



SPECIAL STUDY AREAS

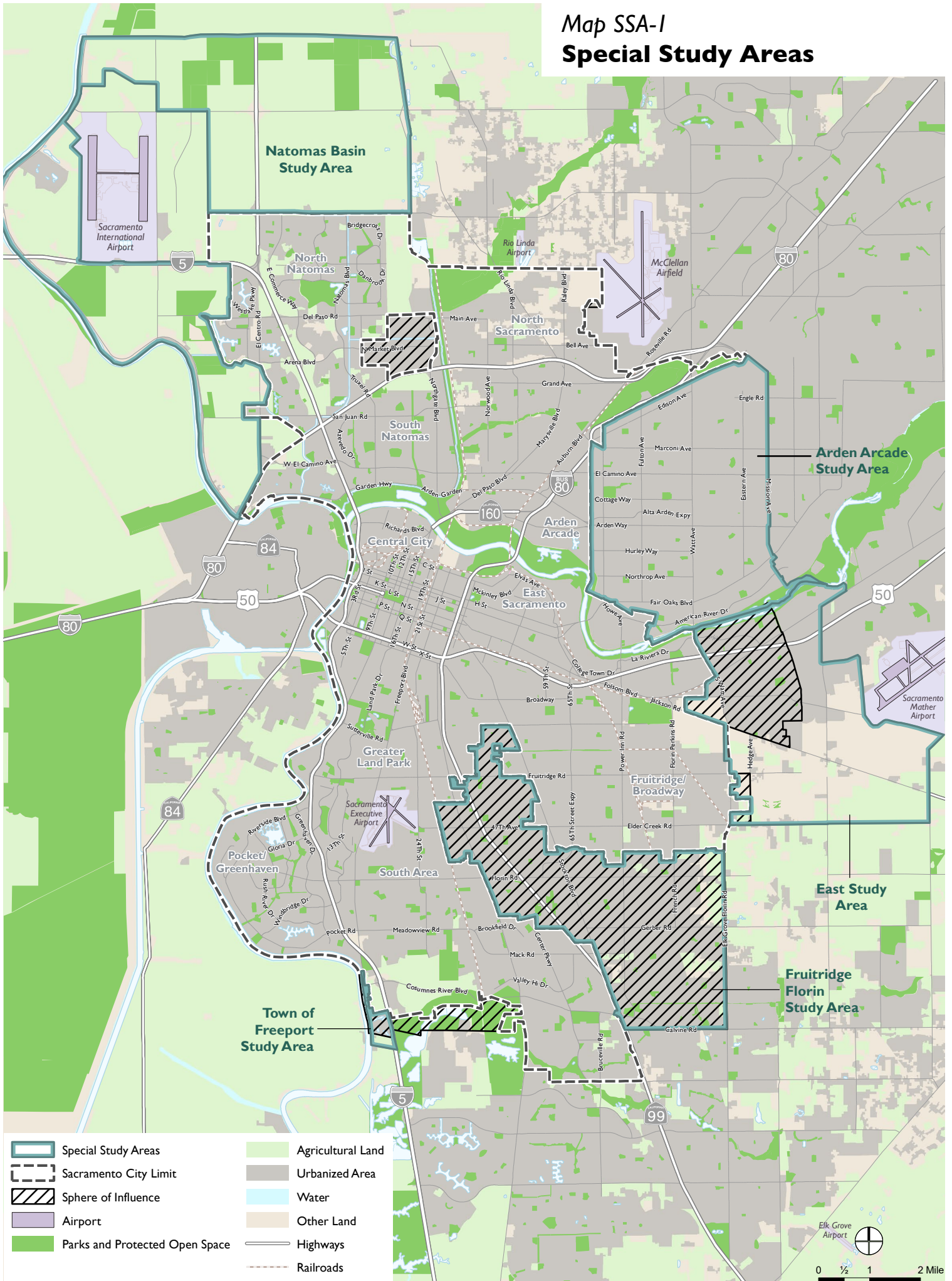
The City has identified five Special Study Areas that are adjacent to existing city limits and are of interest to the City of Sacramento (**Map SSA-1**). Planning for the future of these unincorporated areas necessitates coordination between the City and County. In some cases, part or all of these areas may eventually be annexed by the city. This section includes, for each Special Study Area, a brief description of existing conditions, background information that explains why the area is a “special study area,” and information related to City and County coordination in managing the future of these areas.

These five Special Study Areas each bear relation to the planning of the City of Sacramento, through the efficient provision of services, future growth, open space preservation, and other concerns. While the City may annex some of these areas eventually, many

or all of them may never be incorporated; the City retains an interest in each of these areas whether or not they are ever annexed.

The City of Sacramento’s Sphere of Influence is adopted by the Sacramento Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCo) and delineates the City’s probable ultimate physical boundaries and service area. The Sphere of Influence is intended to coordinate and shape logical and orderly development. Inclusion in the Sphere of Influence is required before annexation; both expansions of Spheres of Influence and annexations are managed and approved by LAFCo. As shown on **Map SSA-1**, some of the Special Study Areas are within the City’s Sphere of Influence, some are partially within, and some are entirely outside.

Map SSA-I Special Study Areas



Source: City of Sacramento, 2023; Fehrs & Peers, 2023; Dyett & Bhatia, 2023



Howe Park in the Arden Arcade Study Area

Arden Arcade Study Area

The Arden Arcade Study Area is located to the east of the City of Sacramento. The area encompasses approximately 10,168 acres and is bounded on the north by Auburn Boulevard and Winding Way, on the south by the American River and the Sacramento City limits, on the east by Mission Avenue, and on the west by the Sacramento City limits. The Arden Arcade Study Area comprises the majority of the Arden Arcade Community Plan Area, which also includes some incorporated area at its western and northern edges; of 101,000 residents of the Arden Arcade Community Plan Area, 88,500 live in the unincorporated Arden Arcade Study Area. The Arden Arcade Study Area is connected to the City of Sacramento and outlying areas by Business 80, major arterials—such as Fair Oaks Boulevard, El Camino Avenue, and Howe Avenue—and by the Sacramento Regional Transit (SacRT) Blue Line light rail line that runs just to the west of the area.

Arden Arcade Study Area is one of the most intensely developed areas of unincorporated Sacramento County. The area has an active residential and business community, and most of the area consists of suburban residential neighborhoods and suburban commercial corridors. The City of Sacramento has a few water distribution pipes on the western edge of the unincorporated portion of Arden Arcade, and stormwater from this edge drains into the City's

drainage basins, but most services are provided by Sacramento County or special service districts, such as for fire protection, water service, sewer service, and parks. The City of Sacramento has appropriate water rights to the American River with a Place of Use (POU) boundary that extends beyond the City's limits. The Arden Arcade Study Area is located within the City of Sacramento's American River POU. In this study area, wholesale water supply is periodically provided by City of Sacramento to the Sacramento Suburban Water District. A ballot measure (Measure D) to incorporate the Arden Arcade Special Study Area into the City of Arden Arcade was defeated in 2010, and residents have repeatedly re-emphasized a desire to remain unincorporated. Any annexation by the City of Sacramento would first require including the Arden Arcade Special Study Area into Sacramento's Sphere of Influence, a move strongly opposed by many residents, which is not being considered by the City at this time.

East Study Area

The East Study Area encompasses approximately 9,191 acres and is located east of Sacramento's city limits, south of Highway 50, and west of the city of Rancho Cordova. The area is roughly bounded on the north by the American River, on the south by Elder Creek Road, on the east by Bradshaw Road and Excelsior Road, and on the west by the Sacramento city limits. SacRT's Gold Line light rail line runs through the northern portion of the Study Area and provides

access to Downtown Sacramento, the City of Rancho Cordova, Gold River, and the City of Folsom. Highway 50 and the Jackson Highway (SR-16), plus the major arterials of Watt Avenue, Bradshaw Road, and Fruitridge Road, connect the East Study Area to the wider region.

A significant portion of the East Study Area is located within the City's existing Sphere of Influence (SOI). The City of Sacramento has appropriative water rights to the American River with a POU boundary that extends beyond the City's boundary. The East Study Area is located within the City of Sacramento's American River POU. Wholesale water supply is periodically provided by the City of Sacramento to the service area of California American Water Company (Cal-AM).

The northern part of the East Study Area, known as Rosemont, is an established community with low-density suburban neighborhoods and commercial corridors. The Rosemont area is mostly built-out, although there are a few underutilized sites around existing light rail stations in the vicinity, particularly the Watt/Manlove station. This area is included in the City's Sphere of Influence, and in the future, annexation of Rosemont could be considered if there is future interest to consolidate urban services. The middle and southern parts of the East Study Area, outside of the City's Sphere of Influence, are comprised of exhausted aggregate mining sites undergoing reclamation for future reuse and urbanization, as well as open space areas and some scattered industrial uses.

Fruitridge-Florin Study Area

The Fruitridge-Florin Study Area encompasses approximately 9,490 acres bordered on the north by 14th Avenue, on the east by South Watt Avenue, on the west by the SacRT Blue Line, Franklin Boulevard, and Highway 99, and on the south by Calvine Road. The area is surrounded on three sides by the City limits and falls within the City's existing Sphere of Influence. The eastern part is located in the Fruit-

ridge Broadway Community Plan Area, and the western part is located in the South Area Community Plan Area. SacRT provides light rail transit services along the Blue Line, with stations adjacent to or near the western portion of the area at Fruitridge Road, 47th Avenue, and Florin Road. Highway 99 crosses through the area and connects the Fruitridge Florin Study Area with Downtown Sacramento and the region, as do several major arterial corridors, including Franklin Boulevard, Stockton Boulevard, and Power Inn Road. The Fruitridge-Florin Study Area is primarily made up of suburban residential neighborhoods and smaller light industrial and commercial districts with scattered vacant and underutilized sites. Most services, including water, police, fire, and parks, are provided by the County of Sacramento and various special districts, but many of these services are challenged by infrastructure deficiencies.

Most census tracts within the Fruitridge-Florin Study Area are designated as Disadvantaged Communities, areas with unusually high combinations of vulnerable residents and pollution burdens, under Senate Bill (SB) 535. Additionally, the majority of the Fruitridge-Florin area is considered a disadvantaged unincorporated community (DUC) by the definition set forth in Senate Bill 244 (SB244). SB244 limits the City's ability to proceed with phased annexations for Fruitridge-Florin because it prohibits an annexation when a disadvantaged unincorporated community is adjacent to the annexation area. As such, if annexation were to occur, the entire Fruitridge-Florin area would need to be annexed into the City at the same time.

The City and County have worked together on joint efforts to revitalize neighborhoods and corridors. For example, in 2012, the City and County completed a joint planning study for the Florin Road corridor which passes through both jurisdictions. The focus of much of this planning is on higher-density and mixed-use projects adjacent to transit stations, along transit corridors, and mixed-use commercial corridors. Three major attempts were made between 1965 and 1970 to annex portions of the Fruitridge-Florin area to the City of Sacramento. The past attempts were approved by LAFCo, but were rejected by the area's registered voters.

The City is considering initiating studies for a potential future annexation of the Fruitridge-Florin Study Area both to provide better services to disadvantaged communities within the area, many of whom are socioeconomically disadvantaged and linguistically isolated, and to guide development along the area's key underutilized corridors. More robust outreach to residents of the Fruitridge-Florin Study Area and close coordination with the County of Sacramento would be required before actively pursuing annexation. Additionally, the City would need to study the existing infrastructure to determine what costs would be associated with annexation. If infrastructure such as water and sewer pipes were in poor conditions or required substantial upgrades to adhere to City standards, for example, the costs of annexation could be significant. Please refer to policies and implementing actions in the Land Use and Placemaking Element.

Natomas Basin Study Area

The Natomas Basin Study Area (NBSA) is an unincorporated portion of Sacramento County that encompasses approximately 18,424 acres and is located north and west of the City of Sacramento. The area is bounded on the north by Sutter County, on the south by the Sacramento City limits, on the east by the unincorporated communities of Rio Linda and Elverta, and on the west by the Sacramento River. The NBSA is connected to Sacramento and the region by I-5 and Highway 99. SacRT's Green Line is planned to eventually extend from Downtown to the Sacramento International Airport, which would provide light rail service to the southern portion of the NBSA. The NBSA is composed of mostly agriculturally zoned land and open space, with some rural residential development located to the east in the Rio Linda and Elverta areas. The Sacramento International Airport is located within the NBSA, north of I-5 and west of the newly-developing Metro Air Park.

The Natomas Basin has been of interest to the City for decades in regard to the preservation of open

space, agricultural and habitat areas, transportation/circulation, water resources, and planning for municipal services. The County Board of Supervisors and the Sacramento City Council approved a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) on December 10, 2002, which established a vision for land use and revenue sharing for the NBSA. This MOU also assigned responsibilities for development to the City as the appropriate future land use regulator and to the County for the preservation of open space, habitat, and agriculture. The MOU defines a set of guiding principles for the implementation of efficient future urban growth, permanent preservation of open space/farmland, improved future air quality, Smart Growth Principles, revenue sharing, and protection of future airport operations. In recent years, developers have applied for the County's approval of two specific plans, the Upper Westside Specific Plan and the Grandpark Specific Plan, which together propose development of over 31,000 new homes, plus new commercial, mixed use, and park spaces for a total of nearly 8,000 acres within the NBSA. These proposed developments are located in areas that have limited to no infrastructure and services. These developments have not been planned for by the County nor the City and are outside urban boundaries.

On May 13, 2003, the City adopted the Natomas Basin Habitat Conservation Plan (NBHCP) – a cooperative federal, state, and local program for the conservation of plant and animal species and their habitats



View of agricultural fields from W. Elverta Road in the Natomas Basin Study Area

in the 53,000+ acre Natomas Basin. On June 27, 2003, the City, United States Fish and Wildlife Service, and California Department of Fish and Wildlife signed the Implementation Agreement for the NBHCP. The Implementation Agreement provides for development within the City of Sacramento of 8,050 acres of land, avoidance measures and mitigation for loss of habitat, and incidental take coverage for listed species. Sutter County is also a signatory party to the NBHCP which allows for the development of 7,467 acres of land. A total of 17,500 acres of land is allowed to be developed in Natomas Basin per existing HCPs. This total also includes 1,983 acres allowed under the Metro Airpark HCP. The County of Sacramento is not a party to any HCP covering Natomas Basin.

To date, approximately 5,100-acres of mitigation lands have been acquired as a result of the HCPs. The HCPs for the Natomas Basin provide for a conservation strategy to provide protection for 22 covered species. This strategy calls for a significant portion of the basin to be placed in habitat mitigation reserves and on preservation of agricultural operations. The City is committed to preserving open space and agricultural uses that includes a system of wildlife corridors and creates buffers between habitat and development as called for in the Natomas Basin Habitat Conservation Plan and the 2002 MOU.

The NBSA is currently outside of Sacramento's Sphere of Influence, the area adopted by LAFCo that delineates probable future boundaries and service areas.

Potential future expansion of the City's Sphere of Influence would help to ensure that County-proposed development at the city's edge is better integrated with the city's planning and services provision, including police, fire, and park services; water, wastewater, and stormwater; flood risk; traffic mitigation; and open space, habitat, and agriculture preservation. The City will encourage the County of Sacramento to maintain a minimum 500-foot conservation buffer along natural open space, habitat, wildlife, and agricultural areas at the City's edge.

For policies related to the Natomas Basin Study Area, including possible expansion of the City's SOI, please see the Growth and Change section of Chapter 3: Land Use, Placemaking, and Economic Development.

Town of Freeport Study Area

The town of Freeport Study Area is located approximately 10 miles south of Downtown along the Sacramento River and Highway 160. The area consists of approximately 197 acres bounded by Sacramento city limits on the north and east, the city-owned Bartley Cavanaugh Golf Course on the south, and the Sacramento River on the west. The Sacramento Regional County Sanitation District (SRCSA) treatment plant is located to the southeast. The Study Area extends southwest beyond the city limits and I-5. Freeport Boulevard and I-5 connect the area to Downtown Sacramento. This historic town is a point of interest for recreational tourists who pass through on their way to various activities in the Delta. The area includes a variety of sporting goods shops, restaurants, and other small retailers mixed with historic homes that overlook agriculture to the east and the Sacramento River levee to the west.

In October 1981, Sacramento's Sphere of Influence expanded to include the majority of today's Town of Freeport Study Area. The City Council endorsed annexation of the area in April 2004 and shortly after, LAFCo approved the annexation. However, a protest was filed by town residents and the annexation attempt failed. In 2004, as part of the annexation effort, the City pre-zoned the area by creating a Freeport Special Planning District and established goals, policies, and development standards for the town of Freeport. The overarching objective is to retain the "Delta river town" identity and unique historical characteristics of Freeport, improve the level of municipal services to the area, guide future improvements and redevelopment in the district, and promote the preservation of historic structures and features. The town of Freeport Study Area is also partially included within the South Area Community Plan.

The town of Freeport has significant infrastructure needs. Existing houses and businesses in Freeport are connected to aging well and septic systems. Challenges to City efforts to annex and integrate this area into the City would likely include overcoming inadequate infrastructure and addressing interface issues between the existing town and new development.

For policies related to the town of Freeport, please see the Land Use and Placemaking Element and the South Area Community Plan.

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SACRAMENTO 2040 GENERAL PLAN