

## Introduction

The City of Davis is preparing the [2021 – 2029 Housing Element Update](#) to evaluate current and future housing conditions and identify housing sites that will meet the community’s needs. Part of the Housing Element Update is completing the Regional Housing Needs Allocation, which is the number of units that each city must plan to accommodate within the next eight years as a requirement under State law. Early technical analysis completed for the Housing Element Update has identified enough sites to meet the requirements for single-family housing, accessory dwelling units (in-law units), small-scale rental buildings, and condominiums/townhouses. The analysis has also identified some of the sites needed to meet the requirements for medium and large multi-family rental housing developments. The City now needs to identify additional sites to accommodate at least 230 more multi-family rental units. To meet State requirements, these sites must allow 30 dwelling units or more per acre of land.



Example of Multi-Family Rental Housing  
(32 dwelling units per acre)

From March 9 – April 2, 2021, the City of Davis implemented a three-week virtual community workshop for the 2021 – 2029 Housing Element Update to engage with community in a discussion around strategies to provide equitable housing. The project team received responses from 116 participants.

## Methodology

The [virtual workshop page](#) included an informational video that explained the Housing Element Update, the Regional Housing Needs Allocation (RHNA) objectives and program, an explanation of the reason for the rezoning strategies to meet the RHNA requirement, and description of each strategy. Participants were asked to comment on the five proposed rezoning strategies and whether or not the City should pursue those strategies.



Informational project video thumbnail

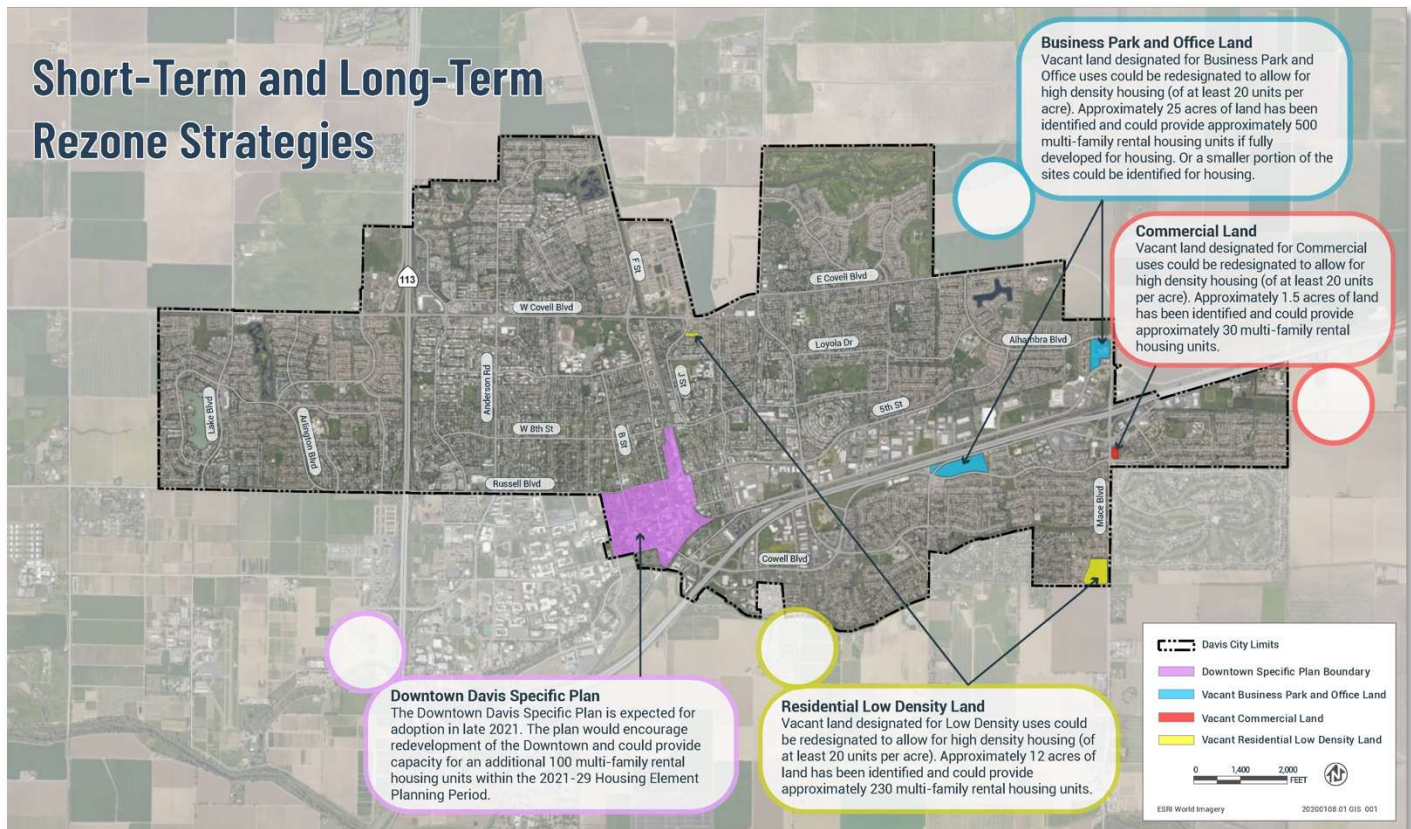
The proposed rezoning strategies are as follows:

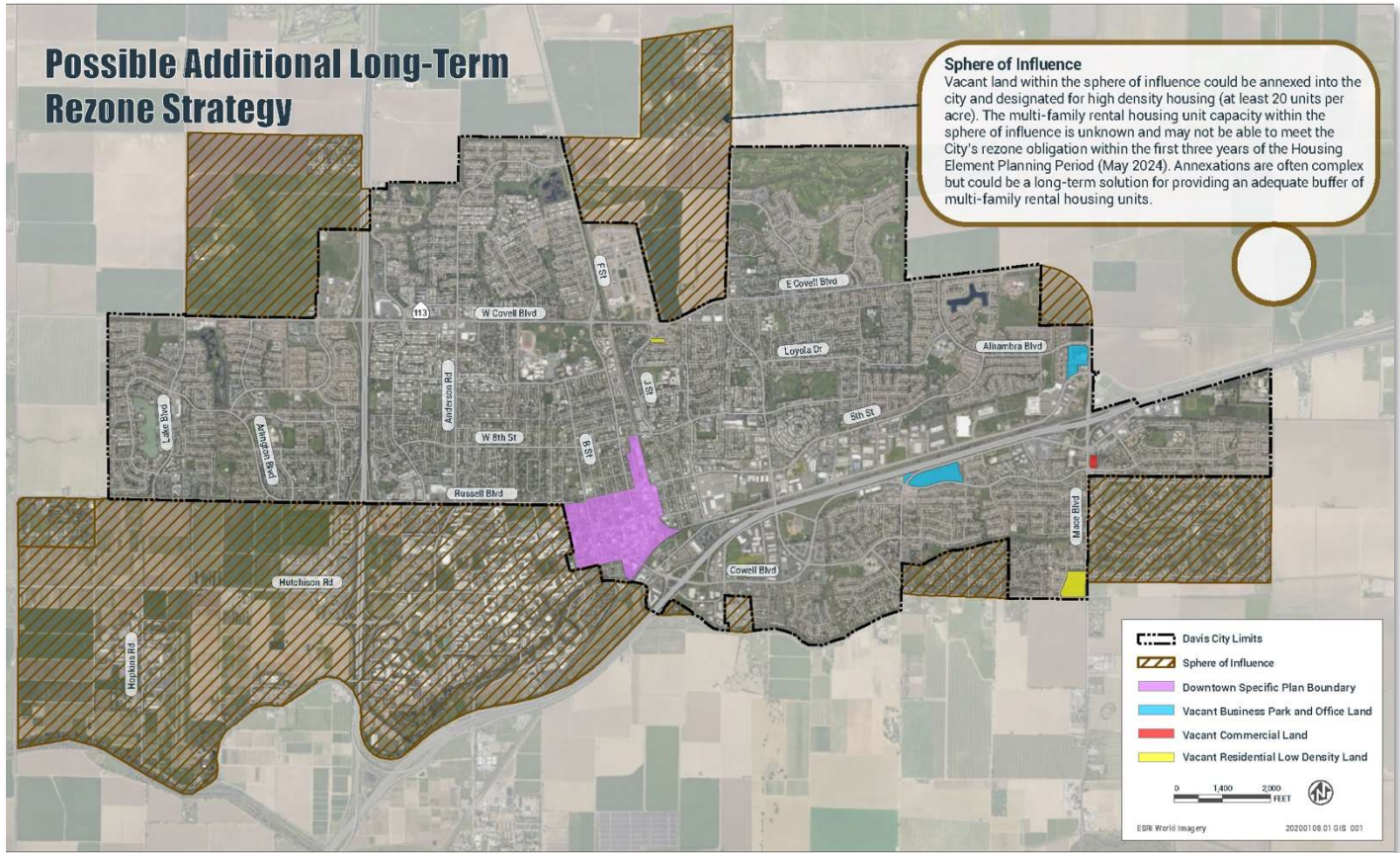
1. **Business Park and Office Land:** Redesignate and use vacant land designated for Business Park and Office uses to allow for high density housing (of at least 20 units per acre). Approximately 25 acres of land has been identified and could provide approximately 500 multi-family rental housing units if fully developed for housing. Or a smaller portion of the sites could be identified for housing.

2. Commercial Land: Redesignate and use vacant land designated for Commercial to allow for high density housing (of at least 20 units per acre). Approximately 1.5 acres of land has been identified and could provide approximately 30 multi-family rental housing units.
3. Residential Low-Density Land: Redesignate and use vacant land designated for Low Density uses to allow for high density housing (of at least 30 units per acre). Approximately 12 acres of land have been identified and could provide approximately 230 lower income units.
4. Downtown Davis Specific Plan: The Downtown Davis Specific Plan is expected for adoption in late 2021. The plan would encourage redevelopment of the Downtown and could provide capacity for an additional 100 lower income units within the 2021-29 Housing Element Planning Period.
5. Sphere of Influence: Annex vacant land within the sphere of influence into the city and designated for high density housing (at least 30 units per acre). The multi-family rental housing unit capacity within the sphere of influence is unknown and may not be able to meet the City's rezone obligation within the first three years of the Housing Element Planning Period (May 2024). Annexations are often complex but could be a long-term solution for providing an adequate buffer of multi-family rental housing units.

## Rezoning Strategy Maps

Below are the rezoning strategy maps used in the Virtual Community Workshop.





### Building Awareness

During the three-week outreach process, the project team implemented a public awareness campaign to increase community participation. To help spread the word about the virtual community workshop, the project team distributed an informational flier via email distribution and community partners, and implemented an earned media and social media campaign. Below is a summary of the outcomes and metrics garnered by the education and awareness campaign.

### Community Partnerships

Community partners were identified and contacted to discuss the City of Davis' planning efforts for the Housing Element Update and its corresponding public outreach opportunity. These partners included representatives from affordable housing advocates, community service groups, disability advocates, business interests, environmental advocates, low-income populations, neighborhood associations, residential developers, senior housing, university students and underrepresented populations. As a result of this outreach, the following organizations shared information about the questionnaire with the public through social media or email:

- Yolo County Housing
- Yolo County Health and Human Services
- Mutual Housing California
- Davis Chamber of Commerce
- Downtown Davis Business Association
- Yolo Healthy Aging Alliance
- House Sacramento

### Earned Media

In addition to partnering with local organizations, the project team sent a media release sharing information about the virtual community workshop to 20 local news outlets. As a result, the following media outlets published the media release:

- [Daily Democrat](#)
- [Davis Enterprise](#)
- [Davis Vanguard](#)

### Social Media

The project team also shared information about the virtual community workshop through a targeted Facebook post. The following social media analytics include reach, post engagements, and link clicks. Reach refers to the total number of people who have viewed the social media advertisement. Post engagement includes all actions that people take involving ads while they are running. Post engagements can include actions such as reacting to, commenting on or sharing the ad, claiming an offer, viewing a photo or video, or clicking on a link. Below is a summary of the results:

- Post #1: (3/10/2021)
  - 4,748 impressions (views)
  - 67 engagements
  - 59 link clicks



Social media boosted post

The City of Davis also posted information about the virtual community workshop on Facebook, Twitter and NextDoor.

### Digital Content Distribution

To raise awareness about this effort the team sent three e-blasts on March 10<sup>th</sup>, 16<sup>th</sup>, and 22<sup>nd</sup> to a database of 1,500 community members who have participated in other Davis land-use related projects and an additional 180 community members collected from the Davis Housing Element Update website. Below shows the email distribution metrics:

- [E-blast #1 \(Constant Contact\)](#)

- Sent: 1,268
- Opened: 429
- Click rate: 75
- E-blast #2 (Constant Contact)
  - Sent: 1272
  - Open rate: 398
  - Click rate: 73
- E-blast #3 (Constant Contact)
  - Sent: 1294
  - Open rate: 359
  - Click rate: 71

In addition to the e-blast, the team sent personal emails to all 94 participants from the Housing Needs Virtual Workshop conducted in November 2020.

## Results

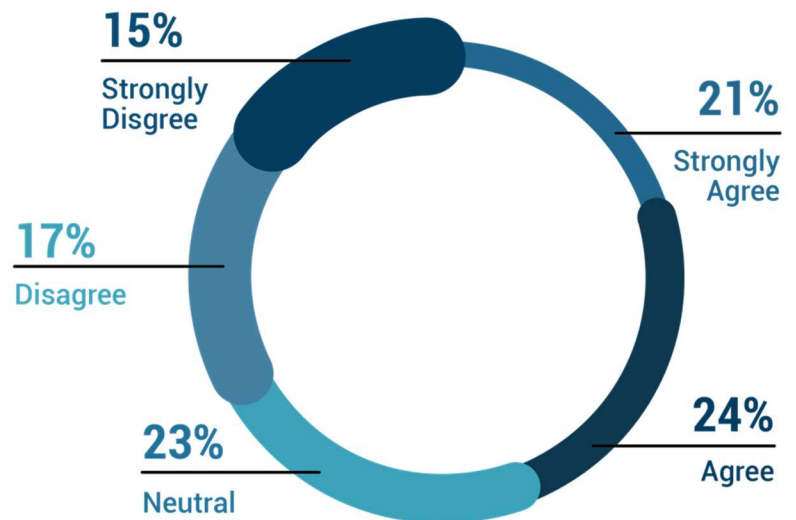
Below is a summary of community responses to the workshop, represented by graphs.

### Strategy 1: Business Park and Office Land

#### Business Park and Office Land



Approximately **30 acres** of land identified  
Could provide **600 low-income units**



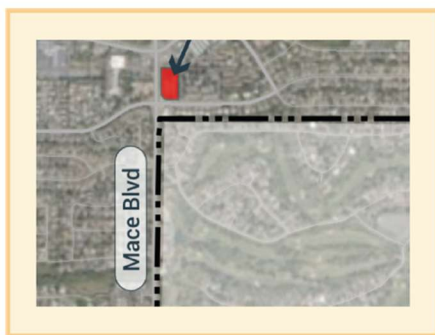
Participant's opinions were split on the proposed strategy to rezone Business Park and Office Land, although responses were generally positive. Those who agreed that the City should pursue this strategy liked that the proposed sites would accommodate high-density housing well and be located close to commercial services such as groceries, greenbelt access, and public transit stops. Participants who supported this strategy also pointed out that many of the sites identified have been sitting vacant for long periods of time and need to be developed.

Proponents noted that the City already has a large volume of office space, and with more people working from home, it would make sense to rezone this land for high-density rental housing.

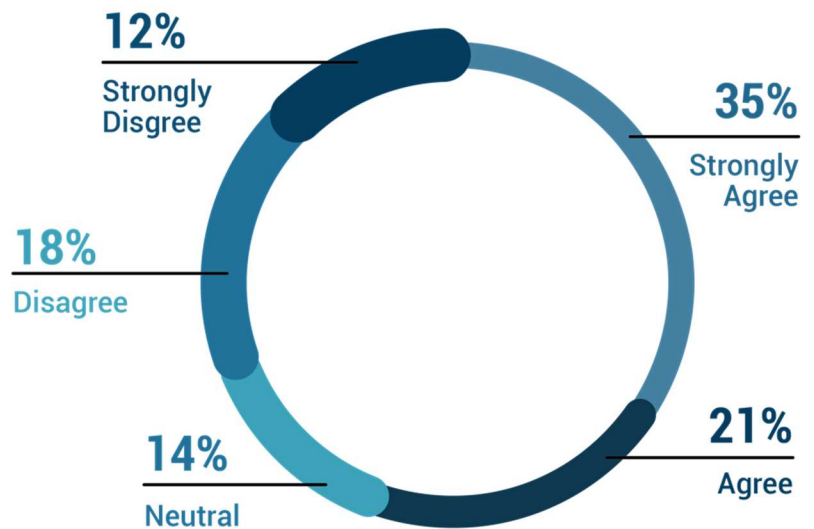
Many participants who were opposed to this strategy did not like that most of the sites identified are located close to the freeway, leading to health hazards and noise pollution in these areas. Some participants also noted that the locations are not very accessible and are located far from the center commercial core and downtown area of Davis. Some participants also felt that the City does not have enough office space and should not change the zoning designations in these areas.

Strategy 2: Commercial Land

**Commercial Land**



Approximately **1.5 acres** of land identified  
Could provide **30 low-income units**



Responses to this proposed strategy were generally positive. Those who were proponents liked that the site identified is in close proximity to public transit stops, grocery and retail stores, and an elementary school. Participants also liked that this site is adjacent to other residential properties and felt that high-density housing at this site would fit in with the area. Participants who supported this strategy also expressed that the City should pursue all strategies to increase low-income housing opportunities. Some participants were also approved of the idea of implementing mixed-use development at this site. Although many people who showed support for this strategy also noted that the proposed site is small and might not supply enough housing units to make a difference.

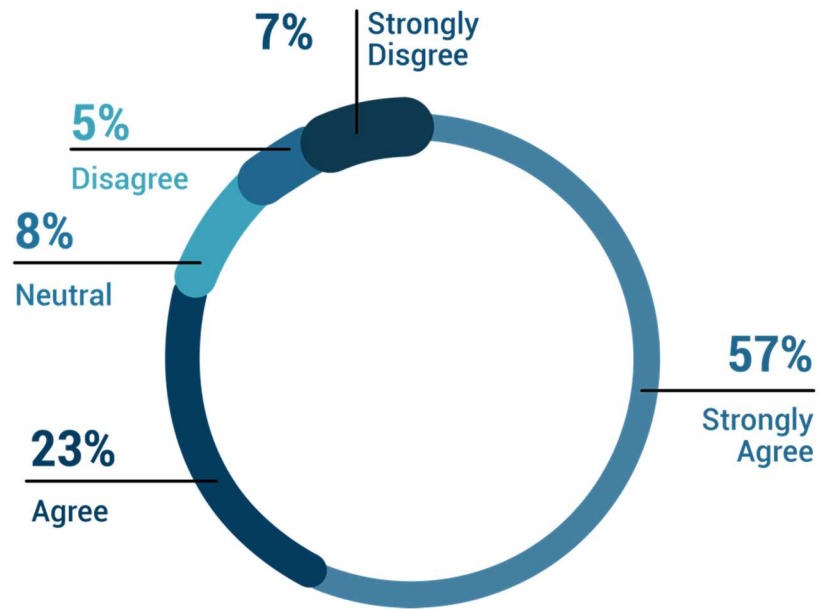
Those who were did not support this strategy expressed concern of a perceived shortage of commercial space within the City. They also expressed that this site is located close to the freeway, which could have health ramifications for future residents and that this site is located on the outskirts of the City, and is quite far from the downtown areas, which might discourage more economic development and public transit/active transportation use.

Strategy 3: Downtown Davis Specific Plan

**Downtown Davis Specific Plan**



Could provide an additional  
**100 low-income units**



A significant number of participants responded positively to this strategy. Those who supported this strategy felt that higher density housing in downtown would help meet the needs of service workers who are employed there. Participants also like the proximity of transit stops and active transportation infrastructure to encourage a more walkable and bikeable community. Proponents also encouraged the City to ensure that multi-family rental housing in the downtown area is accessible for people of all ages and abilities and that there is enough parking for residents, employees, and visitors.

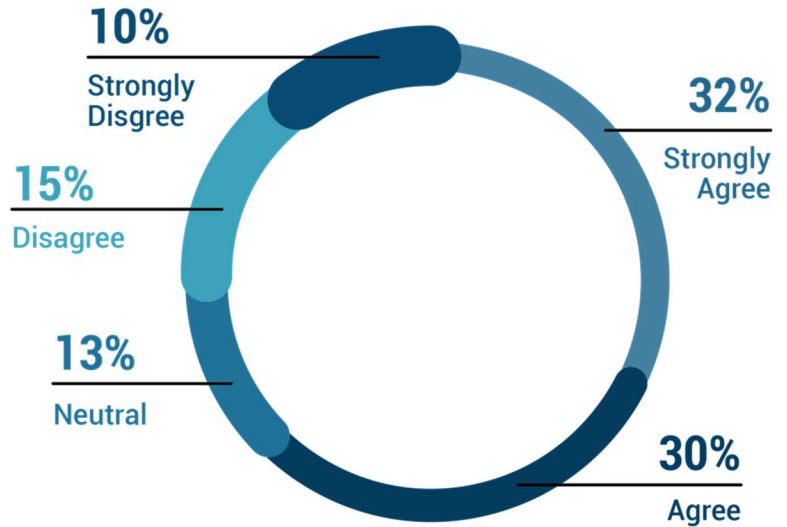
People who did not support this strategy showed concerns of increase in traffic congestion in downtown Davis and felt that building a denser downtown would make Davis feel like less of a small town. Some people also noted that the City should focus on creating more jobs in the downtown area to promote economic vitality rather than increasing the number of dwelling units.

Strategy 4: Residential Low-Density Land

Residential Low-Density Land



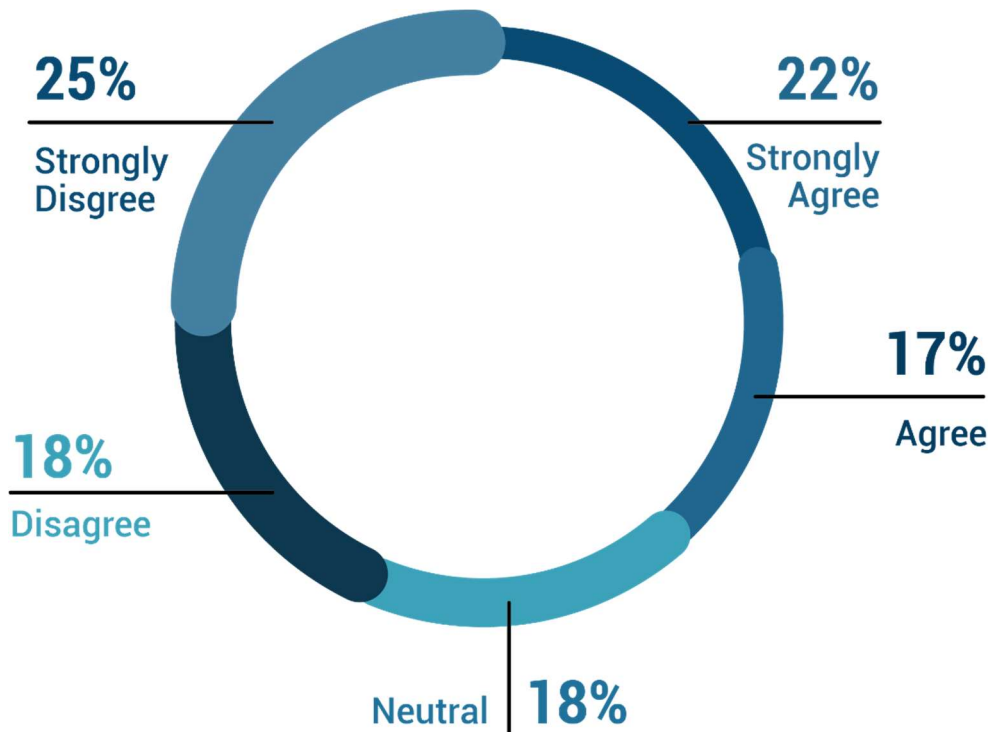
Approximately **12 acres** of land identified  
Could provide **230 low-income units**



Participants generally responded positively to this proposed strategy. Respondents expressed that the site located near J Street was close enough to downtown, schools, grocery stores and public transportation. Many respondents were enthusiastic about rezoning both sites and felt that high-density housing would fit in well with the surrounding neighborhood. Respondents also pointed out that the need for low-income housing is too critical, and that any strategies to create affordable housing opportunities should be pursued.

Those that are were not supportive of this strategy felt that there should not be any more high-density housing in South Davis. Many felt that both sites are too far from many key services like retail and grocery stores, walking and biking infrastructure, and commercial areas. Some participants worried this would encourage more people to drive their cars in an already congested area.

Strategy 5: Sphere of Influence



Those who agree with this strategy felt the City was growing enough to warrant expanding the City boundary. However, they noted that the City should pursue housing opportunities within City boundaries before annexing more land. Proponents encouraged the City to look at annexing more land near the downtown areas and near UC Davis.

Those who were not supportive of this strategy felt that there was no need to expand the City's boundaries, and annexation would lead to more urban sprawl and less farmland. Participants expressed their concern over annexing land to develop more multi-family housing that is far away from Davis' commercial and downtown core. This may lead to people walking and biking less, as they would need to use a car to access more services.