

# MILL DISTRICT AREA PLAN

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FORTUNA GENERAL PLAN 2030

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# Mill District Area Plan

## Introduction

In March, 2007 the Fortuna City Council determined, through the selection of the General Plan Preferred Alternative, that the former mill site owned by the Pacific Lumber Company should be redeveloped as a mix of land uses, including commercial, residential, and open space, rather than continuing the single use, as in the past. To facilitate this concept and to expand mixed use opportunities the City designated in the General Plan a district that includes the former mill site as well as adjoining residential neighborhoods. This has been named the Mill District and shares a common boundary with the Fortuna Boulevard Mixed-Use Corridor (also identified in the Preferred Alternative). Boundaries for the Mill District include the NWPRR tracks on the west, 12th Street and Newburg Road along the north and S. Fortuna Blvd to the Kenmar Rd. along the east (See map in Exhibit A).

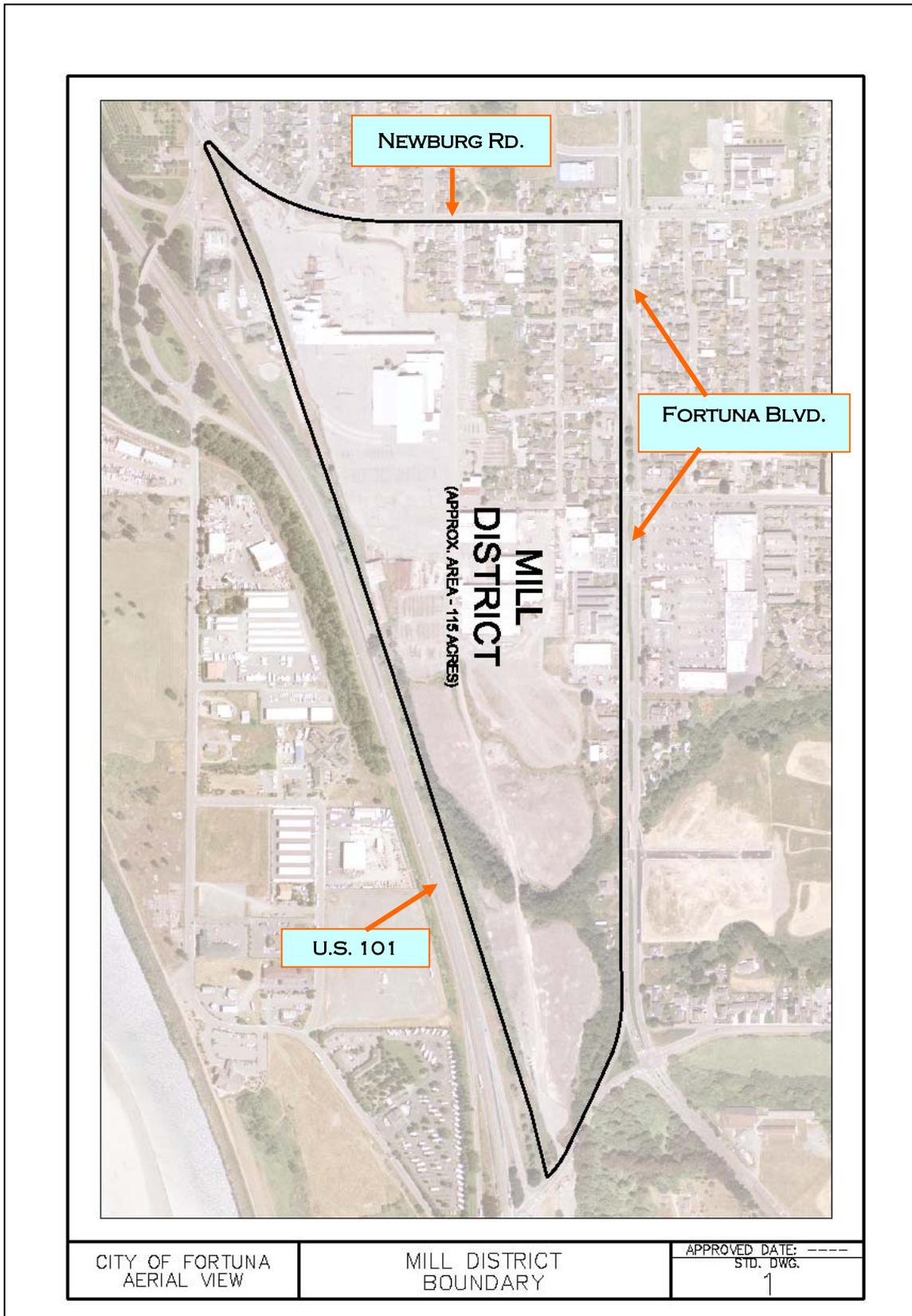
The 115-acre Mill District is a unique area within Fortuna that has great potential for enhancing the vitality and appearance of the community. Composed of an older residential neighborhood with poor drainage, together with an inactive lumber mill site, a stretch of Strongs Creek and a large floodplain the Mill District may become home to an exciting mixture of new retail, office, and residential buildings and open space for public benefit.

This is the most underutilized area of the city. There are significant constraints but there is also great opportunity. Because of this, an Area Plan is the appropriate tool for revitalization as a mixed-use area consistent with the Preferred Alternative.

The purpose of this Area Plan is to formulate policies and mixed-use development concepts presented by the size, location, and physical attributes of the region and to address development options that will be consistent with the Preferred Alternative as selected by the City Council in March 2007. Development of the site will require the combined efforts of the public and private sectors. Because portions of the Mill District lie within the City's Redevelopment Area there are opportunities to facilitate significant improvements to local infrastructure.

This Area Plan is prepared as part of the 2030 General Plan Update and is intended to provide more specific guidelines and standards for developers and the City in order that the community's expectations, the General Plan's identification of the Mill District as a Mixed-Use area, and future development are consistent with one another.

Mill District Area Plan



# Mill District History and Existing Conditions

Because the Mill District is within the City limits it is ideal for a large infill mixed-use project. Originally, the Mill District lay at the outskirts of town. An early railroad line leading to the Newburg Lumber Mill east of Fortuna created a curving property line now following Newburg Road. Years later the Northwest Pacific Railroad installed a rail line between Eureka and Willits. These tracks still lie along the western boundary of the Mill District.

The original road that linked Fortuna with communities to the south skirted the northwest corner of the District, was formerly named Sandy Prairie Road, and is presently known as 12th Street. In addition to functioning as a lumber mill site, the property has been a service facility for logging trucks and equipment, a plywood plant, and a forklift factory.

In addition to the former mill property, the greater Mill District is composed of a mixture of parcels that are either vacant or occupied by residences, offices, and a mix of retail commercial enterprises. In terms of gross acreage, the vast majority of the site is vacant and most of this is under single ownership. In contrast to this, most of the existing residential area of the Mill District is composed of separate parcels each with individual ownership. This situation will make redevelopment and infrastructure improvements more difficult than if the land were all under single ownership.

As of July 2007, approximately 73-acres of the district are owned by the Pacific Lumber Company and represent land that until April 2006 served as a lumber mill processing primarily Redwood and Douglas fir logs.

Much of the land on which the mill was located is composed of fill that raised this area from the natural drainage into Strongs Creek. The process of filling the land for the benefit of the industrial uses on this parcel interrupted the natural drainage from the area along First, Second, and Third Avenues and Spring Street west of Fortuna Blvd.

The southern third of the former mill property was used most recently as a log deck and does not contain any significant structures. This area is south of Strongs Creek and lies in the 100-year flood plain.

Between these two regions lies Strongs Creek, a major drainage for the coastal mountain range to the east of Fortuna. Before Strongs Creek empties into the Eel River, several other creeks and streams flow into it including Mill Creek, Jamison Creek, and Rohner Creek. During major rain events the creeks carry a significant combined flow and form a significant floodway across the southern portion of the property.

Just north of Strongs Creek is an area that was once a large millpond. Prior to the use of mechanical or vehicular log moving equipment the age-old technique of floating logs from the log deck to the mill site was employed. The millpond was naturally formed and served as a means of transportation until more modern methods were introduced in the form of grapple skidders, skid steer loaders, knuckle booms, and gooseneck tailors.

With a diminished need to float logs on water, the millpond became both a liability and an opportunity. Bark removed from logs was placed into the millpond and covered with earth. Successive layers of soil were compacted to form an area for the storage of finished lumber generally free of standing water. Today, this repository of bark and earth presents a challenge since fill is not able to support the weight of buildings without special foundation designs. The bark fill-material is now considered to be contaminated waste product not suited for either composting or fuel. The pond is estimated to contain between 400,000 and 600,000 cubic yards of bark and soil fill. It is estimated that the cost to remove and separate the wood waste produce would be \$10 per cubic yard (in 2006 dollars).

The residential area adjacent to the mill site was built-out about 50 years ago with a few homes added during the past 10 to 20 years. Because of continuing drainage problems, a lack of neighborhood traffic circulation due to dead-end streets, and a lack of new construction, the area has stagnated. Although it provides affordable and rental housing there have been few incentives to improve the overall quality of housing stock through remodeling, the consolidation of lots for new multifamily housing, or other improvements to the infrastructure.

Along the bordering roads (Newburg Road and S. Fortuna Blvd.) is a mix of commercial businesses such as restaurants, auto and machine repair facilities, offices and retail stores including chain saw sales/service and automobile parts. A few residences still exist along this stretch of Fortuna Blvd.

# Redevelopment and the Mill District

In 1989, the Fortuna Redevelopment Agency (RDA) was formed. Portions of the Mill District were identified as one of three project areas that exhibited both economic and physical blight within the City (see Exhibit B). The adopted Redevelopment Plan provided the RDA with powers, duties and obligations to further the goals and implement the general Redevelopment Program. The program was specifically tasked with the rehabilitation and revitalization of the project areas.

Within the Mill District, the Redevelopment Area includes the land South of Strongs Creek that served as the Pacific Lumber Company's log deck. Also included are properties along the East side of Fortuna Blvd. A separate area includes the commercial and residential properties bordered by Newburg Rd., Fortuna Blvd. and the inactive mill property. Within this area are Spring Street, South 15<sup>th</sup>, South 16<sup>th</sup>, Streets, and First, Second, and Third Avenues.

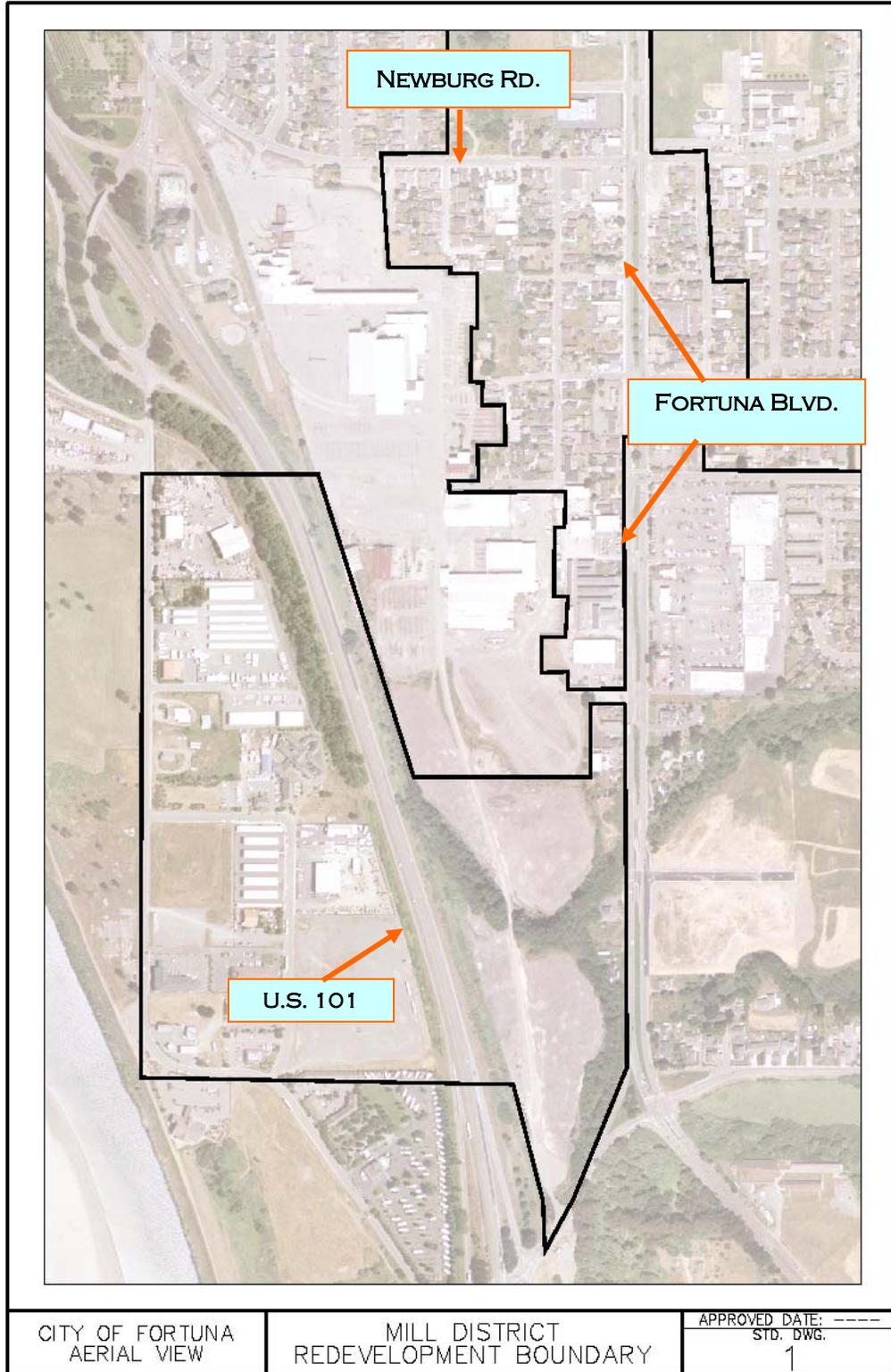
The Redevelopment Agency can leverage its money to upgrade City Streets, assist with sidewalk construction, facilitate drainage improvements, and make the area more attractive to development thereby increasing property values and encouraging property upgrades.

The Redevelopment Agency's Board of Directors (i.e. City Council members) is giving consideration to the concept of expanding the existing redevelopment areas to include the entire Mill District. Doing so at this time would allow the Redevelopment Agency to collect a larger portion of the property taxes generated by the land within the District. As the District is developed the property will be reassessed by the County Assessor resulting in higher property taxes. The increased revenue in the form of "tax increment" will allow the RDA to make additional improvements to the public infrastructure and will facilitate the mixed-use development.

With regard to the Mill District area, the major goals of the Fortuna Redevelopment Agency are:

1. To stimulate the elimination of blighting influences and the correction of environmental deficiencies in the Project Area, including, among others, small and irregular lots, shifting uses and vacancies, obsolete and aged building types, faulty exterior spacing, incompatible and uneconomic land uses, substandard alleys and inadequate or deteriorated public improvements, facilities and utilities.
2. To encourage the assembly of land into parcels suitable for modern, integrated development with improved pedestrian and vehicular circulation in the Project Area.
3. To facilitate the planning, redesign and redevelopment of undeveloped areas which are stagnant or improperly utilized.
4. To provide opportunities for participation by owners and tenants in the revitalization of their property.

**Exhibit B**



5. To strengthen retail and other commercial functions in the Project Area.
6. To strengthen the economic base of the community through the installation of needed site improvements to stimulate commercial expansion, employment, and economic growth.
7. To provide adequate land for parking and open space.
8. To establish and implement performance criteria and standards to assure high quality site and building design, environmental protection, and other design elements that provide unity and integrity of the entire Project Area.
9. To expand and improve the community's supply of low and moderated income housing.

# Policy for the Mill District

“The Mill District” provides for employment, shopping and residential uses developed (or redeveloped) as a mixed-use project; these multiple uses are integrated in a compact urban form, at higher development intensities, and that is pedestrian-oriented and accessible by public transit. This Mixed Use area will foster community interaction by providing a focus on community facilities.

## Goals

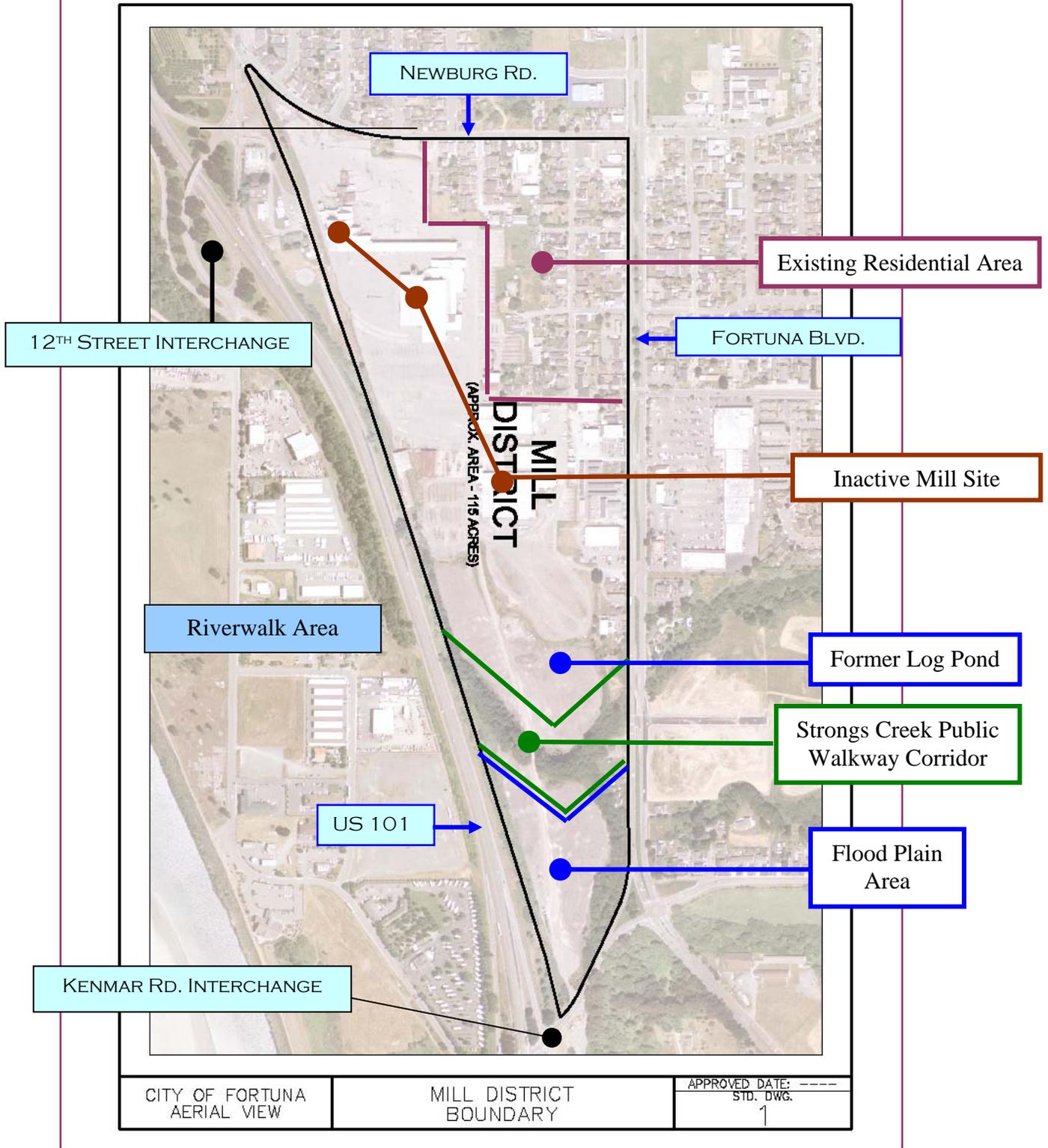
The following goals are intended to guide development, establish a framework for design standards, assist the public, decision makers, and developers, provide a degree of predictability, and facilitate the entitlement process.

1. A comprehensively planned mixed-use employment, shopping, and residential area that provides for the integration of retail stores, offices, institutional, and entertainment uses with residential uses, community facilities and institutions, and open space while retaining compatibility with nearby land uses.
2. To ensure that mixed-use areas are developed in a compact urban form, are pedestrian-oriented, easily accessible by private and public transit, and designed to foster community interaction.
3. To create an attractive and vibrant mix of uses while making effective use of building form and pedestrian and vehicular access points to create a well-defined district.
4. To ensure building and site designs that compliment and enhance existing development.
5. To direct the phasing and/or expansion of municipal infrastructure and services to ensure the timely and orderly development of the Mill District.
6. To ensure connectivity within the District and to the rest of the city by means of well-designed roads, streets, open space and transit corridors, serving pedestrians, bicyclists, public transit, and private automobiles.

## Policies

1. A variety of compatible uses are permitted in the Mill District including retail, office, service commercial, recreation, and low, medium and high density residential uses.
2. A range of development intensities shall be permitted. The overall floor area ratio for a Mixed Use development shall be consistent with the Land Use element and Land Use diagram.
3. A range of building heights shall be permitted.
4. The design and development of the Mill District shall promote this area as a one of Fortuna’s key community activity areas as characterized by a compact form of development, pedestrian-orientation, greater accessibility to public transit, and higher intensity development.

Exhibit C



5.

Open space and parkland shall be provided in the Mill District. The overall requirement for open space and parkland shall be a minimum of 40% of the land area and should integrate the Mill District with the surrounding area. Lands considered as open space comprise publicly owned and publicly accessible private resources, including community and neighborhood parks, creek rights-of-way, any private landscaped open space accessible to the public, stormwater management facilities, pedestrian walkways and related open space amenities and center medians/boulevards within public roads. For the purposes of this plan, Open Space does not include parking lots, commercial loading areas, or road surfaces (unless an area equal to 50% of the roadway is developed either as a median strip or landscaped shoulder areas)

6. Strongs Creek shall be developed as a key open space corridor forming a crucial link in the “River to Forest” public walkways system as identified in the General Plan.
7. Higher density land uses and taller buildings shall be clustered around the economic hub of the Mill District, with lower density land uses and lower buildings being directed to the boundaries.
8. The Mill District’s design and development shall be compatible with adjacent uses. A Form-Based Code may be developed to guide long-term development in the District. The following factors shall be considered in reviewing proposals for new and/or expanding Mill District uses:
  - a) Buildings shall be oriented to the street, residential areas, and transit services, wherever feasible;
  - b) The site plan for individual projects shall includes features to integrate the new development with surrounding uses;
  - c) The site plan shall promotes safe, convenient and barrier-free pedestrian travel within the District, between the District and adjacent uses, and to and from transit stops;
  - d) The site plan promotes public safety;
  - e) The site plan presents a smooth interface with the rest of the city;
  - f) The site plan promotes convenient access to roadways and public transit services;
  - g) Off-street parking areas shall be located in the side and rear yards.
  - h) Vehicle parking shall be encouraged within the millpond footprint.
  - i) Off-street parking shall be located away from adjacent residential uses;
  - j) Loading and service areas shall be screened and landscaped;
  - k) Loading areas and service areas are located to avoid conflict between pedestrian and vehicular traffic, and away from adjacent residential areas; and
  - l) Residential uses are not located adjacent to the freeway. Sound walls shall not serve to mitigate this policy;
  - m) Design elements shall foster a sense of neighborhood identity including street signs, street lights, building materials and style, and public spaces.
  - n) Architects and designers are encouraged to use River Lodge and the Strongs Creek Plaza Shopping Center, as local examples of preferred quality, detail, and architectural styles.

9. Public infrastructure upgrades and extensions shall be timed to coincide with site development.
10. Mill District streets and roadways shall include public transit, bicycle, and pedestrian facilities to encourage the use of public transit, pedestrian and bicycle travel making it as convenient as the personal automobile and shall maximize personal safety:
  - a) Safe and convenient access shall be provided for pedestrians between buildings and transit stops, parking areas and other buildings and facilities;
  - b) The site shall be proximate to the intersection of two arterial and/or collector roads suitable for public transportation;
  - c) The site shall contain a primary north/south pedestrian corridor separated from automobile traffic; and
  - d) The portion of the Strongs Creek “River to Forest” trail within the Mill District shall connect with access points to both the Riverwalk area and Strongs Creek Plaza.
11. Retail, service commercial, and other pedestrian-oriented uses shall be encouraged to locate at street level.
12. Reduced parking standards and/or on-street parking may be permitted for mixed uses to reflect the increased intensity of development and accessibility by transit and other modes of travel. Shared parking in mixed-use developments is appropriate where it can be demonstrated that uses are complimentary.

## **Programs**

- A. The City shall prepare and adopt a Form-Based Code, Design Standards, and criteria for the Mill District to accommodate a range of development options.
- B. The City shall require the construction of a road through the Mill District that connects Strongs Creek Drive, Redwood Way, and Newburg Road. There shall be sufficient connections to adjacent residential streets to facilitate convenient automobile and pedestrian flow through the District. Traffic calming methods such as a traffic roundabout at the intersection of the three roads shall be given consideration.
- C. The City shall prepare a connectivity map for the Mill District.
- D. The City shall require a master plan for development of the Mill District that may be implemented in phased steps. The plan will incorporate the entire district and demonstrate how rehabilitation and/or redevelopment will complement and supplement new development.
- E. The City shall work with the Fortuna Redevelopment Agency to further RDA goals and to improve drainage within existing residential areas of the Mill District.
- F. The City shall utilize FMC Section 17.54.140 Major Retail Ordinance, Development Standards, and conditions of approval addressing adaptive reuse and energy conservation for large-retail anchor mixed-use format stores in evaluating project proposals.

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# Mixed-Use In the Mill District

A Mixed-Use Development is defined as compatible land uses in distinctive buildings within a defined area. Mixed-use is an established land use pattern that was common when transportation was primarily limited to walking, trolleys, and horse-drawn wagons. Local examples can be found in Fortuna where buildings line Main Street that provide retail shopping on the ground floor and either office or residential uses on the second floor. The proximity of neighborhoods to the business district provides residents between Ninth and Sixteenth Streets and between J and P a short walk to banks, florists, restaurants, dentists, and retail shops. This close physical relationship between residential uses and local serving businesses is the essence of the mixed-use concept.

The fact that early transportation methods were a factor in the development and construction of mixed-use communities is not the primary reason why this type of development pattern has been so successful. The benefits of a mixed-use area remain as vital today as they were for our grandparents and their parents who were responsible for building Rohnerville and Fortuna in this manner. Children still love to walk from home to the movie theater or to the ice-cream parlor. People living upstairs overlooking Main Street can take advantage of downtown restaurants, convenience stores, or window-shopping with ease. Walking to the bank, post office, and the public library is an easy triangle of activity for tasks that need to be done regularly.

Business owners enjoy the benefits of a mixed-use area in that a built-in clientele surrounds them. The presence of people walking to and from businesses provides a measure of safety and security, as does the fact that people are often living just upstairs from a storefront and keeping an eye on the neighborhood. For business owners who can walk to their business location there are reduced commuter trips that ease local congestion.

The community has indicated through the General Plan Community Workshops that more mixed-use in Fortuna will be a good thing and that new neighborhoods should not be isolated from commercial establishments that provide daily necessities and enjoyable opportunities for dining and shopping. During the General Plan's Community Workshops, participants discussed both vertical and horizontal mixed-use and looked at several examples of mixed-use projects around the country. The City Council reaffirmed the community's vision when the Preferred Alternative was selected with mixed-use as a principal feature.

In addition to promoting mixed-use development, this Area Plan is intended to present development opportunities that will increase property values in the existing residential neighborhood leading to remodeling projects as well as new development of single-family and multifamily housing projects that will be close to adjacent retail commercial enterprises.

Existing streets shall be incorporated into new development with the extension of First Avenue, Second Avenue, Third Avenue, and South Fifteenth and Sixteenth Streets.

The extension of Redwood Way and Strongs Creek Drive through the District to 12th Street will serve as a principal collector street bringing vehicles into the District.

In addition to the environmental protection of natural resources including Strongs Creek, this Area Plan stresses the importance of using the Strongs Creek right-of-way as a natural path for walking and bicycling. The Fortuna General Plan calls for the construction of a multi-use public walkway along the entire length of Strongs Creek. This pedestrian walkway will become an important feature of the Mill District and will serve as a direct link to the Riverwalk Area of Fortuna by way of a creekside trail passing under the Northwestern Pacific Rail line and US Highway 101 emerging at Alimar Way. This same walkway will also follow the creek eastward with a connection across Fortuna Blvd. at Strongs Creek Drive where the trail will continue to Newburg Park and eventually to the Headwaters Forest Reserve.

## Intent

This General Plan has been developed with special attention to six districts that are expected to be focal points for new development. Among the six focus areas are the Mill District and Fortuna Blvd. Following a series of Community Workshops and a community survey the City Staff recommended and the City Council approved the concept of mixed-use for both areas. This Area Plan further clarifies what is meant by mixed-use and illustrates how it ought to be expressed in terms of new development within the Mill District and along a portion of Fortuna Blvd.

A single developer or a small group of developers working in a coordinated fashion to produce a project that blends housing with commercial office, retail, and public space is typically how mixed-use developments are designed, financed and constructed. The overall goal is to create a project that, either on its own or as a part of a larger community, provides a full range of community services including a variety of housing types, work places, retail stores, service providers, and civic buildings within a network of streets that conveniently links one part of the project with all other parts and that encourages the use of walking and cycling to travel from one location to another by making the experience pleasurable and efficient.

## Commercial Development Concepts

To allow a range of development options consistent with the mixed-use format, this Area Plan presents in the following pages three general development concepts.

The three concepts include:

- A. Traditional Small Store with Residential Mixed-Use Format**
- B. Factory Outlet Store Anchors with Residential Mixed-Use Format**
- C. Major-Retail Center with Residential Mixed-Use Concept**

## A. Traditional Small Storefront w/Residential Format

The classic vertical Mixed Use Development is the downtown area of many American cities. These are the images that appear on picture postcards and that draw tourists, art and antique shoppers, restaurant diners, retail shoppers, and downtown residents.



Exhibit 1

Classic Mixed Use Development was often the norm in small town development. Note the retail uses on the ground floor with either office or residential space above.



It is this same appealing setting that has caused a recent resurgence in and a revitalization of Main Street mixed-use developments. Communities across the country have been investing in new mixed use projects to replace abandoned malls, mill sites, and rail yards taking advantage of brown-field sites, and to revitalize areas of town.

**Exhibit 2**  
**One block of two Downtown type Mixed Use Projects**



These are examples of designs that have been used to provide a mix of retail, office and residential options within a compact area allowing residents to access many essential services with convenience. The lower image demonstrates how parking for employees and residents can be included in the process.



**Exhibit 3**  
**Incorporating Parking into a Mixed Use Project.**

The typical layout uses the ground floor on primary commercial streets for retail stores and service commercial businesses (e.g. restaurants and banks). Ground floor spaces benefit from higher ceilings and generous use of windows on the street. The second story is ideal for residential and office locations. Secondary commercial streets' ground floors are used for personal service and destination commercial establishments (e.g. beauty/barber shops, Land Title offices, and professional offices) with residential above. In some cases residential on both levels will be constructed.

Denser housing options (townhouses, duplex units, and apartments) are placed closer to the business areas with detached and larger homes farther back from the core area. This permits a greater number of people the option of walking to the services they desire.

### **The Mill District Developed with a Small Storefront w/Residential Format**

The Downtown Area of Fortuna is comprised of this style of development. Although this model of development has been used historically, current retail trends, outside of high population centers tend towards different, more cost effective formats.

A Downtown Area Plan is being prepared that will help guide infill development that uses the small storefront business format. That does not preclude the use of a small scale storefront design in the Mill District; no illustration is provided because Downtown Fortuna provides a good visual image.

Traditional Small Storefront format: With a greater percent of the area being used for residential purposes, much of the upper-region of the vacant land will be suitable for an expansion of the street grid patterns and an extension of Strongs Creek Drive and Redwood Way serving as a commercial street with vertical and horizontal mixed use to either side.

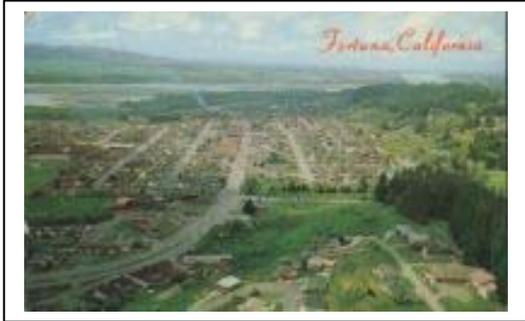
LDR	10 – 30%	(low density residential)
HDR	20 – 50%	(high density residential)
Retail	20 – 30%	(smaller ground-floor store-fronts)
Office	10 – 20%	(second story or side streets)
Public	5 – 10 %	(excluding south of Strongs Creek)



These historic and contemporary photographs show how Main Street in Fortuna has used its mixed use environment with small



This postcard shows the classic street grid that is the hallmark of early town planning and that placed residential neighborhoods adjacent to the business district.



## **B. Factory Outlet Store Anchors with Residential Mixed-Use Format**

This type of development is very similar to the Small Storefront w/Residential model but lends itself to the use of larger buildings for major businesses (e.g. banks, post office, furniture stores) and/or national retailers (e.g. Barnes & Noble, Best Buy, Staples) at major intersections with mid-block buildings providing the vertical mix of retail, commercial office, and residential in complementary structures. Retail establishments, including restaurants are provided on the ground floor along commercial streets to ensure that a walking clientele will continue from one end the block to the other. Second story areas may be used interchangeably for office or residential purposes.

While each developer, in conjunction with the city, determines the most appropriate architectural style of design, most tend to rely on the styles that most people are familiar with when viewing a classic pedestrian street area. Both *Turn of the Century* and *Art Deco* building styles have been popularized in this form of Mixed Use Development.

Secondary streets running parallel on either side of a principal business district street can provide ground level businesses such as personal services, professional and medical offices, and retail establishments that may not need a main street presence or that require a lower per square foot rental rate. As on the main streets, the second story units may be office or residential in nature.

Surrounding the business core, a network of interconnected streets will access residential units with a variety of densities, sizes, and degrees of affordability. A mix of single-family, duplex, townhouse, and apartment formats may be designed into a project for this purpose.

## Exhibit 5

### Example of Mixed-Use development with larger Retail Anchors



In these examples, the larger corner buildings contain retail stores of a nature found at a Factory Outlet Mall. Smaller mid-block buildings provide ground floor retail with office and/or residential apartments or lofts upstairs.

Both Small Storefront and Factory Outlet Mixed-Use projects rely on two and three story buildings. This is consciously done because pedestrians respond well to a being in an outdoor “room” with walls on both sides that are proportional to the width of the street. The formula used to create a good mixed-use environment states that the wider the street the higher the buildings and visa-versa.

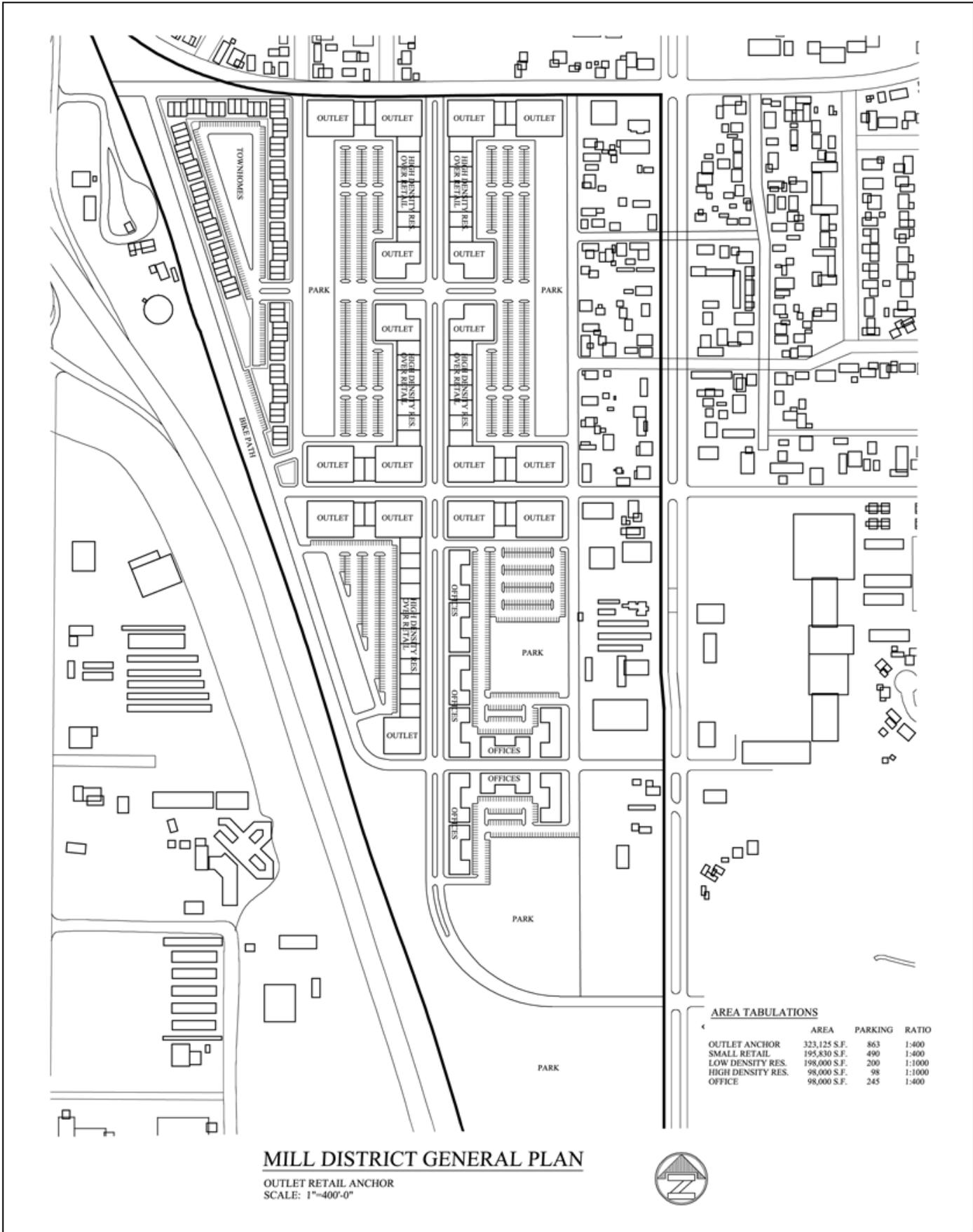
### **The Mill District Developed with an Outlet Store Anchors Format**

This map is a generic conceptual view of the Mill District with Retail, Office, Residential, and public spaces that, in theory, could be developed within the Mill District. This rendering does not represent any development plans that have been presented to the City and the Staff is currently unaware of anyone proposing such a layout. This illustration is simply to show how a mixed-use project could look.

There is no representation in this illustration of property ownership and no implications of proposed zoning changes are being indicated. This illustration is for conceptual purposes only.

The Outlet Store Anchor format is similar in design to the first but with a change in ratios. The most noticeable difference in the retail pattern is that several National Brand stores (i.e. Eddie Bower, Best Buy, Office Depot, and Walden Books) would occupy larger corner lots with smaller ground floor retail and second story office or residential units would occupy the mid-block areas.

LDR	5 – 20%	(low density residential)
HDR	20 – 50%	(high density residential)
Retail	30 – 40%	(Two-story anchor stores at street corners)
Office	0 – 10%	(second story or side streets)
Public	10 – 15%	(not all in one location – multiple plazas)



**AREA TABULATIONS**

	AREA	PARKING	RATIO
OUTLET ANCHOR	323,125 S.F.	863	1:400
SMALL RETAIL	195,830 S.F.	490	1:400
LOW DENSITY RES.	198,000 S.F.	200	1:1000
HIGH DENSITY RES.	98,000 S.F.	98	1:1000
OFFICE	98,000 S.F.	245	1:400

**MILL DISTRICT GENERAL PLAN**

OUTLET RETAIL ANCHOR  
SCALE: 1"=400'-0"



## C. Major-Retail Center with Residential Mixed-Use Concept

Although mixed-use developments traditionally and typically favor smaller retail storefronts combined with restaurants, entertainment, and residential units that are proximate to one another, the use of large-retail centers has become a dominant mode of commerce in recent years.

There may be opportunities to be gained through the establishment of large-retail center within the Mill District. Both mixed-use and large-retail can provide benefits for the city. The desire for additional retail to meet local needs has clearly been established and the Mill District has long been seen as a reasonable place for new retail. Land for additional residential uses in Fortuna is limited for a variety of reasons and the Mill District has both existing residential land that can be redeveloped and land upon which new housing can be constructed.



Exhibit 6

This Mixed-Use development, shown under construction, contains one large and two mid-size retail stores in addition to a residential complex.

Ultimately it is design that will determine whether or not a large-retail project can meet the standards for Mixed-Use. The relationship between commercial and residential uses is key to fostering a sense of neighborhood and identity for residents of the Mill District. Just as downtown residents share their immediate retail space with others who come downtown strictly to shop, so will residents of the Mill District share their retail area with others. It is the number of the additional shoppers that will be the main difference.



Exhibit 8

A mix of residential, office, service, and supporting retail uses now surrounds this pre-existing major-retail store. The original parking lot had been built to standards used by major retailers for a single Supercenter, yet the modified lot still provides adequate parking for the entire project.

Major retail stores, those 80,000 sq. ft. and larger<sup>1</sup> (e.g. Home Depot, Wal-Mart, Lowes, and Kohl's) provide a full range of goods and services in departments and through associated businesses located either within the main store or with separate doorways separate from the retailer's main entrance. With proper design and layout major retail stores can be successfully located within a mixed-use area. In order to ensure that the basic tenants of a mixed-use area are retained, development standards will be employed. Among these basic concepts is a desire to maintain a commercial/retail facility that is attractive and convenient to both pedestrians and motorists. Because of the proximate nature of commercial and residential uses an emphasis on the pedestrian experience not always found with major retail stores will be emphasized.

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<sup>1</sup> FMC 17.54.140 Major retail developments

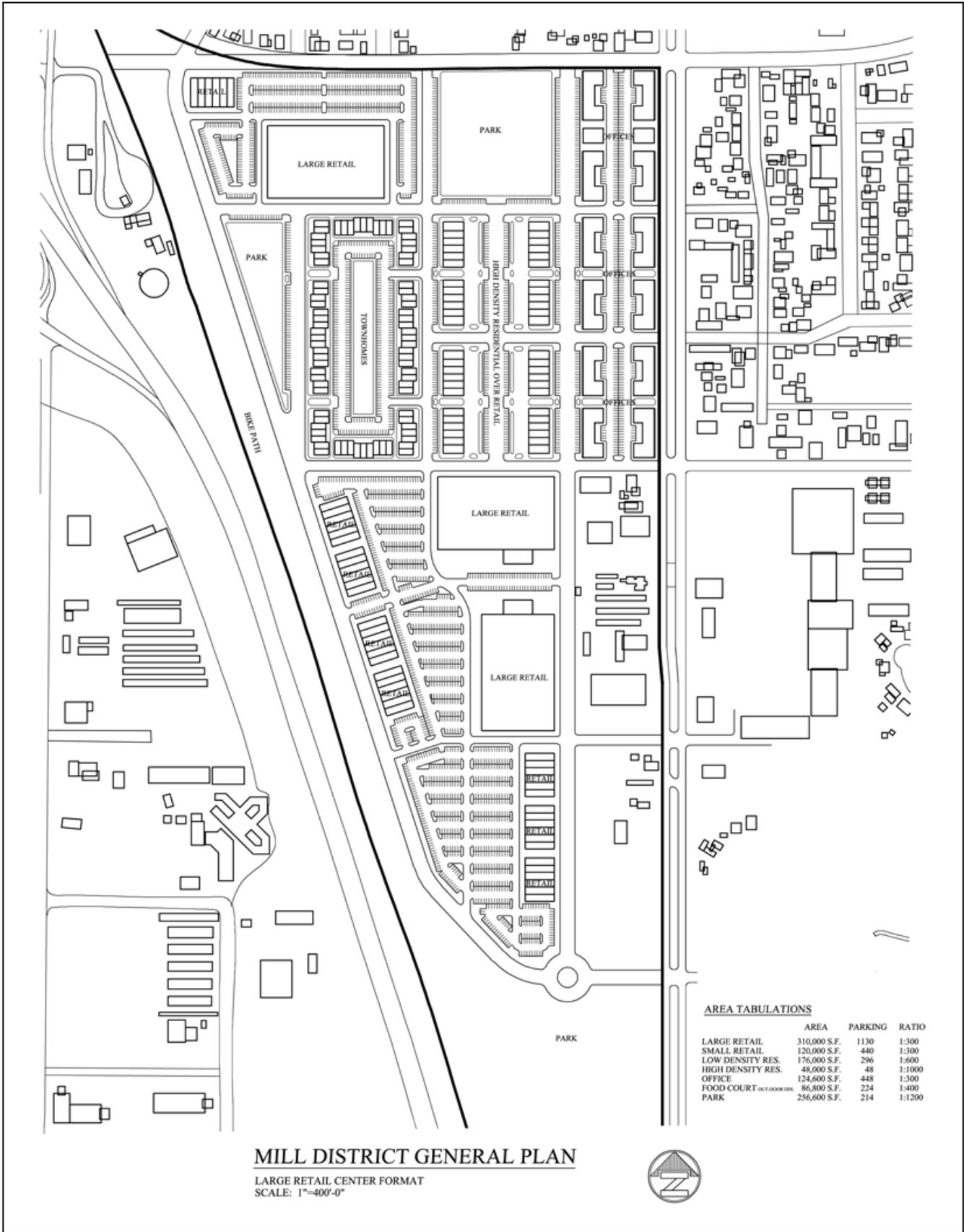
### **The Mill District Developed with a Large-Retail Center Format**

This map is a generic conceptual view of the Mill District with Retail, Office, Residential, and public spaces that, in theory, could be developed within the Mill District. This rendering does not represent any development plans that have been presented to the City and the Staff is currently unaware of anyone proposing such a layout. This illustration is simply to show how a mixed-use project could look.

There is no representation in this illustration of property ownership and no implications of proposed zoning changes are being indicated. This illustration is for conceptual purposes only.

The Large-Retail anchor format presents a significantly different land use pattern with a major focus on new retail development on the Brownfield Area of the Mill District. Residential uses will be limited primarily to that area now developed with single-family residences and perhaps with a City preferred expansion along street extensions of First, Second, and Third Avenues as well as South Fifteenth and Sixteenth Streets.

LDR	5 – 20%	(low density residential)
HDR	5 - 20%	(high density residential)
Retail	50 – 75%	(Two or three stand alone boxes)
Office	0 – 5%	(Primarily on Newburg or Fortuna Blvd)
Public	5 – 10%	(excluding south of Strongs Creek)



**AREA TABULATIONS**

	AREA	PARKING	RATIO
LARGE RETAIL	310,000 S.F.	1130	1:300
SMALL RETAIL	120,000 S.F.	440	1:300
LOW DENSITY RES.	176,000 S.F.	296	1:600
HIGH DENSITY RES.	48,000 S.F.	48	1:1000
OFFICE	124,600 S.F.	448	1:300
FOOD COURT OUTDOOR DIN.	86,800 S.F.	224	1:400
PARK	256,600 S.F.	214	1:1200

**MILL DISTRICT GENERAL PLAN**

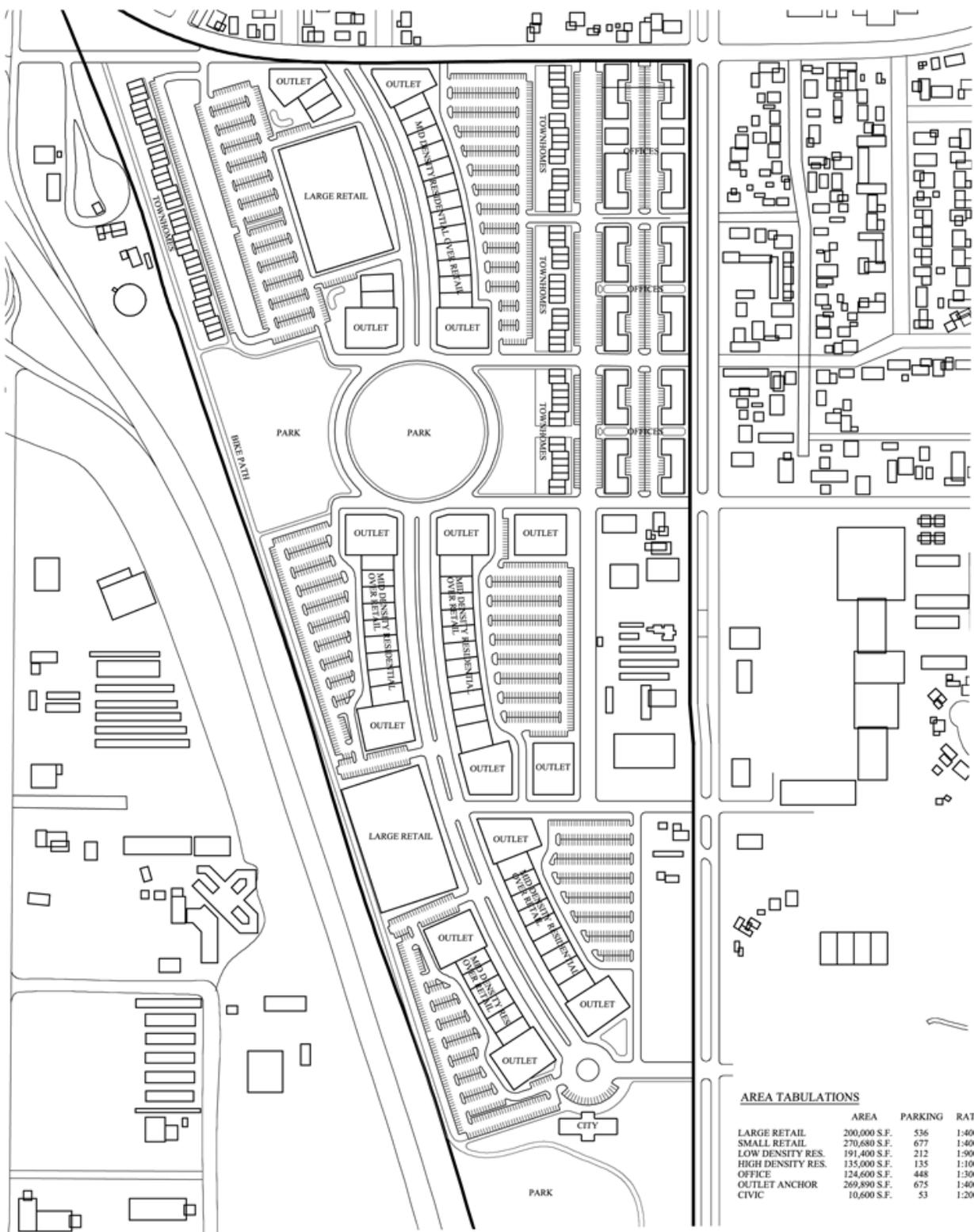
LARGE RETAIL CENTER FORMAT  
SCALE: 1"=400'-0"



### **The Mill District Developed with a mix of Retail Formats**

This map is a generic conceptual view of the Mill District with Retail, Office, Residential, and public spaces that, in theory, could be developed within the Mill District. This rendering does not represent any development plans that have been presented to the City and the Staff is currently unaware of anyone proposing such a layout. This illustration is simply to show how a mixed-use project could look.

There is no representation in this illustration of property ownership and no implications of proposed zoning changes are being indicated. This illustration is for conceptual purposes only.



**AREA TABULATIONS**

	AREA	PARKING	RATIO
LARGE RETAIL	200,000 S.F.	536	1:400
SMALL RETAIL	270,680 S.F.	677	1:400
LOW DENSITY RES.	191,400 S.F.	212	1:900
HIGH DENSITY RES.	135,000 S.F.	135	1:1000
OFFICE	124,600 S.F.	448	1:300
OUTLET ANCHOR	269,890 S.F.	675	1:400
CIVIC	10,600 S.F.	53	1:200

**MILL DISTRICT GENERAL PLAN**  
 SMALL STOREFRONT WITH RESIDENTIAL  
 SCALE: 1"=400'-0"



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# Appendix

## Illustrations

The following section contains a variety of illustrations designed to evoke thought and to demonstrate how developers can make use of the area. These illustrations do not represent any actual plan under consideration by the City. Nor do these plans dictate building style, location of structures or exact layouts of public/private spaces.

These illustrations do, however, provide the public and developers with a concept of how this Area Plan is to be implemented. That is, even if one developer does not propose to construct or build-out the entire areas, he or she will be responsible for creating an overall plan and view with an indication of how their project will fit into a larger picture.

Much of the Mill District is within the Fortuna Redevelopment Area. As a result, there are opportunities for a public – private partnership to improve traffic, drainage, and intensity of land development resulting in an improved project and improved benefits for the community. As a result, some of the plans show radically different uses for parcel of land compared to what may currently exist. While physical change in the Mill District may not occur overnight, any plans that are made should be developed with an eye to the future and to the realization that over time parcels will change hands, may be a merged under one ownership, and have a higher potential value if developed in conjunction with a larger development.

Each of the three aerial views is based on one of the line drawings in the preceding sections. In addition to residential, office and restaurant/storefront shopping locations, one plan includes three major retail (big box) stores. The second plan utilizes mid-size retailers. The third plan provides a mix of large and mid-size stores to complement the other uses in the mix.

Common threads that weave through the plans that should be incorporated into any plan:

- Road connections to Redwood Way, Strongs Creek Drive, and Newburg Road.
- Re-alignment of Newburg Road at 12th Street
- Public uses along Strongs Creek within the 100-year flood zone
- Pedestrian – bicycle path independent of roadways the length of the Mill District with connections to the Strongs Creek Trail subway under the NWPRR tracks and US-101.

## Figure 1a

### **Aerial view of the Mill District with big-box retail stores anchoring the retail environment.\***

How might big-box retail be part of a mixed-use project? In this concept a pedestrian based shopping boulevard is seen running between a park on Newburg Rd. and a large-retail store (big-box) building. Mixed-use structures (*dark blue*) combining retail, restaurants, and services on the ground floor with residential and office space above line the spacious sidewalk. Building pads for two additional large-retail stores are shown with parking provided. Each of the three big-box stores is approximately 100,000 sq. ft. gross floor area.

Additional residential units (*light blue*) are located in a rectangle surrounding a parking area and common green. The front of each building faces onto a street.

Offices or light industrial buildings are shown (*grey*) between Spring St. and Fortuna Blvd. Parking is provided on the back side of most buildings or between adjoining uses to facilitate shared parking opportunities.

Smaller satellite retail stores (*tan*) are located in the area to provide space for services not available in the big-box retail centers.

To improve traffic flow and public safety, Newburg Rd. has been straightened and intersects 12<sup>th</sup> Street at the on-ramp to northbound US 101. Extensions of Redwood Way and a new road (next to Hot Brew and Wildwood Saws) connect with the Mill District's interior roads. Spring St. becomes a through street bordered by a park area adjacent to the existing residential areas. Randolph Way is extended across Newburg into the Mill District and connects to other interior roads.

Common to each of the plans is a pedestrian and cycling path that runs parallel to the railroad tracks. This path connects to the *Eel River to the Headwaters* trail that follows Strongs Creek. In the event that a light-rail transit system is constructed between Scotia and McKinleyville, a station constructed on site conveniently close to residents of the Mill District would be possible.

Land formerly used as a mill pond and lumber deck lie in the flood plain and/or flood-way and would be very expensive or impossible to develop commercially. This part of the District is shown as a public park on both sides of Strongs Creek. Because of flooding potential, this area is not suited to commercial or residential purposes. However it could be an ideal location for amenities desired by the community including a skateboard park, a duck pond for radio controlled model boats, ball fields, and/or a dog park.

\* *This illustration does not represent any proposal before the City. Its sole purpose is to demonstrate how a mixed use project could take advantage of the area provided within the District in the year 2030.*



*City of  
Fortuna*

**MILL DISTRICT GENERAL PLAN  
LARGE RETAIL CENTER FORMAT  
SCHEME ONE**

**BROWN DESIGNS**  
 327 MAIN STREET  
 FERDALE, CA 95536      PHONE 707.215.5390  
 FAX 707.215.3131

**Figure 1b**  
**Interior view of the Mill District's main sidewalk area.**

In this scheme a broad sidewalk creates a public space that is multipurpose. Large enough to accommodate outdoor events it is seen here with tables and chairs to. A variety of restaurants mixed with retail stores can be seen on the left side. Above these are second story residential areas.



*City of  
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**MILL DISTRICT GENERAL PLAN  
OUTDOOR DINING AREA**

**BROWN DESIGNS**  
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FERNDALE, CA 95536  
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**Figure 1c**

**Interior view of the Mill District's main pedestrian street**

In this scheme the broad sidewalk can be seen to the left. The street runs between a home improvement center and a community park. Parking is located on the back side of the building.



*City of  
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**MILL DISTRICT GENERAL PLAN  
OUTLET STORE ANCHOR FORMAT**

**BROWN DESIGNS**  
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FERNDALE, CA 95536  
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FAX 707.215.3131

**Figure 1d**  
**Interior view of the Mill District's mixed use buildings.**

Seen here are a number of smaller spaces suited for specialty retail, restaurants, and related businesses. The Residential units include outdoor decks that overlook the street scene below.



*City of  
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**MILL DISTRICT GENERAL PLAN  
OUTDOOR DINING AREA**

**BROWN DESIGNS**  
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## Figure 2a

### **Aerial view of the Mill District with mid-size retail stores anchoring the main intersections.\***

In this concept a main shopping boulevard is seen running between Newburg Road, Redwood Way, and Strongs Creek Drive. Factory Outlet Stores and mid-size retailers make up the main economic engine in this scheme.

The (*dark blue*) buildings adjoining the Outlet stores are mixed-use structures that contain a mix of retail, restaurants, and services on the ground floor with residential and office space above. Two blocks of the street are lined with office buildings (*light gray*). The office workers are a reliable source of mid-day shoppers and diners.

To improve traffic and reduce congestion, Newburg Rd. has been straightened and now intersects 12<sup>th</sup> Street at the on-ramp to northbound US 101. Extensions of Redwood Way and a new road next to Hot Brew and Wildwood Saws connect with the main shopping street. Spring St. becomes a through street bordered by a park area adjacent to the residential areas. Randolph Way is extended across Newburg into the area and links with other interior roads.

Parking is located behind the buildings so preserve a more pleasant and inviting street scene. Residential units are located on the second level of the mixed use buildings. Townhouse homes (*light blue*) surround a neighborhood park in the lower left corner of the district.

Common to each of the plans is a pedestrian and cycling path that runs parallel to the railroad tracks. This path connects to the *Eel River to the Headwaters* trail that follows Strongs Creek. In the event that a light-rail transit system is constructed between Scotia and McKinleyville, a station constructed on site conveniently close to residents of the Mill District would be possible.

Land formerly used as a mill pond and lumber deck lie in the flood plain and/or flood-way and would be very expensive or impossible to develop commercially. This part of the District is shown as a public park on both sides of Strongs Creek. Because of flooding potential, this area is not suited to commercial or residential purposes. However it could be an ideal location for amenities desired by the community including a skateboard park, a duck pond for radio controlled model boats, ball fields, and/or a dog park.

\* *This illustration does not represent any proposal before the City. Its sole purpose is to demonstrate how a mixed use project could take advantage of the area provided within the District in the year 2030.*



*City of  
Fortuna*

**MILL DISTRICT GENERAL PLAN  
OUTLET STORE ANCHOR FORMAT**

**BROWN DESIGNS**  
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 FERDALE, CA 95536 FAX 707.215.5131

**Figure 2b**

**A view of the Mill District as seen from within a cluster of four retail stores.**

This view and the next (2c) give a sense of the scale of development under this scheme. The anchor retail stores maintain a sense of scale for the district and the median strip down the boulevard duplicates the one on Fortuna Blvd.

The slightly lower building heights prevent a sense of being in a large city atmosphere, but the amenities of the pedestrian environment found in a more urban setting are preserved.



*City of  
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**MILL DISTRICT GENERAL PLAN  
OUTLET STORE ANCHOR FORMAT**

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**Figure 2c**

**A view of the Mill District as seen from within a cluster of four retail stores.**

This view and the previous one (2b) give a sense of easily accessed development under this scheme. The anchor retail stores maintain a sense of scale for the district and the median strip down the boulevard duplicates the one on Fortuna Blvd.

The intersection contains a sense of space but places a number of retail and dining opportunities within an easy walk.



*City of  
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**MILL DISTRICT GENERAL PLAN  
OUTLET STORE ANCHOR FORMAT  
SCHEME TWO**

**BROWN DESIGNS**  
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### Figure 3a

#### **Aerial view of a mix of mid-size and big-box retail stores anchoring the district.\***

In this concept the primary boulevard forms a gentle curve between Newburg Rd. and Strongs Creek Dr. The boulevard includes a traffic roundabout with park facilities as a landmark for the district.

The (*dark blue*) buildings connecting the mid-size stores are mixed-use structures that contain a variety of retail, restaurants, and services on the ground floor with residential and office space above. Parking is provided on the back side of most buildings allowing for a cleaner street frontage to encourage pedestrian travel and, consequently, more retail activity.

To improve traffic flow and to reduce congestion, Newburg Rd. has been straightened and now intersects 12<sup>th</sup> Street at the on-ramp to northbound US 101. Extensions of Redwood Way and a new road next to Hot Brew and Wildwood Saws connect with the main shopping street. Spring St. becomes a through street bordered by an office park (*light gray*) and residential areas.

Additional residential units (*light blue*) are located parallel to the existing railroad tracks and along Spring St. shown in pale blue and surrounding a park common. Offices or light industrial buildings are shown in light grey.

A civic building (*dark gray*) overlooking the City Park area and is designed to potentially serve a variety of public needs such as youth and senior programs, library facilities, and/or meeting room space.

Common to each of the plans is a pedestrian and cycling path that runs parallel to the railroad tracks. This path connects to the *Eel River to the Headwaters* trail that follows Strongs Creek. In the event that a light-rail transit system is constructed between Scotia and McKinleyville, a station constructed on site conveniently close to residents of the Mill District would be possible.

Land formerly used as a mill pond and lumber deck lie in the flood plain and/or flood-way and would be very expensive or impossible to develop commercially. This part of the District is shown as a public park on both sides of Strongs Creek. Because of flooding potential, this area is not suited to commercial or residential purposes. However it could be an ideal location for amenities desired by the community including a skateboard park, a duck pond for radio controlled model boats, ball fields, and/or a dog park.

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*City of  
Fortuna*

**MILL DISTRICT GENERAL PLAN  
SMALL STOREFRONT WITH RESIDENTIAL  
SCHEME THREE**

**BROWN DESIGNS**  
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**Figure 3b**

**A view of the district as seen from the circular park.**

The open feeling seen between retail shops in the previous scheme is expanded in this concept. The large round park provides a focal point for the District and the center of it could hold a landmark feature such as a large flagpole, statue of Henry Rohner, or a fountain.

The single story retail stores maintain the more rural character of Fortuna and preserve the true two-story street front for the Downtown area and perhaps along Fortuna Blvd.



*City of  
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**MILL DISTRICT GENERAL PLAN  
VIEW FROM CENTRAL PARK  
SCHEME THREE**

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**Figure 3c**  
**Office buildings common to all schemes**

Office space provides many benefits to a community in addition to serving as a location for employment. The lunch crowd frequents nearby restaurants and after work many of these same people will do grocery shopping and run other errands before heading home.

For some office workers, home may be only a short walk away. With abundant retail, dining, and social activities nearby the Fortuna Mill District could become an attractive lifestyle.



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## **MILL DISTRICT GENERAL PLAN OFFICE PARK**

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FAX 707.215.3131

**Figure 3d**

**A view from the offices overlooking the community park.**

This particular park is first seen in illustration 1a at the intersection with Newburg Rd. Regardless, in each of the schemes park areas are visible from the office windows of many offices thus providing a pleasant work environment. Whether the windows are floor to ceiling or double-hung ones that can be opened to let in fresh air the view overlooking Fortuna and the Mill District can be a pleasant sight.



*City of  
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**MILL DISTRICT GENERAL PLAN  
PARK VIEW FROM OFFICE PARK**

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FERDALE, CA 95536      FAX 707.215.3131

**Figure 3e**  
**Townhouse residences near a pedestrian and cycling path.**

This is a view of the Mill District as seen from the railroad tracks in lower left area of Figure 3a.

In each of the three schemes presented are residential units that are conveniently located near retail opportunities as seen in the background of this illustration. The particular placement of these townhouses is first seen (light blue) in figure 3a. However, similar settings for the residential units can be found throughout the schemes.

Common to this scheme and to the others is the pedestrian and cycling path that begins at Newburg Rd. and that travels the length of the Mill District with a number of intersections allowing people several choices of destination.



*City of  
Fortuna*

## **MILL DISTRICT GENERAL PLAN TOWNHOMES AND BIKE PATH**

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327 MAIN STREET  
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