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MEMORANDUM

DATE November 2, 2010
TO Vacaville Steering Committee
FROM City Staff and DC&E
RE **Urban Growth Boundary, Urban Service Area Boundary, and
Agricultural Buffer**

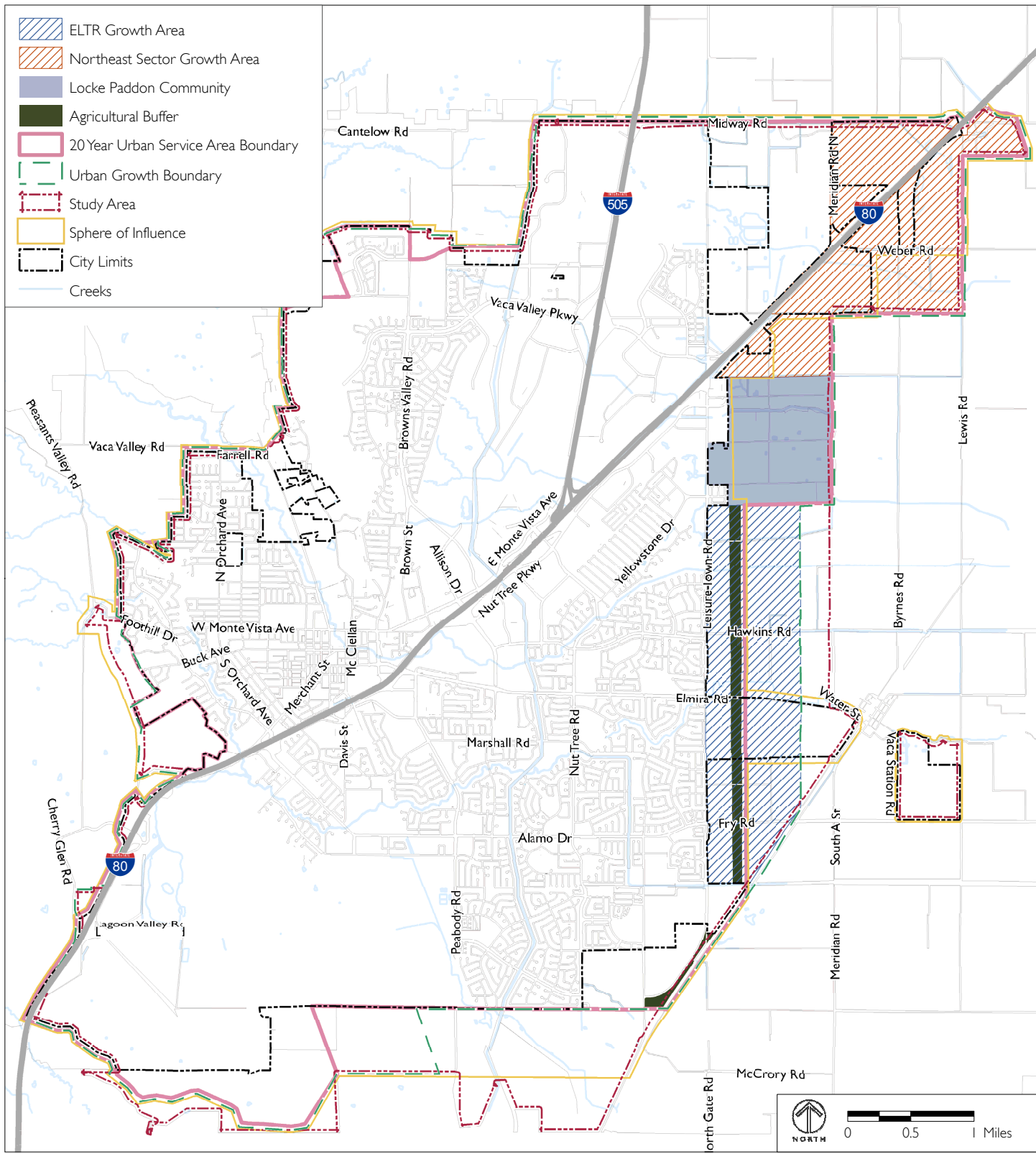
This memorandum provides background information about the Urban Growth Boundary, Urban Service Area Boundary, and Agricultural Buffer. This information is related to the discussion items for the upcoming Steering Committee meeting on November 8, 2010 to develop land use alternatives for the East of Leisure Town Road and Northeast Sector Growth Areas. As indicated below, the Urban Growth Boundary set forth the potential for future development in these areas. However, the Urban Service Area Boundary and Agricultural Buffer, which are both related to the City's Master Water Agreement with the Solano Irrigation District, will need to be amended in order for future development within these growth areas to occur.

A. Urban Growth Boundary

In 2008, the City adopted a 20-year Urban Growth Boundary (UGB). The UGB was adopted by the City Council as a result of a voter signature gathering process. As a result, the UGB was incorporated within the General Plan Land Use Element. The location of the UGB and UGB polices can only be amended by the voters of Vacaville, or by the City Council pursuant to the procedures set forth under Section 2.10-14 of the Land Use Element. Land outside the UGB cannot be designated for anything other than agriculture, park, open space, public facility, and utility uses until March 1, 2028, specifically as set forth in the General Plan Implementing Policies 2.10-1 through 2.10-4.

1. Growth Areas

Adoption of the UGB resulted in two new growth areas, the East of Leisure Town Road (ELTR) Growth Area and the Northeast Sector Growth Area as shown on Figure 1. Each of these areas is partially located outside of the existing General Plan coverage area and the City's Sphere of Influence. As part of the General Plan Update, General Plan land use designations will be assigned to these new growth areas, and subsequently, the City will seek to amend its Sphere of Influence to permit development within these areas.



Source: City of Vacaville.

FIGURE I
UGB, URBAN SERVICE AREA BOUNDARY, AND AGRICULTURAL BUFFER

As part of the General Plan Update, the two new growth areas will be analyzed in terms of land use alternatives, required infrastructure, and environmental constraints. In addition, the General Plan Update will include new policies to help guide future development in these areas.

2. Urban Service Area Boundary

The Urban Service Area Boundary, shown on Figure 1, is a result of the 1995 Master Water Agreement between the City and the Solano Irrigation District (SID). As part of the Master Water Agreement, the City and SID commit to accommodate and support urban development within the Urban Service Area Boundary. Conversely, both entities commit not to support urban development outside of the boundary, within an agricultural service area. The term of the Master Water Agreement is to the year 2050.

As shown on Figure 1, portions of the UGB extend beyond the City's existing Urban Service Area Boundary. Because parts of the UGB are not coterminous with the Urban Service Area Boundary, the City will collaborate with SID to amend the 1995 Master Water Agreement as part of the General Plan Update. The amendment of the Urban Service Area Boundary will be made after a comprehensive land use study of the new growth areas.

B. Agricultural Buffer

The General Plan establishes policies to provide for a permanent, 500-foot wide buffer between agricultural lands and urban uses. This buffer protects viable agricultural operations from the intrusion of urban uses by acting as a separator. The intent is to provide a safe distance between urban uses and agricultural fields, which are subject to chemical spraying and the discing of soils. Permitted uses within the agricultural buffer include: public or private recreational facilities, storm-detention ponds, tree farms, wholesale nurseries, and other specified uses in an approved policy plan.

As mandated by the current agreement with SID, any consideration involving the expansion of the Urban Service Area Boundary shall include the potential expansion of the width of the existing 500-foot wide agricultural buffer designated on the General Plan Land Use Diagram, and as shown on Figure 1. The buffer is currently located east of Leisure Town Road, south of the Locke Paddon subdivision, north of the Union Pacific Railroad tracks.

Where urban land uses abut grazing land, buffers are evaluated on a case-by-case basis. The floor area ration (FAR) is generally 0.01, and can only be increased in specific instances where the City Council finds that a higher ratio will not substantially reduce the open space utility of the buffer zone. Only non-occupied structures meeting one of the following criteria are permitted within a buffer abutting grazing land:

- ◆ Structure that are necessary to the maintenance of agricultural operations (e.g. pump stations).
- ◆ Structures that form a portion of a landscaped separator (e.g. a sound/visual wall).

- ◆ Structures that serve a public recreation use (e.g. parks).
- ◆ Structures that are adjunct to a public health and safety use of the buffer zone (e.g. floodwater detention facilities).

In addition to determining the final location and width of the agricultural buffer east of Leisure Town Road, the City and SID will need to discuss whether an additional agricultural buffer will be required around the Northeast Sector growth area. The current General Plan designates large sections of "Agriculture" in this growth area. If developed, an agricultural buffer may be deemed necessary to act as a separator between urban and agricultural uses.