

CITY OF FAIRFIELD

**2019
ANNUAL REPORT
ON THE
GENERAL PLAN**

JANUARY 1, 2019 THROUGH DECEMBER 31, 2019

INTRODUCTION AND PURPOSE OF THE ANNUAL REPORT

An Annual Report is required for all General Plans by California Government Code Section 65400(b), which states, “the planning agency shall provide an annual report to the legislative body on the status of the plan and progress in its implementation, including the progress in meeting its share of regional housing needs...”

The General Plan represents Fairfield’s future vision of the City in the year 2020. The Plan identifies the general location for future land uses, including residential, commercial, and industrial areas, and desired population and building densities throughout the community. The Plan states future goals for community-wide recreational amenities, housing, transportation, and safety, and contains important policies guiding open space and conservation, economic development, and urban design.

This Report describes the City’s progress in implementing the policies and programs of the General Plan as set forth in the General Plan Implementation Program, including the City’s progress on providing its share of the regional housing needs. The Report is divided into topic areas based on the City’s General Plan Elements. This is the 16th Annual Report prepared by the Community Development Department since the 2002 General Plan Update.

Note that this Annual Report has been prepared and reviewed in 2020. The year 2020 is the horizon year for the current General Plan. The City anticipates preparation of a new General Plan will be initiated during the next 18 months to develop a comprehensive vision for the challenging time ahead.

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The Annual Report is also available on the City of Fairfield Homepage at www.fairfield.ca.gov under Community Development Department.

Development in 2019

Residential development during 2019 continued at a moderate pace. Key projects under review, approved or under construction during 2019 included:

RESIDENTIAL:

- One Lake (Canon Station)
- Estaire (Time Extension)
- Gardenstone
- Goldridge North
- Green Valley Residential
- Ivy Crossing (Formerly Strawberry-Ivy)
- Paradise Valley Estates
- Villages at Fairfield
- Monte Verde
- 1720 West Texas Mixed Use
- Great Jones Street Townhouses
- Union Avenue Tower (Conceptual)

COMMERCIAL, INDUSTRIAL AND OFFICE:

- Shoppes at Solano Town Center (North Bay Urgent Care)
- Nippon Industries Expansion
- Solano Business Center
- Buzz Oates North Watney Warehouse
- Gateway Building “C”
- Green Valley Industrial “B” and “C”
- Storage Pro
- Toyota Expansion and Remodel
- Cordelia Industrial

Land Use Element

Zoning Ordinance Cleanup. Staff continues to update the Zoning Ordinance and Zoning Map to correct and clarify language, ensure the Ordinance remains consistent with state law, and to codify any new policies. In 2019, major amendments included rezoning 1700 Santa Monica Street to facilitate an affordable housing development, rezoning a site on North Texas Street to permit implementation of the Linear Park master plan, tightening regulations governing ministorage and auto storage land uses, and clarifying land use definitions.

Train Station Specific Plan. The City Council adopted the Train Station Specific Plan in July 2011. The Specific Plan envisions parks, schools, open space, residential,

commercial, industrial, and office land uses arranged in neighborhoods, including a “transit village” near the Train Station. During 2019, grading began for the major One Lake community. The City also initiated discussions with developers interested in affordable apartment communities near the train station.

Heart of Fairfield Specific Plan. In 2017, the City Council adopted the Heart of Fairfield Plan and Zoning Ordinance for Downtown Fairfield, which included both the traditional downtown and the West Texas Street corridor. Specific activities that were initiated or underway during 2019 included:

- Two residential/mixed use projects approved, with a third undergoing formal Conceptual Review
- Heart of Fairfield Gateways and Branding Program
- Marketing of City-owned properties in the Planning Area
- Downtown Development Incentives Program
- Allan Witt Park Master Plan
- West Texas Street Complete Street and Infrastructure Study
- Downtown Parking Study
- Downtown Banners and Lighting Program
- Fairview and Sheldon Elementary School Campus Improvements

The City also submitted to the State of California an application for planning funding to expand and amend the Heart of Fairfield Plan to facilitate housing in central Fairfield.

Housing Element

New Construction. Active housing construction continued during 2019. Development was particularly active in northeastern Fairfield, with several merchant builders offering homes in The Villages at Fairfield and the final stages of Goldridge on Peabody Road. As noted above, initial grading for the first phases of One Lake began. In December, the Planning Commission also approved a new apartment community in Green Valley.

The City issued 365 building permits for new single-family homes in 2018, including three (3) accessory dwelling units, the latter of which are reported as moderate-income units on Table 1 on the next page. Table 1 summarizes the City’s progress in meeting Regional Housing Need Allocations (RHNA) assigned by the California Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD) and the Association of Bay Area Governments. RHNA numbers do not represent a requirement to build affordable housing if resources to support construction are not available and market conditions limit the ability of the City or private entities to build lower cost housing. As in 2017 and 2018, the loss of redevelopment continues to impact the City’s ability to directly support new affordable construction. Nonetheless, Fairfield and Solano County remain by far the most affordable housing markets in the nine-county Bay Area, and as such continues to attract commuters

and new residents. In addition, the City is seeing new interest in affordable and workforce housing. The City is currently reviewing formal applications by EAH Housing and Mid-Peninsula Housing for over 130 affordable apartments in central Fairfield. In addition, the City is currently in informal discussions with several potential developers and property owners to develop affordable projects in northeastern Fairfield near the Train Station.

As in past years, the numbers reported in Table 1 are new construction. City housing policies continue to emphasize preserving housing affordability through rehabilitation loans, first-time homebuyer programs, and mortgage credit certificates. These programs have enabled lower-income households to purchase homes in market priced residential neighborhoods. In addition, short sales and foreclosure sales continued to provide opportunities for lower and moderate-income households with credit and down payments.

Table 1
Regional Housing Need
January 1, 2014 - December 31, 2022
New Construction through December 2019

		Income Level				
Year	Extremely Low	Very Low	Low	Moderate	Above Moderate	Total
Projected Need 2014-2022	389	390	404	456	1,461	3,100
Units Built 2014-2018	0	0	2	363	1,834	2,199

Remaining Need	389	390	402	93	0	1,274
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Sources "Projected Need" is the Regional Housing Need Allocation assigned through Association of Bay Area Governments and Solano County Subregional Group. New construction data provided by City of Fairfield Building Division. Note that remaining need is the sum total of the remaining need under each income level column. The City has in fact built more than the allocated number of units in the "Above Moderate Income" category.

HUD Housing Choice Voucher Program (HCV). The HCV program provides subsidized rental assistance to extremely-low- and low-income families. Since the assistance is provided on behalf of the participant, they can locate their own housing, promoting housing choice. In 2018, the Fairfield Housing Authority (FHA) administered 882 Housing Choice Vouchers (HCV). All units are inspected prior to move in and at least annually to ensure the unit is safe, decent, and sanitary. Fairfield resident families that have "ported in" from other jurisdictions were absorbed into the program. FHA currently administers

five (5) Project-Based VASH vouchers from the Department of Veterans Affairs to assist homeless veterans and families. All vouchers are being used.

Housing Rehabilitation Assistance. Housing Rehabilitation Program loans and grants are targeted to low-income (single-family) and low- and very low-income (multi-family) households. In 2019, the program was dormant while the City reorganized and restaffed the division responsible. A new staff specialist will help reinvigorate the program.

However, the City organized a 2019 Senior Home Assistance Repair Event on Saturday, October 12. The City partnered with sponsors, including Lowes, Home Depot, Target, Republic Services, Bethel Community Church, and others to put on the event. Volunteers completed repairs to homes occupied by seniors and a total of seventeen (17) households were assisted.

Mortgage Credit Certificates and Down Payment Assistance. The City did not offer these programs in 2019.

HOME Tenant Based Rental Assistance (TBRA) Program. In 2018, FHA began administering the Tenant Based Rental Assistance (TBRA) program. This program is designed to assist households to help them afford housing costs of market rate units. Assistance can include housing, security, or utility deposits. The level of subsidy will vary based upon the income of the household and need. The City was able to assist eighteen (18) low income households. This program targets low income households and assists with rent and security and utility deposits.

Housing Successor Agency. As required by state law (Senate Bill 341), the Fairfield Housing Successor Agency prepared an Annual Report (dated December 17, 2019), which was presented to the City Council.

Sunset Creek Rehabilitation and Extension of Covenants.

In 2017, the City entered into an agreement with Mid-Peninsula Housing (MPH) to help fund rehabilitation of their existing Sunset Creek apartment community. As part of the rehabilitation funding, MPH reduced rents for eight (8) units to be affordable to extremely low-income households (30% AMI). This project also included extension of the affordability covenants for 55 years for these eight (8) units as well as thirty-eight (38) units targeting 60% AMI. Four (4) of the eight (8) extremely low-income units will be allocated to “supportive housing” that will include wrap-around services.

Verdant Financing. The new owners of the Verdant luxury apartment project in Cordelia used California Community Housing Financing Agency (CalCHFA) funding to finance the acquisition of the project. As a result, this 268-unit project is now 100% affordable for moderate income households (1/3 of the households will meet the 80% low-income threshold). While not new construction, the Verdant financing and associated regulatory

agreement implements a commitment to long-term affordability by the City, the State, and the property owners.

Open Space, Conservation, and Recreation Element

Rockville Hills Regional Park. The City continues to implement the priorities identified by the City Council in 2007, focusing on maintenance and fire hazard reduction. City activities included limiting access during critical fire days, basic maintenance, and minor trail improvements.

City Park Lighting Project – Phase 4. Construction was completed in the first quarter of 2019.

City Park Lighting Project – Phase 5. Lee Bell Park Project received bids on October 8, 2019, and a contract was awarded by City Council on December 2, 2019. Construction will commence in the first quarter of 2020 and is expected to be completed by the third quarter of 2020. The project includes installation of City standard pathway and parking lot lighting and associated infrastructure.

City Park Lighting Project – Phase 6. The Police Department would like Mankas Neighborhood Park to receive the City standard park lighting package. Design will be completed in Fiscal Year 20/21 with construction occurring in the following fiscal year.

Tabor Park Fire Rebuild. The project was completed and accepted by City Council in the summer of 2019.

Allan Witt Sports Center Fire Rebuild. The Park and Recreation Department took this opportunity to consider repurposing some of the fire damaged space that was no longer being used as designed. Plans were approved by the Building Division in the third quarter of 2019. The project will be bid in the first quarter of 2020, but construction will not commence until after the gymnasium (undamaged by the fire) finishes hosting the 2020 summer camp season. The reconstruction of the fire damaged areas and the construction of two new gender-neutral restroom should be completed by the second quarter of 2021.

Community Spaces Initiative

- **Allan Witt Community Park.** CEQA documents were completed and a NOD filed with the County in 2019. A State of California Competitive grant application (Proposition 68) requesting \$8.4M was submitted in August 2019. The grant monies are intended to be used to construct Phase 4 of the 8 phased Renovation Project. City funds are being used to construct phases 1-3. Phase 1 & 2 will be constructed concurrently starting this summer. This work includes improvements to the Skate Park, development of dog parks and realignment of the park's entry road for improved visibility.

- **Linear Park Trail (N. Texas at East Tabor Avenue).** CEQA and NEPA documents were completed and amended, and both NOD's were filed in 2019. Amended environmental documents were required when City Council asked staff to expand the size of the Recreation Facility to make room for additional flexible community program space. Another State of California Competitive grant application (Proposition 68) requesting \$8.5M was submitted in August 2019. The requested funds would be used to increase the building footprint from 5,000 SF to 14,400 SF. Schematic Design for both the 5,000 SF and 14,400 SF concepts have been completed. Project development of the construction documents is pending notification from the State on grant award funding. A funding announcement is expected in the first quarter of 2020.

City Park Playgrounds. No-cost interactive software was installed at all city playgrounds in 2019.

Center for the Creative Arts. The 20,000 SF of roofing membrane and exterior heating ventilation air condition ducts are in need of replacement. Four project bids were received on November 13, 2019. Council awarded the project during the second meeting in December 2019. The project is expected to commence in the later part of the first quarter of 2020 and finish in the later part of the second quarter of 2020.

Solano Open Space (Tri City and County Cooperative Planning Group). In 2019, the City continued to fund Solano Open Space and provide staff assistance to the project. The Planning Group continued to provide support for Solano Land Trust activities, including public outreach and capital improvements.

Pacific Flyway Center. The Pacific Flyway Center, a natural preserve which will include an interpretative nature center, marsh features, and educational facilities dedicated to celebrating the Pacific Flyway migratory waterfowl pathway, received unanimous approval of project entitlements from both the Planning Commission and City Council in the fall of 2018. The processes to obtain necessary permits from identified Responsible (environmental) Agencies as required by CEQA continued in 2019.

Circulation Element

Transit Programs. Planning for the West Texas Street Gateway continued in 2019, which will include enhanced pedestrian access to the Fairfield Transportation Center from West Texas Street, a new bus access drives to the transportation center, and a reconfigured off-ramp onto West Texas Street. As an interim measure, the City opened a new park and ride facility on Oliver Road to serve vanpools and casual carpool users.

Jepson Parkway. Jepson Parkway will link Suisun City, Fairfield, and Vacaville and provide an alternative route for Interstate 80. During 2019, work continued on Vanden Road between Peabody Road in Fairfield and Leisure Town Road in Vacaville.

West Texas Street. The City Council adopted the Heart of Fairfield Plan in May 2017, which promotes a vision for a comprehensive transformation of West Texas Street into a mixed use urban boulevard over time. Concepts include pedestrian and bicycle improvements as well as significant changes in land use along the corridor. A comprehensive study of the Complete Streets program was initiated in 2018 with Coastland Engineering serving as project manager for the City. This study continued during 2019.

Public Facilities and Services Element

Urban Water Management Plan. The City has refocused efforts to reflect California State efforts in water conservation efforts. Indoor Water Use, Irrigation Efficiency, and Water Loss Control play central roles in our water management efforts going into the future. Fairfield continues implementing water conservation programs, which include 14 accepted best management practices, including in-school education programs, irrigation water management plans, and residential water audits.

Infrastructure Maintenance and Upgrades. Infrastructure maintenance and upgrades are outlined in the City's Capital Improvement Program. Major projects administered by the Public Works Department included Measure P-funded road and pavement improvement projects, upgrades to water infrastructure, including the East-West Transmission Line, Water Treatment Plant improvements and enhancements, park improvements, and other improvements to City infrastructure and facilities.

Economic Development Element

Heart of Fairfield Plan. The Economic Development Team took the lead in outreach to the business community and launched a multi-pronged marketing campaign consisting of two new marketing collateral pieces to promote economic development within the City and assist with business expansion, attraction, and retention efforts. The Team also continues administering the revived Façade, Outdoor Seating, and Signage Program, marketing City-controlled properties in the Plan Area, and seeking out, meeting, and negotiating with developers, property owners, and businesses for potential development opportunities and projects.

North Texas Street Programs. Staff continues to work with the North Texas Street Business Improvement District (NTBID). The NTBID elected a new board in order to provide assistance as needed to address business concerns. Additional programs included business retention and recruitment activities, and business crime watch meetings in partnership with the Fairfield Police Department. The NTBID anticipates continuing these programs as well as developing programs that address issues of concern to the membership.

Downtown Revitalization Programs. The City of Fairfield continued to support the Fairfield Main Street Association (the “Association”) and revitalization of downtown. The Association sponsors a variety of activities and programs, including Restaurant Week and Taste of Downtown, the Tomato Festival, the Christmas Tree Lighting and Holiday Festivities, Veterans and Independence Day parades, Small Business Saturday, ribbon cuttings, and newsletters. Marketing programs included the development and installation of new decorative banners that characterize the Heart of Fairfield as a place to Dine, Shop, Enjoy, and Discover, a shopping and dining directory, and Highway 12 directional sign management. Downtown special events continue with their zero waste policies and diverted landfill waste while creating new jobs. The Association worked with Public Works and assisted in grant management which funded staff and supplies.

Association staff attends ongoing training and continues the management of the Certified Farmers’ Market, resulting in \$24,000 in revenue. Special events also included the Health & Wellness Fair on October 5th in partnership to the Solano Family Justice Center.

In addition to the Annual Board and Committee Retreat, the staff attended the annual CalFest conference. Numerous facade improvements took place with new paint, signage, and other design upgrades. The Associations’ Design Committee continues their efforts identifying blight and reporting issues. The Economic Restructuring Committee continues their Welcome-Wagon efforts greeting and welcoming new businesses in the district.

The Economic Development Team also prepared a memorandum relating to potential steps and costs that may be necessary to encourage and facilitate new and appropriate development of a vacant city-owned property located at 421 Madison Street (Former Sem Yeto). Five additional privately-owned sites located in Downtown Fairfield were also analyzed to understand the development potential of properties located within the Heart of Fairfield Plan Area. The analyses of the development economics of the sites assist in determining to what extent development costs would need to be decreased and/or market conditions to improve to enhance development viability.

Business Recruitment and Retention Programs. Economic Development (ED) Division staff implements the City’s business recruitment and retention programs. ED staff researches targeted industries, monitors trade publications, networks with brokers and property owners, attends trade shows, responds to leads and inquiries with marketing and property information, prepares recruitment mailings, calls and visits, and arranges business retention visits to existing employers. ED staff also performed the implementation of a commercial real estate site selection tool that supports commercial real estate professionals and prospective business owners and developers by entering more than 170 privately owned commercial real estate properties located in the City of Fairfield for sale and/or lease.

The City also strengthened relationships with strategic partner organizations by implementing a formalized referral system that provides technical assistance to

entrepreneurs of both small and large businesses, including business plan development, financing assistance, mentorship, and training workshops. These efforts offered more than 24 classes/workshops throughout 2019, helping 58 clients with over 336 advising hours to City of Fairfield clients. These efforts also led to the creation of 6 new businesses providing 110 jobs in our City with a total capital infusion (loans/investment) of \$1,359,200.

Travis Protection Element

Travis Community Consortium. The Travis Community Consortium (TCC) is a coalition whose active members include the Cities of Benicia, Dixon, Fairfield, Suisun City, Rio Vista, Vacaville, and Vallejo as well as Solano County, Solano EDC, Travis Credit Union, and the Travis Regional Armed Forces Committee. The purpose of the TCC is to support efforts that enhance the military value of Travis Air Force Base and secure the base against future rounds of BRAC (Base Realignments and Closures) or other movements detrimental to the installation and local community, such as sequestration. The protection and enhancement of operations for Travis Air Force Base has long been a City priority because of the economic benefit to the community.

The TCC has successfully continued its successful lobbying efforts in support of Travis Air Force Base. Recent accomplishments have included securing funding to extend the life of the C-5 retrofit program, securing funding for additional C-17's above the amount that was originally funded, and inclusion of military construction projects in appropriations bills, including securing a \$22 million appropriation for a 144-room dormitory project. The TCC also played a critical role in the upcoming bed-down of 24 KC-46 aircraft, increasing the value of Travis for world-wide missions.

In 2019, the TCC continued to focus on the retention of existing assets (C-5, C17, KC-10) and missions. With unpredictable base cuts due to periodic and ongoing sequestration, the TCC will continue to focus on preserving existing missions and actively seek bridge missions to backfill the retirement of the KC-10 by engaging with key leadership at Travis Air Force Base, the Pentagon, Capitol Hill, and the Air Mobility Command. The TCC will seek support from federal representatives to preserve Travis's existing aircraft, including technology upgrades and ongoing maintenance funding.

In 2019, City staff also conducted discussions with Travis Air Force Base regarding a major project for the base-construction of a parallel taxiway for the easternmost runway. These discussions included transfer of portions of the City and County-shared "Wilcox Ranch" property. These discussions will continue in 2020.

In 2019, City staff continued discussions with the base regarding potential uses on 75 acres of vacant property on-base near Vanden High School. This land is expected to be part of the *Enhanced Use Lease Area* (EULA) program. In 2020, staff will continue these discussions with Travis as it works to develop the process for EULA planning.