



**STAFF REPORT TO THE PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION
DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT
COMMUNITY PLANNING DIVISION
CASE TYPE – MASTER PLAN**

Hearing Date: May 8, 2017

Case Number: ZONE-17389-2017

Project Description: Infill Incentive Plan

Staff recommendation: Staff recommends **APPROVAL** of the request to adopt the Infill Incentive Plan in conjunction with the Infill Overlay District (IO).

Suggested Motion: Move to **APPROVE** the request to adopt the Infill Incentive Plan in conjunction with the Infill Overlay District (IO).

Staff Analysis: Encouraging infill development within the City of Yuma has been a topic of discussion among City Council and Staff for several years. In 2016, Council directed City Planning staff to develop incentives to encourage infill development. To comply with Arizona Revised Statute § 9-499.10 regarding infill incentive districts, staff drafted an ordinance to identify the Infill Overlay District (IO) as well as this Infill Incentive Plan to outline the incentives related to development within the IO.

The purpose of the Infill Incentive Plan is to explore issues associated with infill development and to identify potential incentives available to those who choose to develop and/or redevelop within the IO. As government budgets become ever tighter, the City must learn to grow within, rather than expanding outward. This means accommodating growth within the existing infrastructure network, rather than expanding the City's maintenance liability ever broader. The City is conscious of the impacts of sprawling development on environmental resources, transportation grids, and the overall quality of life for residents.

There are a variety of benefits related to infill development, and the following directly impact our community:

- Make better use of urban land while reducing consumption of agricultural land;
- Reduce the time, money and air pollution associated with commuting and other use of single occupant automobiles;
- Renew older neighborhoods and housing stock; and
- Make better use of existing infrastructure and lowering costs of public services such as: transit, sidewalks, water and sewer, school, and public safety.

Research provided within the Infill Incentive Plan reflects the existing conditions of the community, including current development, existing infrastructure, and vacancy within the infill area. This research serves as the foundation upon which recommendations for infill incentives are based. Current vacant and underutilized parcels stay vacant for a reason. Unless growth pressure is very strong and land costs are high, developers prefer land with few constraints; this typically translates to development on greenfield land as it tends to carry a low purchase price. Therefore, it is necessary to provide a sufficient package of incentives to encourage infill and redevelopment efforts.

The key to successful implementation of infill development is flexibility of zoning, design standards, and fees for both new construction and renovation of existing buildings. The “Infill Incentive Toolkit” within the plan outlines the incentives available for development within the IO. These incentives will help lessen the burden of development and encourage developers, business owners and potential homeowners to seek property within the infill area. Identifying potential incentives required collaboration between several City Departments. Such collaboration required staff to evaluate existing regulations and identify potential deviations available to properties within the Infill Incentive District.

The City’s toolkit is like a deck of cards; staff can help developers assemble the best hand for each project. Not all incentives apply to every project, but staff can help determine the ones that fit and provide the best deal for each unique project. Some of the incentives focus on allowing flexibility and deviations from the typical development standards identified in the City of Yuma Zoning Code, while others focus on reducing the cost of fees associated with development. Flexible standards are allowed, but are carefully calibrated to ensure that the scale and character of new construction and redevelopment is in accordance with and further enhances the surrounding area. Any incentives offered on a case-by-case basis should be in accordance with adopted Redevelopment or Revitalization Plans for those neighborhoods.

The City of Yuma is adopting this plan in conjunction with the designation of an Infill Overlay District, in accordance with Arizona Revised Statute § 9-499.10. Areas can be designated as infill incentive districts if they meet at least three of the following requirements:

- a) Large number of vacant older or dilapidated buildings or structures
- b) Large number of vacant or underused parcels of property, obsolete or inappropriate lot or parcel sizes or environmentally contaminated sites
- c) Large number of buildings or other places where nuisances exist or occur
- d) Absence of development and investment activity compared to other areas in the city
- e) High occurrence of crime
- f) Continuing decline in population

The statute goes on to state that “if the governing body establishes an infill incentive district, it shall adopt an infill incentive plan to encourage redevelopment in the district. The plan may include:

- 1) Expedited zoning or rezoning procedures
- 2) Expedited processing of plans and proposals
- 3) Waivers of municipal fees for development activities as long as the waivers are not funded by other development fees.
- 4) Relief from development standards.”

1. Does the proposed plan implement the goals, objectives and policies of the General Plan?

Yes. Both the Housing Element and Redevelopment Element of the General Plan specifically discuss the need for infill development in the City of Yuma. The General Plan recommends that the City of Yuma provide incentives to encourage infill development. In addition to this Infill Incentive Plan, the City of Yuma will also designate an Infill Overlay District (IO) which will designate the area in which incentives are available.

2. Does the proposed plan fit the overall purpose and intent of the zoning ordinance?

Yes. The plan fits the overall purpose and intent of the zoning ordinance.

3. Will the proposed plan change the range of uses identified in the zoning code? If so, how?

No. This plan will not change the range of uses identified in the zoning code. Rather, the Infill Incentive Plan, in conjunction with the Infill Overlay District (IO), will identify properties within the City of Yuma which may qualify for development or redevelopment incentives.

4. Will the proposed plan change the development standards of the zoning or subdivision ordinances? If so, how?

Yes. In accordance with A.R.S. § 9-499.10, the incentives proposed in the plan allow for flexibility of development standards such as setbacks, lot coverage, alleyway paving, and landscape standards.

5. What are the potential impacts of the proposed plan?

Potential positive impacts of infill development include:

- Making better use of urban land while reducing consumption of agricultural land;
- Reducing the time, money and air pollution associated with commuting and other use of single occupant automobiles;
- Renewing older neighborhoods and housing stock; and
- Making better use of existing infrastructure and lowering costs of public services such as: transit, sidewalks, water and sewer, schools, and public safety.

No negative impacts have been identified with the proposed plan.

6. Does the proposed plan fit the overall purpose and intent of the subdivision ordinance?

N/A

7. Does the proposed plan conform to prior City Council actions regarding this issue?

Yes.

Public Comments Received: None Received

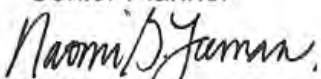
External Agency Comments: None Received

Neighborhood Meeting Comments: No Meeting Required

Attachments:

A	B
Staff Research	Infill Incentive Plan

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Senior Planner

Prepared By: 
Naomi Leeman, AICP, Senior Planner

Date: Apr. 14. 2017

Reviewed By: 
Bob Blevins, Principal Planner

Date: 4/17/17

Approved By: 
Laurie L. Lineberry, AICP,
Community Development Director

Date: 4.27.17

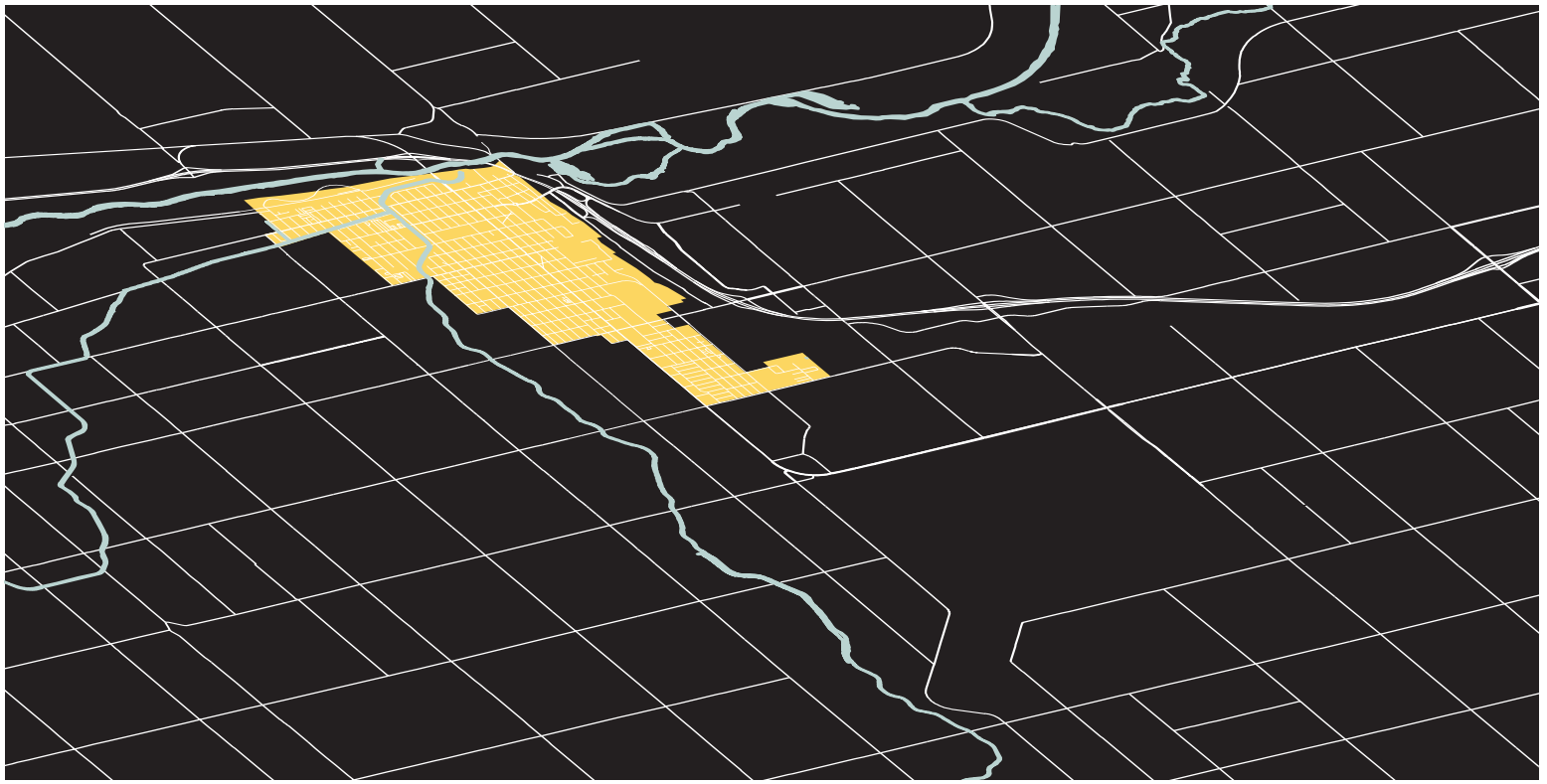
**ATTACHMENT A
STAFF RESEARCH**

- **Legal Ad Published:** The Sun (04/14/17)
- **34 Commenting/Reviewing Agencies noticed:** (03/23/17)
- **Comments due:** (04/03/17)
- **Hearing Date:** (05/08/17)

<i>External List (Comments)</i>	Response Received	Date Received	“No Comment”	Written Comments	Comments Attached
Yuma County Airport Authority	NR	03/04/17	X		
Yuma County Engineering	NR				
Yuma County Public Works	NR				
Yuma County Water Users	Yes	03/24/17	X		
Yuma County Planning & Zoning	NR				
Arizona Public Service	NR				
Time Warner Cable	NR				
Southwest Gas	Yes	03/23/17	X		
Qwest Communications	NR				
Bureau of Land Management	NR				
YUHS District #70	NR				
Yuma Elem. School District #1	NR				
Crane School District #13	NR				
A.D.O.T.	NR				
Yuma Irrigation District	NR				
Yuma Mesa Irrigation & Drainage District (YMIDD)	Yes	03/24/17	X		
Arizona Fish and Game	NR				
USDA – NRCS	NR				
United States Postal Service	NR				
Yuma Metropolitan Planning Org.	NR				
El Paso Natural Gas Co.	NR				
Western Area Power Administration	NR				
<i>City of Yuma Internal List (Conditions)</i>	Response Received	Date Received	“No Conditions”	Written Conditions	Comments Attached
Rod Hamilton, Police	NR				
Ron Ramirez, Parks	NR				
Damon Chango, Parks	NR				
Andrew McGarvie, Engineering	NR				
Kayla Holiman, Fire	Yes	03/27/17	X		
Randy Crist, Building Safety	NR				
Director, ITS	NR				
City Engineer	NR				
Traffic Engineer	NR				
MCAS / C P & L Office	Yes	03/24/17	X		
Jay Simonton, Utilities	NR				
Joel Olea, Public Works	NR				
Joel Olea, Streets	NR				

<i>Neighborhood Meeting</i>	<i>Comments Available</i>
NONE REQUIRED	See Staff Report Attachment

ATTACHMENT B
INFILL INCENTIVE PLAN



INFILL INCENTIVE PLAN

CITY OF YUMA, ARIZONA

DRAFT

May 23, 2017



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This document was prepared by City of Yuma Community Planning staff for the City of Yuma Council. A special thanks to the staff of the Yuma Crossing National Heritage area for providing information, data, and thoughtful guidance throughout the planning process and for the encouragement and vision from Gary Knight, Deputy Mayor.

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Yuma

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DRAFT

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DRAFT



INTRODUCTION

Encouraging infill development within the City of Yuma has been a topic of discussion among City Council and Staff for several years. In 2016, Council directed the Planning staff to develop incentives to encourage infill development. To comply with Arizona Revised Statute 9-499.10 regarding infill incentive districts, staff drafted an ordinance to identify the Infill Overlay District (IO) as well as this Infill Incentive Plan to outline the incentives related to development within the Infill Overlay District (IO).

The purpose of this document is to explore issues associated with infill development and to identify potential incentives available to those who choose to develop and/or redevelop within the IO. As government budgets become ever tighter, the city must learn to grow within rather than expanding outward. This means accommodating growth within the existing infrastructure network, rather than expanding the City's maintenance liability ever broader. The City is conscious of the impacts of sprawling development on environmental resources, transportation grids, and the overall quality of life for residents.

Research provided within this document reflects the existing conditions of the community, including current development, existing infrastructure, and vacancy within the infill area. This research serves as the foundation upon which recommendations for infill incentives are based.

The key to successful implementation of infill development is flexibility of zoning, design standards (building setbacks, parking requirements, etc.), and fees for both new construction and renovation of existing buildings. The "Infill Incentive Toolkit" within this document outlines the incentives available for development within the IO. These incentives will help lessen the burden of development and encourage developers, business owners and potential homeowners to seek property within this area.

HISTORIC PRESERVATION

The Yuma Crossing National Heritage Area (YCNHA) has been successful in restoring several historic properties in the downtown Historic Districts. In 2010, the YCNHA purchased three adobe National Register buildings along Madison Avenue which were in a serious state of deterioration. 106 S. Madison Avenue (top photo) was restored in 2012, but funding was not available for further restoration of the other two at that time. In 2014, the YCNHA offered 102 S. Madison (right photo) for lease. The prospective tenant was so enthusiastic about the project that he offered to buy the building upon its restoration, and invested more in exterior improvements. In 2016, 118 S. Madison was sold and is currently being renovated into a cafe and residential unit.



MAIN STREET RENOVATION

In 2005, Main Street was completely transformed from a failed 1960s-era pedestrian mall to its historic roots as a thriving business district. Streetscape improvements accommodate pedestrians and vehicles alike and many historic façades were renovated. In the years since, new businesses and restaurants have opened, rejuvenating the heart of downtown. The Yuma Crossing National Heritage Area helped to foster consensus, secured funds, and managed the design and construction of the project.



REVITALIZE YUMA

Since its creation in 2000, the Yuma Crossing National Heritage Area (YCNHA) has been a major force of change in Yuma, and has paved the way for current efforts to encourage infill development. In addition to the YCNHA's exceptional work in restoring the West and East Wetlands, the organization has restored many historic buildings and facilitated the construction of high-quality infill developments by both private and public investment.

For decades, Yuma sought to reconnect the community to its most precious natural asset – the Colorado River. Although recognized for its historic importance as the Yuma Crossing National Historic Landmark, the downtown riverfront had become blighted from divided and complicated ownership, industrial uses, and disuse. The Heritage Area's coordination with the private sector and facilitation of private investment has truly transformed Yuma's downtown riverfront. The construction of Gateway Park and other riverfront restoration projects helped pave the way for the construction of the \$30 million Hilton Garden Inn & Conference Center as well as the John M. Roll United States Courthouse. Additional hotel and residential development on the riverfront is now being considered.

The YCNHA continues to foster conditions which will stimulate new private investment. In Yuma's historic Main Street District, the YCNHA facilitated

the reconstruction and reopening of Main Street and a façade restoration program for historic buildings. The YCNHA was also successful in convincing the Union Pacific Railroad to donate the historic freight building. This building and surrounding area is now being considered for use as a higher education campus. In the Century Heights Historic District, two Queen Anne Victorian homes were moved and restored by a private developer in order to build the roadway to the south of the new City Hall. A blighted former gas station, Stan's U-Save, was donated to the Heritage Area and environmental remediation was completed. This site is now being converted into a community garden. From 2004-05, the Heritage Area administered a façade restoration loan program for residential homes in Century Heights. In the Brinley Avenue Historic District, three deteriorated adobe historic buildings along Madison Avenue were purchased and restored from 2012-16. Following restoration, all three buildings were sold to private owners, returning them to the tax rolls.

This Infill Incentive Master Plan builds on the ongoing revitalization efforts, redevelopment plans, and designated character areas presented by the Heritage Area. This plan offers solutions to encourage infill development in all the areas designated for redevelopment, an area inclusive of, but more broad than the historic downtown core and adjacent riverfront areas in which the Heritage Area directs their focus.

STATE STATUTE

The City of Yuma is adopting this plan in conjunction with the designation of an Infill Overlay District, in accordance with Arizona state statute (ARS 9-499.10). Areas can be designated as infill incentive districts if they meet at least three of the following requirements, with the highlighted ones applicable in Yuma:

- a. Large number of vacant older or dilapidated buildings or structures
- b. Large number of vacant or underused parcels of property, obsolete or inappropriate lot or parcel sizes or environmentally contaminated sites
- c. Large number of buildings or other places where nuisances exist or occur
- d. Absence of development and investment activity compared to other areas in the city
- e. High occurrence of crime
- f. Continuing decline in population

Statute goes on to state that “if the governing body establishes an infill incentive district, it shall adopt an infill incentive plan to encourage redevelopment in the district. The plan may include:

1. Expedited zoning or rezoning procedures
2. Expedited processing of plans and proposals
3. Waivers of municipal fees for development activities as long as the waivers are not funded by other development fees.
4. Relief from development standards.”

This plan fulfills the state requirement for the infill incentive plan; incentives are highlighted in a following section and focus on making development standards more flexible and reducing the cost of development.

BENEFITS OF INFILL

01 Infill is efficient because it uses existing infrastructure & services that have been sized to accommodate development on these parcels. This infrastructure includes streets, water, sewer, parks, fire, police, and schools. By making better use of existing infrastructure, the overall cost of public services is reduced.

02 A focus on maximizing existing infrastructure means reducing consumption of agricultural and natural lands. Preservation of these valuable lands is paramount, particularly in an agricultural-based community such as Yuma.

03 Infill development strengthens existing neighborhoods by increasing density, which increases walkability, which in turn leads to more pedestrian traffic, and dollars spent, in the downtown.

04 Replacing vacant and blighted properties with functioning assets strengthens real estate markets and increases property values.





INFILL DEVELOPMENT

Infill is the process of developing vacant or under-used parcels or rehabilitating buildings within existing urban areas. Infill sites are located within the service areas of existing infrastructure such as streets, utilities, fire protection, and parks.

The opposite of infill is greenfield development, which is the development of land that was previously natural or agricultural. Typically, greenfield sites are located at the fringes of the City's limits. Greenfield development requires that new infrastructure (roads, utilities, fire, parks, and police) be constructed in proximity to the development.

The Infill Overlay District shown in yellow on the map above is the historic heart of the city. As population grew over the years, the city expanded from that core. Development patterns within the Infill Overlay District are traditional in nature; lots are accessed via alleys, homes front the streets, and commercial and residential uses are mixed to create walkable neighborhoods. As development codes have changed over the years to accommodate automobile-centric development, new construction in these traditional areas became more and more difficult. Today, many properties sit vacant or in disrepair. Revitalizing these neighborhoods will require the creative solutions contained herein.

THE VISION

SPUR DEVELOPMENT OF WALKABLE, MIXED-USE NEIGHBORHOODS IN THE HEART OF YUMA

Neighborhoods within the Infill Overlay District were developed during a time when walkable communities were a necessity. Sites in this area are within close proximity to more businesses, schools, and other daily destinations than suburban areas. In recent years, demand has increased for walkable, urban communities where people can live, work, and play without complete dependence on a car. Careful planning efforts about how new development occurs allows businesses to thrive and gives families the option to live close to their daily destinations. Encouraging development of existing vacant sites in the IO increases density, which in turn increases the number of pedestrians on streets to support the local businesses.



INCREASE PROPERTY VALUES

Infill development strengthens real estate markets and renews older neighborhoods' housing stock. There is no doubt that vacant and blighted properties depreciate the value of the surrounding neighborhood. Vacant properties become targets for squatting and crime. By encouraging development and redevelopment within the IO, existing property values will stabilize and increase. It is imperative that new development fit in with the established neighborhoods and be of high enough quality to ensure the change has a positive effect. Careful consideration and design guidelines will mitigate impacts on existing neighborhoods and residents.

PRESERVE YUMA'S NATURAL & AGRICULTURAL LANDS

By offering incentives to make the heart of town more attractive to investors and residents alike, the community can make better use of existing urban land supplies while reducing consumption of valuable agricultural and natural lands. Directing development to the heart of town, where infrastructure already exists, means less greenfield lands become the target of sprawling development. Preserving our rural landscape is essential to preserving agriculture, recreation, and tourist attractions that drive the local economy.



MOBILIZE POLICIES, PARTNERS, AND RESOURCES TO IMPROVE YUMA

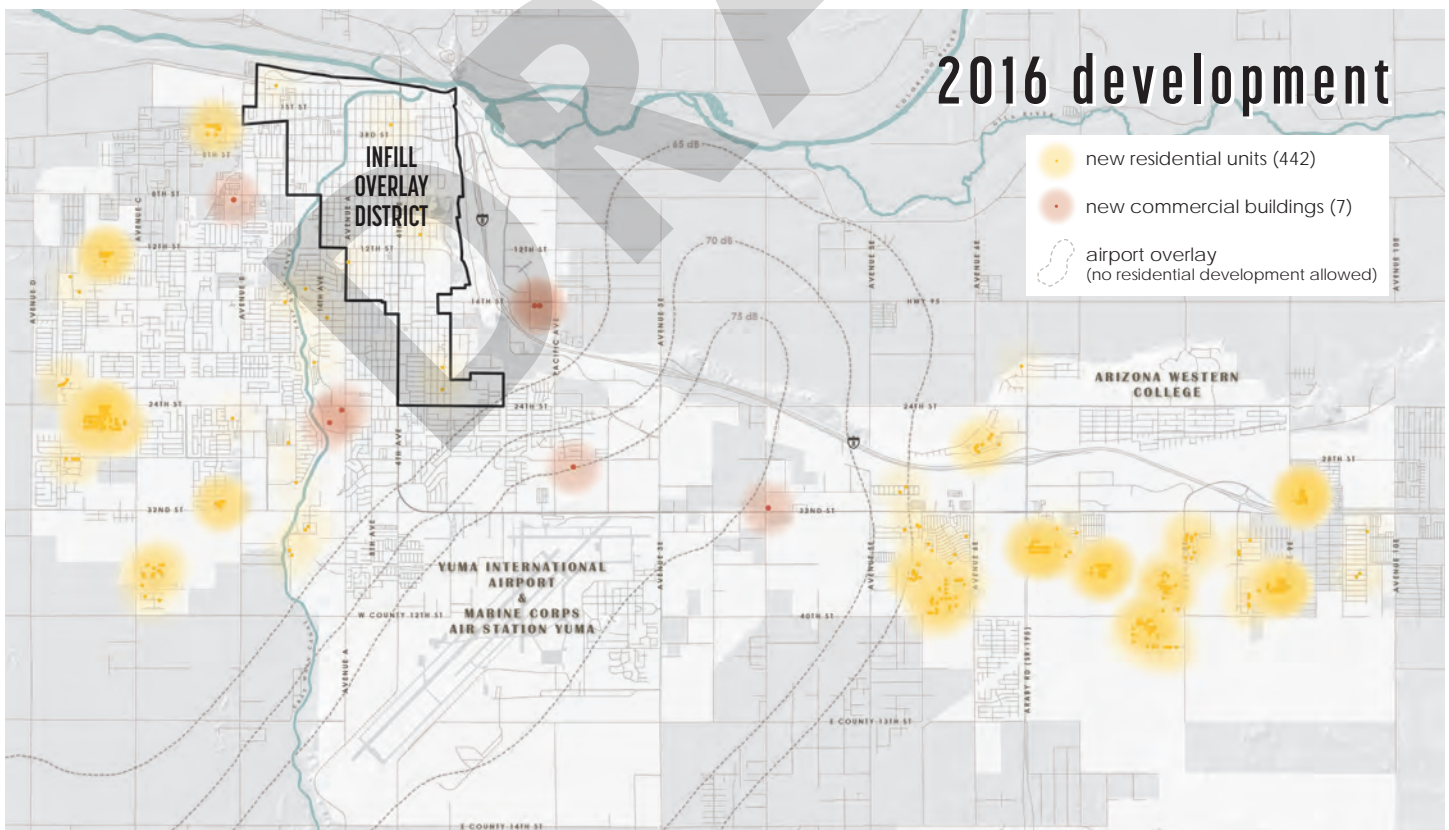
Implementation of the incentives presented in this plan will require collaboration and support of many City departments. The plan also presents ideas that will need staff dedication and continued efforts to adopt new policies and procedures. There are many more steps in this process - code amendments, Council actions, and creative solutions - that will need to be made in order to continue incentivizing the revitalization of our downtown.

Not only is unilateral City support critical, the support of the community is equally vital; business owners, residents, and consumers vote with their dollars to support the success of the infill area. The City needs dedicated, skilled developers to design site-sensitive infill projects that will benefit Yuma.

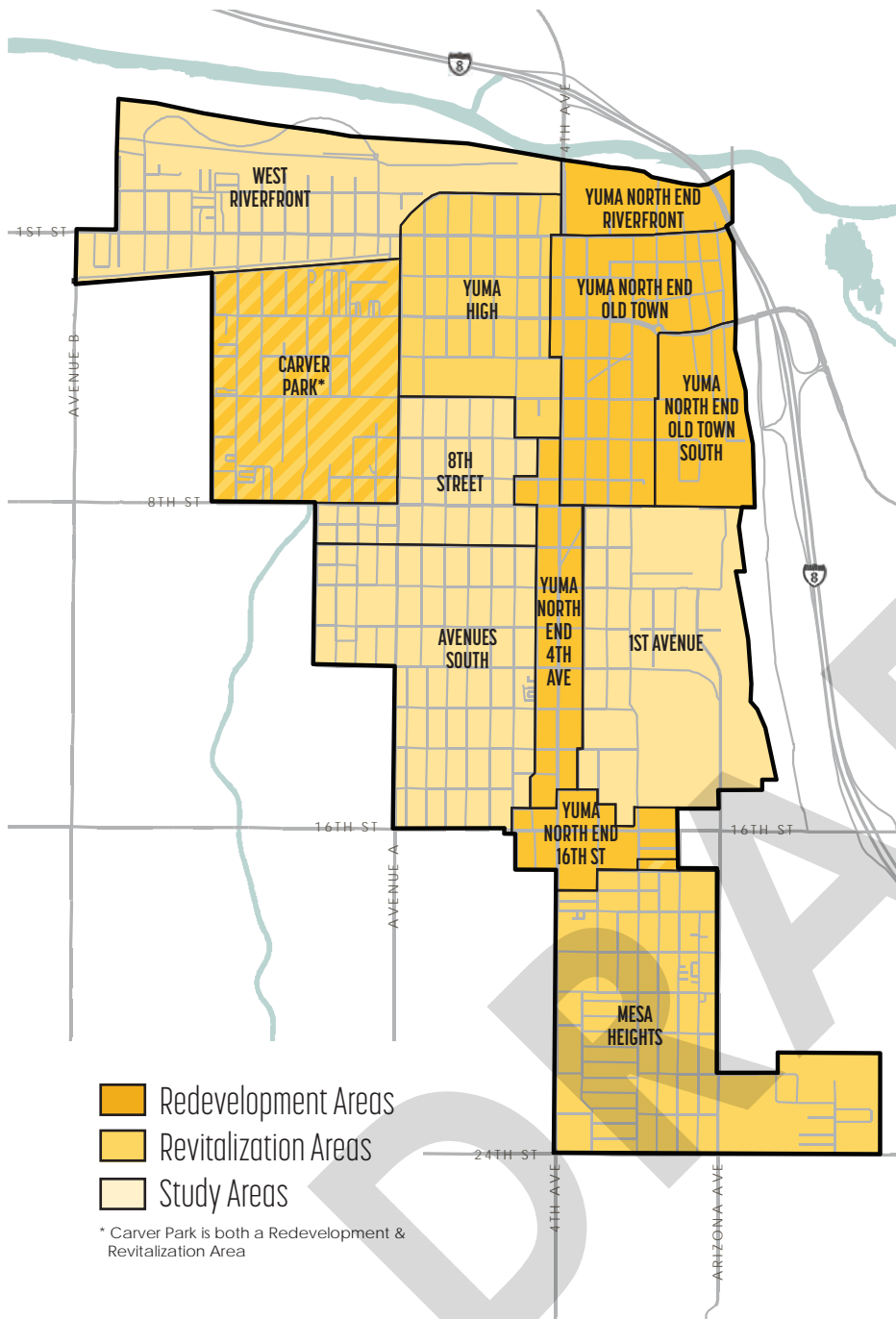
EXISTING CONDITIONS

Analysis of existing conditions is the first step to understanding how to encourage redevelopment. The General Plan identifies areas targeted for redevelopment. A thorough inventory of the infill area was conducted to identify all vacant parcels. Then, staff analyzed all pre-development meetings held in 2016 regarding vacant properties within the Infill Overlay District. Finally, an examination of existing infrastructure was conducted.

The map below clearly illustrates that most new investment in the City is occurring on the outskirts of town. Despite the several hundred vacant lots within the Infill Overlay District, very little new development is happening in the infill area. By mapping new development, we can clearly see that most of the recent investment is not happening in the heart of town. This is why offering incentives for infill development is so important. This plan also aims to understand why investment is not happening in the infill areas and what types of incentives can be offered to encourage investment.



Each point represents a property issued a Certificate of Occupancy (CO) in calendar year 2016. Of the 442 new residential units built, only 7 (1%) were within the Infill Incentive District. None of the new commercial development occurred within the Infill Incentive District.



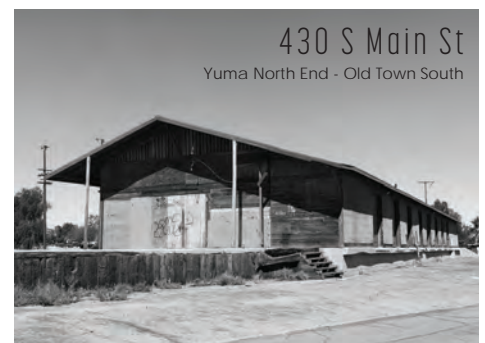
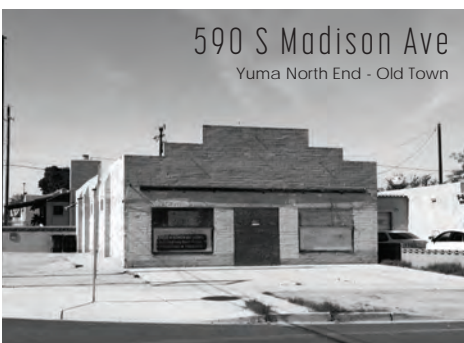
REDEVELOPMENT AREAS

The City of Yuma 2012 General Plan addresses redevelopment by identifying neighborhoods that need special consideration to prevent the decline of property values in both residential and commercial properties. The City recognizes that strong, vital neighborhoods assure a vital community, economy, and tax base. The General Plan identifies three different types of areas, each with a unique set of characteristics, including: Redevelopment Areas, Revitalization Areas, and Study Areas. Collectively, these areas make up the Infill Overlay District that is addressed in this plan and shown in the map to the right. Redevelopment and revitalization plans work in conjunction with this plan and should be considered when development occurs.

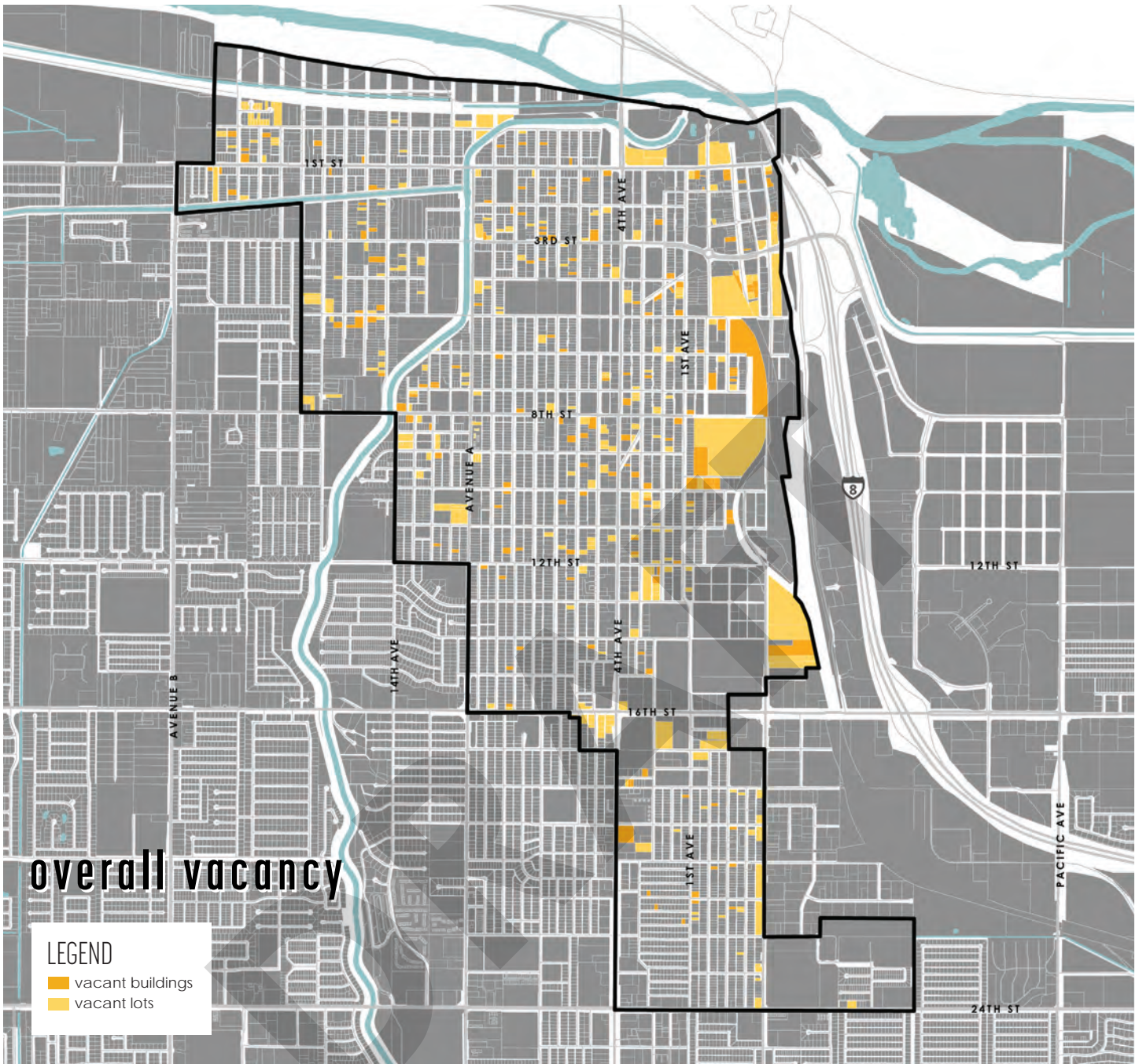
Redevelopment Areas are those found to have slums or blighted areas, have been adopted as redevelopment areas pursuant to Arizona state law, and have adopted redevelopment plans to guide development.

Revitalization Areas are blighted, predominately residential in nature, have a high number of low-income residents, and may be eligible to receive federal funds. These areas have adopted revitalization plans and redevelopment efforts are typically managed by the City's Neighborhood Services Division of the Department of Community Development.

Study Areas are in need of additional efforts to encourage redevelopment, but have not been officially declared as blighted and do not have adopted plans.



Examples of vacant properties found throughout the Infill Incentive Overlay District.



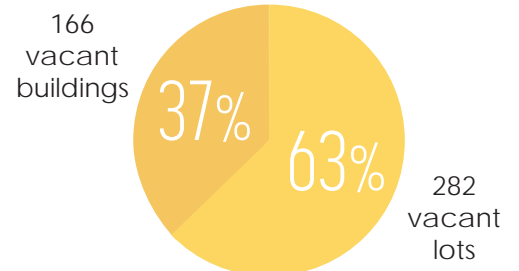
total vacancy

448 206

of vacant properties

acres of vacant property

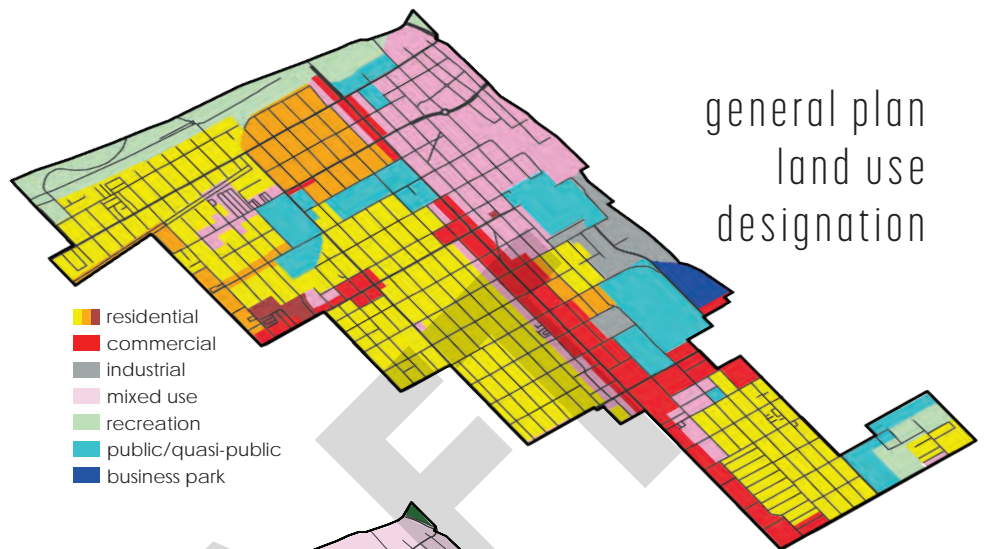
property type



VACANT PROPERTIES

Planning staff conducted an inventory of the Infill Incentive District in the second half of 2016. All properties vacant at that time were included in this inventory. This inventory is a snapshot in time and it offers a baseline from which to measure future success. At the time of writing, there are 448 vacant properties in the Infill Incentive District, which represents 12% of the total buildable area, as shown in the map on the facing page.

The three maps to the right show how zoning districts and land use designations layer over the current land use. Sometimes, the zoning and land use designation of a property doesn't match the current use, creating conflicts that property owners and staff work to solve.



ownership

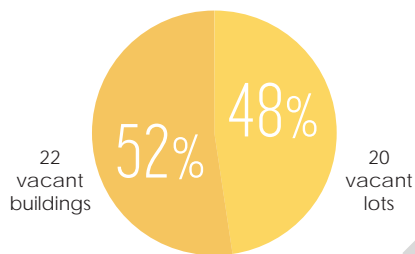
77%

owned by Yuma residents

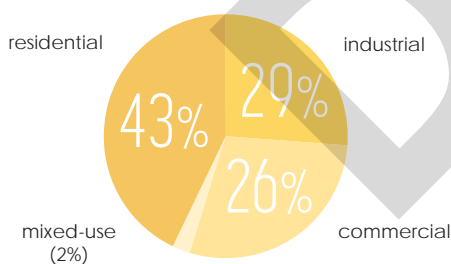
42

vacant properties with PDMs in 2016

property type



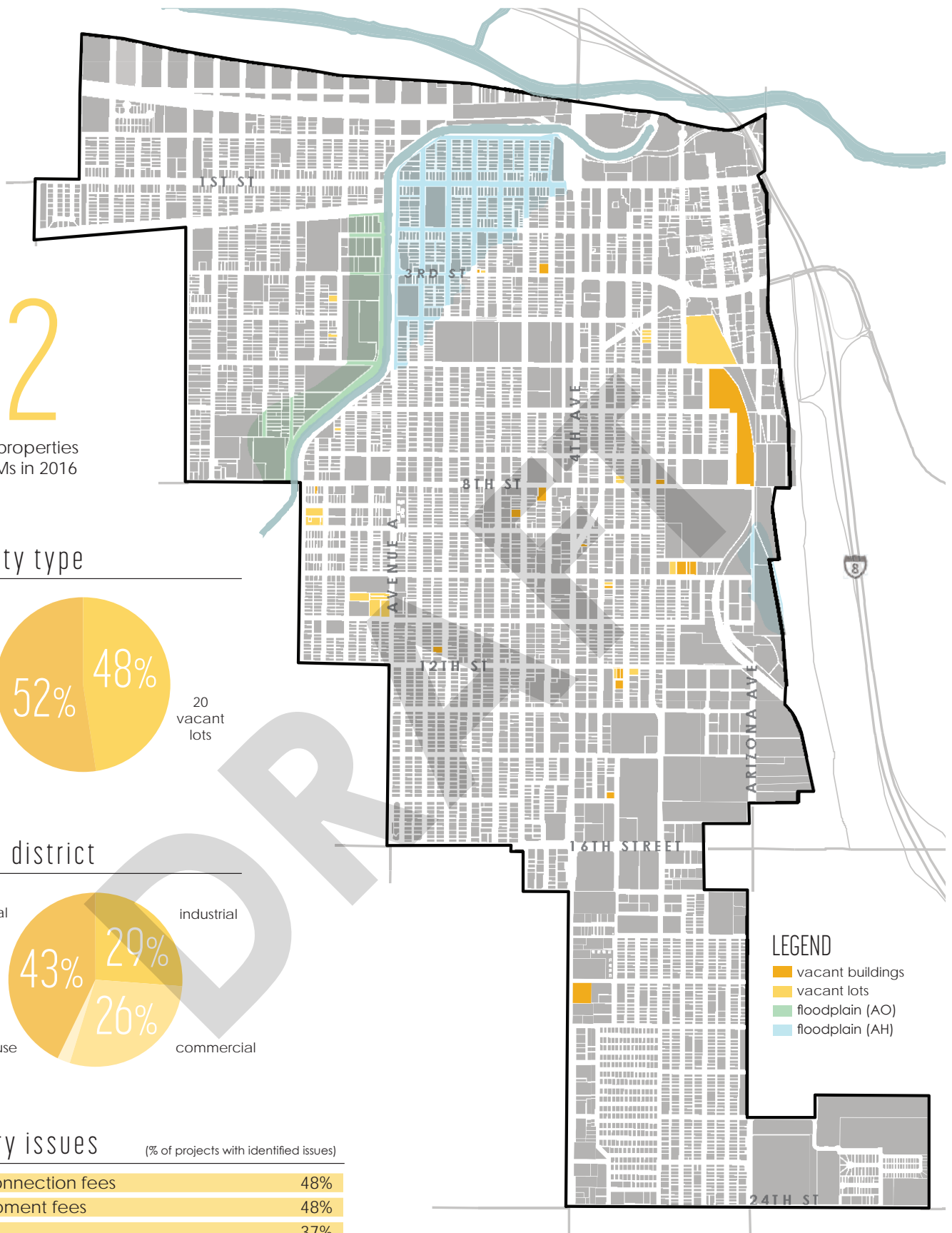
zoning district



primary issues

(% of projects with identified issues)

utility connection fees	48%
development fees	48%
parking	37%
alley	31%
lot tie/split	17%
demolition	17%



LEGEND

- vacant buildings
- vacant lots
- floodplain (AO)
- floodplain (AH)

2016 PDM locations

IDENTIFYING ISSUES

Pre-development meetings (PDM) are offered to customers to review and discuss proposed projects with City staff to identify development requirements for a particular site. Among the vacant properties identified in the inventory presented on the previous pages, the City hosted PDMs for 42 of those in 2016 (map on facing page). PDMs are indicative of market interest in a property, yet these 42 properties remained vacant at the end of 2016. Analysis of these properties provides insight into the barriers to development faced by these properties and which incentives might be most effective.

KEY ISSUES IDENTIFIED IN PRE-DEVELOPMENT MEETINGS

<i>Alley</i>	Multi-family residential or commercial development triggers the requirement for paved alleyways.
<i>Conditional Use Permit</i>	Conditional Use Permit (CUP) required in order for a property to develop under its current zoning districts (i.e., industrial zone within 600' of residential).
<i>Demolition</i>	Primary structures, debris, or secondary structures need to be removed before development occurs.
<i>Development Fees</i>	The fee administered by the City to pay for a portion of the costs of providing public services to the new development.
<i>Fire Sprinklers</i>	Development required to install fire sprinklers as part of fire code requirements.
<i>Landscaping</i>	Development and planning actions require the installation of landscaping.
<i>Lot Tie/Split</i>	A lot split or lot tie is needed to provide adequate site area for development.
<i>Parking</i>	Properties with issues with paving, access, or number of parking spaces.
<i>ROW Dedication</i>	The City requires the dedication of some portion of right-of-way (ROW) in conjunction with development, effectively reducing the developable area.
<i>Utility Connection Fees</i>	Costs associated with sewer and water connections to a lot that has not had City utilities before.

FLOODING POTENTIAL

Although the issue did not present itself in any PDM meetings in 2016, several properties in the Infill Overlay District (IO) are located within a FEMA designated flood zone. These properties are concentrated in the Yuma High and Carver Park neighborhoods, near the canals. Due to the potential for flooding, mortgaged properties in these zones are required to carry flood insurance. New construction is also required to elevate to at least one foot above the base flood elevation. In the AO flood zone, this means an additional elevation of about 4 feet, such as the house shown at the right. This additional elevation makes new construction incongruous with the surrounding neighborhood.



Home built on several feet of fill to raise it above the flood level.

EXISTING INFRASTRUCTURE

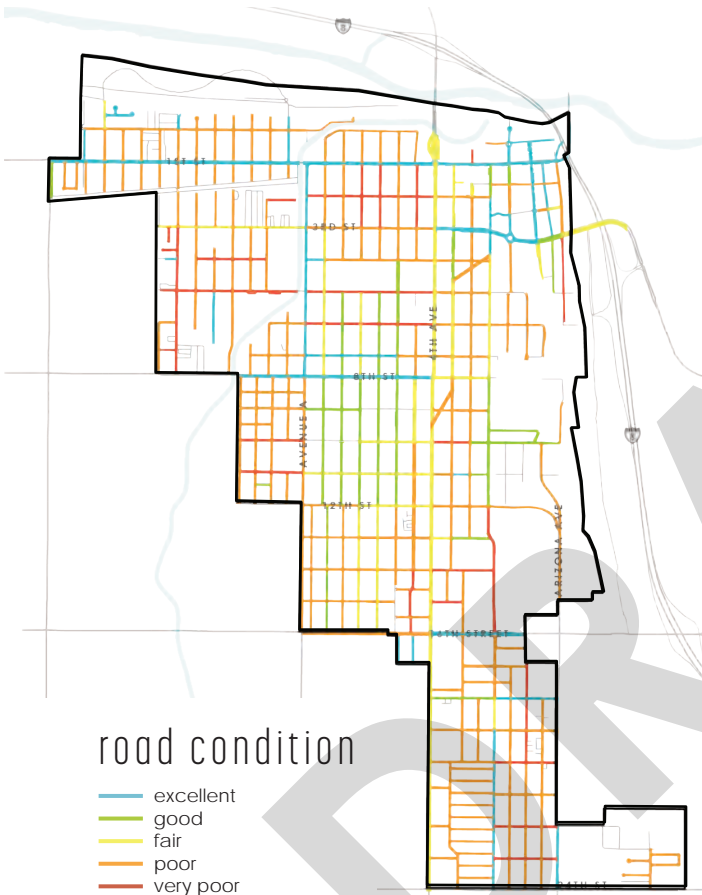
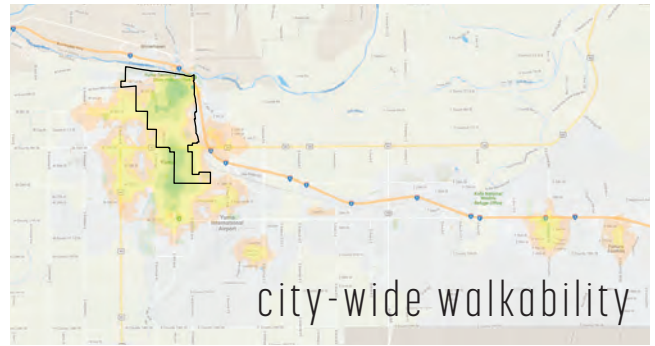
An essential element of infill development is access to existing infrastructure. The utilities, roads, sidewalks, schools, public safety stations, and other amenities currently exist, which means the cost of infill development is lower than the costs of providing new services to greenfield developments. Because the infrastructure is already in place it benefits developers, the City, and citizens alike to maximize the use of existing assets to effectively lower the cost of public services for everyone.



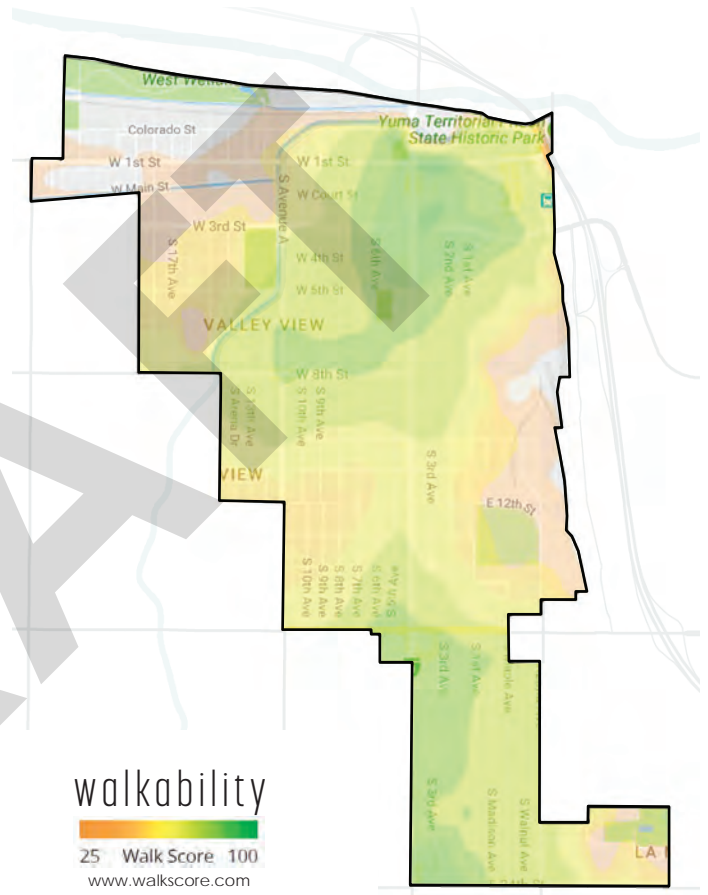
Most of the Infill Incentive District has had City water service for some time, as this area encompasses the oldest parts of the City. The vacant, undeveloped parcels in Old Town South do not currently have service. If a lot has never had water service, new development triggers the utility connection fee.

The map above does not indicate the size of the distribution lines that serve a property. For some commercial development, a 6-inch and larger line may be required; contact the City of Yuma Utilities Department for detailed utility locations and sizes.

Much of the Infill Incentive District is currently served by sewer service. Vacant, undeveloped areas that lack service include the Old Town South industrial sites and some of the County areas around Arizona Avenue. Sewer service to some sites may be limited by site factors such as topography and soils. Contact the City of Yuma Utilities Department for detailed information regarding sewer service and fees.



Road surface condition is monitored by the Public Works Department and upgrades are scheduled based on a computerized maintenance program. Roads in “excellent” condition are relatively new and are expected to have 15 to 20 years of useful life remaining, those in “good” condition have about 10 years remaining, “fair” indicates about 5 years remaining, “poor” means 2 to 3 years remaining, and “very poor” indicates the road needs to be replaced as soon as budget allows. While most of the primary thoroughfares in the Infill Incentive District are in good condition, many of the residential roads will need attention in the next few years. Recent road repairs in the District include the repaving of 1st Street, a road diet on Orange Avenue, and the re-design of the 16th Street and 4th Avenue intersection.



Walkability assesses the number of common destinations (stores, businesses, parks, schools, etc.) that can be reached on foot. The map above shows the Walk Score, an open-source data set that “analyzes hundreds of walking routes to nearby amenities [and] points are awarded based on the distance to amenities in each category.” Walk Score also measures pedestrian friendliness by analyzing population density and road metrics such as block length and intersection density.

Overall, Yuma’s average Walk Score is 34 (as illustrated on the top map) which means most errands require a car. Most of the infill area has a Walk Score higher than the city’s average, making these neighborhoods some of the most walkable in the city.

INFILL INCENTIVES

Current vacant and underutilized parcels stay vacant for a reason. Unless growth pressure is very strong and land costs are high, developers prefer land with few constraints; this typically translates to development on greenfield land as it tends to carry a low purchase price. Therefore, it is necessary to provide a sufficient package of incentives to encourage infill and redevelopment efforts.

Identifying potential incentives required collaboration between several City Departments. Such collaboration required staff to evaluate existing regulations and identify potential deviations available to properties within the Infill Incentive District. These incentives form the Infill Incentive Toolkit, summarized on the facing page. The City's toolkit is like a deck of cards; staff can help developers assemble their best hand for each project. Not all incentives apply to every project, but staff can help determine the ones that fit and provide the best deal for each unique project.

Some of the incentives focus on allowing flexibility and deviations from the typical development standards identified in the City of Yuma Zoning Code, while others focus on reducing the cost of fees associated with development. Flexible standards are allowed, but carefully calibrated to ensure that the scale and character of new construction and redevelopment is in accordance with and further enhances the surrounding area.

Any incentives offered on a case-by-case basis should be in accordance with adopted Redevelopment or Revitalization Plans for those neighborhoods.

INFILL INCENTIVE TOOLKIT

flexible standards & reduced cost of development

benefits residential benefits commercial reduces costs

For more information, please contact the Department of Community Development at (928) 373-5000 for more information.

01 REDUCED SETBACKS



To match existing established development patterns in the IO, reductions in the required setbacks for front yard, side yard, and rear yard setbacks will be allowed on a case-by-case basis. Reducing setbacks not only allows new development to fit seamlessly in existing neighborhoods, it also increases the buildable area of the site.

02 INCREASED LOT COVERAGE



The current lot coverage standards identified in residential zoning districts range between 35% and 50%. Many parcels within the IO do not meet minimum lot size requirements, which limits the redevelopment and buildable area. For residential lots in the IO, lot coverage may be increased by 15 percentage points.

03 ACCESSORY DWELLING UNITS



Accessory dwelling units (ADUs) offer a variety of benefits, including providing affordable housing, allowing homeowners a source of extra income, increasing density, and improving property values. ADUs are limited in size and the owner of the property must reside on-site.

04 REDUCED LANDSCAPING



On a case-by-case basis, for existing buildings, the landscape regulations will be reduced. The focus for required landscape will continue to be on trees, particularly street trees, which provide shade, visual enclosure to the street, increased property values, and a host of environmental benefits.

05 REDUCED PARKING



Certain reductions to the required parking standards are allowed for developments in the IO. The reductions strive to provide adequate parking while limiting excessive, unnecessary parking spaces, which serves to reduce the cost of development and to increase the walkability of the neighborhoods.

06 ALTERNATIVE ALLEYWAY PAVING



For commercial and multi-family developments, a common financial barrier is the requirement to pave the alleyway for access. As an alternative, recycled asphalt millings treated with a surface coat can be used to pave the alleyways at a fraction of the price, while still mitigating dust issues in the urban environment.

07 NO-BUILD EASEMENTS



No-build easements are an alternative to right-of-way dedication requests made during the planning phase of a project. As opposed to dedicating land to the City for future use as a street, no-build easements allow the ownership of the land to remain private while preventing permanent structures within the easement.

08 INTERNATIONAL EXISTING BUILDING CODE



The International Existing Building Code (IEBC) allows flexibility of building code requirements for some existing and historic properties. When repairing or altering an existing building, use of this code allows compliance with minimum safety requirements to be achieved without compromising the building.

09 FIRE CODE FLEXIBILITY



In some circumstances within the IO, equivalencies, alternatives and/or modifications to the City of Yuma Fire code may be considered. Requests submitted to the Fire Department in accordance with National Fire Protection Association guidelines (NFPA 1 2012 § 1.4) will be considered based on use, hazard, size, and proposed site improvements.

10 UTILITY FEE WAIVERS



Fees are assessed on both commercial and residential properties for utility connections for new and/or existing services depending on the proposed use and previous development on a property. Partial waivers of these fees may be available for properties in the IO.

11 DEVELOPMENT FEE CREDITS



Development fees are paid by new developments to offset the costs associated with providing necessary public facilities or services to support that development. Several recommendations have been made to increase credits and provide funds to defray costs for properties in the IO.

12 REDUCED PERMIT & REVIEW FEES



Fees for building permits, plan review, and land use applications are by the Department of Community Development. For properties in the infill area, plan review fees will be reduced and land use application fees will be given a 50% reduction.

13 LEASE EXCISE TAX



The Government Property Lease Excise Tax (GPLET) was established by Arizona statute as a redevelopment tool to initiate development by reducing a project's operating costs by replacing the property tax with an excise tax. The tax can be abated for the first 8 years if the property is located within a CBD and a Redevelopment Area.

01

REDUCED SETBACKS

RESIDENTIAL DISTRICTS

As development patterns have changed over the years, setbacks have gotten larger and building orientation has favored automobile access over pedestrian access. Modern zoning codes, largely based on suburban development models, don't often work well in traditional downtown neighborhoods, such as those in the Infill Overlay District (IO). Development standards make many small lot residential sites in the IO difficult to redevelop because the buildable area is limited. New residential development within the IO should be compatible with the existing established neighborhood. This includes design elements such as front façade orientation and prevailing front, side, and rear yard setbacks. To achieve compatibility, reductions in the front, side, and rear yard setbacks are to be allowed as appropriate.

	CURRENT SETBACK	REDUCED SETBACK
FRONT YARD	20'	DEPENDS
SIDE YARD	7'	5'
REAR YARD	10'	5' (if required parking accessed from alley)

Front yard setbacks

may be reduced to match existing prevailing conditions on the street or surrounding neighborhood, as determined on a case-by-case basis. Attached or detached garages and/or carports with

entrances that face the front of a property abutting the street right-of-way shall be set back at least 10 feet behind the primary front façade of the house. This maintains the existing character of the neighborhood.

Side yard setbacks in many of these neighborhoods were historically 5 feet, therefore the requirement will be reduced from 7 feet to match this standard.



Historically, residential properties located within the infill area were developed with alley access; resulting in many garages constructed at the rear of the property. Over the years, many properties were provided curb-cuts along the roadways to provide access from the primary roadway. To reinforce the character and functional relationships of these established neighborhoods, the City's policy is that within the IO, no additional curb cuts will be permitted where they do not currently exist. Therefore, vehicular access to the property will be provided through the alley. However, if a curb cut exists on a property, the property owner may utilize that access point. As an incentive to utilizing the alley, a **rear yard setback** reduction from 10 feet to 5 feet will be provided when required parking (including a garage, carport, or accessory dwelling unit) is accessed from the alley.

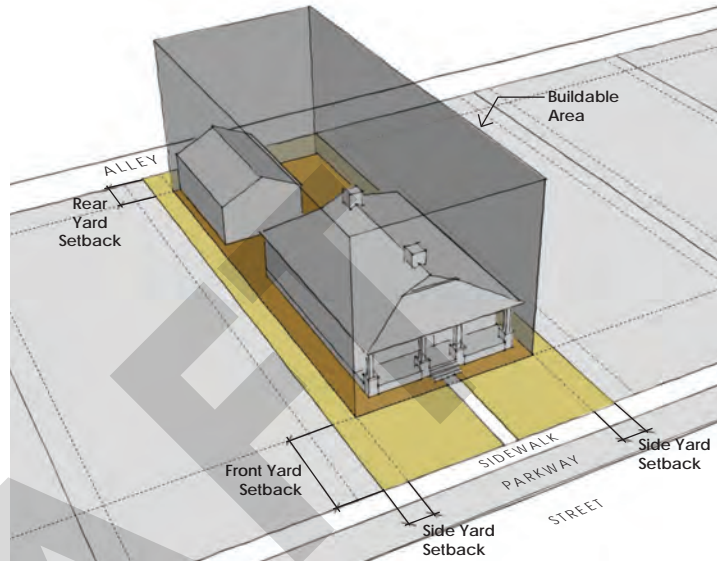
COMMERCIAL DISTRICTS

Similar to residential neighborhoods, it is imperative that infill development within commercial districts fit into the existing context, avoiding abrupt changes in the established character of the neighborhood. In order to address this concern, staff will allow reductions in the required setback from the public right-of-way to match the existing conditions along the streetscape. To maintain existing character, the setback becomes a build-to line to ensure front façades along the street are aligned. Along historically pedestrian-oriented commercial streets such as 4th Avenue, 8th Street, and 3rd Street, this approach will allow new construction to orient the building to the street and place the parking at the rear or side of the property.

FLEXIBLE STANDARDS

The first group of incentives focuses on increasing the flexibility of development standards to allow a wider range of design options in how the lots can be used. Development standards are established by the Zoning Code and vary by zoning district. These standards, such as setbacks, lot coverage, and parking standards, were developed to mitigate impacts on neighboring properties and to establish consistency for future development.

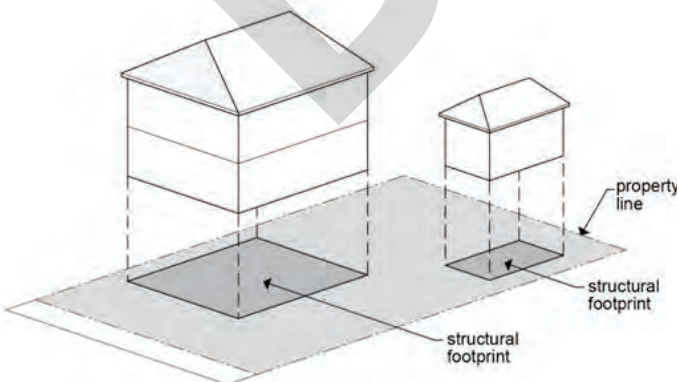
The first three incentives in this section focus on increasing the buildable area of the site as much as possible. The next four focus on easing other development requirements that make new construction or redevelopment more difficult or more expensive.



02

INCREASED LOT COVERAGE

The current lot coverage standards identified in the residential zoning districts typically range between 35% and 50%. Development on many parcels within the IO do not meet minimum lot size requirements. As a result, many of these lots are limited in the amount of buildable area permitted. Therefore, for residential lots in the IO, lot coverage may be increased by 15 percentage points. For example, if the current standard allows for 35% lot coverage, the same lot would be allowed 50% coverage if it were located in the IO. In combination with reduced setbacks, allowing a larger lot coverage allows more options when designing a site.



$$\text{lot coverage (\%)} = \frac{\text{total area of structural footprint(s)}}{\text{total lot area}}$$

This increase in lot coverage is consistent with the existing character of the parcels with the residential areas of the IO. Most of these sites were developed prior to lot coverage regulations.

03

ACCESSORY DWELLING UNITS

By mid-2017, the City of Yuma will have adopted an ordinance permitting the construction and/or conversion of existing structures for use as accessory dwelling units (ADUs). Accessory dwellings are also referred to as an accessory suite, a granny flat, a laneway house, a guest house, a converted pool house, a carriage house and/or a garage apartment. ADUs are limited in size (200-1,000 square feet, typically) and the owner of the property must live on-site.

Accessory dwelling units offer communities a variety of benefits, including providing affordable housing and allowing a source of extra income to homeowners to mitigate increases in the cost of living. By providing affordable housing options, communities can retain population groups that might otherwise be priced out of the housing market. As infill development, ADUs make efficient use of existing infrastructure and can significantly improve the property value.



Examples of accessory dwelling units

04

REDUCED LANDSCAPE

In addition to reduced requirements proposed by the 2017 text amendment to the Landscape Regulations, the landscape requirements for existing buildings in the IO can be reduced on a case-by-case basis. The focus for required landscape will continue to be on trees, particularly street trees, which provide shade, visual enclosure to the street, increased property values, and a host of environmental benefits. Oftentimes, existing sites have existing paved surfaces or parking areas that current codes would require as landscape areas. Causing an existing developed site to remove parking spaces so as to make the total parking available fewer than the number required should be avoided.

05

REDUCED PARKING

The off-street parking regulations (Article 16 of the Zoning Code) were updated in early 2017 to reduce the number of required parking spaces for certain uses and to add a section permitting reductions for developments in the IO. The changes strive to provide adequate parking while limiting excessive, unnecessary spaces. Land within the City is a finite resource that can be put to a more productive use than parking. The cost of parking is often one of the most expensive portions of the project, so reducing parking also serves to reduce the cost of development. Fewer parking spaces also allow for a more walkable environment and reduce the impacts of the urban heat island effect. The amendment made several changes to ease barriers to development in the infill area, as follows:

- Adjacent on-street parking may be counted for up to 50% of the parking requirement for single-family residential
- Reduction in the size of the parking spaces for residential (from 10'x 20' to 9'x18')
- 10% reduction in the parking requirement for certain non-residential uses
- Changed the definition of a parking lot from 4 spaces to 5 spaces to lower the cost for development of duplexes
- Provided a parking exemption based on maintenance of a historic structure



On-street parking in Historic Downtown Yuma

06

ALTERNATIVE ALLEYWAY PAVING

For commercial and multi-family developments, a common barrier to development is the requirement to pave the alleyway for access. If the property is located mid-block, this could mean paving up to 300 feet of alleyway, a considerable cost that proves to be prohibitive to many projects. The paving requirement is founded in the need to control dust and air pollution in the urban environment (PM-10), and therefore should not be foregone altogether. As an alternative, recycled asphalt millings can be used to pave the alleyways at a fraction of the price. Asphalt millings are produced when old roads are resurfaced, and typically the City has a stockpile on hand. The recycled millings are applied to a compacted and prepared surface, and then treated with a resin-based surface coat that acts like a glue to hold the roadway together and prevent dust. This application is appropriate for low-traffic areas such as alleyways, and has been used in Yuma at the East Wetlands parking lot. Long term, the City could elect to resurface all the alleyways in the IO as part of the Capital Improvements Program budget, but in the interim, allowing private developers to use asphalt millings to pave the alleyways will amount to a large cost savings.



BEFORE



DURING



AFTER

REDUCING DUST WITH ASPHALT MILLINGS

The City of Chandler, AZ has been using recycled asphalt millings to pave their alleyways since 2009. Photos from 2012 articles from Arizona Central (azcentral.com) and ForConstructionPros.com.

07

NO-BUILD EASEMENTS

During planning cases, the City may ask the private property owner to dedicate land to City for public use as a condition of approval. An alternative to right-of-way dedications is to use a no-build easement. In comparison to dedications, no-build easements allow ownership of the land to remain private and on the tax rolls, while still preventing the construction of permanent structures within the easement. In the IO, dedications should be limited as a means to maintain the character and scale of the existing streetscape.

08

INTERNATIONAL EXISTING BUILDING CODE

As building codes have evolved over the years to increase safety, they have also become more technical. This poses challenges to bring existing buildings into compliance. To help alleviate this compliance issue, the City of Yuma has adopted the International Existing Building Code (IEBC) which allows flexibility of code requirements for some existing and historic properties. The intent of the IEBC is to "provide flexibility to permit the use of alternative approaches to achieve compliance with minimum requirements to safeguard the public health, safety and welfare insofar as they are affected by the repair, alteration, change of occupancy, addition and relocation of existing buildings".

09

FIRE CODE FLEXIBILITY

In some circumstances within the designated Infill Overlay (IO) District, equivalencies, alternatives and/or modifications to the City of Yuma Fire code may be considered. Requests to consider equivalencies, alternatives and/or modifications may be submitted to the Yuma Fire Department in accordance with the guidelines set forth in the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) 1 (2012) § 1.4. Equivalencies, alternatives and/or modifications may be granted in certain instances based on several parameters, including, but not limited to: use, hazard, size, and proposed site improvements.

REDUCING COSTS

The second set of incentives focuses on reducing the cost of development. In every jurisdiction, new construction comes with a host of fees to pay for impacts to infrastructure, police and fire protection, as well as for permitting and review. Although each fee is important and justified in its own right, altogether they can add up to making a project infeasible, particularly for small business owners, small developers, and private property owners. A careful analysis of each of these fees was conducted to determine how to reduce these fees without undermining the important function they serve.

10

UTILITY FEE WAIVERS

Fees associated with utility connections may be required for new and/or existing services depending on the proposed use and previous development on a property. These fees are assessed on both commercial and residential properties and include fees associated with capacity, connection, meter, state and county taxes, water system development charge (WSDC), and sanitary sewer interceptor charge (SSIC). For a typical single family residence on a site with no previous connection to utilities, the total fee for water and sewer would be approximately \$12,000. For both commercial and residential development in the Infill Overlay District, both the water system development charge (WSDC) and sanitary sewer interceptor charge (SSIC) will be waived.

Additionally, for residential lots in the IO annexed and platted before 1977, water and sewer capacity fees would be offered a 50% reduction. Capacity fees cover the cost of infrastructure required to provide the connection in water/sewer treatment facilities and major transmission and distribution lines. When subdivisions are platted, the water and sewer capacity of the entire subdivision is taken into account when sizing the infrastructure to be installed. The City began charging water and sewer capacity fees in 1977. Prior to that time, no fees for capacity were charged. For residential lots in particular, water and sewer capacity fees, totaling \$10,175, are a significant cost of development. For residential lots in the IO to be eligible for the reduced water and sewer capacity fees, the most recent plat must show a residential lot platted prior to 1977 and the site must have been annexed into the City prior to 1977.

Example #1: A 7,000 sq. ft. residential lot in the Yuma High neighborhood has been vacant for many years and no record of past water or sewer service can be found. It was platted in 1920 as part of the 'Gandolfo's Subdivision of Block 104'. A new single family residence is proposed for the site. Water or sewer capacity fees would be charged at a 50% reduced rate.

Example #2: A developer would like to subdivide a 14,000 sq. ft. vacant lot on 2nd Avenue into two lots and develop two single family residential units. The lot was platted in 1894 as one single family lot. In this case, the property would get credit for one residential unit (50% reduction of the capacity fees) and would pay full capacity fees for the additional lot.

The City of Yuma Utilities Department provides credit to properties which have had a usage history. However, past policy has been that such credits would not be permitted for land being disposed of by the City of Yuma. At the direction of the City Council, this plan recommends a shift in that policy to allow City-owned properties in the IO to benefit from such utility credits.

11

DEVELOPMENT FEE CREDITS

Development fees, also referred to as impact fees, are paid by new development (both residential and commercial) to offset the costs associated with providing necessary public facilities or services to support new development. The City adopted the development fee program in 2005, and the past policy was to give credit to properties where a building existed in the past, but was demolished after 2005. At the direction of the City Council, this plan recommends that policy be adjusted to give credit to lots with previous development, to include those demolished after 1952.

Another City policy is to not give development fee credit to properties sold to private developers by the City. Another policy change this plan recommends is to allow credit for these formerly City-owned properties that are located in the IO.

At its discretion, the City Council can elect to waive development fees, but the amount of the fee must be paid from another source, typically the General Fund. This repayment requirement is dictated by state law.

Requiring further Council action is the potential to create a fund to help defray the costs of development fees within the Yuma North End Redevelopment Areas. This fund would utilize the 1% surcharge tax collected on retail sales within in the Riverfront District. An estimated \$25,000 each year could be available to support defraying development fees, defraying utility fees, and demolishing decrepit buildings. Historic preservation and revitalization in the Century Heights Conservancy District will be given priority, but projects throughout the Yuma North End Redevelopment Area can be supported.

12

REDUCED PERMIT & REVIEW FEES

Construction projects in the City of Yuma require a permit and inspection. Building permit fees and plan review fees are assessed when plans are reviewed by the City Staff. Building permit fees are based on the valuation of the project and the plan review fee is calculated at 65% of the permit fee. For example, if the building permit for a single-family residence is \$1500, the required plan review fee would be \$975. For all development within the IO, plan review fees will be credited toward the cost of the building permit fee.

In addition to building permits, the Department of Community Development reviews land use applications which also require a fee. Depending on the request, fees range from \$84 to \$1200. Properties in the IO will be allowed a 50% reduction for land use applications.

13

LEASE EXCISE TAX

The Government Property Lease Excise Tax (GPLET) has been established by the State of Arizona and is a redevelopment tool to initiate development by reducing a project's operating costs by replacing the real property tax with an excise tax. Under the state statute an excise tax is established for the building type or use and is calculated on the gross square footage of the building. The use of the excise tax cannot continue for more than twenty-five years and requires that the land and improvements be conveyed to a government entity and leased back for private use. The excise tax rate can be abated for the first eight years after a certificate of occupancy on the building is issued if the property is located within a Central Business District and a Redevelopment Area.

Source:
www.azcommerce.com/incentives/lease-excise

CASE STUDY // COMMERCIAL // 796 W 3RD STREET



ZONING DISTRICT
PREVIOUS USE
YEARS VACANT

General Commercial (B-2)
Restaurant/Bar
4+ years

Based on community feedback from an October 2016 survey conducted by Community Planning staff regarding infill properties, this case study reflects requirements for the property to be converted to a corner market and deli with outdoor seating. When this property redevelops, the zoning code requires adequate paved parking, parking lot lighting and landscaping. Landscaping is required of all commercial development, when a rear or side property line is shared with residential zoning, a landscaped buffer of 5 feet or 20 feet is required dependent on the size of development; this case would require a landscaped buffer of 5 feet. Along with the installation of landscaping, an irrigation system is also required and an irrigation meter is recommended (approx. \$100) because the monthly fee is assessed only for water usage in comparison to a typical meter which is assessed for both water and sewer usage.

As with all existing buildings, City staff reviews the proposed use to ensure the property meets all building safety and fire requirements. If renovations in excess of 50% of value as assessed by the building code are required or proposed to the structure, the fire code would require the existing building to be retrofitted with an automatic sprinkler system. At the pre-development meeting, the applicant can discuss with staff possible equivalencies, alternatives and/or modifications to installing fire sprinklers. In this case, an alternative might be providing smoke detectors connected to a monitoring system rather than sprinklers.

Certain development standards, such as parking, landscaping, and setback requirements can be reduced according to the incentives herein. A proposed change to the parking code requirements reduced the number of required spaces for this type of convenience food store and allowed a 10% reduction for this type of use in the IO.



CASE STUDY // RESIDENTIAL // 555 S 8TH AVENUE



ZONING DISTRICT
VACANCY HISTORY

Low Density Residential (R-1-6)
Never developed

This site consists of two parcels totaling 14,000 square feet. Historically, the properties were never developed, but were subdivided as part of the Yuma Townsite Subdivision and are located in an established residential neighborhood.

The current zoning for the properties permits the sites to be developed as low density single-family residential. Development standards, as outlined in the zoning code, address lot coverage, setbacks, and parking requirements. Utility and development fees would typically be collected in response to the new development. In regard to these properties, the City started collecting these fees after the lots were subdivided as part of the Yuma Townsite Subdivision. Had these sites been developed at the same time as the surrounding homes, they would not have been subject to such fees. When subdivisions are established, the full build-out impact on infrastructure and utilities is considered. Vacant lots located in an established subdivision have already been factored into capacity calculations; therefore, water and sewer capacity fees along with the water system development charge and sanitary sewer interceptor charge will be waived. For these two lots, waivers of those fees total a savings of over \$21,000.

These vacant lots are ideal for quality residential infill development, as the surrounding neighborhood is stable. The proposed design utilizes the reduced setbacks for the side and rear yards. The homes shown are also plans chosen from the proposed set of standard plans. These plans were carefully chosen to ensure quality, appropriate design that enhances the neighborhood. Both lots are shown with accessory dwelling units (ADUs). Because neither of these sites had existing curb-cuts, both sites are accessed from the alley, and utilized the rear yard setback reduction from 10 feet to 5 feet because the required parking is located at the rear.



IMPLEMENTING CHANGE

Moving forward, the City will continue to expand the toolkit of infill incentives. Although not applicable yet, the incentives and proposed changes highlighted in this section represent goals the City is working to implement. These include expanding mixed-use zoning throughout the development code, marketing vacant sites, assembling a portfolio of pre-approved residential plans, improving the appearance and enforcement of vacant properties, promoting homeowner rehabilitation programs, and making a concerted effort to invest in public realm improvements in the Infill Incentive District.

A

EXPAND MIXED-USE ZONING

Infill and redevelopment projects can stimulate revitalization efforts within the surrounding neighborhoods. When these projects feature a mix of uses, the neighborhood becomes more walkable. The key to mixed-use projects is to ensure they are compatible with existing neighborhoods. The following are proposed changes that will increase mixed-use development in Yuma:

- Adopt a Zoning Code text amendment to allow corner markets and other small service businesses to be located within residential zoning districts. For examples, corner markets provide residents the opportunity to easily access food and other goods within walking distance.
- Expand the types of uses allowed in the Transitional (TR) District. Such uses may include higher housing density or more intense commercial uses.
- In addition to changes to the Transitional (TR) District, an amendment to consider allowing certain types and densities of residential development within the Limited Commercial (B-1) District and the General Commercial (B-2) District is proposed. Permitting residential development within commercial development offers residents the opportunity to utilize urban living amenities.



The Corner Market in Eugene, OR

INCENTIVE	RESPONSIBLE CITY DEPARTMENT	TIMELINE
A EXPAND MIXED-USE ZONING	Community Planning	1-2 years
B MARKET VACANT SITES	Community Planning, Economic Development	1 year
C ASSEMBLE STANDARD RESIDENTIAL PLANS	Community Planning, Building Safety	2 years
D SECURE VACANT PROPERTIES	Building Safety	1-2 years
E EXPAND HOMEOWNER REHAB PROGRAMS	Neighborhood Services, Heritage Area	5 years
F INVEST IN THE PUBLIC REALM	Public Works, Engineering, Parks & Recreation, Community Planning	1-10 years

B

VACANT PROPERTY PROFILES

To augment the inventory of vacant parcels and buildings in the Infill Incentive District, the City's Community Planning Division will create property profiles to help potential buyers understand what uses are best suited for the sites. Information included in these profiles will include zoning, land use designation, history of the site, availability of utilities, surrounding land uses, access to public facilities, most suitable land uses, and potential incentives. This effort will go hand-in-hand with the Pre-Development Meetings offered by City staff. Property profiles could be made available on the City's website and in print format.



C

ASSEMBLE STANDARD RESIDENTIAL PLANS

The City will assemble a portfolio of pre-approved residential plans available for purchase by developers and potential homeowners. Much as new subdivisions have standard plans that have been previously reviewed and approved by the City's Building Safety staff, the City will provide standard plans specifically designed to meet the needs of typical lot dimensions found in the Infill Incentive District. Plans will be pre-approved by the Design and Historic Review Committee (DHRC) with color and material palettes that will complement historic districts and existing neighborhoods. Not only does this ensure a high-quality design that fits with the neighborhood, it also saves prospective developers the cost of hiring an architect. A variety of single-family, duplex, and triplex plans will be provided, in varying sizes and construction price points.



Designs by Allison Ramsey Architects

D

SECURE VACANT PROPERTIES

Vacant properties are unsightly and contribute to the blight of a neighborhood. The City will promote innovative strategies to secure and activate vacant properties without drawing attention to their vacancy. SecureView is a product that offers an alternative to using plywood to board-up vacant properties. The system is designed to look like traditional windows, which enhances the marketability and safety of the property. The patented material is virtually unbreakable, which means the property is protected from intrusion, while the transparency reduces crime and squatters associated with boarded-up buildings.



SecureView decreases blight



'2 Blocks of Art' event in San Francisco utilizes vacant storefronts

Across the country, many municipalities have had success activating vacant storefronts through temporary art installations. This approach draws attention to the property and reduces crime and blight through positive use. Detroit has a program, known as REVOLVE, that matches potential tenants to vacant buildings.

Due to the predominance of vacancy in the Infill Incentive District, the City's code enforcement team could take a proactive approach to enforcement in the entire district to ensure vacant properties are not generating more crime and blight. Proactive enforcement would require additional staff.

E

EXPAND HOMEOWNER REHAB PROGRAMS

The City's Neighborhood Services division currently offers a rehabilitation program focused on low- and moderate-income homeowners to assist with minor to substantial repairs, sometimes to include complete reconstructions. Applicants can apply online through the City's website. The program has proven successful and popular; nearly 100 applicants are currently on the waiting list. Priority is given to families with the highest need for safe and affordable housing. Revitalization Areas are targeted, although any City resident is eligible and welcome to apply. Funds are given as a loan that must be repaid if the property is sold or rented, but if the homeowner meets certain criteria, the loan can be forgiven. This program relies heavily on federal and state grants, such as CBDG funds and state grants. Neighborhood Services is exploring additional funding sources to continue and expand the program.

In the past, the Yuma Crossing National Heritage Area allocated \$35,000 of National Park Service (NPS) funds for a facade restoration program of Century Heights residential homes. The funds were provided on a 50/50 match basis with no interest. The funds did not have to be repaid until the homeowners sold their property. Under the program, four properties were restored and saw significant private investment beyond the required 50 percent. If funding becomes available, the Heritage Area would like to create a long-term revolving loan fund for this historic neighborhood.



YCNHA's facade restoration program helped revive this home on Orange Ave.

F

INVEST IN THE PUBLIC REALM

Concerted efforts by the City to invest in public realm improvements in the Infill Incentive District would go a long way to making a positive impact. Roadway improvements to increase pedestrian and cyclist traffic, such as the recent road diet on Orange Avenue, show the City's commitment to improving the neighborhoods. Street trees are an essential part of increasing property values and desirability on both commercial and residential streets. Neighborhood identity and historic signage are also good additions. City-sponsored citizen groups such as the Clean & Beautiful Commission and the Public Art Ad-Hoc Committee could focus their efforts in the Infill Incentive Area. When funds are available and when the opportunity presents itself, utilities should be placed underground and alleyways paved with the millings alternative paving system mentioned previously.



Street trees provide shade to the sidewalk and increase property values along 8th Avenue



Department of Community Development
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