

CHAPTER 2: CONCEPT PLAN

The Concept Plan is an illustration of the land use and transportation concepts in the document with accompanying descriptive text. The Concept Plan does not encumber private land or limit the ability of a private land owner to develop in accordance with their current zoning or City standards. It does provide an illustration of compatible reinvestment within the Plan boundary, intended to help with the interpretation of the Plan’s goals and policies. The Concept Plan takes into account feedback from public meetings as well as comments for this Plan and The Standard development rezoning case held between 2011 and 2015. The feedback and comments were used to develop the Concept Plan and related goals and policies in Chapter 3. The Future Growth Illustration in the *Flagstaff Regional Plan 2030 (FRP30)* and some development standards from the Zoning Code were also considered in developing the Concept Plan.

The Concept Plan includes a map of potential land uses, two scenarios for streetscapes, 3D illustrations for compatible reinvestment on private property, and a park improvements illustration for Old Town Springs Park. The illustrations are indicative of a **desirable** “build-out” condition⁴ based on the goals and policies in Chapter 3. Some **illustrations could** require a rezoning or conditional use permit in order to be built in the location they are shown. The illustrations meet the parking ratio and general site-design requirements in the Zoning Code and the Plan’s policy for compatible development in each Neighborhood policy area (Map 13). These build-out illustrations have not been taken through the review process that an actual development application would be subject to and therefore do not represent “pre-approved” projects. Staff has not done a financial feasibility of these illustrations as the market and property values may change independent of the actions of the City.

Concept Map 1 shows a desirable build-out scenario for the area. Land uses and building forms assume the floodplain issues associated with the Rio de Flag Flood Control Project have been resolved (Streetscapes Scenario 2). Streetscapes Scenario 1 accounts for the Rio de Flag Flood Control Project not going through. Reinvestment that takes place in the interim may be laid out differently because of the Clay Avenue Wash floodway and floodplain issues. Due to regulatory limitations on the substantial improvement of properties in the floodplain, it is anticipated that most large-scale redevelopment in that area will occur after the Rio de Flag Flood Control Project is completed or would require flood proofing similar to the redevelopment of Barnes and Noble and College America in the Commercial Edge. The Concept Plan does not take into account utility easements and other deed restrictions.

Concept Plan Illustrations were created in SketchUp Pro by:

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Old Town Springs Concept: Mark DiLucido, RLA

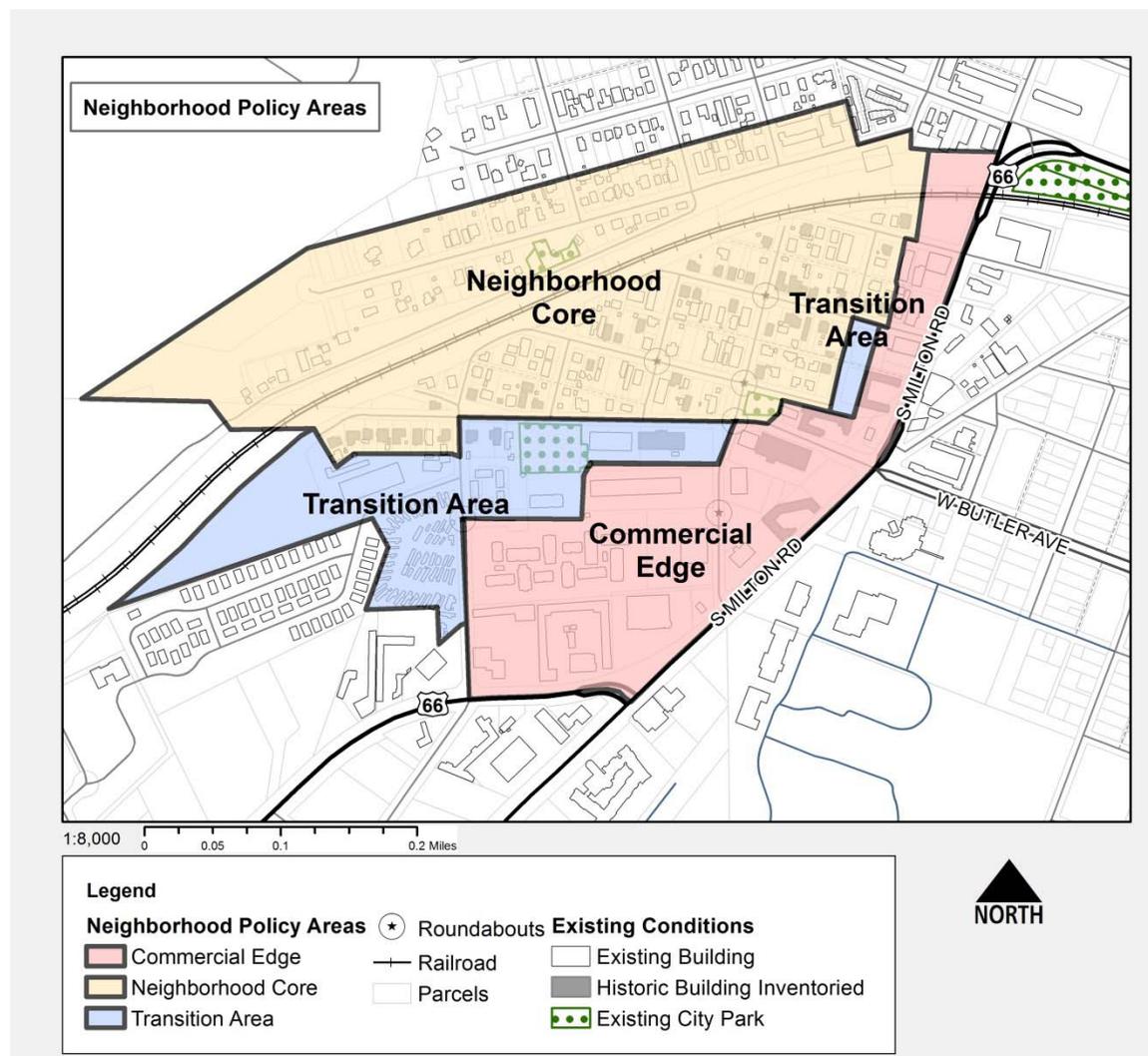
⁴ Desirable build out illustrations cannot be required. Existing entitlements cannot be changed by the Specific Plan.

WHAT ARE NEIGHBORHOOD POLICY AREAS?

La Plaza Vieja is a historically mixed-use neighborhood. In order to set goals and policies for the form and character of the built environment, neighborhood policy areas have been identified to guide the implementation of current zoning, Regional Plan direction, transportation and access, and preservation of neighborhood character. In Chapter 3, under Preserving Neighborhood Character, Goal 6 is divided into Neighborhood Core (6N), Transition Area (6T), and Commercial Edge (6C). The locations of each illustration in this chapter are primarily in the Transition Area and Commercial Edge because the desired form of buildings in these zones is not well illustrated by current examples in the area.

The City cannot change land-use (zoning) entitlements without revising its Zoning Code. If a property owner does not seek a zone change, then the goals, policies, and illustrations of the Specific Plan, like those of the Regional Plan, will be aspirational and the Zoning Code will determine what the property owner is allowed to build and what uses are available. The neighborhood policy areas are therefore not “zones,” but instead planning areas which encourage compatible development and design of a variety of land uses.

Map 13: La Plaza Vieja Neighborhood Policy Areas



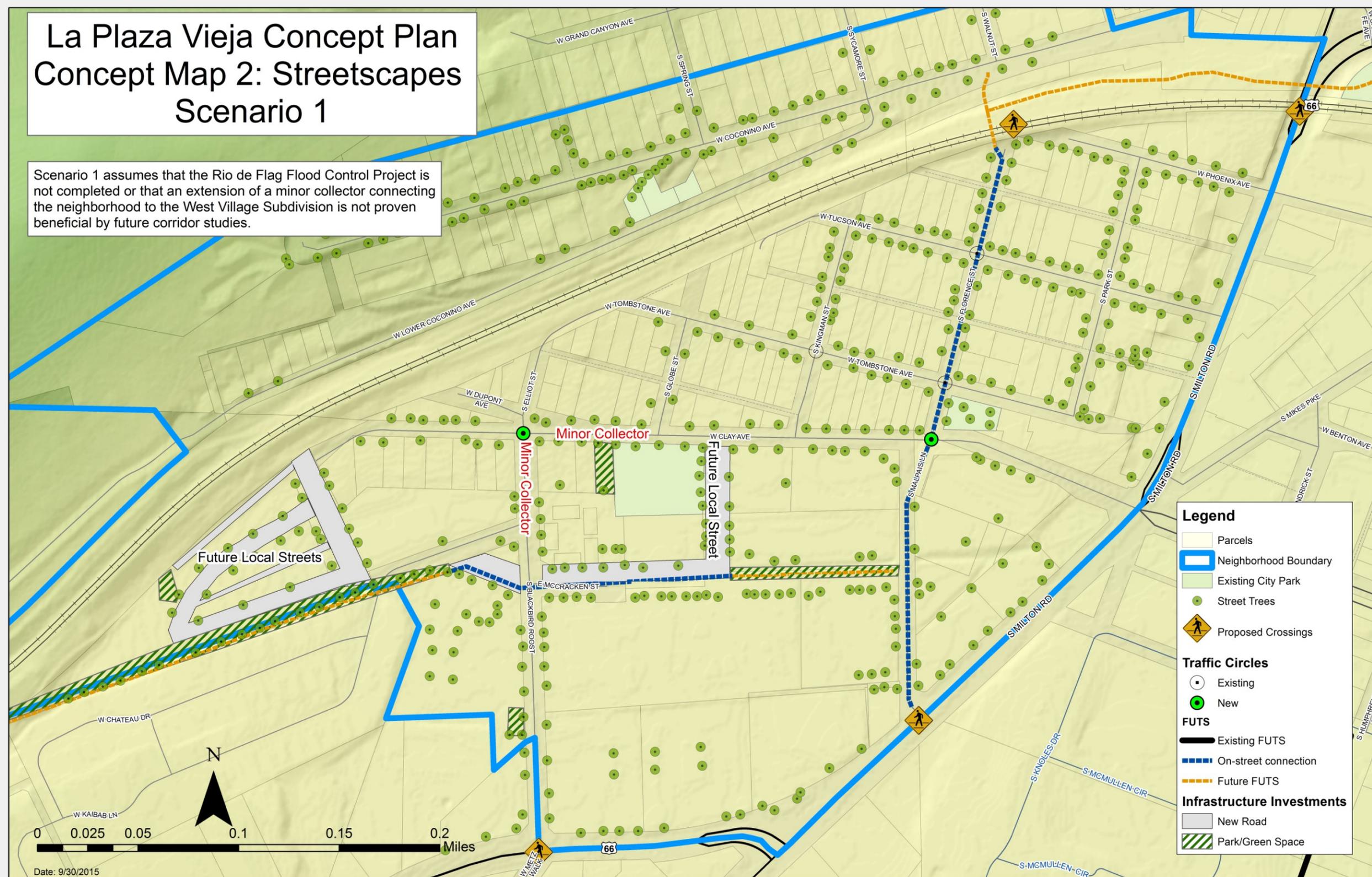
The Commercial Edge corresponds to the commercial core and corridor place types from *FRP30*. Corridors are geographically defined as a half block from the road frontage and commercial cores are typically the parcels surrounding the intersection that defines an activity center. Both of these definitions have flexibility depending on the scale of the activity center (regional or neighborhood), location, and surroundings (such as topography). The commercial core for La Plaza Vieja melds the urban neighborhood-scale activity center, suburban regional-scale activity center, and two commercial corridors into a cohesive automotive-oriented commercial area. All of the parcels in this policy area are zoned Highway Commercial (HC). **The scale of the activity center primarily determined the depth of the commercial core from the main street.** All of these place types support higher intensity of commercial, services, and mixed-use development.

The Transition Area corresponds to the pedestrian shed of activity centers as described in the *FRP30*. The description of a pedestrian shed in *FRP30* is primarily **medium to high density** residential with smaller scale commercial. La Plaza Vieja is a unique circumstance because the area that would typically be the pedestrian shed is zoned for commercial and mixed-use development. Therefore, the description of a pedestrian shed has been expanded for La Plaza Vieja to include a wider range of commercial, services, and mixed-use development at a scale and intensity that balances neighborhood preservation and the land uses that support the activity centers and corridors. The largest block in the Transition Area has a great diversity of uses ranging from single-family homes **to high density** apartment complexes closer to the activity centers and corridors. This demonstrates that this part of the neighborhood already functions as a pedestrian shed. **The smaller piece of the Transition Area is located between Park Avenue and South Milton Road and is made up of 2 vacant parcels. The potential future development of these parcels could have a major impact on the residential character of Park Avenue and would diminish important views of the Our Lady of Guadalupe steeple, from the neighborhood.** The majority of this area is already zoned **commercial, and therefore** this Plan's description of compatible and incompatible development within the Transition Area cannot limit the exercise of existing entitlements. Even though a 60-foot tall building may be an incompatible mass and scale for this area, it could be built if the parcel is currently zoned for it. All development in the commercial zones must meet the design standards for the City, and the policies of this Specific Plan can be used to determine appropriate appearance of streetscapes, landscaping, materials, form, colors, and architecture (Flagstaff Zoning Code 10-30.60.080).

The Neighborhood Core corresponds to an urban neighborhood as described in the *FRP30*. Since this is a historic neighborhood as identified on Map 14 in *FRP30*, some of the direction from the *FRP30*'s description of density and intensity appropriate for urban neighborhoods does not apply in this case. The parcels in the Neighborhood Core are all zoned Single Family Residential Neighborhood (R1N), which allows single-family homes, duplexes, and Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs). There is no design review currently for single-family homes or ADUs, but duplexes must go through concept review and design review along with their building permit. Non-conforming structures in this area may continue to be used without expansion in accordance with the Flagstaff Zoning Code 10-20.60.030.

La Plaza Vieja Concept Plan Concept Map 2: Streetscapes Scenario 1

Scenario 1 assumes that the Rio de Flag Flood Control Project is not completed or that an extension of a minor collector connecting the neighborhood to the West Village Subdivision is not proven beneficial by future corridor studies.



Legend

- Parcels
- Neighborhood Boundary
- Existing City Park
- Street Trees
- Proposed Crossings

Traffic Circles

- Existing
- New

FUTS

- Existing FUTS
- On-street connection
- Future FUTS

Infrastructure Investments

- New Road
- Park/Green Space

ILLUSTRATION 3: MCCRACKEN EXTENSION BLOCK



Figure 32: Overview of the Block South of Clay Avenue with McCracken Extension

McCracken Street currently dead ends about 250 feet east of Blackbird Roost. After the completion of the Rio de Flag floodplain improvements, it may be possible to connect the road with Malpais Lane and create a mid-block connection to Clay Avenue (Policy 6T.2). The midblock connection would



Figure 33: Commercial Building along Malpais Lane

displace the current accessible parking and playground equipment associated with the Guadalupe Park. In this case, the City would need to acquire additional property proximate to the ballpark to reestablish the playground area (Policy 3.3). The new roads would create the opportunity to have commercial, mixed-use buildings, and apartments throughout the reconfigured block and not just along Malpais Lane and Blackbird Roost (Policy 6T.1 and 6C.1). New local roads would increase the amount of on-street parking for special events at the school, park, or commercial buildings (Policy 6T.3, 6C.4, and Policy 3.1). Shared parking and driveways within this block will also increase the parking capacity for commercial businesses that would typically occupy parking spaces during the day, and apartments and the ballpark that would use the parking at night and on weekends. Proximity to transit and bicycling opportunities will also improve the efficiency of parking within this block (Goals 10, 12, and 14).



Figure 34: View of Shared Parking, West Side of Block



Figure 35: Three-Story Mixed Use along McCracken Extension



Figure 36: Multi-Family Facing New Local Street, Mid-Block

The buildings illustrated in this block along the McCracken Street Extension include (from west to east) an office building, a mixed-use building with commercial and residential uses, facing apartment buildings with stoops on the street, and a corner-entry commercial building at the corner of Malpais Lane and the new McCracken Street Extension that enhances the entrance into the neighborhood. Illustration 3 shows an adequate amount of surface parking for all residential, commercial, and mixed-use buildings on the block. Shared parking makes parking requirements more feasible with a parking demand study. Features that make these designs compatible with the character of La Plaza Vieja are their use of locally significant materials, paseos to allow views into interior courtyards from the street, gables and hipped roofs, cupolas, the use of residential features in the design (dormers, stoops, balconies), and landscaping (Policy 6T.1 and 6C.1). All buildings are tallest along McCracken Street and step back as they approach Clay Avenue. Buildings in the adjacent Commercial Edge may be taller in the future. The office building at the corner of Blackbird Roost and the McCracken Street Extension has a roofline that mimics the historic school at the opposite corner of the block, including cupolas (Policy 6T.1). Patio spaces, residential porches, courtyards,

balconies, and various civic spaces all appear in Illustration 3 as a way of blending residential and commercial spaces. The commercial buildings along the McCracken Extension feature recessed entries and arched hallways, which, along with street trees and gathering spaces, contribute to a varied and pedestrian-oriented streetscape. Residential entryways also face the street throughout the block, and are given elevated and recessed entries and landscape buffers to better distinguish private from public space.

ILLUSTRATION 5: TRANSITION AREA ADAPTIVE REUSE



Figure 44: Adaptive Reuse of Old Fire Station along Malpais Lane

This illustration shows a potential repurposing of the former firehouse building, playing off the firehouse history but adding architectural features such as patios, low walls, and other features that make it relate better to human scale and the new uses (Goals 6, 6C, 8, Policy 8.4). It also shows the possibility of a second floor that contains four residential units (Policy 6C.1). This space could potentially be offices if adequate parking could be secured (Policy 6C.4).



Figure 45: Alternate View of Adaptive Reuse from Milton Road

These are illustrative examples of desired outcomes from the Plan, and do not impact existing land entitlement or limit the ability of a private land owner to develop other uses in accordance with the City Code and Standards.

- Buildings that mimic architectural features of established residences, the school, or the armory, or incorporates elements of the significant historic periods of the railroad and timber industry.
- Buildings that incorporate paseos or walkable courtyards through buildings or a landscaped plaza.
- Civic and gathering spaces and uses, such as community centers, parks, and schools.

Examples of incompatible developments within the Transition Area include but are not limited to: commercial and mixed-use buildings with multiple-level structured parking garages;⁵ buildings over three stories in height that are taller than buildings in the Commercial Edge; metal buildings; buildings without compatible or historically appropriate architectural details; and buildings without doors and windows that face the neighborhood and sidewalks.

POLICY 6T.2: Extend the urban street grid from Clay Avenue south and west to McCracken Place in order to provide a smaller block atmosphere in the Transition Area. Public streets and alleys are preferred to culs-de-sac and private driveways.

POLICY 6T.3: Connections between parking areas and shared parking and driveways are encouraged in the Transition Area.

POLICY 6T.4: Provide bicycle and pedestrian connectivity from the Neighborhood Core to commercial developments within the Transition Area.

POLICY 6T.5: Medium density housing in the Transition Area is preferred when using building types that protect the neighborhood character of La Plaza Vieja.

POLICY 6T.6: Support opportunities for willing property owners to reduce entitlements in the Transition Area to ensure future development is appropriately scaled to the Neighborhood Core regardless of ownership.

POLICY 6T.7: Design new buildings to minimize impacts to views of the San Francisco Peaks, Mars Hill, Old Main Historic District, Mt. Elden, or Our Lady of Guadalupe Church from residential streets and public parks.

GOAL #6C: ENHANCE THE **COMMERCIAL EDGE**

Plan for and design Milton Road, Route 66, and Malpais Lane as mixed use and commercial corridors that are compatible with the La Plaza Vieja character and provide services and jobs for Flagstaff residents.

Related FRP30 Goals: FRP30 identifies the Commercial Edge (see Map 13) roughly north of the intersection of Malpais Lane and Milton Road as the core of an urban activity center and associated corridor. South of Malpais Lane, the Commercial Edge is the core of a Suburban Activity Center and associated corridor. Policy LU.18.2: Strive for activity centers and corridors that are characterized by contextual and distinctive identities, derived from history, environmental features, a mix of uses, well-designed public spaces, parks, plazas, and high-quality design. Policy LU.18.9: Plan activity centers and corridors appropriate to their respective regional or neighborhood scale.

POLICY 6C.1: Development within the Commercial Edge is compatible with La Plaza Vieja character. Compatible development includes:

⁵ Multiple-level parking garages may be considered compatible where the size of the lot or its width would otherwise limit its ability to develop in a manner that would otherwise be considered compatible with the neighborhood character.

- Buildings with gabled roofs where they face the Transition Area and Neighborhood Core.
- Commercial and mixed-use buildings with architecture and form that enhances the comfort of the pedestrian environment on South Milton Road and interior neighborhood roads (if applicable).
- Commercial and mixed-use buildings that provide commercial services to tourists and residents on the first floor facing the street.
- Commercial and mixed-use buildings with architecture that faces the neighborhood and the corridor.
- Buildings that mimic architectural features of established residences, the school, or the armory, or incorporates elements of the significant historic periods of the railroad and timber industry.
- Buildings with outdoor seating, paseos, or walkable courtyards through buildings.
- Office uses and residential units above or behind commercial buildings.

POLICY 6C.2: Consider impacts to views of Flagstaff’s iconic scenery (i.e., the San Francisco Peaks, Our Lady of Guadalupe Church steeple, and NAU’s Old Main) and landscapes from the Neighborhood Core and the roadway, when reviewing development applications in the Commercial Edge.

POLICY 6C.3: Recognize the history of automotive tourism along Route 66 by preserving and enhancing National Scenic Byway-related landmarks in good condition, such as the L Motel and the Armory (Natural Grocers building).

POLICY 6C.4: Connections between parking areas and shared parking and driveways are encouraged in the Transition Area.

POLICY 6C.5: High occupancy housing, such as rooming and boarding, single room occupancy, and dormitories, may be permitted provided that the project mitigates the effects on the neighborhood including appropriate architecture, increased parking to account for occupancy, landscaping, traffic calming, and street trees.



Figure 57: Neighborhood Policy Area Photos

Neighborhood Core (Upper Left) Commercial Edge (Lower Left)

GOAL #6T: ENCOURAGE CONTEXT-APPROPRIATE DEVELOPMENT IN THE TRANSITION AREA BETWEEN NEIGHBORHOOD AND COMMERCIAL CORRIDORS

Implementation Strategy 6T.1: For developments over 35 feet tall, step back buildings so they are closer to the neighborhood scale away from Milton Road and Route 66. Incorporate residential scale details, such as windows, doors and porches, on the building elevation facing the residential neighborhood.

Implementation Strategy 6T.2: For developments over 35 feet tall, buildings should have street-level design features that provide a pedestrian-friendly sidewalk environment next to the building.

Implementation Strategy 6T.3: Rezone all City-owned parks in La Plaza Vieja to the Public Facilities zone.

Implementation Strategy 6T.4: Incentivize rezoning of Highway Commercial parcels in the Transition Area to zones with lower height, mass, scale, density, and intensity of redevelopment to meet plan goals and policies. For example, in order to develop housing without a mixed-use component, a property in the transition area could be rezoned to Medium Density or High Density Residential. The Planning Director may submit applications on behalf of property owners to request voluntary downzoning for parcels in the Transition Area, reducing the cost of the application. Also consider buying development rights for key parcels to reduce entitlements, transfer of development rights, financial credits towards building permit fees, or other means of compensating property owners for voluntarily reducing mass, scale, density, and intensity.

GOAL #6C: ENHANCE THE COMMERCIAL EDGE

Implementation Strategy 6C.1: Consider development of enhanced design standards for first floors of commercial and mixed-use buildings in the Commercial Edge.

Implementation Strategy 6C.2: Encourage LPVNA to participate and build partnerships with local businesses around Route 66 events as a forum for telling La Plaza Vieja’s story in Flagstaff history.

Implementation Strategy 6C.3: Incorporate residential scale details, such as windows, doors and porches, on the building elevation facing the Neighborhood Core or residences in the Transition Area.

PRESERVING HISTORIC IDENTITY

GOAL #7: PRESERVE AND ENHANCE EXISTING HOUSING STOCK

Implementation Strategy 7.1*: LPVNA to support efforts to establish a pilot rehabilitation program for rental housing in La Plaza Vieja.

Implementation Strategy 7.2: Empower LPVNA to find non-federal grant funding for projects that can’t meet federal thresholds because of costs or sound mitigation issues.