain National Monument in 2015 immediately east of the Capay Valley along with other recreational opportunities on Cache Creek could become a regional draw for outdoor enthusiasts. These draws as well as increased costs in the San Francisco Bay area and Sacramento could fuel a revitalization of the town's economy.

### **Desired Economic Development Conditions**

- *Restore and revitalize the historical businesses on Yolo Avenue*

A major concern of the most recent Esparto Plan was the preservation of aging commercial buildings in the business district that had been underutilized and poorly maintained. The stretch of Yolo Avenue between Grafton Street and Woodland Avenue encompasses a number of commercial and warehouse buildings built in Esparto prior to 1920. The Countywide General Plan recognizes three of these structures as historical resources: the Esparto Railroad Station, Clarence Johnson Shop, and Lindberg/IOOF Building. The Railroad Station and Johnson shop are under private ownership and are both in good condition after the recent renovation of the Railroad Station. The New Season Community Development Corporation has brought the Lindberg/IOOF Building up to code with an ADA compliant elevator installed through funding from the Yocha Dehe. Pacific Ace Hardware has moved into the space and purchased the building from New Season. Additionally, the Adams Building across from the Lindberg Building has been partially renovated, but requires additional fire and earthquake improvements. New Season's office is in that building along with tenants which include a gym and coffee shop.

In addition to setting policies to preserve historical structures, the previous Esparto Plan proposed a new land use designation and zone for Esparto's historical business district and nearby land fronting on Yolo Avenue and Woodland Avenue. The Downtown Mixed Use zone was later adopted into the zoning code under the General Plan's General Commercial land use. The zone includes an array of building design regulations found in both the zoning code and the 2007 Esparto Plan update. This approach has made the zoning somewhat difficult to comprehend and enforce among applicants and reviewers. It is possible that this complicated zoning has unintentionally deterred development as well. The building design standards are now simplified and clearly stated in Chapter 3 of this Community Plan and focused on the historical business district along Yolo Avenue between Grafton Street and Woodland Avenue.

Another possible impediment to revitalization of the business district is the fact that the Caltrans right of way for SR 16 is unusually wide through the block spanning about 95 feet from store front to store front. This has made it difficult to improve the streetscape through tree plantings and outdoor areas along the sidewalk. Any improvement would require a Caltrans encroachment permit which is costly and time consuming and any maintenance or repairs of structures in the area would require another encroachment permit from the State. Abandonment of the sidewalks by Caltrans so that their right of way covers only the street area between the curbs would free up businesses to plant trees or add outdoor areas to make the district more appealing to residents and visitors. New Season should facilitate a coordinated look for the district and continue to encourage rehabilitation of the buildings and finding tenants to fill them.

➤ ***Identify community strengths and business opportunities***

It may be difficult for a small town like Esparto to compete for regional businesses, but it has unique qualities and strengths resulting from its history and location at the entrance to the Capay Valley. The combined population of Esparto and the Valley is only around 5,000 people compared to retail centers like Woodland with 50,000 people or Vacaville with nearly 100,000 people. What these larger communities do not have however, is Esparto's proximity to agriculture and recreational opportunities in the Capay Valley. Other communities in Yolo County have made use of their historic downtowns and special events to draw visitors such as Winters and more recently Woodland. Local business organizations should identify unique features that would appeal to visitors and capitalize on its unique location and character.

As the Gateway to the Capay Valley, Esparto can build on the regional agricultural heritage which is benefitting from the rise of interest in farm-to-fork and organic food. Despite being surrounded by very productive farmland, Esparto is something of a food desert. The three groceries located in town have a very limited selection of fresh foods; only El Toro market offers fresh meat and vegetables. There is currently one restaurant serving hamburgers and pizza and a deli at Manas Custom Meats location. Agricultural opportunities might include restarting the farmers market or inviting Capay Valley farmers to have more of a presence in town. An example is the specialty mushroom and produce stand next to Manas Ranch Custom Meats which has recently been approved.

The Capay Valley also has many recreational opportunities that Esparto could use to increase its visibility as a destination. Bicycling is a popular recreational activity in Yolo County. The annual Davis Double Century ride is said to be the most popular double century in California and passes through the Capay Valley and close by Esparto. The Davis to Capay bike ride is a very popular route year round. Restoration of Cache Creek will provide other opportunities and the recent designation of the Berryessa Snow Mountain (BSM) National Monument will increase awareness of outdoor recreational opportunities in and around the Capay Valley. The town of Winters has long benefited from its location on SR128 serving as an attractive stop for visitors to Lake Berryessa. Esparto could fulfill a similar role on SR 16 for visitors to BLM lands around the Cache Creek Wilderness.

➤ **Improve Broadband services**

Esparto and the Capay Valley have been slow to benefit from modern communication services which has an effect on business opportunities. Broadband services are still limited for the region. Currently, there are three communication service providers for Esparto: AT&T, Esparto Broadband, and Frontier Communications. AT&T maintains old copper lines that provide for landline phone service and minimal broadband with speeds between 12-20 Mbps. Frontier has a fiber network and runs at faster speeds. Esparto Broadband is a local company that offers 25, 50, or 100 Mbps packages. AT&T is in discussions with the Esparto Fire Department to place transponders on the old tower next to the fire station. With so much business dependent on internet today, more should be done to support and improve internet access in Esparto.

## **6. CIRCULATION AND TRANSPORTATION**

### **Existing Circulation**

Currently, automobiles are the principal form of transportation in Esparto. The average number of cars per household is 3 in Esparto which is higher than the average for California. State Route 16 passes directly through the Town of Esparto connecting the Capay Valley with Woodland, Davis, and Sacramento to the east and Winters and Vacaville to the south on Interstate 505. Local trucking has taken the place of the old railroad to transport crops from the farms to processing plants. The harvest season brings the highest volume of trucking into the Esparto Area. Trucks transporting gravel mined from Cache Creek are required to use 87 north and CR 19 to I-505 except for local deliveries. A recurring idea has been to create designated truck routes for trucks and buses using SR 16 to help reduce truck traffic in the center of Esparto.

The traffic traveling on Highway 16 has dramatically increased since the Cache Creek Casino Resort opened in Brooks. Average daily traffic on Highway 16 at County Road 21A in Esparto doubled from 5,100 vehicles in 1999 to 10,400 vehicles in 2004. The number of average daily trips has remained about the same since 2004 with 11,000 vehicles recorded for 2016. The Rumsey tribe has contributed mitigation monies to upgrade some portions of Highway 16 in the Capay Valley, including the realignment of the Route 16/County Road 85B intersection in the Esparto area.

Yolobus provides regular service from the Casino through Esparto to Woodland and beyond. Currently the bus makes hourly round trips from 5:30 to 9:30 am, 1:30 pm to 5:30 pm, and 9:30 pm to 12:30 am year round. The bus stop is in the Town Center at Yolo Avenue and South Grafton Street. There is not currently direct service to Winters.

An East Esparto Circulation Plan Update was completed in 2018 to look at potential impacts of the three yet pending subdivisions in combination with a proposed gas station at the corner of Yolo Avenue and CR 21A and increased use of the SR 16 due to the 459-room hotel expansion at the Cache Creek Casino. Additionally, Caltrans is currently engaged in another SR 16 Safety Improvement Project. The Caltrans project includes improving road shoulders, a roundabout in Madison, and traffic light at the south end of Yolo Avenue at the intersection with CR 21A. Further



pending improvements to Yolo Avenue by Caltrans include curb bulb-outs and ADA ramps, and additional lighting.

The 2018 Circulation Plan Update focuses on Level of Service (LOS) which is a measure of how easily automobile traffic flows through an area regardless of pedestrian or bicycle safety. LOS is graded from A- free flow or the highest level of traffic flow, to F- forced or the lowest level. The Yolo County General Plan allows LOS E for Yolo Avenue which is considered operating at capacity, common in heavily developed areas where lane changes and merging slow traffic flow. Although not required by the State of California, LOS has typically been the engineering standard used to measure circulation because it is relatively easy to engineer a solution for automobile traffic by building more infrastructure for automobiles. New State guidelines however, require circulation to be measured by Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT) in order to meet California's Greenhouse Gas reduction goals. VMT seeks to reduce automobile traffic by providing for alternative types of transportation and linking residential land uses more strongly with land uses which provide jobs and services.

The 2007 Esparto Plan set in place policies requiring off-street paths for active transport such as walking and bicycling. The more recent residential subdivision projects on the west side of town have included a paved path that circumnavigates the new developments as well as sidewalks along all the streets. Sidewalks were not provided in the original settlement and have only recently been required for new construction of residences in the older parts of town. A Safe Routes grant was received to provide sidewalks for north side of Plainfield Street and south side of Madison Street west of Yolo Avenue. Otherwise, sidewalks in town are provided in an unorganized, piecemeal fashion with individual infill projects and remodels.

### Desired Circulation Conditions

- *Improved safety on Yolo Avenue and SR 16*

Figure 9: Areas of Safety Concern



The community feels that the greatest transportation related issue is the speed and amount of traffic

on State Route 16/Yolo Avenue. As the main route to the Capay Valley, many different types of vehicles use SR 16 from valley residents to farm equipment, freight trucks, Cache Creek Casino tour buses and visitors looking for recreational activities in the valley or mountains beyond. There has long been discussion in Esparto of the possibility of a bypass to reroute highway traffic from the center of town. Given the likely further economic blow to the town however, Caltrans does not support this option. Some traffic does already avoid Yolo Avenue by traveling on CR 21A and 85B. With some improvements that route could be designated as a route for heavier bus and truck traffic.

The 2007 Esparto Plan update occurred concurrently with an Esparto Main Street Revitalization Plan which included several means to reduce traffic speed in the community. Phase one was completed by the County in 2010 and consisted of painted bulb-outs, back-in diagonal parking, and printed brick surfaces for pedestrian crossings. Subsequent phases were not completed, but Caltrans has incorporated similar concepts in their 2015 Collision Reduction Plan. The plan includes various street and pedestrian improvements such as curb and gutter construction with raised bulb-outs, ADA curb ramps, and additional street lights along Yolo Avenue mainly between Grafton and Plainfield Streets.

Despite these upcoming improvements, the community remains concerned about the speed of vehicles using SR 16 through town and the safety of pedestrians trying to cross the road. Three locations in particular are of concern: the intersection of SR 16 and CR 86A, south Yolo Avenue from CR 21A to Grafton, and North Yolo Avenue at the Woodland Avenue intersection (See Figure 8).

County Road 86A will eventually align with the entrance to the E Parker subdivision becoming a four-way intersection with residential development north of SR 16 and commercial including a grocery store, meat market, and produce stand on the south side. The designated industrial land would also be accessed from 86A and this intersection. Current Caltrans safety improvements will expand SR 16 road to add a turning lane; however, the community feels that this location warrants a traffic light and safe pedestrian crossing from the north to south side of SR 16 allowing pedestrians to safely visit these stores.

South Yolo Avenue has been slow to develop and not held much of a draw for pedestrians south of the bridge over Lamb Valley Slough. The location of the high school and elementary school on Plainfield Street make crossing Yolo Avenue at Plainfield and Madison Streets popular with students creating a hazard for them due to traffic on Yolo Avenue that has not slowed from highway speeds. The completion of the Park and Aquatic Center on the east side of Yolo Avenue south of the slough and a proposal for a gas station and convenience store across from it west of Yolo Avenue will only increase the number of students and pedestrians crossing Yolo Avenue and exposed to speeding traffic. Caltrans has funded a traffic light at the intersection of SR 16 and CR 21A, but it will keep the sweep turn for westbound SR 16 north onto Yolo Avenue which does little to slow or pulse traffic heading into a heavy pedestrian area. The community wishes the sweep lane removed requiring a full stop before traffic turns north onto Yolo Avenue. Better traffic calming and safer pedestrian crossing are also desired.

Similarly, the north end of Yolo Avenue is an unprotected turn with a high amount of pedestrian use from the apartment complex on the northeast corner of the intersection with Woodland and the downtown businesses. A traffic signal or roundabout have been discussed for this intersection and any solution needs better traffic calming and protections for pedestrians.

The County has had problems with installing improvements due to the fact that maintaining them requires a permit for Caltrans to do work in the state road right of way. This adds an unacceptable level of liability to improvements because the County cannot immediately repair hazards that occur. A possible solution is for Caltrans to release parts of its right of way through town so that the County is free to repair any improvements to these areas. Another possible solution is to have a standing encroachment permit for maintenance. Either solution will require better communication and cooperation with the State agency.

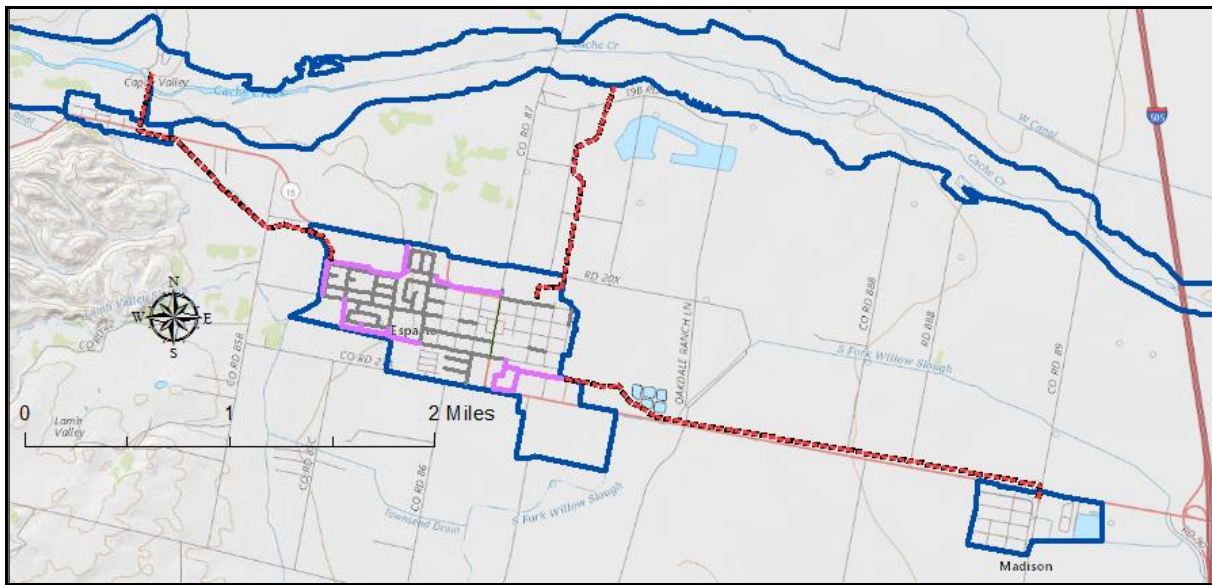
➤ ***Maintain the grid network of streets to distribute circulation within town***

The original town was laid out as a grid of blocks 400 feet long and 320 feet wide. This pattern was designed for walkability and prevents traffic chokepoints such as those resulting from the limited number of routes over Lamb Valley Slough. Currently, all traffic in town must use only two crossings: either Fremont Street or Yolo Avenue. With the floodplain east of town setting the edge of the Community Growth Boundary, the 2018 East Esparto Circulation Plan Update determined that there is no longer a need for expansion of the grid in that direction or provision of another car crossing over the Lamb Valley Slough at Alpha Street or farther east though a pedestrian crossing may be appropriate. Development to the west however, may require another vehicular crossing in addition to pedestrian crossings.

Based on the original town grid which ended at Omega Street, no plan was made for extension of the grid and the Countrywest subdivision platted as a spiraling cul-de-sac in 1989 blocked any further expansion of the grid west of Omega Street. Although east-west vehicle traffic in town is limited to Grafton Street, there is still potential for pedestrian and bicycle paths including the planned connection between Duncan Drive and Bruno Street to bridge the gap above Woodland. Another potential east-west path connection is along Lamb Valley Slough.

➤ **Improve Active Transportation and Public Transit through town and regionally**

**Figure 10: Walking and Bicycling paths**



There is a desire on the part of the community for better bicycle and walking paths in and around the town for recreation, trips to school, and errands in the downtown. Off of State Route 16, the low traffic volumes and slower speeds in town make walking and bike riding relatively comfortable. However, walking and bike riding are less pleasant on State Route 16 and county roads where traffic is faster. Enhancement of the pedestrian and bicycle network in and around the town is needed. The recently constructed subdivisions have provided pedestrian and bicycle paths and proposed projects will also be required complete a link of trails around the community, according to the plan illustrated in Figure 10. East to west connectivity through town needs to be improved as well. Currently, Grafton Street is the only road that complete transects the town from Alpha Street past Omega Street and through the more recent western development to County Road 85B. Only one block of Grafton Street east of Omega Street has sidewalk.

As mentioned above, all streets west of Omega Street have sidewalks including a sidewalk along the west side of Omega Street and there is an off-street path that circumnavigates the outside of these

developments. The stretch north of Duncan Drive is planned to connect with the sidewalk along Bruno Street; however, further progress east ends in cul-de-sac or jogging south to Woodland Avenue which has no sidewalk and joins SR 16.

A potential off-street path along Lamb Valley Slough has also been identified. An off-street path already runs along the southern boundary of the retention area south of Clover Street near the slough as well as between the elementary school and the slough. Currently, the path near the school is gated off, but if open to the public, the path would exit onto Plainfield Street which has a sidewalk along the north side all the way to Yolo Avenue. On the east side of Yolo Avenue, a pedestrian crossing over Lamb Valley Slough is planned between the High School and the new Park and Aquatic Center. A path is also planned to continue east to the edge of the community.

The Community also expressed a desire for pathways to communities and parks outside Esparto including a bike route for students from Madison attending school in Esparto and recreational trails leading to Capay and the Capay Open Space Park as well as north along CR 87 to Cache Creek. Possible routes are shown above (Figure 10).

## 7. RESILIENCE AND SERVICES

### Existing Conditions

Resilience is the capacity to recover quickly from adverse conditions, to withstand and recover from crises with minimal hardship. It is a hopeful and practical response to multiple emerging challenges including environmental concerns such as climate change and biodiversity loss, and social and economic issues such as the Great Recession. The Yolo County Hazard Mitigation Plan identifies four priority hazards for the County that are likely or highly likely to occur with critical to catastrophic consequences. These include Severe Weather and Flood hazards as Catastrophic priority hazards and Drought and Wildfire as Critical priorities.

**TABLE 5: HAZARDS**

<b>Unincorporated Yolo County— Hazard Profiles Hazard</b>	<b>Probability of Occurrence</b>	<b>Geographic Extent &amp; Potential Magnitude</b>	<b>Priority Hazard</b>
Severe Weather	Highly Likely	Catastrophic	Yes
Flood	Likely	Catastrophic	Yes
Drought	Likely	Critical	Yes
Wildfire	Highly Likely	Critical	Yes
Earthquake	Occasional	Critical	Yes
Dam Failure	Unlikely	Critical	No
Volcanic Activity	Unlikely	Critical	No

Climate and weather related risks are of the greatest concern. California’s climate has long featured wide swings between drought and flood, but recent years have seen an increase in the frequency of extreme wet and dry weather events with unusually rapid transitions between the two extremes. This “Climate Whiplash” will test the County’s water storage, distribution, and flood protection infrastructure.

Esparto is within the jurisdiction of the Yolo County Flood Control and Water Conservation District. The district has authority to plan, develop, and manage water resources, including the construction, operation and maintenance of irrigation, drainage, and flood control facilities and related hydroelectric plants.

The total water supply currently available to the district includes surface water from the Clear Lake/Indian Valley/Cache Creek system as well as from groundwater. The availability of water for delivery has varied greatly over the last decade due to extreme variability in rainfall, but typically the

district has the capability of delivering surface water supplies of over 200,000 acre-feet per year. Very little water is wasted during the irrigation season. Most of the drainage water that runs off irrigated fields is returned to the conveyance system and reused by farmers further downstream. In cooperation with the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation, an irrigation management service is available to help growers schedule their irrigations. Groundwater use has remained sustainable.

Areas subject to flooding are shown on Figure 2. Flooding in Esparto has occurred in two forms: excessive ponding following heavy rainfall in poorly drained areas and breaching of levees along the Lamb Valley Slough. During periods of extensive rainfall, the flat topography of the area can create localized ponding, especially between Madison and Esparto on State Route 16 and in the east area of town. Lamb Valley Slough drains the area located to the west of Esparto and takes water collected at the Winters Canal through to the east side of town. The design of the slough and lack of regular maintenance has combined to restrict the flow of storm water causing the channel to overflow in severe storms.

A related concern is potential failure of the Indian Valley Dam upriver on Cache Creek. Although unlikely, Cache Creek is located less than one mile to the north and the area of inundation resulting from a failure of the Indian Valley Dam would come close to the north side of town.

Esparto is just outside of the Moderate Wildfire Severity Area which begins at CR 85B and runs west through the Capay Valley and up the Capay Hills to the more severe wildfire hazard areas along the County's western border. Although wildfire may be a highly likely occurrence west of the town and impacts may be felt due to evacuations and firefighting efforts in the Capay Valley, the town itself lies in area designated Non-Wildland/Non-Urban and considered less at risk.

The final two environmental hazards considered are earthquakes and volcanic activity. Although there are no recorded fault zones in Esparto itself, there are several in the vicinity. A moderate earthquake from one of the faults in the Capay Valley could result in damage to structures made of inflexible materials, such as masonry and plaster. The closest volcanic hazard is the Mt. Konociti/Clear Lake area which is considered a dormant site.

#### Water and Sanitation

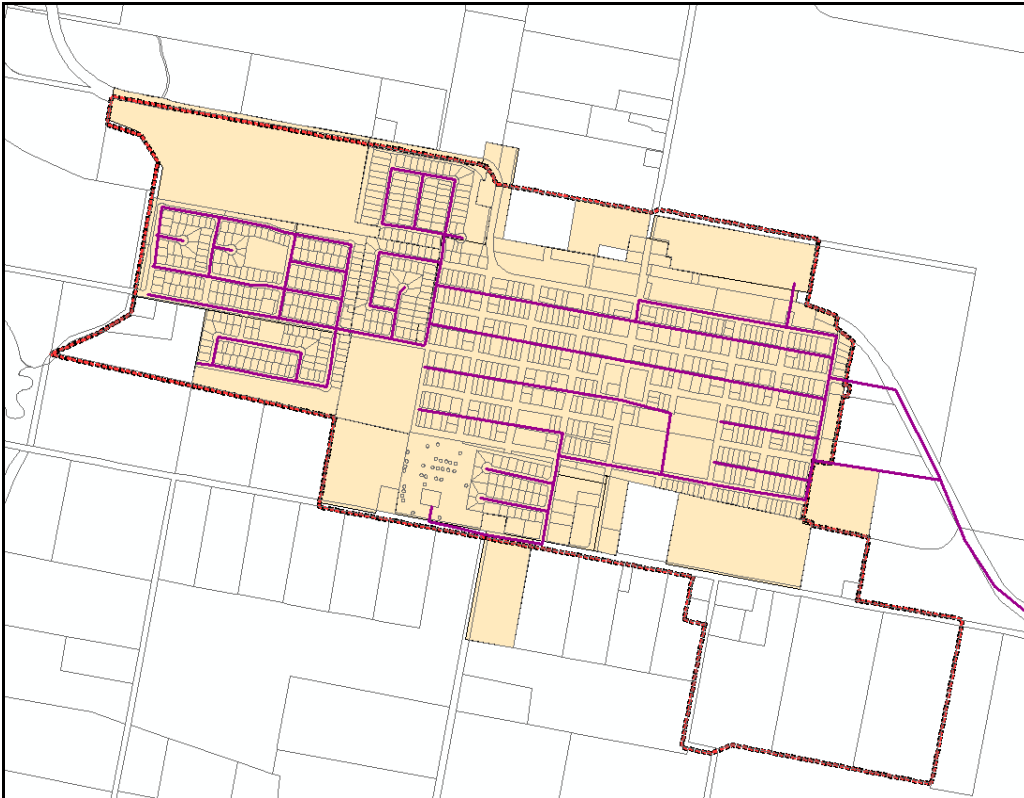
The Esparto Community Services District provides water wells and distribution lines, sewer lines and wastewater treatment for Esparto. The existing water supply for the Esparto Community Service District (ECSD) is from groundwater wells located throughout the community. ECSD currently has four operational wells: 1, 5, 6 and 7. Well 1 is the primary supply for the town with the other wells supplementing during peak demand periods. Well 6 was brought online with the Mercy Housing Project. Well 7 was dug in anticipation of the new subdivision pending on the east side of town. Another well is anticipated for pending development on the west side of town. There is a 500,000 gallon ground-level storage tank at Well #5 with booster pumps and a hydro pneumatic tank and generator. ECSD currently provides water to 950 households and has the capacity to double that to over 1,900 households. Groundwater levels have remained steady according to the Yolo County Flood Control and Water Conservation District.

The Yolo County Health Department and the State Department of Water Resources (DWR) are responsible for monitoring the water quality in Esparto. The County Health Department tests for the coliform bacteria levels in the water supply, while DWR checks for infiltration of dangerous chemicals. Water quality in the Esparto area is considered good; although total dissolved solids are somewhat above recommended levels. No special water treatment is required at this time.

The original wastewater collection, conveyance, and treatment system within ECSD consists of 6-inch, 8-inch, and 10-inch sewer lines constructed in the late 1960s to convey flow to the treatment plant east of town. Beginning in 2002, 8-inch and 10-inch lines were extended from existing lines to serve new development on the west and north sides of the community. The 10-inch line ties into the 12-inch Alpha Street line along the east side of town and extends west along Woodland Avenue to the intersection of Omega Street (Figure 11).

The wastewater treatment facilities consist of ten facultative ponds located east of Esparto at the Esparto Wastewater Treatment Plant (WWTP). The plant has been upgraded over the past decade to handle all current and pending development. The original 17.7 acres system of facultative ponds for treatment with disposal by percolation and evaporation has had aeration systems added and four new ponds totaling approximately 25 acres have been constructed in anticipation of build out of the approved subdivisions.

**Figure 11: ECSD Service Area and Sewer Lines**



## **Desired Resilience Conditions**

### **➤ *Mitigate flood risks from Lamb Valley Slough***

The community has long been concerned with the flood risk from Lamb Valley Slough which accommodates runoff from lands west of Esparto as well as most of the stormwater runoff from the town. The channeled slough formed the southern boundary of the original platted town, but in recent decades, the town has crossed it and grown south to CR 21A. Although the original town map from 1888 lists the width of the Lamb Valley Creek Canal as 40 to 60 feet with a depth of 16 feet, modern maps only give the feature a 42-foot easement for the channel with no required setback.

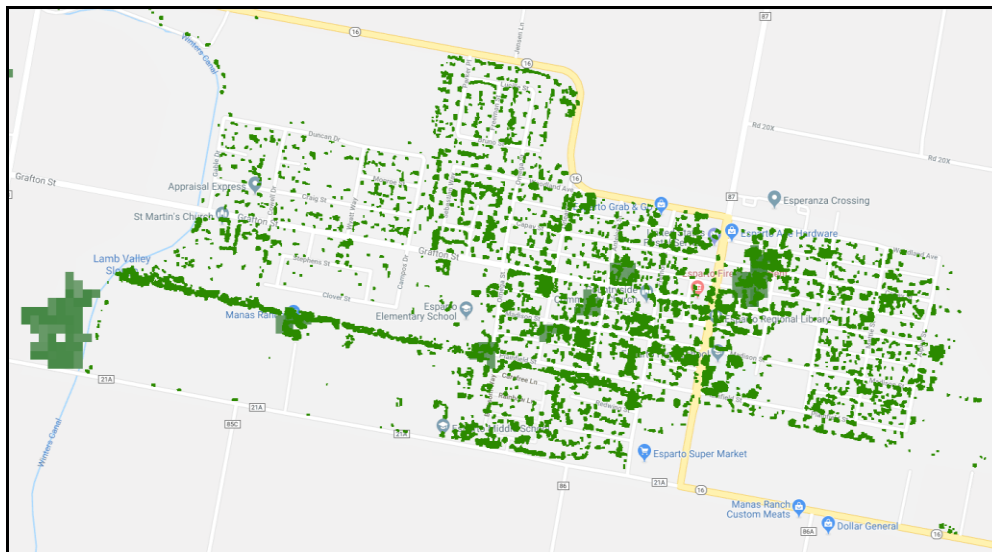
Newer subdivisions have been required to provide large stormwater retention areas so that they do not further contribute runoff to Lamb Valley Slough; however, maintenance and the lack of capacity in the slough continue to be a major concern. The previous plan update calls for the County to develop standards for maintenance easements along Lamb Valley Slough, but no standards have been set. Recently approved subdivision maps have shown a 50-foot improved channel for the slough and 25-foot maintenance easements on either side of the channel. Setting these requirements as the standard would use the historical average channel width and also meet the needs of the Yolo County Flood Control and Water Conservation District for access and maintenance.

The biggest flood risk along Lamb Valley Slough is the section of Plainfield Street west of Yolo Avenue around the Fremont Street and Yolo Avenue bridges. This stretch of the slough in particular suffers from close encroachment of structures on adjacent properties and bridges that were not constructed up to standards. The south side of the slough which has a nearby Caltrans garage has been reinforced so that it does not flood. The north side, however, has a series of extremely narrow commercially-zoned lots that run parallel to the slough and range from approximately 20 to 70 feet in width. One is developed with a communications tower and covered with old equipment. There is also a residence and a large garage structure built on the edge of the slough. A 1996 letter from the Caltrans District Director and a 2000 letter from a consultant both state that the current Fremont Street and Yolo Avenue bridges fail to meet 100-year flow conditions for the slough. These two factors create a bottleneck in the slough and in the past accumulated debris under the bridges have blocked the slough's flow and led to flooding in the area. Further intense development on the small commercial lots would exacerbate the risk of flooding and commercial zoning is inappropriate. The parcels should be rezoned to Open Space and the two lots between the bridges should be publicly acquired to prevent future risk to property and to better protect the slough. Open Space zoning would still accommodate the existing communications tower and potential small solar system which the owner of the two westernmost lots desires.

Lamb Valley Slough joins other drainages just east of town forming a floodplain that runs from CR 20X to CR 86A and draining away down SR 16 (Figure 2). As discussed in the Land Use section, removing areas of development from the floodplain by reducing the Community Growth Boundary on the east side will avoid future flooding issues for that area. Furthermore, preventing future development to the north and east will protect the town from the risk of failure of the Indian Valley Dam upriver on Cache Creek. Cache Creek is located less than one mile to the north and the area of inundation resulting from a failure of the Indian Valley Dam would come close to the north side of town.

- ***Use green infrastructure to aid in stormwater retention and urban cooling***

**Figure 12: Tree Canopy Cover**



Another way to reduce the risk of flooding along Lamb Valley Slough and increase community resiliency is to make use of green infrastructure systems which incorporate biological functions into streets and drainage systems to increase stormwater infiltration, evaporation, and retention to decrease runoff by capturing it closer to the source. Additional benefits include improving water quality and through plantings of trees and vegetation, increased carbon sequestration, air quality

improvement, stress relief, and urban cooling. Techniques for incorporating green infrastructure include intercepting stormwater runoff in streetside planters, permeable surfaces, and increased tree canopy cover.

As can be seen in the above image of tree canopy cover, the original town plat between Alpha and Omega Streets has a high level of tree cover compared to the more recent development west of Omega Street (Figure 12). Although it would be expected that trees planted in the last twenty years or so with the newer development would not be as mature or large as older trees in town, the number of trees appears less than the older parts of town. The more recent subdivisions were required to plant one tree per lot, but the resulting view is unshaded concrete accented by turf and garages with a sparse colonnade of trees along the street. Increasing the number of trees would soften the view as well as increase cooling and stormwater retention. In the older parts of town, the only large treeless areas are the schools and athletic fields. Each of the new subdivisions has a large areas for stormwater retention which is now a barren expanse of grass and weeds. Incorporation of green infrastructure improvements could enhancement these retention basins to increase the resiliency and quality of the environment in Esparto.

➤ ***Ensure that all structures are safe in the event of an earthquake.***

Some of the older buildings in town are made of masonry and other materials that may not be able to withstand a sizeable earthquake. The historic buildings on Yolo Avenue would be at risk for seismic damage. In the last decade, the New Season Community Development Corporation has worked on renovating the structures. To date, seismic upgrades to the Lindberg Building have been completed. The Adams Building needs further work.

➤ ***Maintain local educational, emergency, and healthcare services***

The Esparto Unified School District (EUSD) serves approximately 1,000 students within its 550 square mile jurisdiction with an elementary, middle school and high school located in Esparto. A continuation school is located in Madison. The district houses the district office at the high school and also rents a bus yard facility in Esparto. Enrollment has been fairly steady over the last 20 years.

EUSD has identified a capacity of 525 students for the elementary school and 270 students for the high school. The middle school for grades 6-8 is identified as having no capacity because the portable buildings used for classrooms are considered near or at the end of their useful lives. Additionally, the district has expressed some concern at the deteriorating condition of the elementary school. With the schools near capacity, continued buildout of the three approved subdivisions in Esparto would add a significant number of new students requiring an expansion of the existing schools.

Emergency response includes fire, police and ambulance services. The Yolo County Sheriff's Department serves all of unincorporated Yolo County, including the town of Esparto. The Department is headquartered in Woodland, but has satellite offices throughout the County. The nearest office to Esparto is located in Woodland, approximately 14 miles east. Services offered to the community include routine patrols, crime investigations, narcotics, youth services, family violence services, animal services, and training sessions.

There are currently two sheriff's deputies who routinely patrol the Esparto area. They work eight hours per day, five days per week. Local sheriff's deputies are first responders to traffic accidents. However, California Highway Patrol (CHP) is the main enforcer of traffic in the area. CHP has one officer on "day watch" and two or three officers on "swing shift" in Esparto and the surrounding areas seven days a week. One or two officers work the "grave yard shift"; however that shift serves the entire county. Currently, CHP has a contract with Yolo County for increased patrols, funded by Cache Creek Casino, that adds one or two additional CHP officers in the area typically during peak traffic hours or when the casino hosts special events.

The Esparto Fire Protection District serves an approximately 74 square mile service area in Yolo



County, providing fire suppression and emergency medical services to the town and surrounding rural area. As of 2017, the existing service population within the district included an estimated 1,143 housing units, 2,874 residents, and business enterprises employing approximately 909 persons. The Fire District staffing includes a full-time paid Firefighter, a part time clerk, and a contingent of 14 volunteer firefighters. The Firefighter works a 40-hour schedule during normal work hours, and is on-call the remainder of the week. The District fire station is located at 16960 Yolo Avenue in the center of Esparto. Equipment at the Esparto Fire Station includes: 3 engines (Type I, II/III, and III), a rescue squad, water tender, and 2 pick-up trucks (command and utility). The District owns the Esparto Fire Station Property and does not anticipate growth in the next decade that would require an additional station; however, the current property is aging and in need of renovation. An increase of service population may also require full-time firefighters who would need living and sleeping quarters which do not currently exist at the station.

The District provides emergency medical technician (EMT) services but not paramedic services. An ambulance is parked in town to provide emergency transportation to a regional hospital. The nearest hospital is Woodland Memorial Hospital in Woodland, approximately 14 miles from Esparto and UC Davis Medical Center in Sacramento is the closest major trauma center. The Town of Esparto has limited medical and other health care services. Health services are generally sought in Woodland or Davis for any complicated or extensive medical treatment. Esparto does have one local clinic, the Esparto Family Practice Center, which is run by the Agricultural Workers Health Center, a non-profit corporation. The clinic primarily serves farmworkers. There is one dental office in Esparto, open part time.

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