

STAFF REPORT

DATE: May 6, 2008
TO: City Council
FROM: Katherine Hess, Community Development Director
SUBJECT: Reconsideration of LAFCO Sphere of Influence

Recommendation

Staff recommends the City Council revise its original recommendation and propose a Sphere of Influence for Davis that includes the following sites:

- City-owned parcels
- UC Davis, El Macero, Willowbank, and Royal Oaks mobile home park
- “Covell Village” site at Pole Line Road and Covell Boulevard
- Signature/Yamada property inside Mace curve
- Nishi and Rust Properties
- Northwest Quadrant, east of Road 99 to north edge of Binning Tract (area reduced from Council action of February 26, 2008)
- Mace-Covell Gateway (Shriner’s/Gidaro) east of Wildhorse

The recommended Sphere would not include the following parcels that were recommended by the City Council at its meeting of February 19, 2008:

- Far west Davis, east of Pedrick Road between Russell and Covell Boulevards
- Signature property north and east of the Mace curve
- Parcels south and east of El Macero
- Northwest quadrant, west of CR 99 or north of the Binning Tract.

A map of the recommended sites is included as Attachment 1 of this report.

Fiscal Impact

No direct fiscal impact from this report, or from LAFCO’s adoption of the Municipal Services Review or Sphere of Influence. Fiscal impacts from any future development proposal would be evaluated at the time of land-use application.

Council Goals

- Provide a mix of high-quality housing to meet community needs
- Conserve natural resources and protect the environment
- Ensure top quality fire, police and emergency services

Reconsideration of LAFCO Sphere of Influence

Background

As the Council knows, the Local Agency Formation Commission is preparing an update to its Sphere of Influence map for the City of Davis. The Sphere of Influence shows the area that, in LAFCO's opinion, are reasonably available for annexation within a twenty-year period. In part, the Sphere of Influence is determined by a review of municipal services and a determination of whether the jurisdiction has the capacity to extend services to new areas. The Sphere of Influence was last updated in 1988.

The Yolo County LAFCO released a draft Municipal Services Review and Sphere of Influence recommendations in January of this year. In that report, LAFCO's consultants recommended a reduction in the Sphere, compared to that approved in 1988. The City Council discussed the draft recommendation on February 26, 2008, and recommended the Sphere be expanded, rather than reduced. The City Council discussion focused on the following main themes:

- The areas adjacent to the City of Davis are vitally important to the character of Davis, and
- Any development in these areas, if it is to occur, should be at the discretion of the City and subject to its regulations and processes.

LAFCO held a public hearing in Davis on March 31, 2008. Public testimony, and the LAFCO discussion, focused on the best mechanism for managing growth on the periphery of Davis. Prior to the hearing, LAFCO staff provided a revised Municipal Service Review with more detailed analysis on the basis for including and excluding specific sites. After that hearing, Councilmember Souza requested reconsideration of the earlier Council recommendation.

Analysis

Staff has the following comments on the Sphere of Influence for City of Davis:

1. Recent changes to State law call for a review of a jurisdiction's Sphere every five years. Previously, Spheres were required to be updated on a twenty-year cycle. This may reduce the need for the Council and the LAFCO to project a full 20 years into the future.
2. There is no clear answer to the question of whether including land in the City's Sphere will increase or decrease its chance of future development. Including land in the Sphere may increase community expectations for eventual urban development. Excluding land may make it more difficult for the City to prevent development through a Yolo County process, although it is still possible for the County to approve development even if it is within a City's Sphere of Influence. The Pass-Through Agreement is a stronger factor in controlling where growth would occur, and within a larger area.
3. Whatever decisions are made at this time, future City Councils would have the ability to petition LAFCO to have land added to the Sphere concurrently with an annexation request.
4. The City may acquire and develop land for a sports park even if it is outside its Sphere. It seems likely that that land, if developed, would be added to the City's Sphere during the next LAFCO update.

Reconsideration of LAFCO Sphere of Influence

5. The recommended Sphere corresponds to that recommended by LAFCO staff, with the exception of the Mace-Covell Gateway parcel. City staff recommends that property be included, as its location and attributes are very similar to the other parcels north of Davis that are recommended for inclusion.

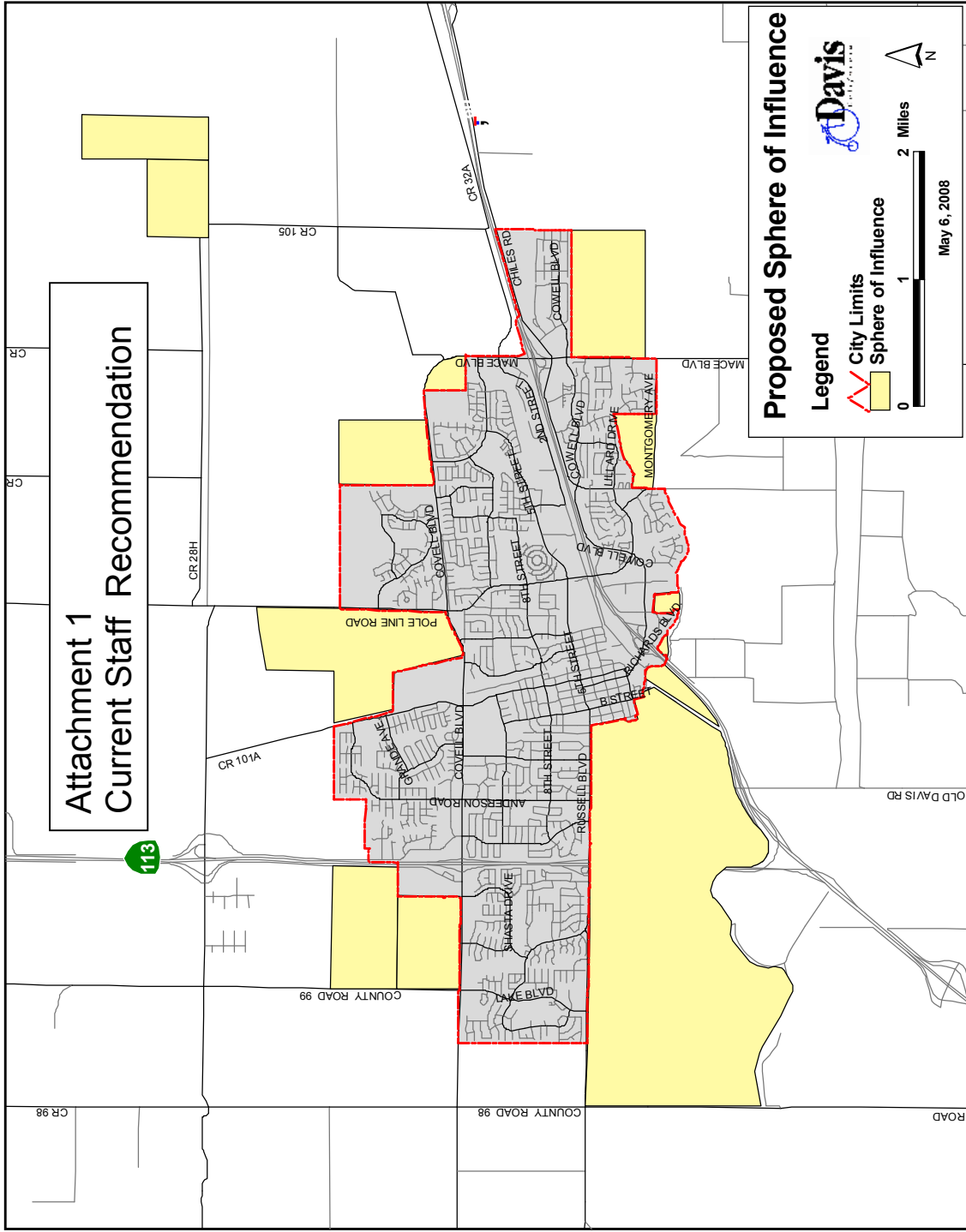
Staff does not believe that there is significant dissent over whether Nishi, Rust, or the existing urbanized areas should be included in the City's Sphere of Influence. The major questions are which (if any) properties to the west, north, and southeast should be included. Staff's recommendation is that the SOI be focused on those areas with the greatest growth pressure, including contiguous areas that have been discussed by Yolo County as part of its General Plan process. These include the nearest parcels in the Northwest Quadrant, the Covell Village site, Mace/Covell Gateway, and Signature inside the curve. This is not to say that development is imminent in these areas. These are simply the areas that are most likely to accommodate urbanization, based on infrastructure availability, adjacent urban uses, city form, and quality of soils.

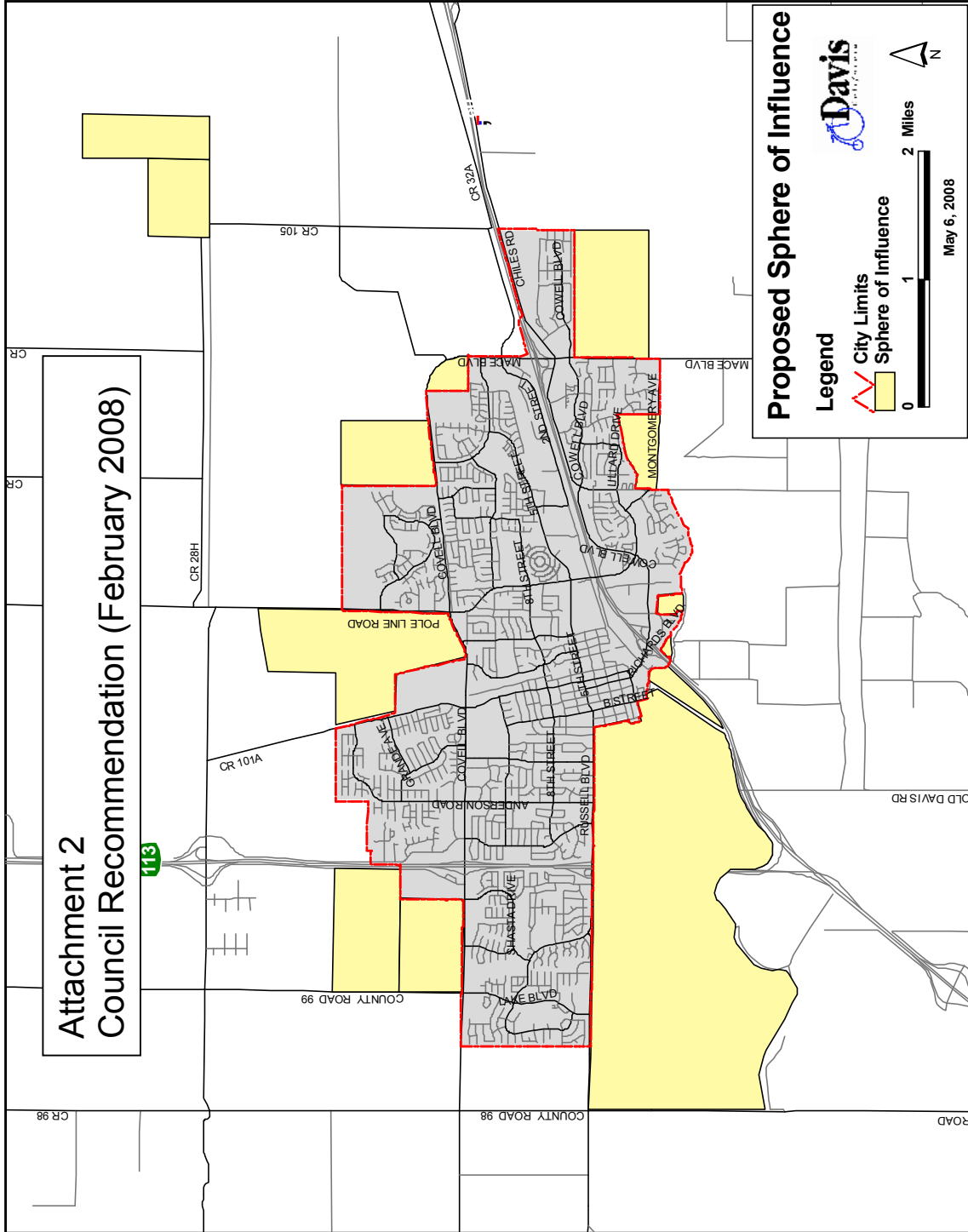
Attachments

- 1 - Davis staff recommended Sphere of Influence as of May 6, 2008
- 2 - LAFCO staff recommendation discussed at February 26, 2008 meeting
- 3 - Council determination from February 26, 2008 meeting
- 4 - Information on Sphere of Influence areas for other California cities

The LAFCO report is at <http://www.yolocounty.org/lafco/>. The analysis of why sites were and were not included in the recommended Sphere of Influence begins on page 9.0-5.

The City staff report for the February 26, 2008 meeting is at http://www.cityofdavis.org/meetings/councilpackets/20080226/08_LAFCO_Sphere_of_Influence.pdf





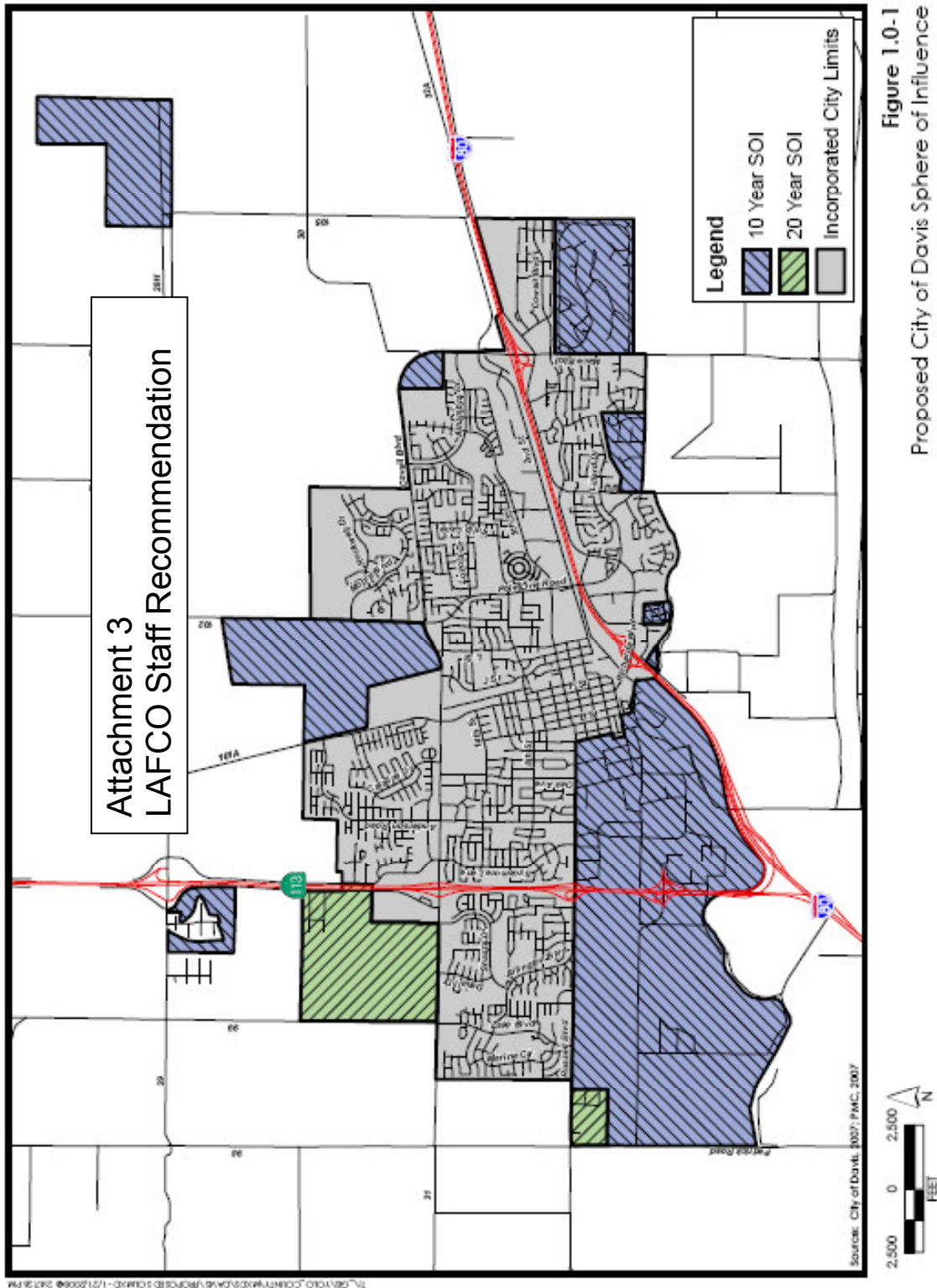


Figure 1.0-1
Proposed City of Davis Sphere of Influence
PMC

Attachment 4

Sphere of Influence Comparisons

City and County	Growth Control Measures	Extent of Sphere of Influence Outside of City
Livermore, Alameda	City General Plan policy creates a Housing Implementation Program. Implementation program has a Growth Review Committee. The Committee reviews growth parameters for development and then ranks the parameters and projects for an allocation program. Based upon the Committee's review of the parameters the an annual allocation number ranging from 140-700 dwelling units is set. The allocation number is set for the next three years until the next review.	Large
Santa Cruz, Santa Cruz	The city approved a ballot measure to have greenbelt system around the city in the late 1970's. Since then they have acquired over 2,000 acres of vacant land around the City's edges to remain in a natural undeveloped state. Additional growth is constrained by this and by other natural barriers outside of the city's boundary: To the south is the Monterey Bay; west is significant acreage in state park system; east is an urbanized part of the unincorporated area; and to the north is greenbelt.	Small
Petaluma, Sonoma	The city identifies an Urban Growth Boundary in the General Plan Land Use Map.	Medium
Orinda, Contra Costa	An Urban Growth Boundary adopted by the county exists but is yet to be adopted by the City Council. There is no current need for growth restrictions at due to the existence of East Bay MUD lands, permanent open space, the City of Lafayette, and the City of Moraga are all on the perimeter of the city which sets geographical constraints for growth.	Small
Moraga, Contra Costa	<p>The major restraint on growth in Moraga is due primarily to no direct freeway access. All the traffic in and out of Moraga has to go through Lafayette or Orinda, which impacts the area traffic congestion. Any proposed increases in residential density or total number of housing units in Moraga immediately brings opposing comments from the adjacent cities. Generally, if the Town wants to increase the density on any parcel, then they have to compensate by reducing the density on some other parcel within the Town.</p> <p>Adjacent unincorporated areas is restricted because the land is watersheded to San Leandro Reservoir and either owned or restricted to agricultural use by the East Bay Municipal Utility District (EBMUD), or belongs to other jurisdictions.</p> <p>Adjacent unincorporated development has been permitted by the County due to lack of control or ability to expand their SOI. Adjacent private land owners have objected to expansion of the SOI.</p>	Small
Morgan Hill, Santa Clara	The city has an Urban Growth Boundary and Residential Development Control System in the Municipal code that has set a population ceiling of 48,000 for the city in the year 2020. This has lead to an average allocation of 250 units per fiscal year.	Small
San Luis	The city has Urban Reserve Line identified in their General Plan Land	Large

Attachment 4

City and County	Growth Control Measures	Extent of Sphere of Influence Outside of City
Obispo, San Luis Obispo	The City has residential growth management regulations intended to maintain an average residential growth rate of one percent per year.	
Santa Barbara, Santa Barbara	The city has Measure E, which limits the amount of square footage in buildings which can be added annually.	Large
Napa, Napa	No direct growth limit regulations , although City included a pacing strategy in its 2001 Housing Element to limit <i>above moderate</i> income housing if needed, and developed an implementing draft pacing ordinance that could be put in place if needed. To date it has not been. The City’s General Plan defines a Rural Urban Limit Line (RUL), and a city charter amendment in 1999 now requires a general vote of the people to change of the RUL. For many years, both City and County General Plan policies and implementing zoning have stated that land within the RUL shall be annexed to the City prior to urban development. The new County General Plan has recently proposed Study Areas on two large preexisting industrial sites adjacent to the city, and the City has been working with the county to have a say in what may happen there.	Small
Chico, Butte	General Plan Policies – compact urban form, urban development line and green line on city’s west side, east side has the endangered species act growth due to presence of vernal pools and threatened species, north airport use has kept growth from encroaching, south down hill from sewer plant, no highway interchange putting high price tag to development. The east side also has a urban limit line known as the “gold line” to protect hill sides under consideration.	Medium