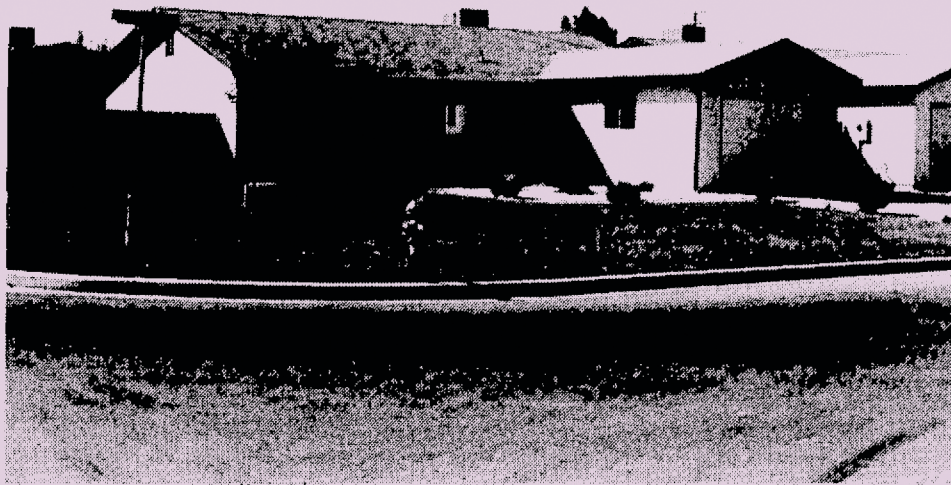


# EARLIMART COMMUNITY PLAN



**A COMPONENT OF THE LAND USE AND CIRCULATION  
ELEMENTS OF THE TULARE COUNTY GENERAL PLAN**

1988





# EARLIMART COMMUNITY PLAN

**A COMPONENT OF THE LAND USE AND CIRCULATION  
ELEMENTS OF THE TULARE COUNTY GENERAL PLAN**

*Prepared for*

**Tulare County Planning and Development Department**

*Prepared by*

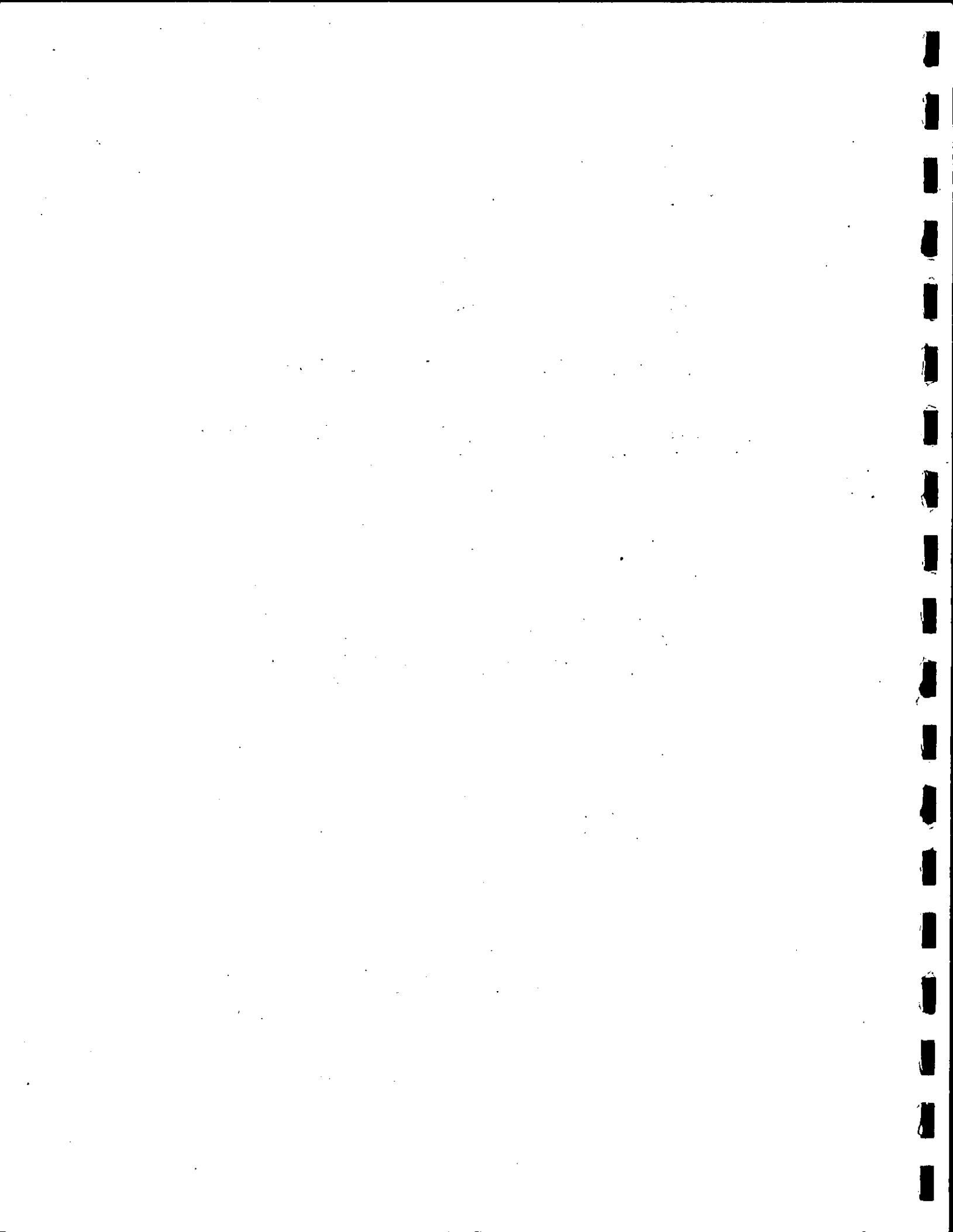
**Collins & Castrillo, Planning Consultants**

*Approved*

**Tulare County Planning Commission, Resolution No. 6565, September 28, 1988**

*Adopted*

**Tulare County Board of Supervisors, Resolution No. 88-1438, November 29, 1988**





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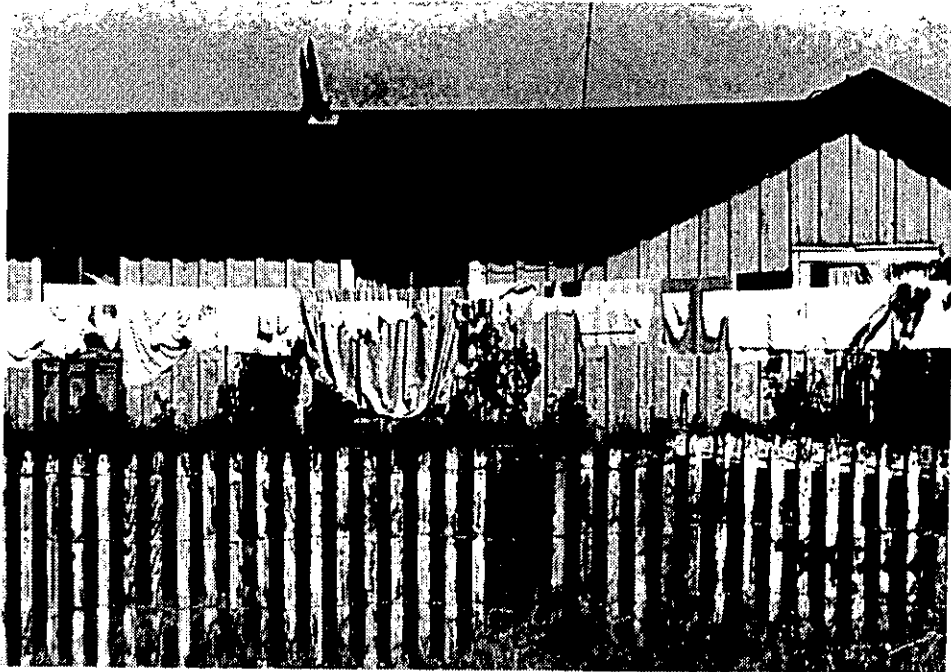
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## **CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION**

**This chapter explains the purpose of the Earlimart Community Plan and how the document is organized.**





# Earlimart Community Plan

## Chapter One: Introduction

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### INTRODUCTION

State law, Government Code Section 65300, requires every city and county to adopt a comprehensive, long range general plan to guide its future physical, economic and social development. As the name implies, a general plan is not a detailed parcel-by-parcel statement of land use policy. It is a statement of generalized land use patterns, policies and recommendations which carry out the goals and objectives of the community.

Tulare County has chosen to fulfill this State planning law requirement by preparing a comprehensive general plan for the County and through the preparation of a series of "community plans" for the larger unincorporated communities. Community plans allow the County to examine planning issues within a defined area and to tailor a planning program to fit the conditions present. These community plans will augment rather than supersede the Tulare County General Plan within these areas.

While State planning law establishes the issues a general plan must address, the responsibility of determining the contents of the community plans rests with the adopting agency, in this case, Tulare County. The Earlimart Community Plan examines the most critical issues facing the community. These issues are:

**Urban Boundaries** - How much land will Earlimart need to accommodate its future growth; where should future growth be located; and, how can growth and the county's policies regarding agricultural land be reconciled.

**Land Use** - Within the planning area how can land uses be distributed in an efficient and environmentally conscious manner. What can be done to improve the existing developed areas.

**Circulation** - What improvements are needed to implement the proposed land use pattern and to make the existing circulation system more efficient.

## Earlimart Community Plan Chapter One: Introduction

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**Public Facilities** - Are existing public facilities capable of sustaining the amount of growth projected and if not what improvements are needed to serve future residents.

While complying with State law is in itself sufficient reason to prepare planning documents, there are also other reasons to do so. The goals and policies of the plan establish the ground rules for land use decisions. As a result, residents will have a better idea about how land use decisions will be made. It also assures that everyone is dealing with the same understanding about the future of the community. Persons interested in investing or building in the community also benefit because it gives them a good idea of what the county will or will not allow. Additionally, since this plan covers territory of interest to several governmental agencies, it can serve as the basis to coordinate decisions.

Finally and most importantly, it provides a means for residents of the community to participate in the land use planning process. Through the plan preparation and adoption process, residents have the opportunity to examine the planning issues of their community and can help determine the policies that will guide future development.

### **Planning Framework**

To be meaningful a planning document must be more than a land use map and general policy statements. The Plan must provide descriptive data about the community, carefully analyze it, and discuss the significance of the material in order to develop meaningful goals and policy statements to guide new growth.

To meet these requirements the remaining chapters of this plan are organized as follows:

**Environmental Assessment** - The environmental assessment documents existing conditions in the planning area and will be used as the environmental setting section for the environmental impact report.

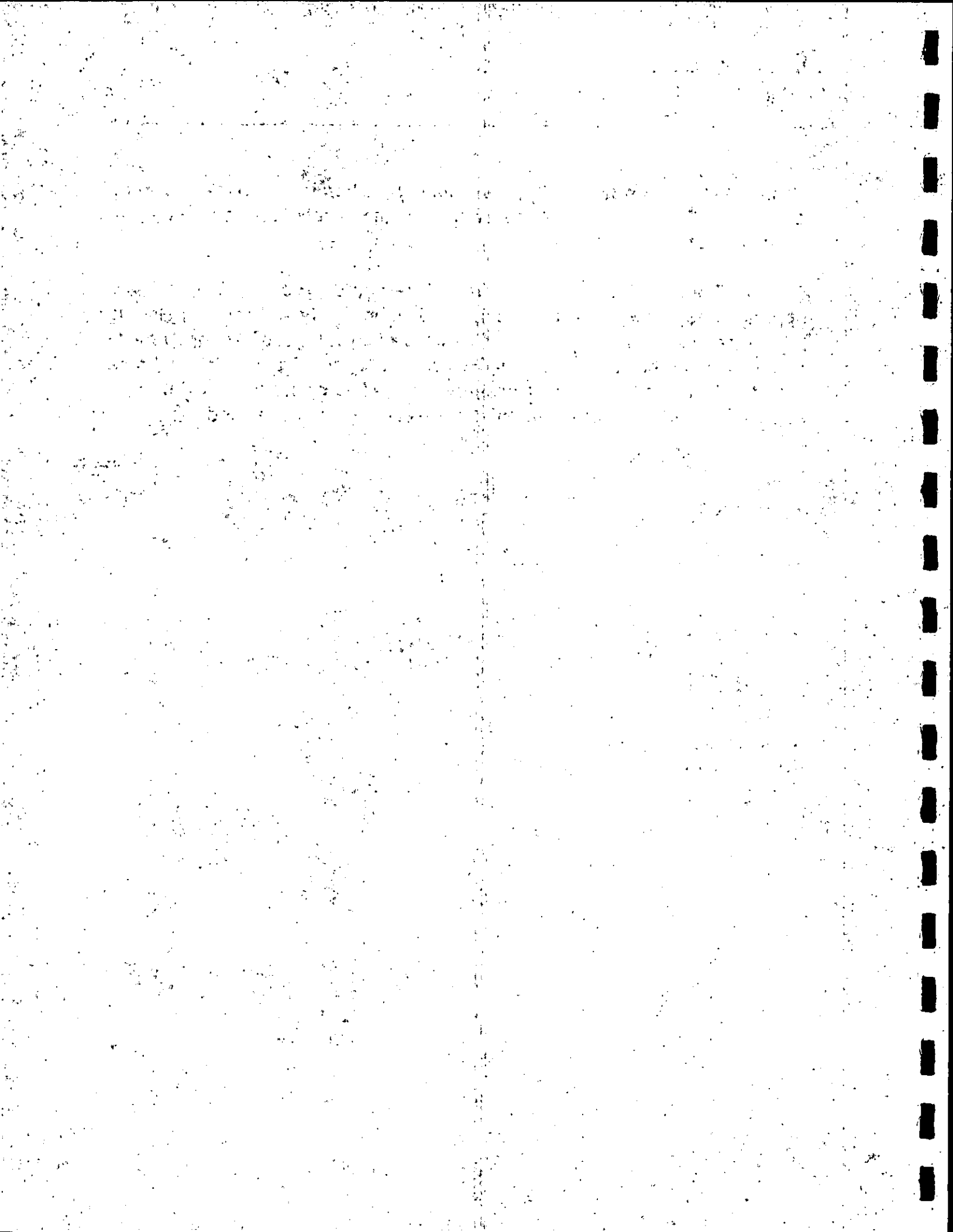
# Earlimart Community Plan

## Chapter One: Introduction

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**Urban Area Boundary** - This section will examine Earlimart's urban area boundary in order to determine if modifications are needed to accommodate future growth.

**Policy Plan** - The policy plan examines the problems and opportunities facing the community. Examining these issues helps to determine how land use patterns can take advantage of an opportunity or rectify a problem. These issues are the result of analyzing the data included in the environmental assessment. As each issue is reviewed, a set of policies and implementation measures is recommended.





## **CHAPTER 2: ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT**

**This chapter includes all the necessary data for the preparation of the Earlimart Community Plan and its corresponding environmental impact report (EIR). This chapter will serve as the environmental setting section of the EIR as allowed by the Guidelines for the Implementation of the California Environmental Quality Act, Section 15166.**





# Earlimart Community Plan

## Chapter Two: Environmental Assessment

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### LAND USE

#### Location

Earlimart is a rural unincorporated community of 5600 persons located in southern Tulare County, approximately 25 miles south of Visalia and 40 miles north of Bakersfield. The nearest incorporated city is Delano located 10 miles south on State Highway 99 in Kern County.

Earlimart was established in 1880, ten years after the construction of the San Joaquin Valley Railroad, now known as the Southern Pacific Railroad. It was originally known as Alila, "land of flowers". In 1910, Earlimart derived its present name from the fact that the crops in this region ripened early, and therefore could be taken "early to market". Thus the name "earli-mart".

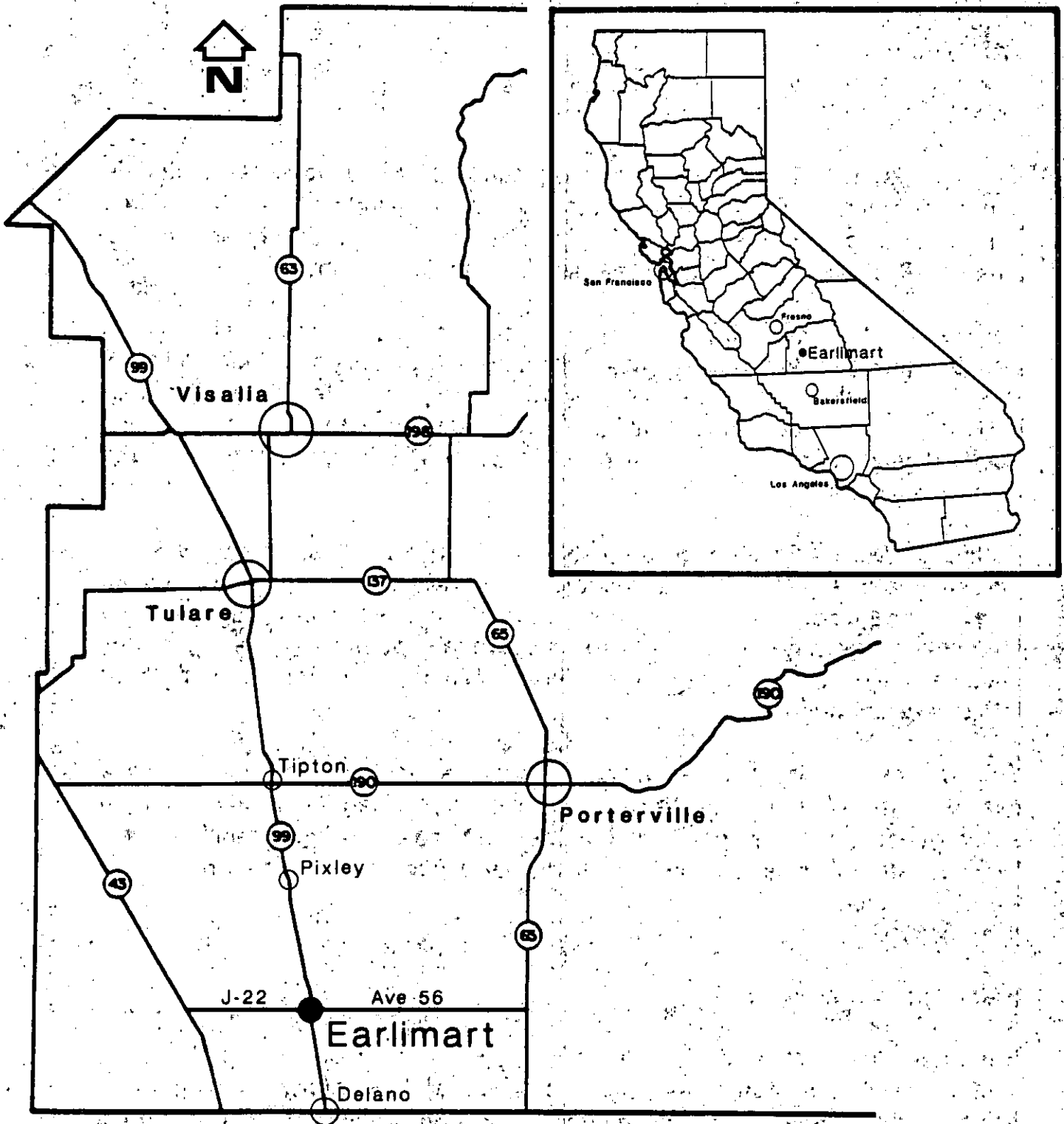
Earlimart has a climate typical to the Southern San Joaquin Valley - hot dry summers and cool, moist winters. The average annual precipitation rate is approximately ten inches most of which occurs between the months of November and April. The average monthly high temperatures occur in July, 100 degrees F; the average monthly low temperatures occur in January, 35 degrees F.

The community is predominantly a rural, agriculturally-related service center. It not only serves as an area where agriculturally oriented enterprises, such as packing houses and cold storage facilities are located, but it also is a bedroom community where many of the area's farm workers reside.

#### Planning Area

Generally, the community's urban growth has been well planned. For a community that is nearly as large as some of the county's incorporated cities, growth has remained compact through infilling and contiguous development.

Earlimart is surrounded by agricultural lands. Crops grown on these lands



## Earlimart Community Plan

### Chapter Two: Environmental Assessment

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include cotton, alfalfa, grain and vineyards. Unlike many valley communities, there is little rural residential development surrounding the denser urbanized area.

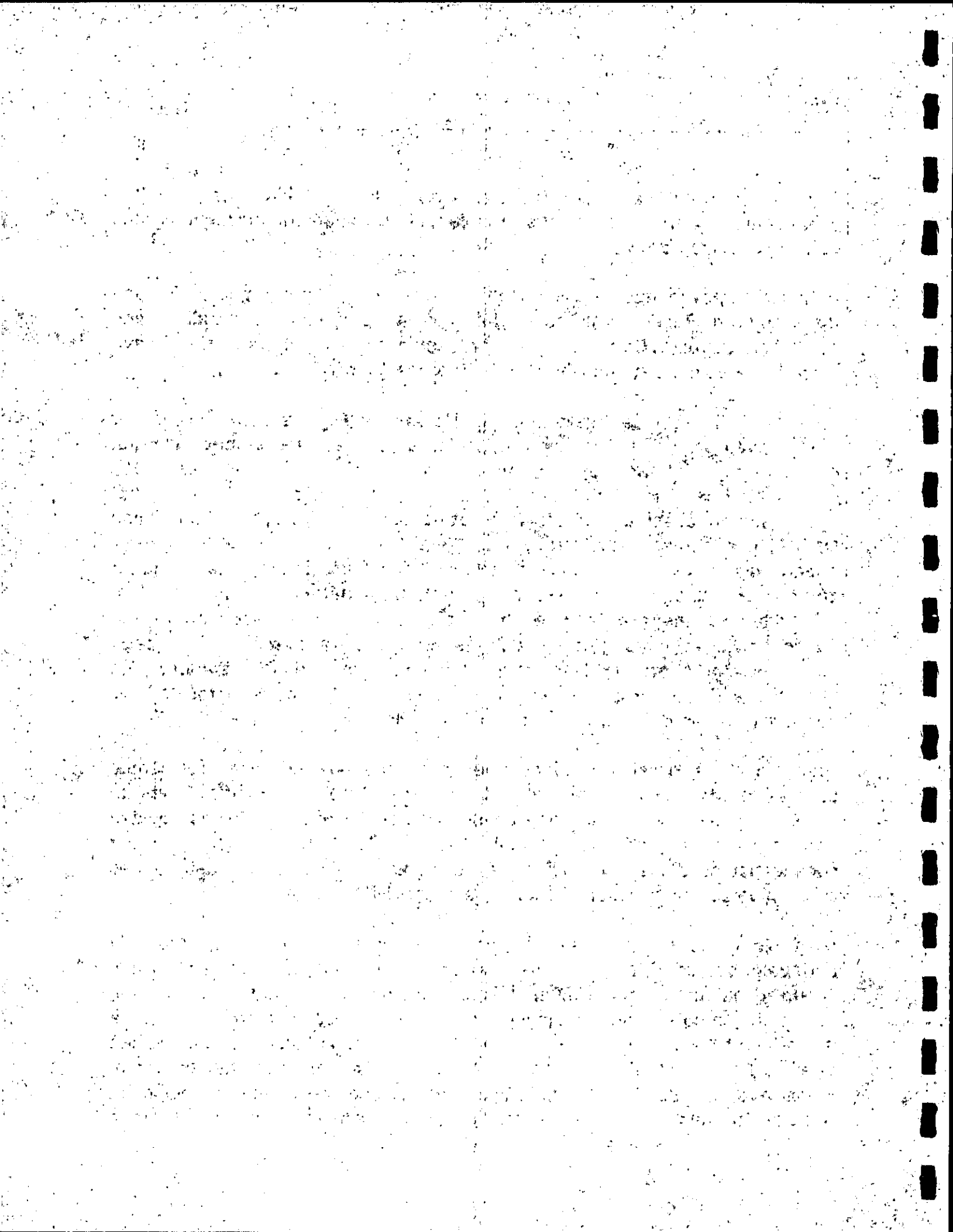
Earlimart's growth has been strongly influenced by State Highway 99 and the Southern Pacific Railroad. The highway and railroad parallel each other and traverse Earlimart in a north/south fashion and, in effect, have divided the community into three distinct areas (See Map No. 2 ).

Area No. 1 is an older residential district east of Highway 99. Except for new development to the north, this area has developed without present-day building and planning controls. Most of Earlimart's deteriorated or dilapidated housing is located in this area. It is not uncommon to observe two or three residential units located on the same lot. Mobile homes, travel trailers and small stick-built homes have been added to the primary residence without regard to density standards or zoning and building regulations. Although older and in need of rehabilitation, this area is the "hub" of the community because of the public facilities located there, such as Earlimart's two schools, a park, churches, the Earlimart Memorial Building, and the fire station. In addition, within a year, a new post office will be constructed at the northeast corner of Washington and Church Streets.

Area No. 2 is a mixture of commercial, industrial and older residential uses located between Highway 99 and the Southern Pacific Railroad. Dominating the area are packing houses and cold storage buildings, located between the railroad and Bishop Street. Small businesses in older commercial buildings and residential uses, many of which are deteriorated or dilapidated, lie between Bishop Street and Highway 99.

Area No. 3 is west of the Southern Pacific Railroad. It is primarily undeveloped except for some newer residential development which occurred in the early 1980s. This development included a 35 unit apartment complex and 88 single family homes. Also located in this area is Earlimart's waste water treatment plant and percolation ponds, located west of Road 128, and a borrow pit, situated on the southeast corner of Sierra Avenue and Road 128. Although additional residential development is slated for land south of the multiple family complex, this area lacks a





# Planning Areas

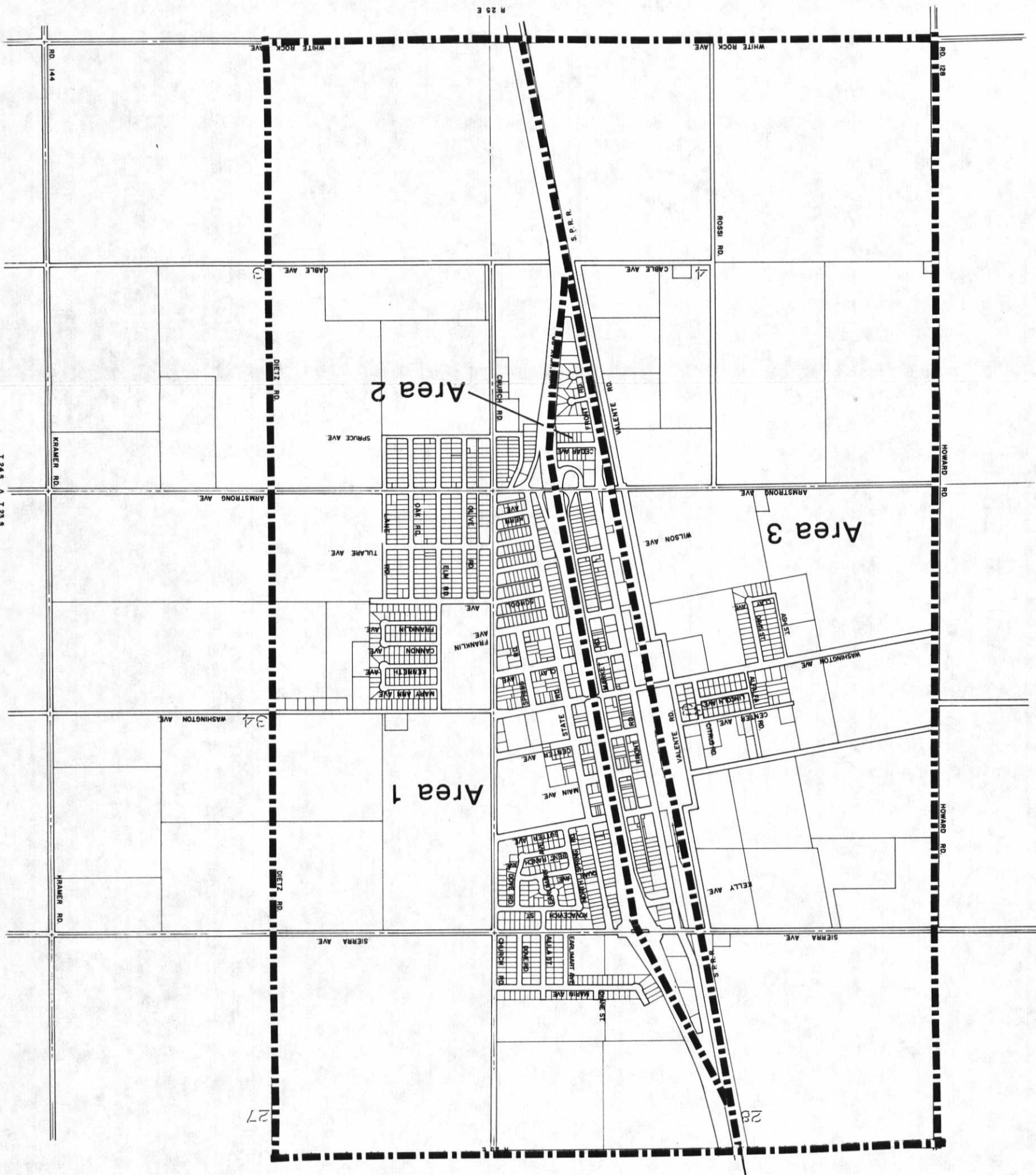
## Earlimer Community Plan

### Map 2



0 660 1320 FT

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COMPTON  
CORPORATION

NEW YORK





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school, park and a road system necessary to sustain large scale development.

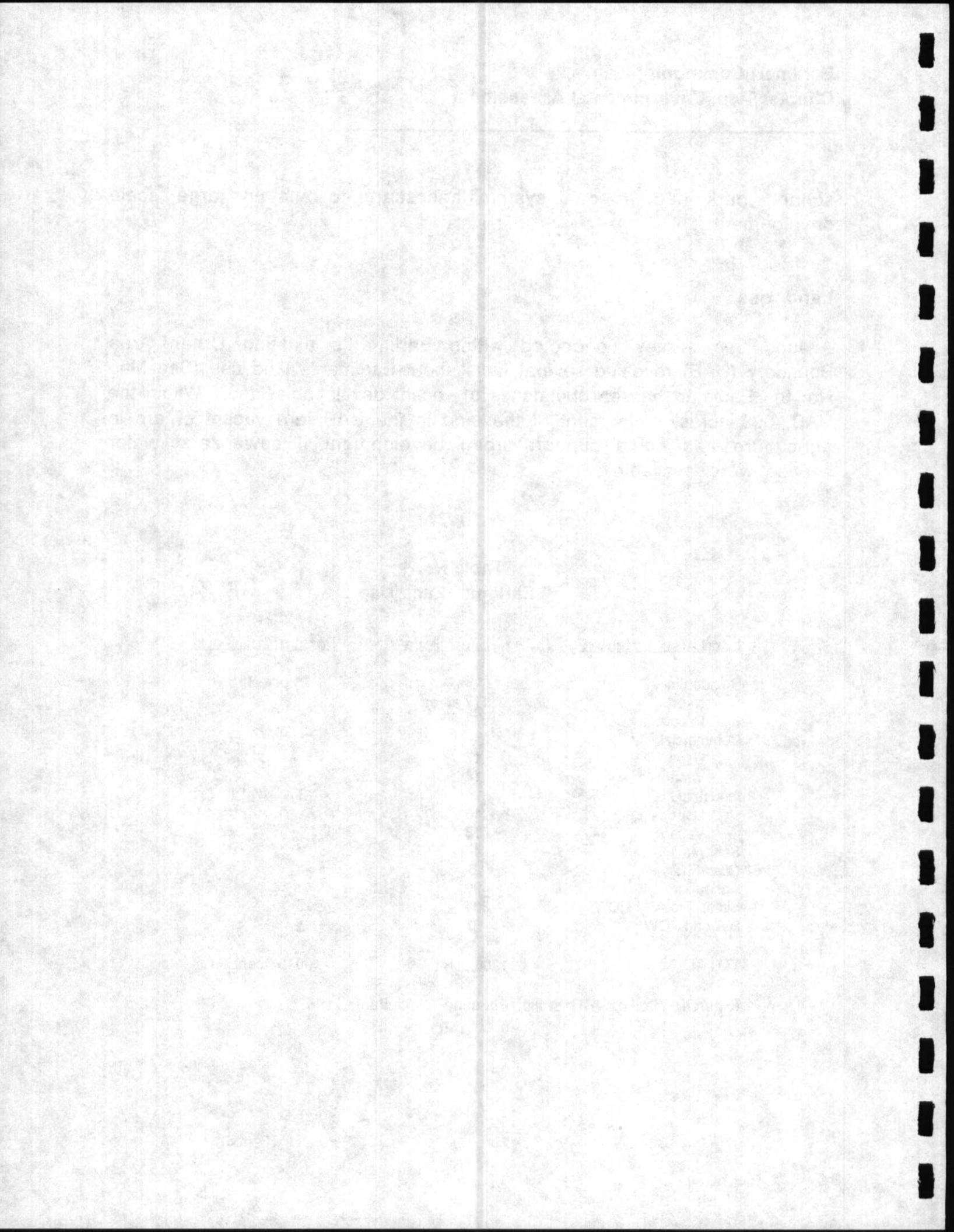
**Land Use**

A land use survey conducted within Earlimart's existing Urban Area Boundary (UAB) revealed several facts about Earlimart's land use (See Map No. 3) Earlimart has an abundance of vacant developable land. Within the UAB, 593 acres, 49 percent of the land in the UAB, are vacant or are in agriculture and could support urban development if sewer and water service were available.

**Table No. 1**  
**Earlimart Land Use**

<u>Land Use Category</u>	<u>Land Area</u>	<u>Percent of Total</u>
Residential		21 percent
Used	177 acres	
Vacant	72	
Commercial		3
Used	17	
Vacant	16	
Industrial		2
Used	10	
Vacant	13	
Schools	44	4
Quasi-Public	6	>1
Agriculture	492	41
Street - Freeway ROW	301	25
Railroad ROW	60	5
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1208 acres</b>	<b>+100 percent</b>

(Source: Collins & Castrillo, Planning Consultants, 1987)





# Existing Land Use

Mobilehome



Single Family



Multi Family



Commercial



Industrial



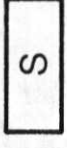
Vacant



Agriculture



Schools



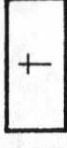
Parks



Quasi-Public



Church



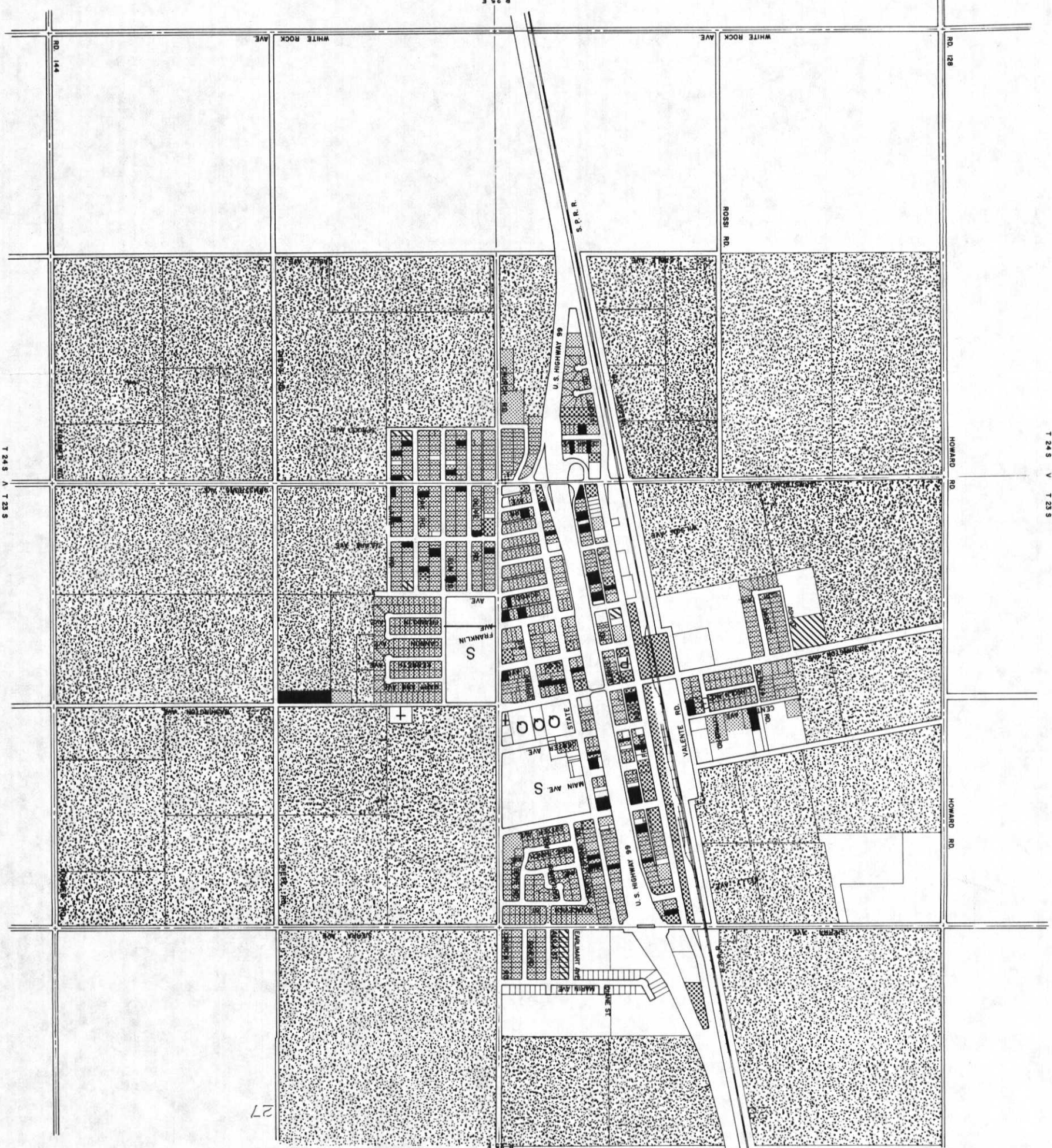
# Earlimart Community Plan

## Map 3



0 660 1320FT

**COLLINS & CASTRILLO**  
PLANNING CONSULTANTS




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27



	REPUBLIK INDONESIA DEPARTEMEN KESEHATAN	SURVEILLANCE SURVEILLANCE	SURVEILLANCE SURVEILLANCE	SURVEILLANCE SURVEILLANCE	SURVEILLANCE SURVEILLANCE	SURVEILLANCE SURVEILLANCE	SURVEILLANCE SURVEILLANCE	SURVEILLANCE SURVEILLANCE	SURVEILLANCE SURVEILLANCE	SURVEILLANCE SURVEILLANCE
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**Earlimart Community Plan**  
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The survey also revealed that there are many land uses in the area that are incompatible with one another. This mix of land uses was most apparent on properties adjacent to Highway 99. Within a single block it is common to have a mix of industrial, commercial and residential uses. This condition creates an environment where residents of the area must cope with noise, truck traffic and visual blight not typical of residential neighborhoods.



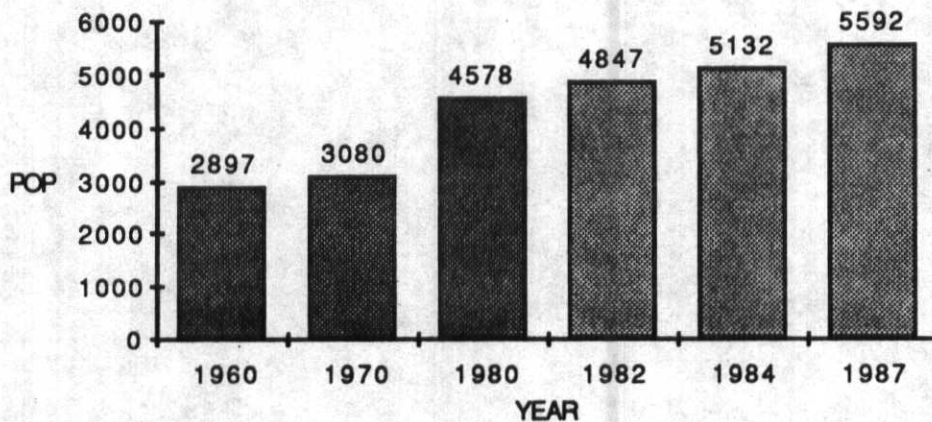
**POPULATION**

**Present Population**

From 1960 to 1980 Earlimart's population grew from 2897 to 4578 persons, an average annual growth rate of 2.9 percent. This exceeded the county's growth rate of 2.25 percent over that same period of time.

Since 1980, 166 single family residential and 40 multiple family units have been constructed in Earlimart. This residential development encourages immigration, and when coupled with the community's natural growth, at the least, should maintain the historical growth rate of 2.9 percent. Based on this growth rate, it is estimated that Earlimart's 1987 population is 5600 (See Figure No. 1).

**Figure No. 1**  
**Present Population**

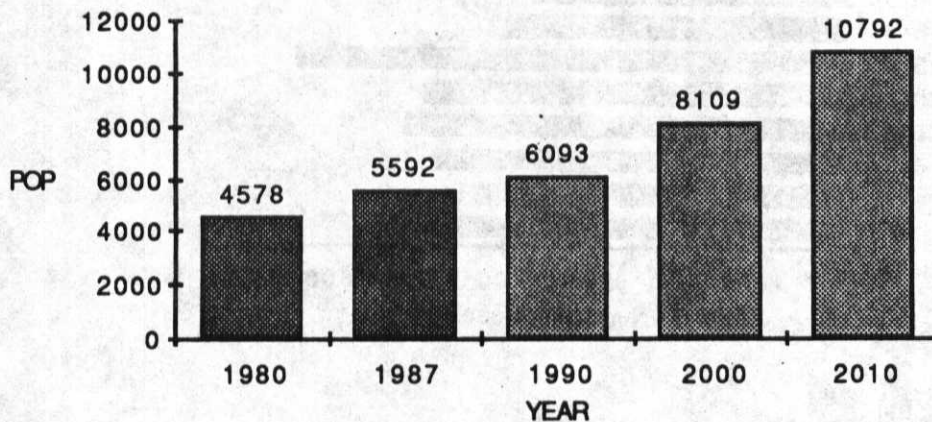


(Source: 1980 Census and Collins & Castrillo, Planning Consultants, 1987)

### **Projected Population**

Projecting future population was determined by using the historical 2.9 percent figure. The enrollment statistics for the Earlimart School District for the K-6 grades, which has averaged a 7.3 percent annual increase since 1980, provides an interesting insight into the community growth. This enrollment trend indicates that natural growth rather than immigration is having a major influence in fueling the population growth. Based on the historical growth rate of 2.9 percent, projections for the years 1990, 2000 and 2010 are 6100, 8100 and 10,800 people, respectively (See Figure No. 2.)

**Figure No. 2**  
**Population Projections**



(Source: Collins & Castrillo, Planning Consultants, 1987)

### **Age Structure**

Population by age category is an important indicator of what impact the population will have on the community's services and infrastructure in the



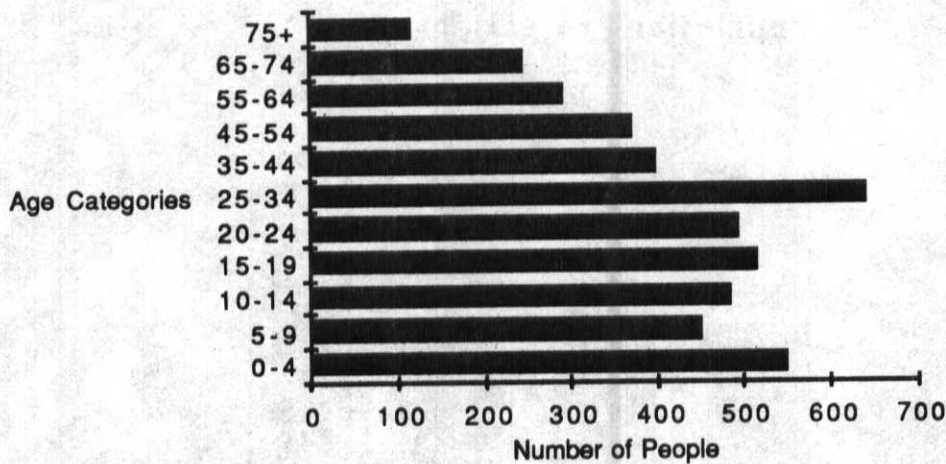
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future. For example, if the number of women in the child-bearing years, 15-44, is substantial, it can have a marked impact on natural growth (births). This increase in births will create a demand for services like day-care centers, lower grade elementary classrooms, parks and pediatric health care (See Figure No. 3).

With a median age of 22.6, and a community which had 22 percent of its population in the child-bearing years in 1980, Earlimart will exhibit a strong natural growth rate for at least the next 15 years.

**Figure No. 3**  
**Population by Age**



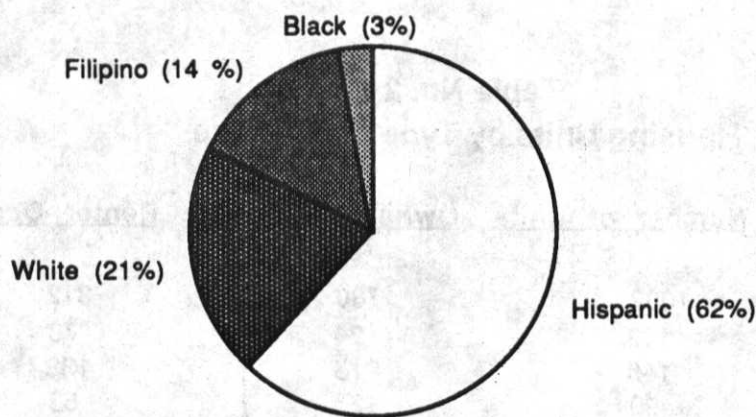
(Source: 1980 Census)



**Ethnic Composition**

Earlimart's ethnic composition is dominated by persons of Spanish/Hispanic origin (62 percent or 2838 persons); followed by persons classified as White (21 percent or 961 persons); Filipino, (14 percent or 641 persons). This ethnic breakdown differs markedly from the county's figures for these three groups: Spanish/Hispanic, 22 percent; White, 73 percent; and Filipino, 1 percent (See Figure No. 4).

**Figure No. 4**  
**Racial Composition**



(Source: 1980 Census)

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**HOUSING**

**Housing Units by Type and Tenure**

According to the 1980 Census there were 1229 occupied housing units in Earlimart. Seventy-five percent, or 924 units, were one family dwellings; 17 percent, or 208 units, were multiple family units; and 8 percent, or 90 units, were mobile homes (See Table No. 2). These percentages are almost identical to the figures for the county for the same types of housing.

Since 1980, 166 single family and 40 multiple family residential units have been constructed. In addition, nine four-plexes are in various stages of construction; however, none of the units has been completed and therefore these units were not included in the housing data.

**Table No. 2  
Housing Units by Type and Tenure**

<u>Unit Type</u>	<u>Number of Units</u>	<u>Owner-Occupied</u>	<u>Renter Occupied</u>
1 unit	1092	780	312
2 - 4	103	24	79
5 or more	145	13	132
mobile homes	90	27	63
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1430</b>	<b>844 (59%)</b>	<b>586 (41%)</b>

(Source: Collins & Castrillo, Planning Consultants, 1987)

The number of owner-occupied and renter-occupied units in Earlimart is 844 (59 percent) and 586 (41 percent) units, respectively. When compared to the county percentages, 63 versus 37 percent, it is apparent that Earlimart is weighted towards rental stock. Possibly, the second and third housing units placed on some of the single family lots are there to provide the owners with rental income rather than to house extended families.

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**Housing Conditions**

The health or viability of a community can often be measured by the condition of its housing stock. A housing conditions survey was conducted as part of the land use survey. Each housing unit was rated as sound, deteriorated or dilapidated, depending upon the number and magnitude of structural defects. The survey indicates that 62 percent of Earlimart's housing stock is sound and 38 percent is either deteriorated or needs replacing (See Table No. 3).

**Table No. 3**  
**Housing Conditions**

<u>Unit Type</u>	<u>Sound</u>	<u>Deterlorated</u>	<u>Dilapidated</u>	<u>Total</u>
Single family	631	304	77	1012
Multiple family	43	24	11	78
Mobile homes	50	24	5	79
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>724 (62%)</b>	<b>352 (30%)</b>	<b>93 (8%)</b>	<b>1169*</b>

\*Note: Based on an 80 percent sample of total units.

(Source: Collins & Castrillo, Planning Consultants, 1987)

Self-Help Enterprises, a nonprofit housing corporation, has assisted families in constructing 23 new homes in Earlimart since 1980, and rehabilitated 25 homes in the south-central portion of the community using Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds. Their rehabilitation program has helped in upgrading housing stock from a deteriorated to a sound condition. Unfortunately, given the number of housing units in a deteriorated condition, much more remains to be done. Additionally, there is not a program in place which replaces dilapidated units.



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**Overcrowding**

Overcrowding is defined by the State Department of Housing and Community Development as units which have more than one person per room. The 1980 Census indicated that 2255 persons lived in residential units with more than one person per room, or nearly half of Earlimart's population. Earlimart has 3.64 persons per housing unit (See Table No. 4). This is significantly higher than the county average of 2.98 persons per housing unit.

**Table No. 4**  
**Persons per Housing Unit**

<u>Unit Type</u>	<u>Number of Units</u>	<u>Total Persons</u>	<u>Persons per Unit</u>
1 unit	924	3515	3.8
2 - 4	110	365	3.32
5 or more	97	383	3.95
mobile homes	98	217	2.21
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1229</b>	<b>4480</b>	<b>3.64</b>

(Source: 1980 Census)

**Vacancy**

In 1980, Earlimart had 57 units which were vacant; a 4.2 percent vacancy rate. Thirty seven of these units were "for rent" and 20 units were "for sale".

**Affordability**

Spending too much of one's income on housing does not leave enough for life's other requirements. For years, the standard ceiling figure for housing cost as a percent of income has been 25 percent. However, more

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recent trends indicate that households are spending upwards of 30 to 40 percent of their income on housing. Lower income households which exceed the 25 percent figure are placed in a difficult position, in that less money is available for other necessities, such as food, utilities, and transportation.

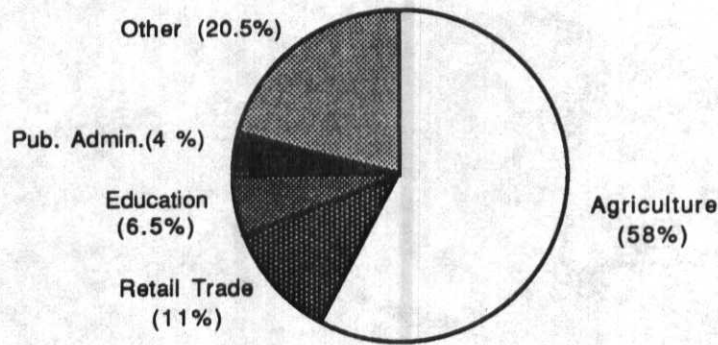
Earlimart households with incomes less than 80 percent of the County's median income (\$14,153) and that pay more than 25 percent of their monthly income towards housing fall into the "low-income overpayment" category as established by the State Department of Housing and Community Development. For owner-occupied and rental households in 1980, this equaled 155 (27%) and 188 households (44%), respectively. In total, 34 percent of Earlimart's households fell into the "low income overpayment" category.

**ECONOMY**

**Employment**

Employment by industry is dominated by persons working in the agricultural sector (see Figure No. 5). In 1980, 58 percent of the work force worked in the agricultural sector of the economy; 56 percent in 1970. Persons working in the retail trade sector were a distant second, accounting for 11 percent of the total work force. Although agriculture is the major employer in the County, it represents only 20 percent of the total County labor force.

**Figure No. 5**  
**Employment**



(Source: 1980 Census)

**Income**

Earlimart's 1980 median family income of \$10,352 is one of the lowest among unincorporated communities in Tulare County. For comparison, the County figure is \$16,166, and Visalia's, the county seat, is \$19,434. This



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low median income figure is primarily related to employment patterns mentioned previously. Since many agriculturally related jobs are seasonal and the wages for agricultural jobs have traditionally remained low, incomes in Earlimart have remained depressed.

As a result of the lower income levels, 37 percent of Earlimart's population in 1980 was below poverty status, defined as a family of four making less than \$7,412 annually. This percentage of persons living below the poverty level is well above the 16.5 percent figure for the County as a whole. Earlimart's economic conditions have not changed noticeably since 1970 when the percentage of persons living below the poverty level was 35 percent.

These low income levels are a prime reason for the high rate of deteriorated and dilapidated housing in Earlimart. It is also a basis for the number of illegal second and third units on single family lots as they provide low cost housing for which there is a large market due to the low incomes of the area.

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**PUBLIC SERVICES**

**Police Protection**

The Tulare County Sheriff's Pixley substation serves a rural population of approximately 40,000 persons. In addition to serving Earlimart, the substation serves Alpaugh, Allensworth, Teviston, Pixley and Tipton. The substation is served using a three shift operation which includes 14 deputies, three sergeants and one lieutenant. During any one shift there is a minimum of two deputies in the field and one sergeant on the desk. Statistically, crime in Earlimart is not unlike other unincorporated communities in Tulare County with regard to types of incidents.

**Fire Protection**

Tulare County contracts with the California Division of Forestry (CDF) for fire protection services. The Earlimart substation serves an area south to Delano, west to Alpaugh, east to Road 176 and north to Avenue 72. The Earlimart station is backed up by stations located in Pixley, Alpaugh and Richgrove. Ambulance service is provided by a fire station in Delano.

The station is staffed by a full-time firefighter, and is supported by ten volunteers. Equipment support is provided by a light fire engine (99 gpm pumper) used for grass fires and accidents, and a large engine (750 gpm pumper) used for structural fires. During summer months the dominant fire call is for grass fires; the winter months involve structural fires, especially mobile homes.

**Schools**

Earlimart is served by an elementary school, grades K-4, and an intermediate school, grades 5-8. High school students attend Delano High School located ten miles south. The two schools have recently experienced a tremendous surge in the student population. Since 1980, enrollment has increased from 964 to 1349 students in 1987, almost a seven percent average annual increase.



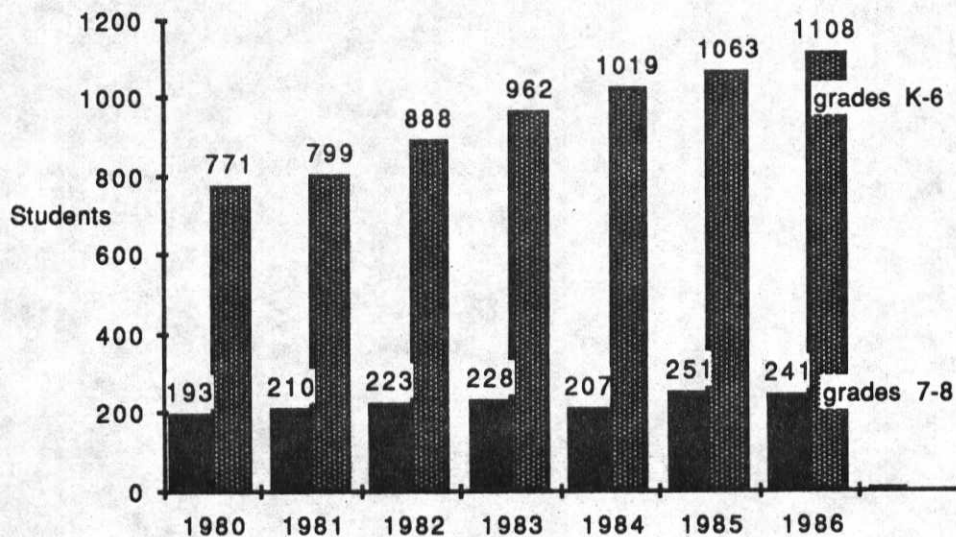
## Earlimart Community Plan

### Chapter Two: Environmental Assessment

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School district officials have indicated that the the elementary school is at capacity, 28-30 students per classroom, and the intermediate school will be at capacity in 1988. The District collects school impact fees amounting to \$1.50 a square foot for new residential construction and \$.25 a square foot for commercial and industrial development. These funds, however, are not sufficient to finance the district's need for new classrooms. A District-sponsored bond measure to provide additional funds for school construction was defeated in November, 1987. Presently, the District is in the process of setting up a task force to study other means of resolving the overcrowding problem. Ad ad hoc committee has been formed, including members from the communities of Pixley and Earlimart, to study the feasibility of establishing a new high school in southern Tulare County.

**Figure No. 6**  
**Earlimart School Enrollment**



(Source: Earlimart School District, 1987)

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**Chapter Two: Environmental Assessment**

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The increase in the student enrollment provides some insight into Earlimart's population growth. The increase in enrollment, most of which is occurring at the lower grade levels, is a result of natural population growth, not immigration. This is due to Earlimart's very young median age (22.6), and a large percentage of the female population in the child-bearing years (15-44).

**Health Care**

Health care is provided by a private health center, United Health Centers of the San Joaquin Valley. The County of Tulare provides health services at the Hillman Health Center in Tulare. The County also provides a senior nutrition and child care education program at facilities within Earlimart.



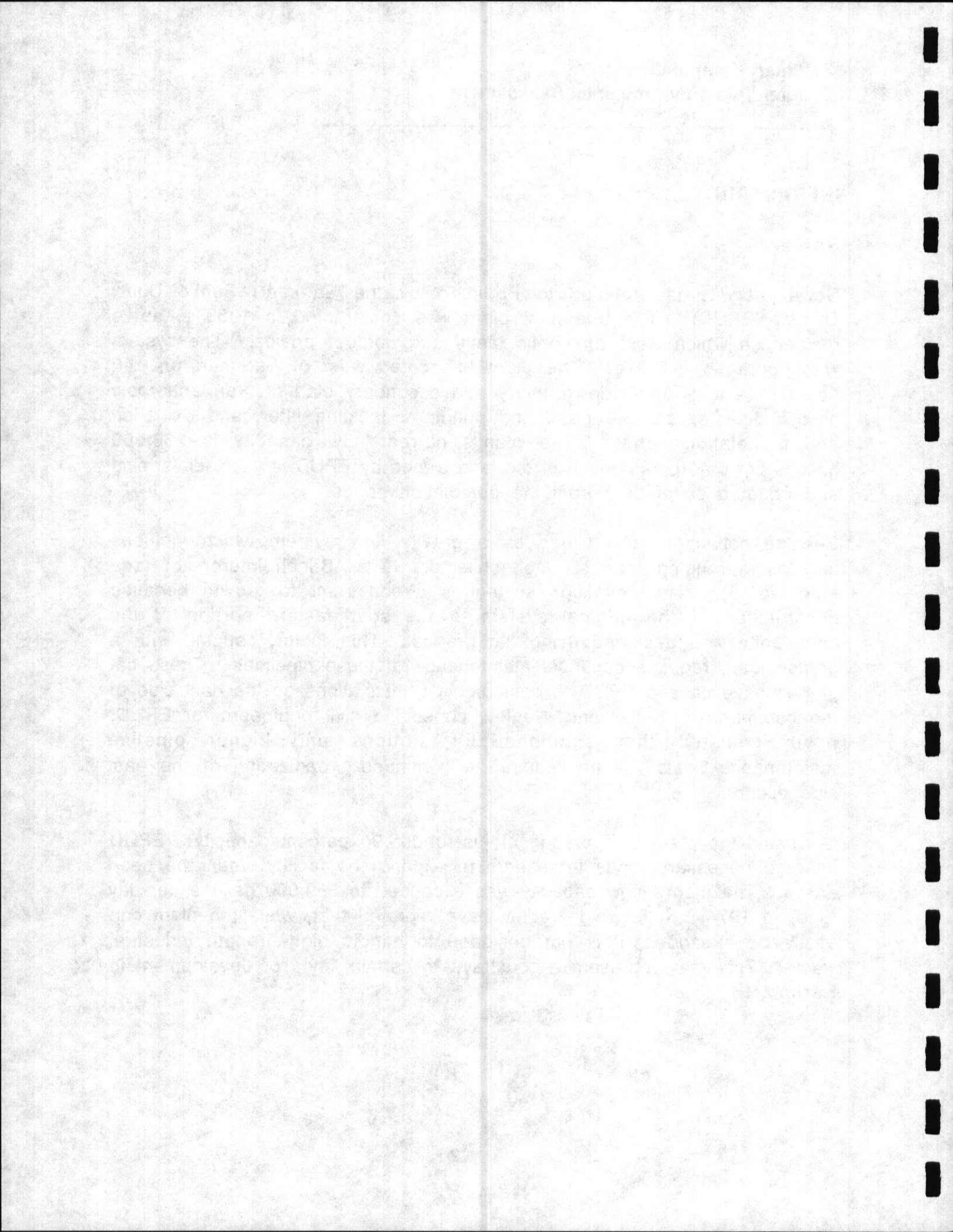
## **INFRASTRUCTURE**

### **Sewer**

Sewer service is provided to Earlimart by the Earlimart Public Utility District (EPUD). The treatment plant was constructed in 1959 to serve residences which were on septic tanks and outdoor privies. The system was upgraded in 1974. The plant is located west of Earlimart on 240 acres of land. It includes primary and secondary clarifiers, an anaerobic sludge digester and sludge drying ponds, a trickling filter, and oxidation and percolation ponds. The plant's current flow capacity is 360,000 gallons per day (gpd). Much of the land owned by EPUD is used for farming and irrigated by effluent from the percolation ponds.

Sewage collection is provided by a gravity flow system which includes clay pipes ranging from six inch collectors to a 15-inch interceptor (see Map No. 4). The collection system is a constraint to growth because construction of the original system in the southeastern portion of the community was designed using flat grades. This factor, coupled with a grease load, requires continual maintenance of these pipelines. These flat grades have caused EPUD to construct two lift stations on the east side of the community. Keller and Wegley, consulting civil engineers for EPUD, have indicated that additional lift stations and higher pipeline maintenance costs will be required if continued urbanization of the east side occurs.

Currently, the plant is operating at just under 90 percent capacity. EPUD has the necessary funds in reserve to expand the facility when the need arises. The plant's flow capacity was expanded to 360,000 gallons per day (gpd) in 1974. Keller and Wegley have reported that, while the plant can easily be expanded, it is not designed to handle high-strength industrial waste. This may represent a constraint to certain kinds of development in Earlimart.





# EPUD Sewer

- DISTRICT BOUNDARY
- SEWER LINE
- MANHOLE
- x CLEANOUT
- LIFT STATION

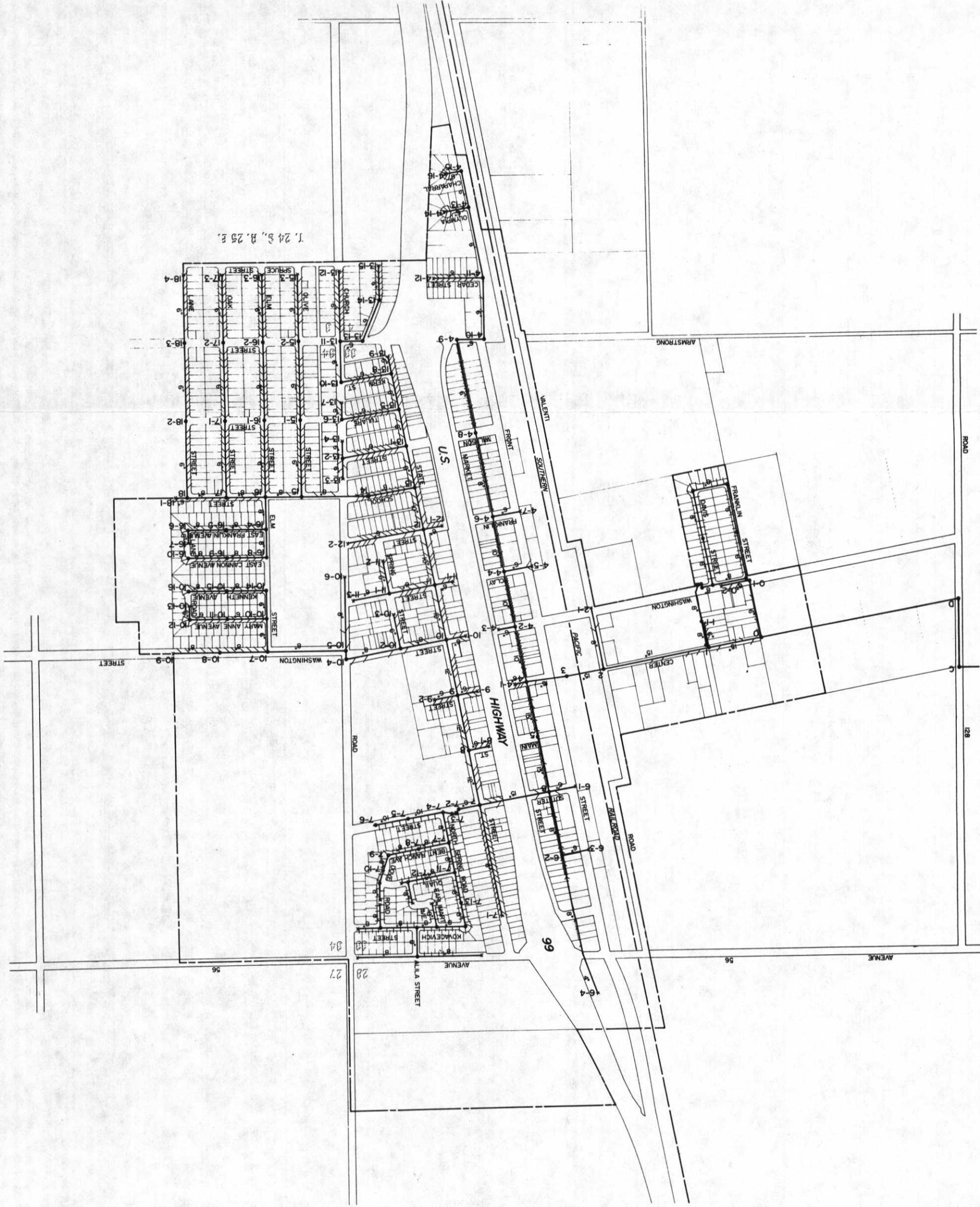
Source:  
Keller/Wegley Consulting Engineers

## Earlismart Community Plan

### Map 4



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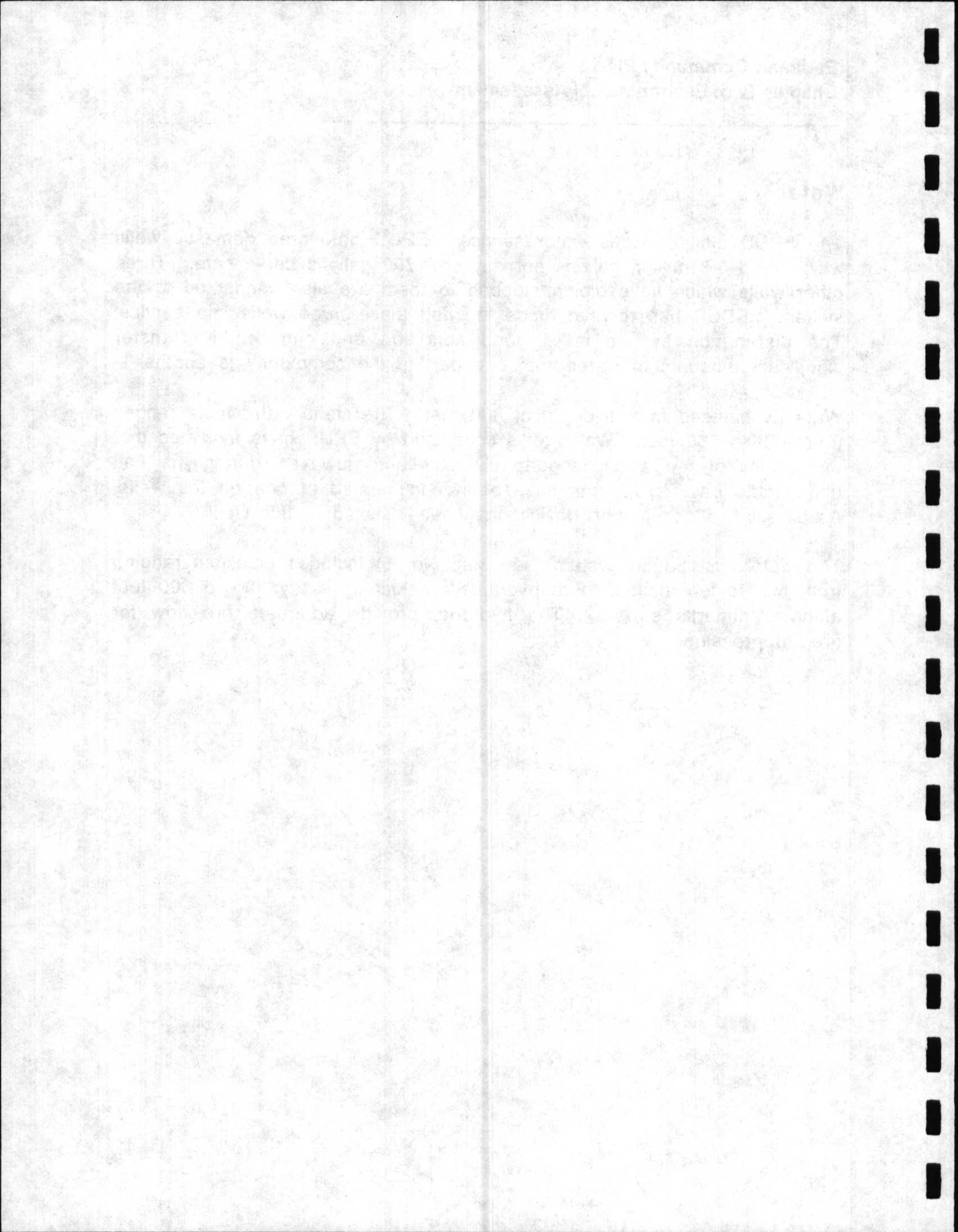
## **Water**

The EPUD also provides water service. EPUD has three domestic wells which yield 3.8 million gallons per day or 2,700 gallons per minute. Three other wells which have piping stubbed to them are also connected to the system. EPUD has reserve funds to bring these three wells into service. The distribution system is in good condition and can readily transfer significant amounts of water from one part of the community to another.

Water is pumped from a depth of 300 feet. The static water table ranges from 135 to 160 feet. Water tests conducted by EPUD have indicated that the quality of the water is generally excellent, however, during the Fall undesirable bacterial counts have been documented at one on the wells. As a result, a chlorination device has been installed at this well.

The water distribution system (see Map No. 5) includes pipelines ranging from two to ten inches. Fire hydrants are located every 300 to 600 feet along Earlimart's streets. The hydrants provide adequate fire flow for fire suppression.







# EPUD Water

- DISTRICT BOUNDARY
- GATE VALVE
- 6" FIRE HYDRANT
- 4" WHARF HEAD FIRE HYDRANT
- ◐ 2" WHARF HEAD FIRE HYDRANT
- ⊙ WELL
- ⊘ ABANDONED WELL
- S STEEL PIPELINE
- A.C ASBESTOS-CEMENT PIPELINE
- WATER PIPELINE

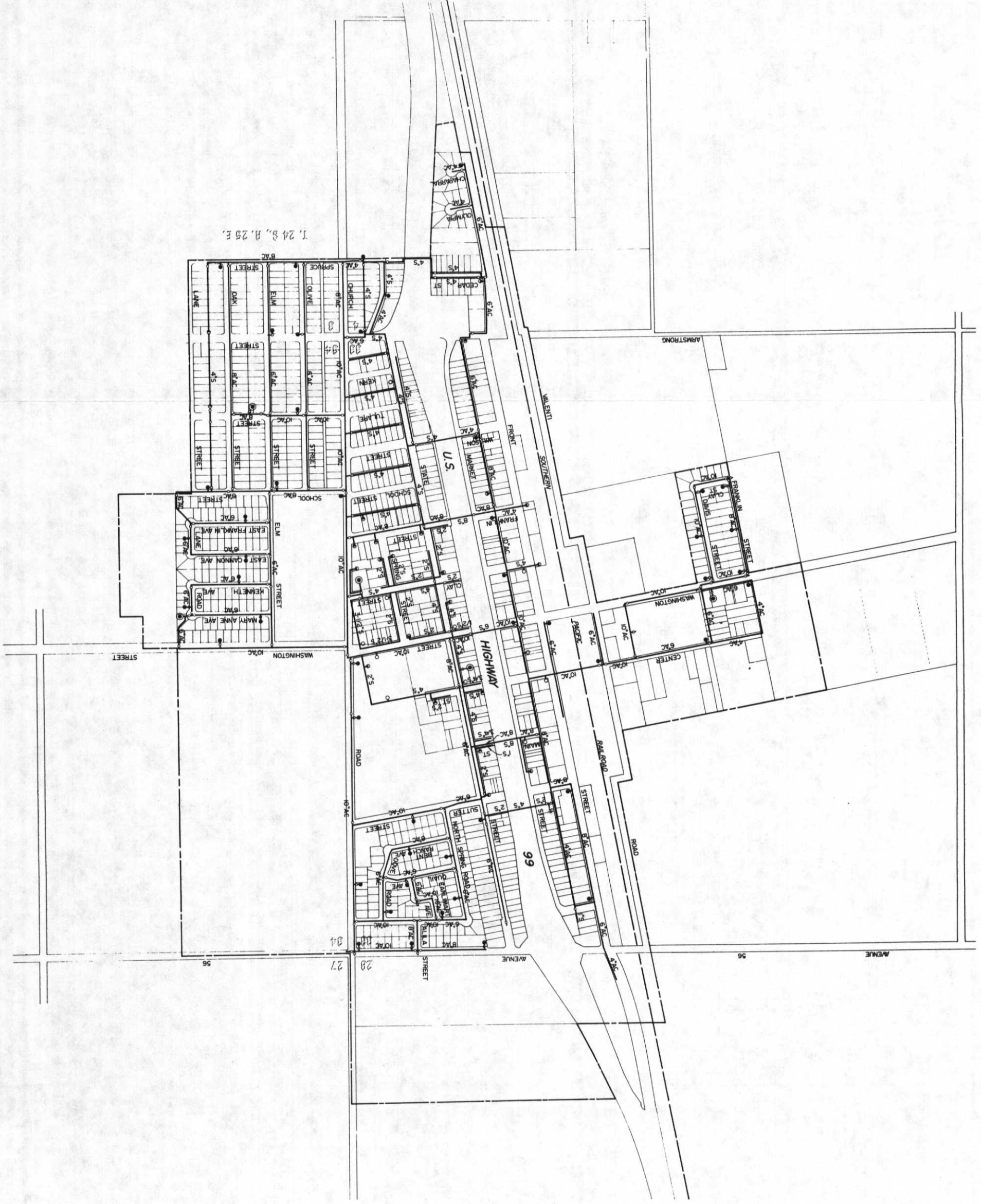
Source:  
Keller/Wegley Consulting Engineers

## Earlimart Community Plan

### Map 5



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# Earlimart Community Plan

## Chapter Two: Environmental Assessment

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### CIRCULATION

#### Description

For a land use plan to operate effectively, it is imperative that a comprehensive circulation plan be prepared. Existing roadways must have the capacity to expand as traffic counts increase, and new roads must be planned so that one part of the community can be connected to another.

Highway 99 bisects Earlimart in a north-south fashion. For the most part, the roadway is depressed as it passes through the community. Sierra Avenue (Avenue 56) connects Earlimart to State Highway 43 and the community of Alpaugh to the west, and State Highway 65 and the community of Ducor to the east.

Earlimart is fortunate in that three streets, Armstrong Avenue (Avenue 56), Washington Street and Sierra Avenue (Avenue 48), cross Highway 99 at grade and bridge the east side of Earlimart with the west side. Two streets parallel State Highway 99, State Road and Front Road. The latter provides access to Earlimart's commercial/industrial district. Since numerous packing houses and cold storage facilities are located along Front, the roadway attracts substantial truck traffic.

In terms of internal circulation, Washington Street is the most crucial to the community. It is centrally located and is one of three streets which crosses Highway 99. It connects the commercial/industrial district located west of the highway to the east side of the community which contains most of the residential development and Earlimart's two schools. Washington also serves as a major pedestrian corridor since it provides access to both elementary schools.

Tulare County recently completed a draft Circulation Element for its General Plan. This document includes 1986 traffic counts for certain roads and highways, and projected traffic counts for the year 2010. The 2010 counts are also provided with a service level rating (See Table No. 5) which is based on the traffic count and roadway capacity. The draft



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**Chapter Two: Environmental Assessment**

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element analyzed two roadways in Earlimart, Highway 99 and Avenue 56. Highway 99 had a 1986 traffic count of 25,500 vehicles per day and a projected count of 48,500 for 2010. The projected count warranted a "D" service level which is a condition approaching unstable flow and may require additional lanes. CALTRANS has indicated that they eventually intend to widen Highway 99 to six lanes throughout Tulare County.

**Table No. 5**  
**Level of Service Interpretation**

<u>Service Level Rating</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Volume to Capacity Ratio</u>
A	FREE FLOW. Free traffic flow condition.	.00 to .59
B	STABLE OPERATION. An occasional phase is fully utilized. Minimal delays.	.60 to .69
C	STABLE OPERATION. Major approach phase may become fully utilized. Most drivers feel somewhat restricted.	.70 to .79
D	APPROACHING UNSTABLE. Drivers may have to wait through more than one red signal indication. Queues develop but dissipate rapidly, without excessive delays.	.80 to .89
E	UNSTABLE OPERATION. Volumes at or near capacity. Vehicles may wait through several red indications. Significant delays, and effective signal coordination is near impossible.	.90 to .99
F	FORCED FLOW. Represents jammed conditions. Excessive delays, and signal coordination is useless.	1.00 and above

(Source: Highway Capacity Manual, Highway Research Board, Special Report No. 87, Washington, D.C., 1965)



**Earlimart Community Plan**  
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Traffic counts for Avenue 56 indicate 1000 vehicles per day west of Highway 99 and 1800 vehicles east of Highway 99. The projected 2010 traffic counts are 2300 and 3200 vehicles per day, respectively. These counts indicate an "A" service level rating: free traffic flow condition, no delays.

The most recent traffic counts for other streets in Earlimart were taken in 1981 and 1982 by the Tulare County Public Works Department (See Table No. 7). These roadways are paved, two lane undivided streets which have a capacity of 9000 vehicles per day based on an "E" service level rating. They will be able to accommodate substantial increases in traffic volumes based on the 1981 and 1982 traffic counts, their projected volumes and the recognized traffic volume capacities established by the Transportation Research Board (See Table No. 6).

**Table No. 6**  
**Roadway Capacities**

<u>Roadway Geometrics</u>	<u>Roadway Capacities*</u>
4 Lane Freeway	80,000 vehicles per day
4 Lane Divided Expressway	37,000
6 Lane Divided Arterial	40,000
4 Lane Divided Arterial	27,000
2 Lane Divided Arterial	15,000
4 Lane Undivided Arterial	24,000
2 Lane Undivided Arterial	12,000
4 Lane Divided Collector	20,000
2 Lane Divided Collector	10,000
4 Lane Undivided Collector	18,000
2 Lane Undivided Collector	9,000

\* Based on "E" Service Level. Roadway at or near capacity.  
 (Source: "Interim Materials on Highway Capacities", Transportation Research Board, Circular No. 212, Washington D.C., Jan. 1980)

# Earlimart Community Plan

## Chapter Two: Environmental Assessment

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**Table No. 7**  
**Earlimart Traffic Counts**

<u>Location</u>	<u>1981/82 Count*</u>	<u>1987 Projection**</u>
Armstrong West of Church	3300	3916
Armstrong East of Lane	1500	1780
Armstrong West of Market	2500	2968
Church North of Sierra	2500	2968
Front South of Washington	3250	3750
Sierra East of State	1900	2255
Sierra East of Valente	1000	1086
Washington East of State	2000	2172
Washington East of Valente	1000	1086

\*Note: All traffic volumes are Annual Average Daily Traffic (AADT). AADT is the number of vehicles traveling in both directions, passing a point during the year, divided by 365.

\*\* Projections are based on a 2.9 percent annual increase.

(Source: Tulare County Public Works Department, 1982)

### Transportation

The dominant mode of travel in Earlimart, like other communities in Tulare County, is the automobile. Transit is primarily used by the elderly and persons who do not have access to automobiles. The 1980 Census indicated that the most common mode of transportation used by persons traveling to work was either their own automobile or carpooling with other persons. The Census also indicated that 12 percent of the occupied households in Earlimart, 141 units, were without an automobile. This indicates that a portion of the population may from time to time require public transit for shopping, recreation or for health-related reasons. The Tulare County Transit Service serves this public transit need by providing Monday through Friday dial-a-ride service. Public transportation outside the county is provided by the Greyhound bus systems.



## NATURAL RESOURCES

### Soil/ Agricultural Lands

The Earlimart area is composed of primarily three soils: Traver fine sandy loam, Hesperia sandy loam and Hanford sandy loam (See Map No. 6). The Traver soil is a class II soil which has a "moderate" shrink-swell potential and a "slight" rating for septic tank absorption fields. It is "moderately" affected by salt and alkali deposits. The Hanford and Hesperia soils are class I soils. Both soils have a "severe" rating for sewage lagoon areas (See Table No. 8).

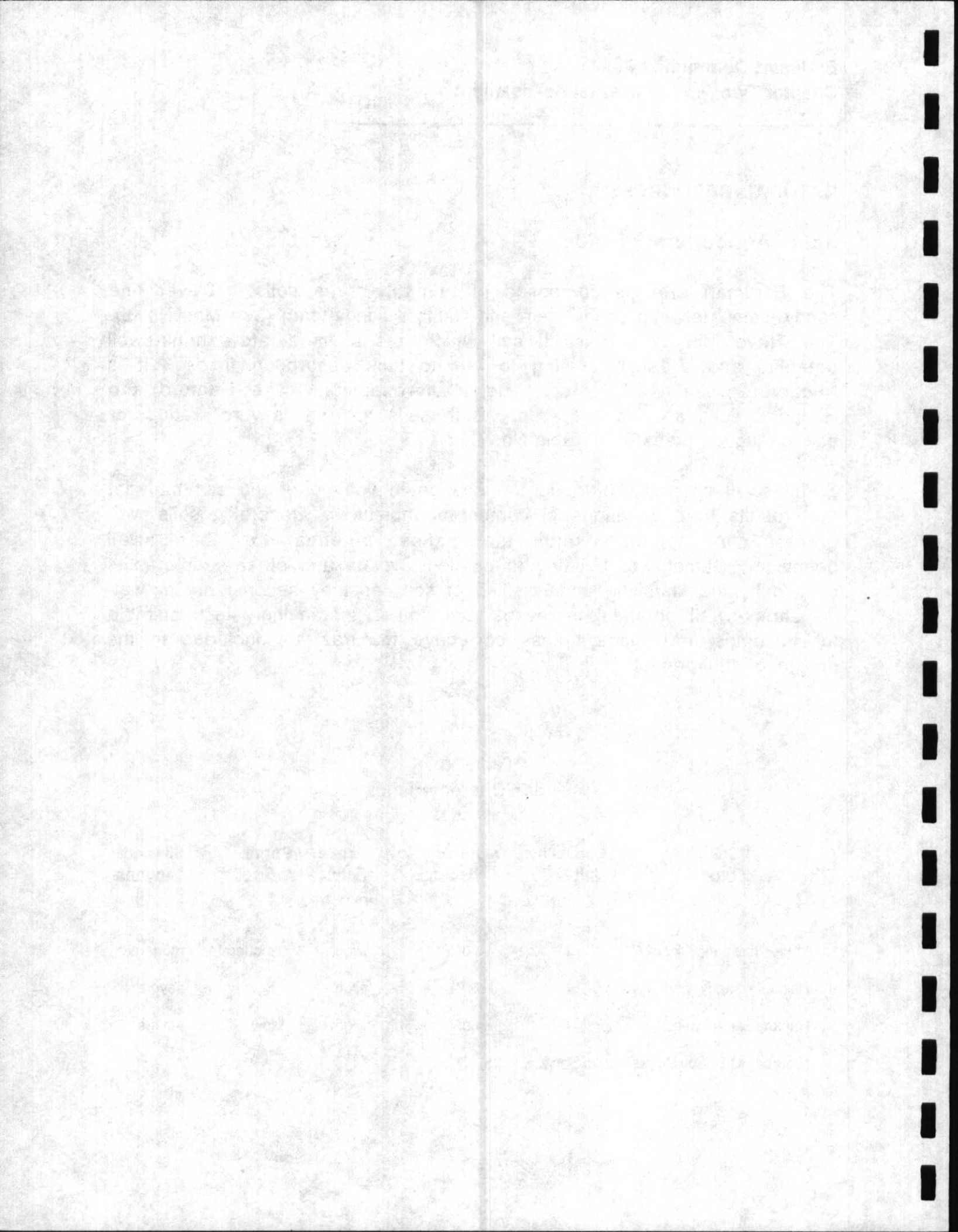
Shrink-swell potential refers to the change in volume of the soil material that results from a change in content of moisture. Generally, soils with greater clay content exhibit the highest potential for shrink-swell behavior. Damage to building foundations, roads and other structures is caused by the shrinking and swelling of soils as they become dry or wet. As shrink-swell potential increases, the soil is increasingly less suitable for buildings and roads unless corrective features are included in the design of the project.

**Table No. 8**  
**Soil Characteristics**

<u>Soil Type</u>	<u>Capability Unit</u>	<u>Depth To Bedrock</u>	<u>Septic Rating</u>	<u>Shrink Swell</u>	<u>Sewage Lagoons</u>
Traver fine sandy loam	I	60"+	slight	moderate	moderate
Hesperia sandy loam	I	60"+	slight	low	severe
Hanford sandy loam	I	60"+	slight	low	severe

(Source: U.S. Soil Conservation Service, 1935)





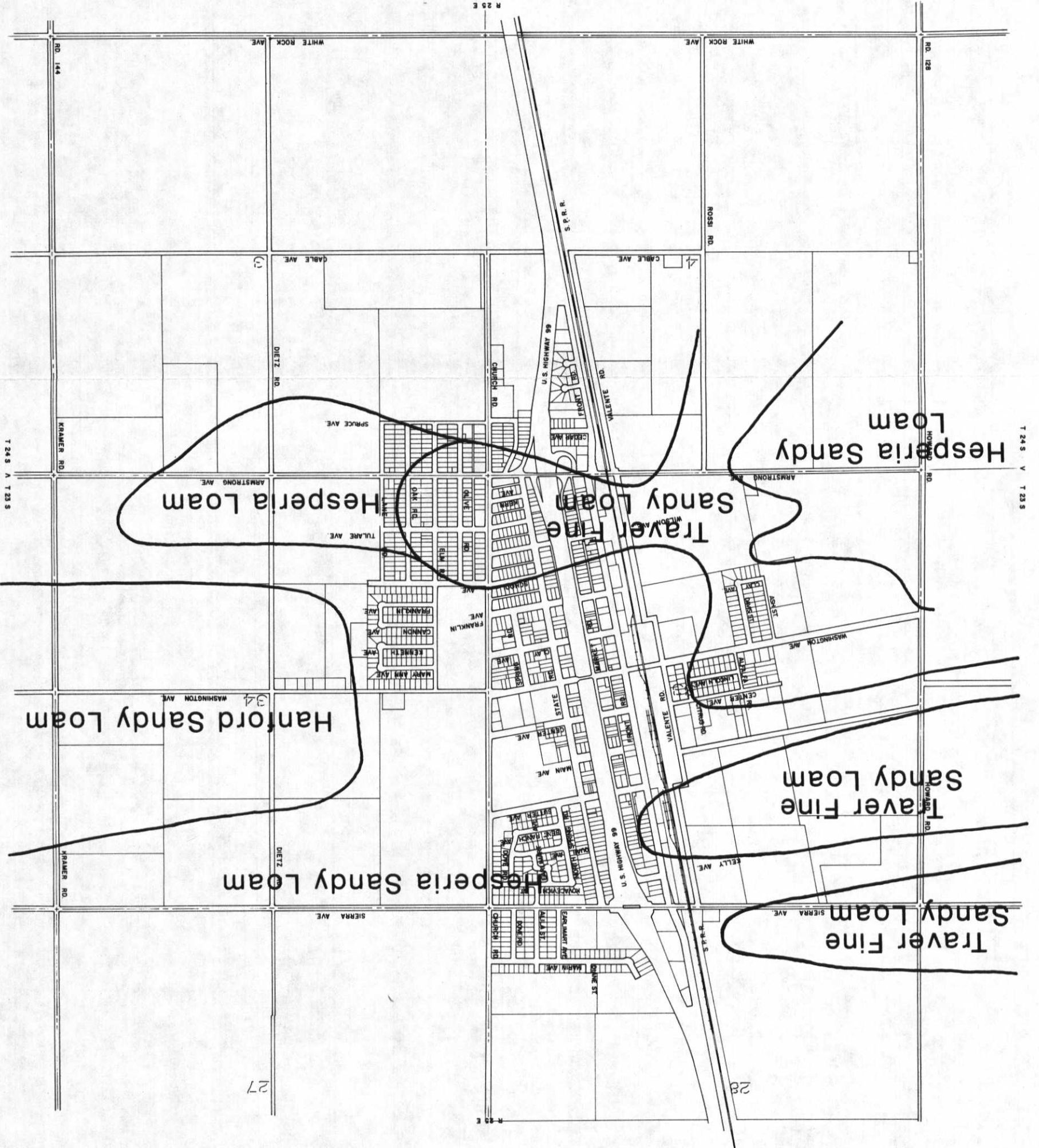
Soil

# Earlilmart Community Plan

## Map 6



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# Agricultural Preserves

-  Agricultural Preserve Contract
-  Not in Agricultural Preserve

# Earl mart Community Plan

## Map 7

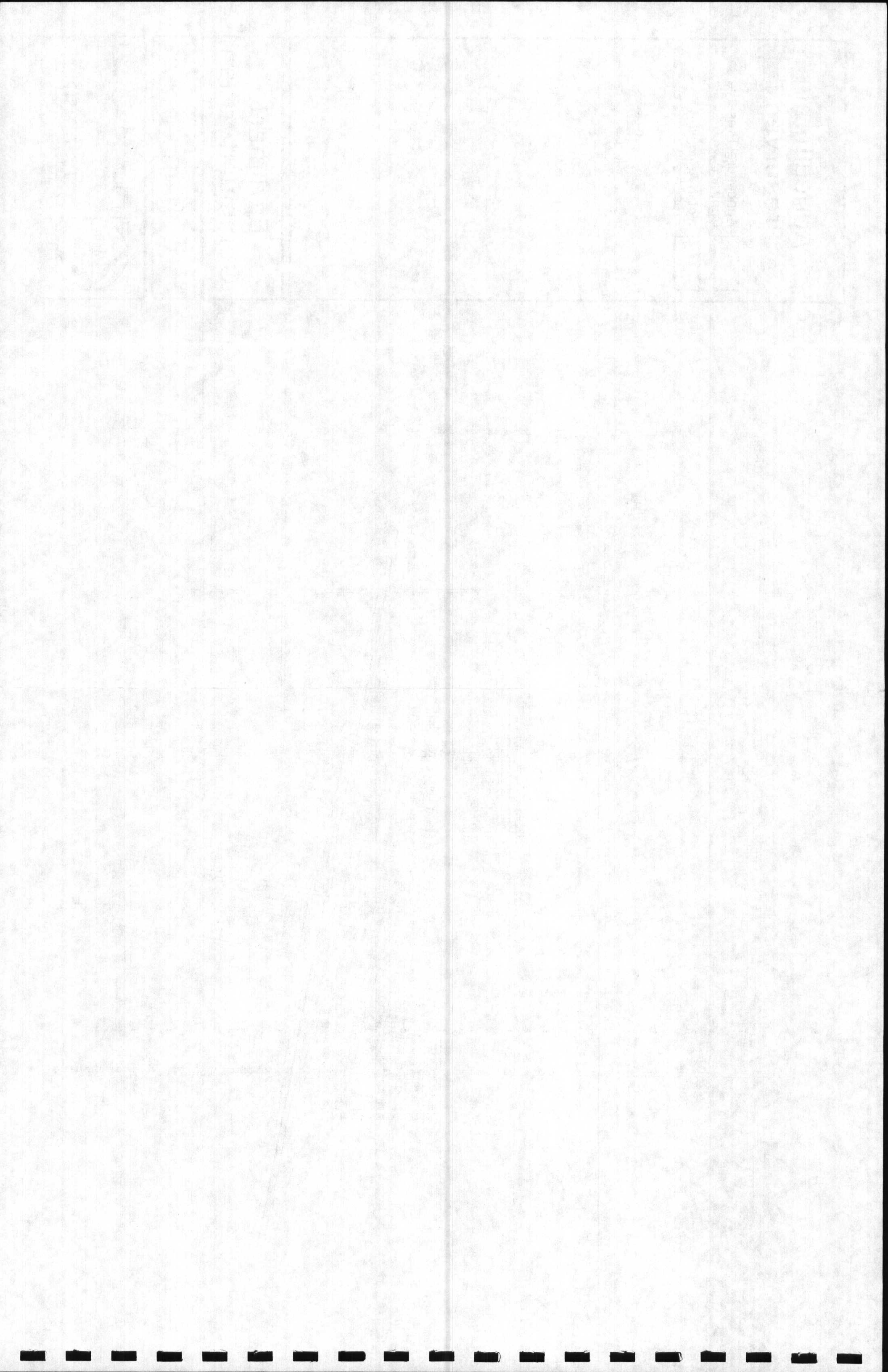


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## Earlimart Community Plan

### Chapter Two: Environmental Assessment

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Within the planning area there are a number of parcels that have been placed in the Williamson Act. The Williamson Act is designed to keep productive farmland in agricultural use by exchanging lower property tax assessments for a promise, in the form of a contract, that the land will not be converted to an urban use for at least ten years. Map No. 7 shows the location of lands under the Williamson Act.

#### Biotic

The planning area of Earlimart is void of native lands which would provide a habitat for threatened, candidate, proposed or endangered species; however, west of Earlimart are lands which still exist in their native state, grassland. The Pixley National Wildlife Refuge is also located in this area. These native lands are prime habitat for three Federal endangered, threatened or candidate species. They are: San Joaquin kit fox (Vulpes macrotis mutica), Tipton kangaroo rat (Dipodomys nitratooides nitratooides), and Blunt-nosed leopard lizard (Crotaphytus silus). Because of Earlimart's close proximity to these native lands there is the possibility that these species may migrate through lands on the outskirts of Earlimart.

#### Air Quality

Earlimart is within the San Joaquin Valley Air Basin. It comprises the southern half of the Central Valley which is bounded on the west by the Coastal Range, on the east by the Sierra Nevada Mountains, on the south by the Tehachapi Mountains, and on the north by the Sacramento Valley Air Basin.

Topography and climate of this area are unusually favorable for the development of air pollution, especially in the southern portion of the air basin where pollutants build up against the Tehachapi Mountains. Due to the air basin's light wind patterns, long periods of warm and sunny days, and surrounding mountains, air quality problems can occur at any time of the year.



## Earlimart Community Plan

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The nearest State of California Air Resources monitoring station is located in Visalia, 30 miles north of Earlimart. Based on air quality data from 1984, two measured air pollutants exceeded State air quality standards. Ozone, the major ingredient of photochemical smog, exceeded the State one-hour standard of .10 parts per million (ppm) 46 days during 1984. Particulate matter, airborne particles of dust and smoke, exceeded the State 24-hour standard of 50 ug/m<sup>3</sup> 28 out of the 58 samples taken over the 1984 year. A 1987 report by the California Air Resources Board indicated that Bakersfield and Fresno ranked among the top 15 cities in the nation in terms of poor air quality. Earlimart is almost halfway between these two metropolitan areas.

According to the State Air Resources Board's presentation entitled, Presentation on San Joaquin Valley Growth and Air Quality Impacts, Tulare County exceeded the State and federal standards for ozone 80 percent and 25 percent of the time, respectively. For the annual standard for particulate matter the State and federal standards were exceeded by the County 73 percent and 26 percent of the time, respectively.

On a more local level, persons living in close proximity to Highway 99 are the most likely to be exposed to unhealthy levels of carbon monoxide, hydrocarbons, oxides of nitrogen, sulfur dioxides, and particulate matter.

#### Ground Water

A 1974 report prepared by Keller and Wegley, civil engineer consultants to the Earlimart Public Utility District (EPUD), indicated that with few exceptions the ground water quality under Earlimart was excellent for domestic, industrial and agricultural purposes. In 1974, EPUD measured the static water table level for some of its wells. The ground water depth ranged from 135 to 160 feet.

## **ENVIRONMENTAL RISK**

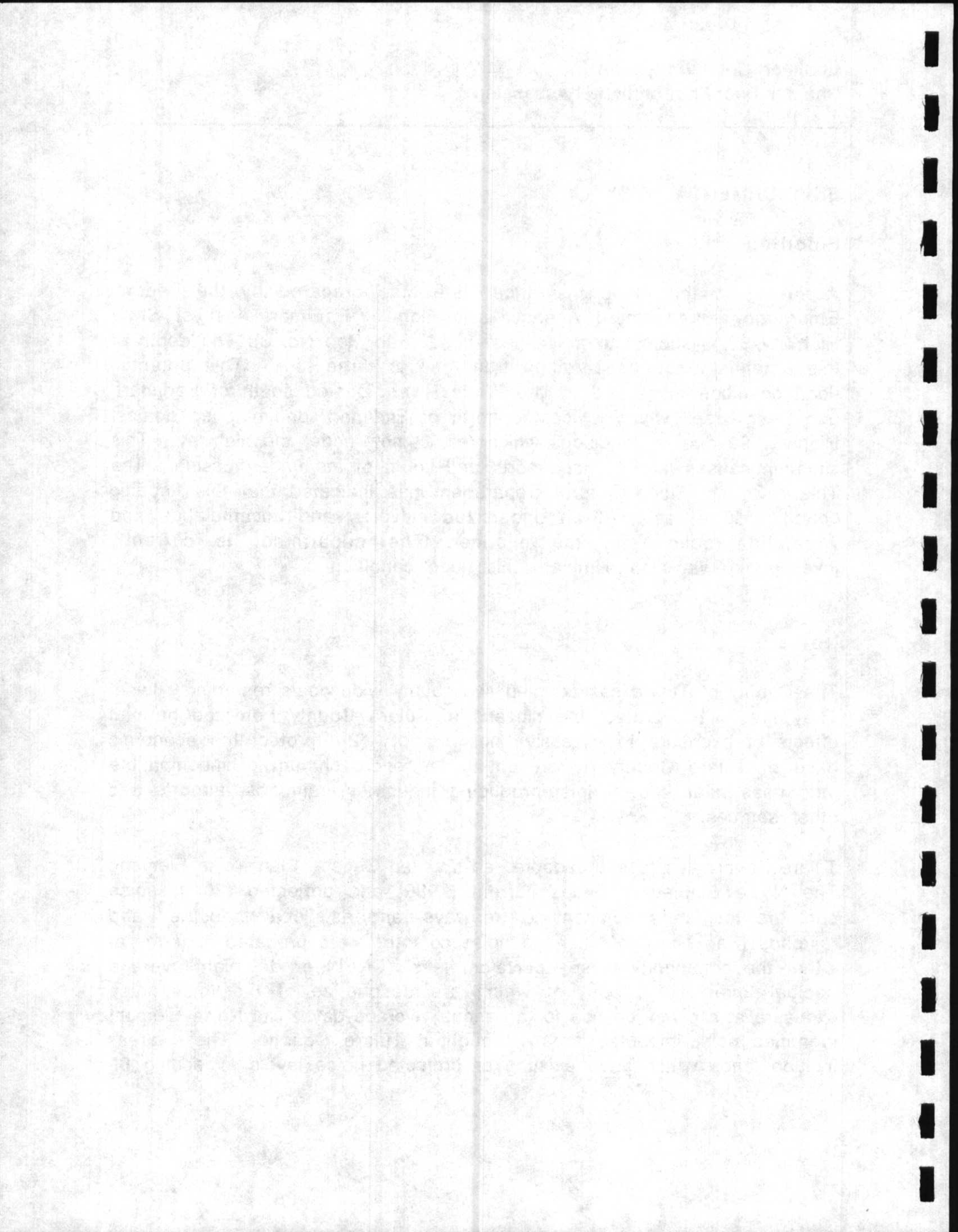
### **Flooding**

According to the Flood Insurance Rate Map prepared by the Federal Emergency Management Agency, a portion of Earlimart east of State Highway 99 is subject to a 100-year flood (See Map No. 8). The depth of this potential flood could range from one to three feet. This potential flood condition is caused by the White River, located south of Earlimart, and Deer Creek which is located north of Earlimart, damming up against Highway 99 due to conditions which restrict flow under the highway. This situation causes land to flood north and south of the undercrossing. The Tulare County Flood Control Department has indicated that this flooding condition is a result of an undersized culvert, sand accumulation and vegetation buildup in the channel. The department is currently investigating ways to eliminate this flood condition.

### **Noise**

The County of Tulare has adopted two county wide goals regarding noise. They are: (1) protect the citizens of Tulare County from the harmful effects of exposure to excessive noise; and, (2) protect the economic base of Tulare County by preventing the encroachment of incompatible land uses near known noise-producing industries, railroads, airports and other sources.

Tulare County has recently adopted an updated General Plan Noise Element. The Noise Element provides current (1986) and projected (2010) noise contours for lands adjacent to freeways, airports, local industries and railroads (See Map No. 9). The noise contours were prepared in terms of either the community noise equivalent level (CNEL) or day-night average decibel level (Ldn), both of which are descriptive of the total noise exposure at a given location for an annual average day. The Noise Element identifies noise-impacted areas throughout Tulare County. These areas include lands which have existing or projected noise levels exceeding 60





# Flooding

## Zone AH



Areas of 100-year shallow flooding where depths are between one (1) and three (3) feet; base flood elevations are shown, but no flood hazard factors are determined.

## Zone B



Areas between limits of the 100-year flood and 500-year flood; or certain areas subject to 100-year flooding with average depths less than one (1) foot or where the contributing drainage area is less than one square mile; or areas protected by levees from the base flood.

## Zone C



Areas of minimal flooding. (No shading)

Source :  
FEMA 1986 Panel No 065066-1210B

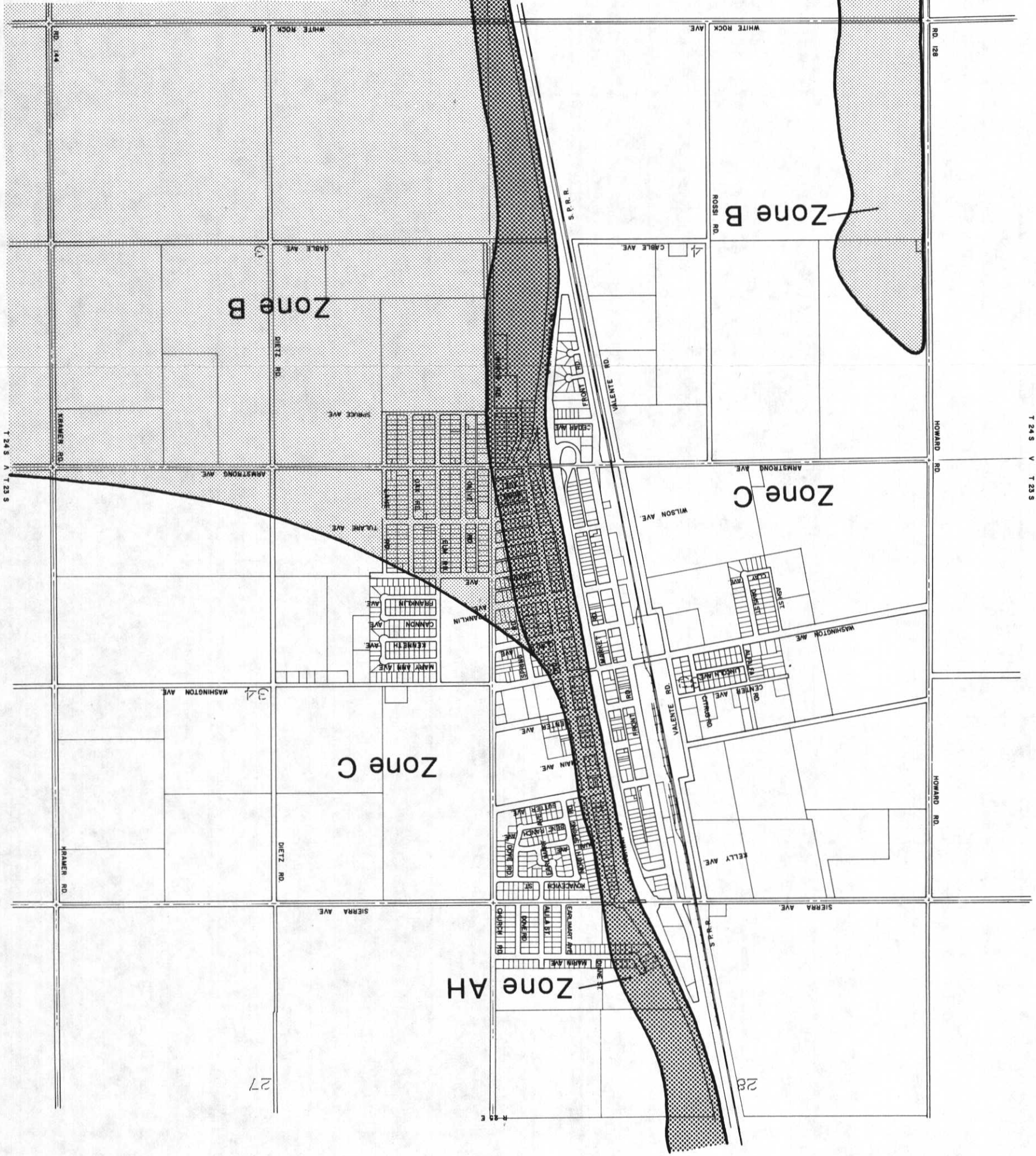
# Earlilmart Community Plan

## Map 8

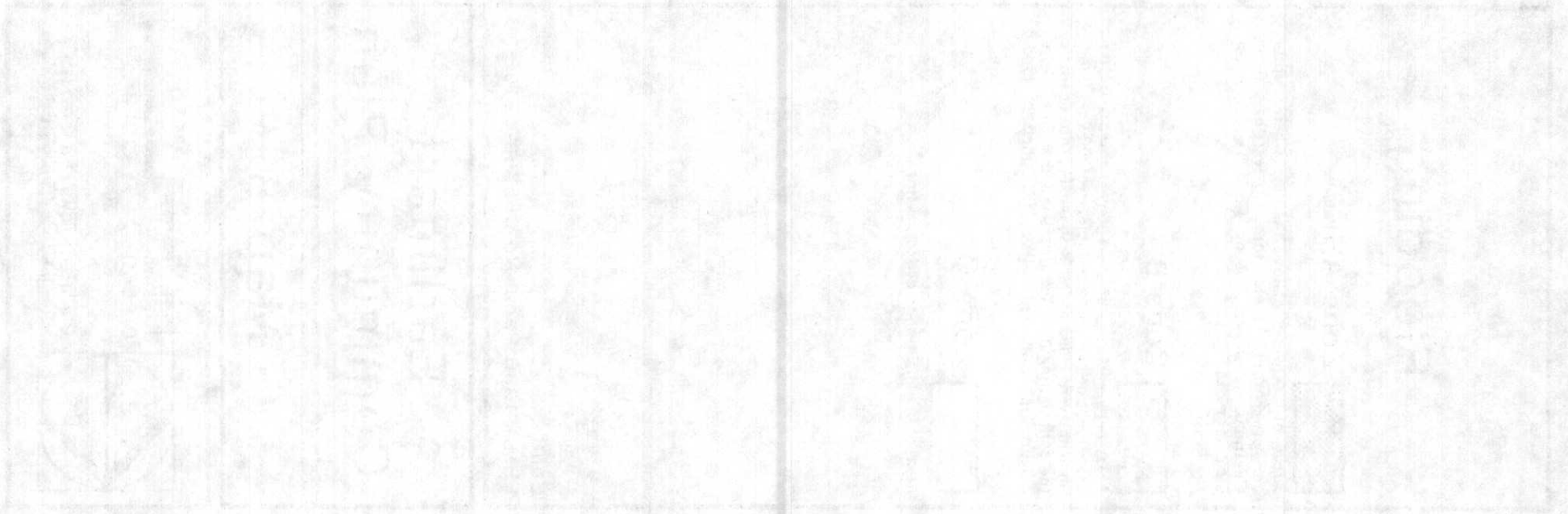


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Zone B

Zone B

Zone C

Zone C

Zone D

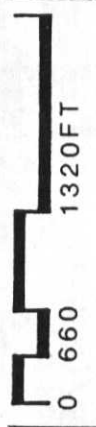


# Noise

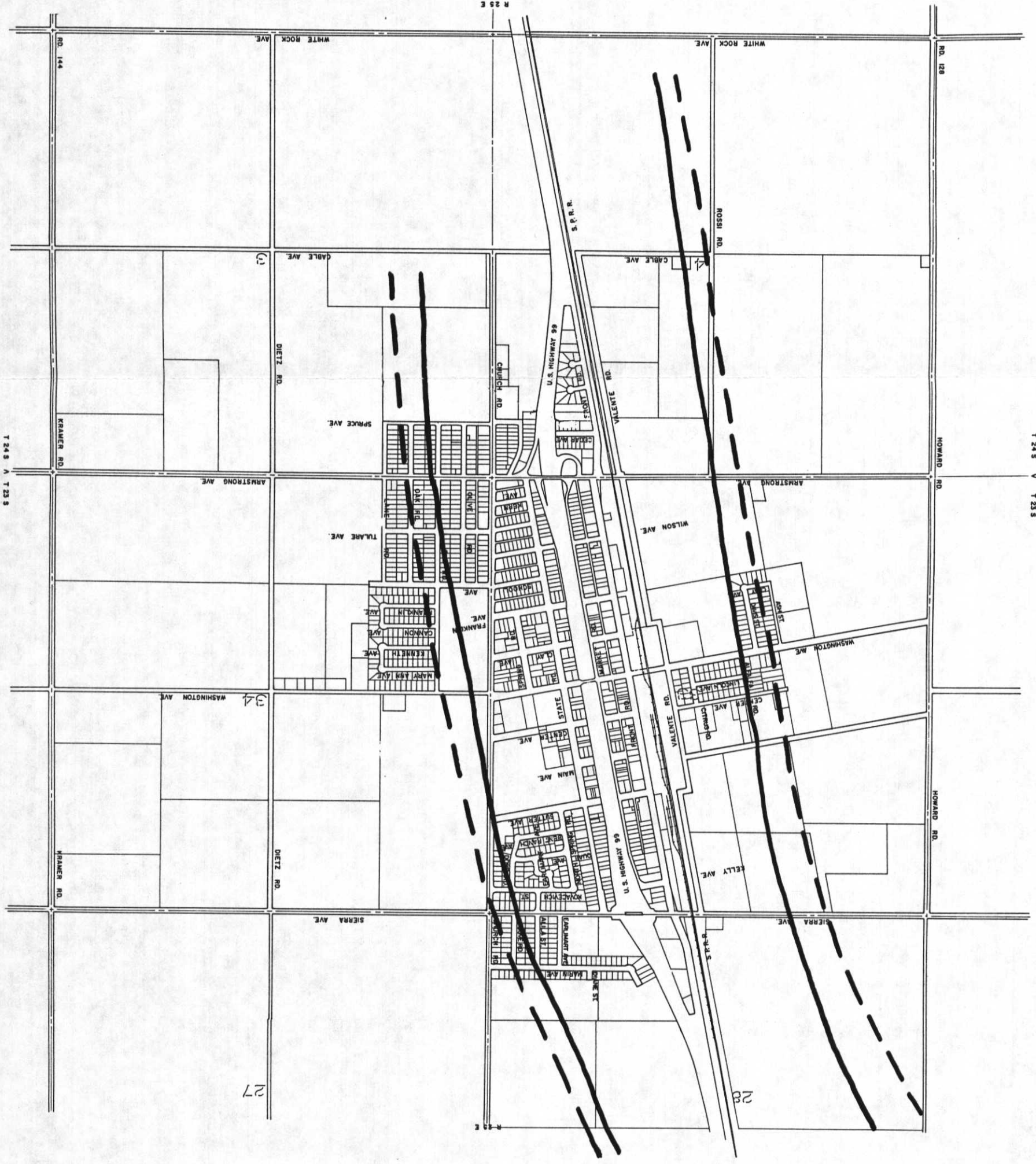
- 60 dB Ldn (1986)
- 60 dB Ldn (2010)

# Earlimart Community Plan

# Map 9



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*[Faint, illegible handwritten notes or markings]*




**Earlimart Community Plan**  
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decibels (dB) Ldn. This decibel figure is considered to be the maximum normally acceptable noise level for single family residential areas (See Figure No. 7). Earlimart is one of the most noise-impacted unincorporated communities in Tulare County. The two primary noise sources are State Highway 99 and the Southern Pacific Railroad. Together, these noise sources place approximately 80 percent of the urbanized portion of Earlimart within the 60 dB Ldn noise contour. By the year 2010, projections indicate that ninety percent of the existing community will be within this noise contour.


**Figure No. 7**  
**Land Use/Noise Compatibility**


LAND USE CATEGORY	COMMUNITY NOISE EXPOSURE Ldn OR CNEL, dB					
	55	60	65	70	75	80
RESIDENTIAL – LOW DENSITY SINGLE FAMILY, DUPLEX, MOBILE HOMES	Normally Acceptable	Normally Acceptable	Normally Acceptable	Normally Acceptable	Normally Unacceptable	Clearly Unacceptable
RESIDENTIAL – MULTI. FAMILY	Normally Acceptable	Normally Acceptable	Normally Acceptable	Normally Unacceptable	Clearly Unacceptable	Clearly Unacceptable
TRANSIENT LODGING – MOTELS, HOTELS	Normally Acceptable	Normally Acceptable	Normally Acceptable	Normally Unacceptable	Clearly Unacceptable	Clearly Unacceptable
SCHOOLS, LIBRARIES, CHURCHES, HOSPITALS, NURSING HOMES	Normally Acceptable	Normally Acceptable	Normally Acceptable	Normally Unacceptable	Clearly Unacceptable	Clearly Unacceptable
AUDITORIUMS, CONCERT HALLS, AMPHITHEATRES	Normally Acceptable	Normally Acceptable	Normally Acceptable	Normally Unacceptable	Clearly Unacceptable	Clearly Unacceptable
SPORTS ARENA, OUTDOOR SPECTATOR SPORTS	Normally Acceptable	Normally Acceptable	Normally Acceptable	Normally Unacceptable	Clearly Unacceptable	Clearly Unacceptable
PLAYGROUNDS, NEIGHBORHOOD PARKS	Normally Acceptable	Normally Acceptable	Normally Acceptable	Normally Unacceptable	Clearly Unacceptable	Clearly Unacceptable
GOLF COURSES, RIDING STABLES, WATER RECREATION, CEMETERIES	Normally Acceptable	Normally Acceptable	Normally Acceptable	Normally Unacceptable	Clearly Unacceptable	Clearly Unacceptable
OFFICE BUILDINGS, BUSINESS COMMERCIAL AND PROFESSIONAL	Normally Acceptable	Normally Acceptable	Normally Acceptable	Normally Unacceptable	Clearly Unacceptable	Clearly Unacceptable
INDUSTRIAL, MANUFACTURING UTILITIES, AGRICULTURE	Normally Acceptable	Normally Acceptable	Normally Acceptable	Normally Unacceptable	Clearly Unacceptable	Clearly Unacceptable

**INTERPRETATION**

 **NORMALLY ACCEPTABLE**  
Specified land use is satisfactory, based upon the assumption that any buildings involved are of normal conventional construction, without any special noise insulation requirements.

 **CONDITIONALLY ACCEPTABLE**  
New construction or development should be undertaken only after a detailed analysis of the noise reduction requirements is made and needed noise insulation features included in the design. Conventional construction, but with closed windows and fresh air supply systems or air conditioning will normally suffice.

 **NORMALLY UNACCEPTABLE**  
New construction or development should generally be discouraged. If new construction or development does proceed, a detailed analysis of the noise reduction requirements must be made and needed noise insulation features included in the design.

 **CLEARLY UNACCEPTABLE**  
New construction or development should generally not be undertaken.

(Source: State Office of Noise Control)



A field observation (noise measurements were not conducted as a part of this community plan) indicated that the highest average annual daily noise levels exist on properties adjacent to Highway 99, where the freeway is not depressed. This grade level condition exists along three stretches of the freeway as it passes through Earlimart.

The updated Noise Element includes performance standards for new residential or other noise-sensitive land uses which are to be located near noise-impacted areas. The Element indicates that these uses will not be permitted unless effective design measures can be integrated into the development to mitigate the impact of noise.

### **Seismic/Geologic Hazards**

The Five County Seismic Safety Element which was prepared for Tulare County and other Valley counties indicates that Earlimart is in the "V1" zone: an area of "low" seismic risk. This means that the likelihood of surface faulting, soil liquefaction and ground rupture is remote. The San Andreas Fault is the nearest active seismic area, located 60 miles to the west.

Earlimart is, however, located in a subsidence zone. The Seismic Safety Element indicates that the area in and around Earlimart has subsided 2 to 3 feet since the 1940s due to a drop in the ground water level.



**ADOPTED COUNTY PLANNING POLICIES**

The Tulare County Planning and Development Department recently compiled a Comprehensive Policy Plan which includes all of the goals, objectives, and policies contained in the various elements of the Tulare County General Plan. Within this document each community or city has a separate section devoted to policies which specifically affect that entity. Policies which refer to Earlimart, and the corresponding policy number of the Comprehensive Policy Plan, are as follows:

1. Through its continuing planning program, the county should develop plans for small rural communities which will be in scale with current problems and extreme limitations on economic and physical growth. Service centers requiring early attention are Goshen, Cutler-Orosi, Ivanhoe, Pixley, Earlimart and Poplar (424.801).
2. The principal proposals of the sketch plan are (424.802):
  - a. The replacement of dilapidated housing units within the urban pattern prior to encouraging outward physical expansion of the community.
  - b. Concentrations of residential development east of Freeway 99, to minimize the extent of crossings required by residents west of Freeway 99, particularly school children.
  - c. Commercial development as an expansion of the existing commercial center and at freeway interchanges.
  - d. Industrial expansion along the west side of the freeway and along the Southern Pacific Railroad.
3. Urban Development Boundaries (UDB) are established around the following unincorporated communities in the county to serve as official urban planning areas for these communities (Earlimart included) (424.801)

## **Earlimart Community Plan**

### **Chapter Two: Environmental Assessment**

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In addition to the above policies, there are other policies which have been adopted by the County which serve to guide development and planning in the County. While all of these policies cannot be listed it is important to get a sense of the County's attitude towards planning and development prior to preparing the Plan. The most important policy statements are summarized below:

- Retain community identity (211.103)
- Control urban sprawl (211.107)
- New development should be an extension of existing development (211.106)
- Urban development boundaries (twenty-year planning area) shall be prepared for Earlimart (211.109)
- Modification of Earlimart's Urban Development Boundary shall place a high priority on preserving prime agricultural land (211.132)
- Earlimart's UDB shall identify areas for urban land uses which benefit from urban services (211.135)
- Earlimart shall develop a land use plan, specifying densities and land use categories (211.137)
- Community water systems should be extended in a manner which will promote orderly development (211.153)
- Special districts should extend trunk lines in reasonable anticipation of new development (211.154)
- Residential densities less than one dwelling per acre should not benefit from urban services (211.168)
- Flood prone locations shall be avoided when planning urban

## Earlimart Community Plan

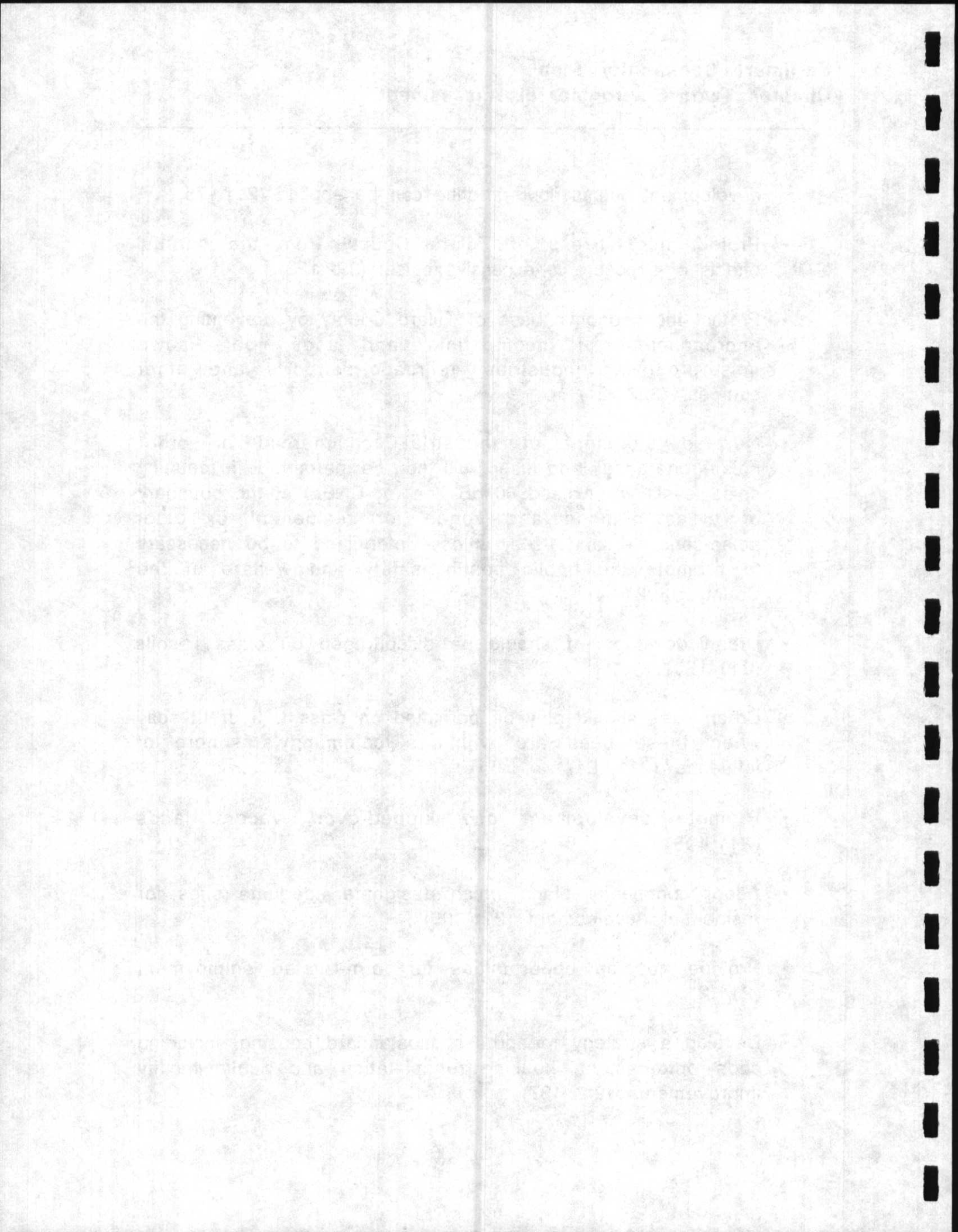
### Chapter Two: Environmental Assessment

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development unless flood-proofing can be applied (211.175)

- Protect the citizens of Tulare County from the harmful effects of exposure to excessive noise. (322.123)
- Protect the economic base of Tulare County by preventing the encroachment of incompatible land uses near known noise-producing industries, railroads, airports and other sources. (322.124)
- New development of industrial, commercial or other noise-generating land uses will not be permitted if resulting noise levels will exceed 60 dB Ldn (or CNEL) at the boundary of areas planned and zoned for residential or other noise-sensitive land uses, unless determined to be necessary to promote the public health, safety and welfare of the County. (322.314)
- Urban development should be discouraged on class I soils (211.190)
- Urban uses should only be permitted on class I, II or III soils when these uses are within a community's sphere of influence (211.194)
- Promote development of "skipped-over" vacant lands (211.408)
- Adopt community plans which designate adequate sites for residential development (211.409)
- Provide housing opportunities for farm-related employment (211.213)
- Develop a strategy to address substandard housing, including code enforcement, housing rehabilitation and public facility improvements (211.437)





### **CHAPTER 3: URBAN DEVELOPMENT BOUNDARY**

**This chapter delineates the planning area, also known as the Urban Development Boundary (UDB), for the Earlimart Community Plan. To determine the UDB for the planning area, a suitability analysis was employed to identify lands appropriate for urbanization.**









## **Earlimart Community Plan Chapter Three: Urban Boundary**

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### **INTRODUCTION**

Although State planning law does not define specific requirements for establishing planning area boundaries, it is generally agreed that the planning boundaries should include the territory within a community's adopted sphere of influence. In 1974, Tulare County added an Urban Boundaries Element to its General Plan. The element required the designation of an urban boundary for every "viable" unincorporated community in the county. At that time, an Urban Improvement Boundary (20-year growth boundary) and Urban Area Boundary (ultimate growth area) were established for Earlimart. These boundaries were subsequently amended in 1978, 1979 and again in 1982.

In 1983, the Urban Boundaries Element was amended to replace the Urban Improvement Boundary concept within the Urban Development Boundary (UDB), and to change the Urban Area Boundary concept to a comment area around incorporated cities. Urban Area Boundaries are thus no longer established around unincorporated communities.

The UDB establishes a 20-year growth line for Earlimart. Over the years, services will be extended into this area which will accommodate new growth. Since the UDB defines the area where growth will occur, it should also serve as the planning area boundary in this study.

### **Benefits of Establishing An Urban Boundary**

Besides defining the area in which Earlimart will eventually grow, designating a UDB for the community can provide local agencies and citizens with other benefits including:

- Encouraging coordination between land use planning and the provision of governmental services.
- Identifying and resolving potential interagency conflicts regarding service area.

**Earlimart Community Plan**  
**Chapter Three: Urban Boundary**

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- Encouraging efficient, economical and effective delivery of public services.
- Allowing property owners to identify the type and level of service their lands presently receive or may receive in the future.
- Assisting in the County's efforts to preserve open space and productive agricultural land.

**Methodology For Establishing Urban Boundary**

There are no scientific formulas or computer models that can be used to establish a UDB. Rather, many factors must be individually and cumulatively applied and analyzed. Additionally, urban boundaries must respect and support local and regional plans, take into account special local situations and result in growth patterns which will be sensitive to the environment. To establish the UDB for the Earlimart Community Plan the following factors were examined:

• **Population Projections**

Population projections indicate when and how many people must be planned for. They also provide County officials with a basis to estimate the future land needs of the community.

• **County Policies**

State planning law requires that plans must be internally consistent. Since this Plan is a part of the Tulare County General Plan it must carry out adopted county policies. Therefore, these policies must be considered in establishing the UDB.

• **Development Suitability Analysis**

By examining the physical features of the planning area, lands best suited for new development can be identified. In addition, constraints

**Earlimart Community Plan**  
**Chapter Three: Urban Boundary**

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to development can be identified, such as flooding, noise and traffic. Furthermore, strategies can be devised which will minimize, remove or avoid constraints.

**POPULATION PROJECTIONS**

Populations projections are the building blocks of planning. They provide a glimpse into the future and a basis for making land use decisions. However, population projections must be viewed for what they are - estimates of what will probably happen - not exact specifications of what will actually occur. Population projections are based on past trends and how existing and probable future trends will affect them.

**Table No. 9**  
**Earlimart Projected Population**

<u>Year</u>	<u>Population Projection</u>	<u>Percentage Increase</u>	<u>Numerical Increase</u>	<u>Increase Over 1980</u>
1980	4578	2.9		
1987	5600	2.9	1022	1022
1990	6100	2.9	500	1522
2000	8100	2.9	2000	3522
2010	10800	2.9	2700	6222

(Source: Collins & Castrillo, Planning Consultants, 1987)

Earlimart has had a historical growth rate of 2.9 percent per year. By applying this rate to the 1980 population, a current population of 5600 was estimated. If this historical growth rate is applied to the existing population, Earlimart will grow to 6100 by 1990 and to 10800 by 2010.



## Earlimart Community Plan

### Chapter Three: Urban Boundary

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The implications of population growth are obvious. More people moving into an area means that more housing must be provided as well as commercial and industrial areas for shopping, services and jobs. This means that ample area must be available for these future land uses.

Within the planning area about 536 acres are developed and 593 acres remain vacant. By dividing the 1987 estimated population of 5600 by 536 (urbanized acres) a ratio of one urbanized acre per 10.43 persons is calculated. If the ratio of urbanized acre to population remains constant as the population grows, an additional 499 acres will be required for development by the year 2010.

**Table No. 10**  
**Land Demand Projections**

<u>Year</u>	<u>Projected Pop.</u>	<u>Land Demand</u>	<u>Increase Over 1987</u>
1987	5600	536 ac.	
1990	6100	584 ac.	48 ac.
2000	8100	778 ac.	242 ac.
2010	10800	1035 ac.	499 ac.
2010*	10800	1284 ac.	749 ac.

\* This land demand figure reflects a 50 percent flexibility factor.  
(Source: Collins & Castrillo, Planning Consultants, 1987)

When combined with the amount of land already developed, approximately 1035 acres will be urbanized by 2010. In addition to the 499 acre estimate, a reasonable amount of additional land must be included in order to allow for unforeseen circumstances and to provide for a large enough selection of sites so that the real estate market is not unreasonably constrained or influenced. For these reasons, a margin of an additional 50 percent is used to determine the amount of land to be included in the UDB.

**Earlimart Community Plan**  
**Chapter Three: Urban Boundary**

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A 50 percent flexibility factor results in a total developable land area of 749 acres. This acreage, plus the amount of land urbanized in 1987, 536 acres, determines the size of the UDB necessary to accommodate urbanization in Earlimart for the next 20 years, a total of approximately 1300 acres.



## **COUNTY POLICIES**

In establishing a UDB for Earlimart, it is important to not only fulfill the requirements of State planning law, but also be consistent with county goals and policies which pertain to urbanization. This will help assure that the UDB will not be at odds with general plan policies. As specified earlier, there are many County policies that guide development in Earlimart. However, those which have a direct influence on the delineation of the Earlimart UDB are as follows:

- Control urban sprawl (211.107)
- New development should be an extension of existing development (211.106)
- Modification of Earlimart's UDB shall place a high priority on preserving prime agricultural land (211.132)
- Earlimart's UDB shall identify areas for urban land uses which benefit from urban services (211.135)
- Community water systems should be extended in a manner which will promote orderly development (211.153)
- Flood prone locations shall be avoided when planning urban development unless flood-proofing can be applied (211.109)
- Promote the development of "skipped over" vacant lands (211.408)



## **DEVELOPMENT SUITABILITY ANALYSIS**

### **Purpose of a Development Suitability Analysis**

The purpose of a development suitability analysis is to determine the areas best suited to accommodate new growth. It is a means of identifying areas free of development constraints and those areas where improvements must be made before urban type development is allowed. This development suitability analysis will be used not only to determine the location of the Earlimart UDB but also to help establish the land use pattern of the community.

To determine development suitability, factors that either encourage or constrain development were selected and mapped. Each factor was assigned a "suitability" rating to show the level of constraint it will have on new development. Suitability ratings used in this study include:

**Very High** - These areas are "infill lands" or lands that are surrounded on three sides by existing urban land uses.

**High** - These areas are lands free of development constraints. They are adjacent to existing development and can be connected to community sewer and water service.

**Moderate** - These lands are located outside the Earlimart Public Utility District boundaries but are near existing urban development. These lands also exhibit other qualities that make them suitable for future development.

**Low** - These lands should be precluded from intensive development until the conditions which constrain the land can be changed or corrected. Examples of such constraints include flooding and Williamson Act lands.

All of the factors have been mapped and from these maps, a composite map of all the factors was prepared. This map was examined to determine what suitability pattern emerged. It is important to remember that a low development suitability rating does not necessarily mean the land must

## **Earlimart Community Plan**

### **Chapter Three: Urban Boundary**

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remain undeveloped. Instead, a low development suitability rating serves as a way to identify the areas where only low density development may be appropriate or to pinpoint areas where improvements should be made prior to allowing intensive urban type development.

The factors examined in this study and their suitability ratings are discussed on the following pages. These factors were considered in establishing the UDB and in selecting the land uses in the UDB.

#### **Existing Urbanized Areas**

These lands include all of the existing urbanized areas including vacant skipped over lands and lands which could be "recycled" into more intensive uses (See Map No. 3).

#### **Suitability Rating:**

Areas within existing urbanized areas - Very High

#### **Areas Within EPUD Service Area**

Areas served with a community sewer or water system are capable of supporting a wider variety of land uses than those served by individual septic systems and wells. Hence these areas are highly suitable for many urban uses. Map No. 10 shows the District's boundary. Although EPUD is near its sewer treatment capacity, the district has sufficient capital reserves to expand the system to serve new growth. While the district can expand the sewage treatment system when the need arises, the district's engineers have pointed out that lift stations may need to be constructed to serve new development east of Highway 99. Lift stations can be costly to construct and maintain and may place an added administrative burden on the district if a special assessment district must be formed to pay for their long term operation and maintenance costs. EPUD also provides water service to the planning area. The system is relatively free of constraints which would prevent it from serving lands contiguous to existing urbanization.



# Earlhart Public Utility District

— DISTRICT BOUNDARY

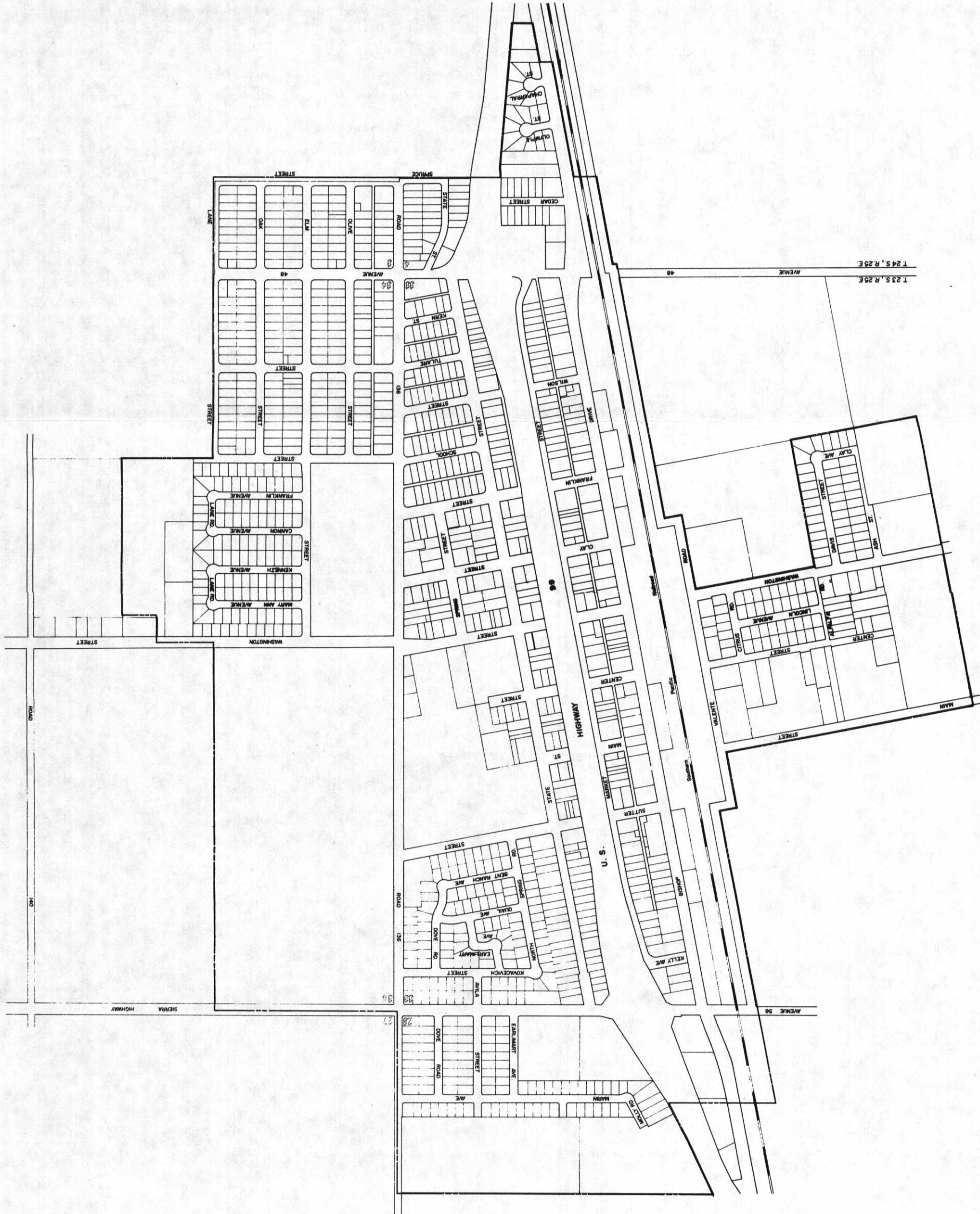
Source:  
Keller/Wegley Consulting Engineers

## Earlhart Community Plan

Map 10



**COLLINS & CASTRILLO**  
PLANNING CONSULTANTS





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**Earlimart Community Plan**  
**Chapter Three: Urban Boundary**

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**Suitability Rating:**

Areas within EPUD's service area - High

**Land Contiguous To Existing Urbanized Areas**

Contiguous lands are those lands within one quarter mile of the existing urbanized area that, because of their proximity to services or existing development, increases their potential for new development (See Maps No. 3, 4 and 5). Development of these areas encourages the implementation of the County's general plan policies which call for the extension of existing development and the orderly extension of sewer and water systems (See policies 211.106 and 211.154).

**Suitability Rating:**

Areas within one quarter mile to existing development - High

**Noncontiguous Lands Free of Development Constraints**

Within the area examined there are lands that are further than one quarter mile from existing development and outside the EPUD boundary that may be suitable for long range urbanization because they are relatively free of development constraints (See Maps No. 3,7,8 and 10). Examples include the lands west of Earlimart which are near existing development and do not require lift stations to transport waste water to the treatment plant.

**Suitability Rating:**

Noncontiguous areas free of development constraints - Moderate

**Agricultural Preserves**

Agricultural land is a resource that must be conserved just like air and water. It is also economically important and provides other benefits such as wildlife habitat, groundwater recharge and open space, a contributing factor to the rural character of the area.



**Earlimart Community Plan**  
**Chapter Three: Urban Boundary**

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Within the planning area there are several properties within an agricultural preserve (See Map No. 7). A preserve is designed to keep productive farmland in use by exchanging lower property tax assessment for a promise, in the form of a contract, that the land will not be converted to an urban type use. Land in a preserve is required to remain in agriculture for a ten year period. Unless a notice of non-renewal is filed, the contract is automatically self-renewing every year for an additional ten year period.

Since land within a preserve is under a ten-year contract, and the Earlimart Community Plan is designed for a twenty-year time frame, this factor is considered to be a short-term development constraint. By State law, land in an agricultural preserve cannot be developed to an urban use. Therefore, a "low" suitability rating is assigned to lands in a preserve, even though after ten years the land could be legally developed.

**Suitability Rating:**

Areas in an agricultural preserve - Low

**Flood Prone Areas**

Development within flood prone areas not only results in placing property and life in danger but can also increase the possibility of flooding downstream. Additionally, the county and its property owners risk the loss of federally sponsored flood insurance programs if the county's development regulations do not minimize the risks of flooding.

The 100-year flood plain is the basic planning criteria to identify areas in which precautions should be taken. The 100-year flood plain boundary defines the areas which have a one percent chance of flooding in any given year. Map No. 8 shows the location of 100-year flood plain areas. The implications for planning are that these areas are not well suited for development unless structures are built above the elevation figure specified on the flood insurance maps.



**Earlimart Community Plan**  
**Chapter Three: Urban Boundary**

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According to flood prone maps prepared by FEMA, a portion of Earlimart east of State Highway 99 is subject to a 100-year flood. The depth of this potential flood could range from one to three feet.

**Suitability Rating:**

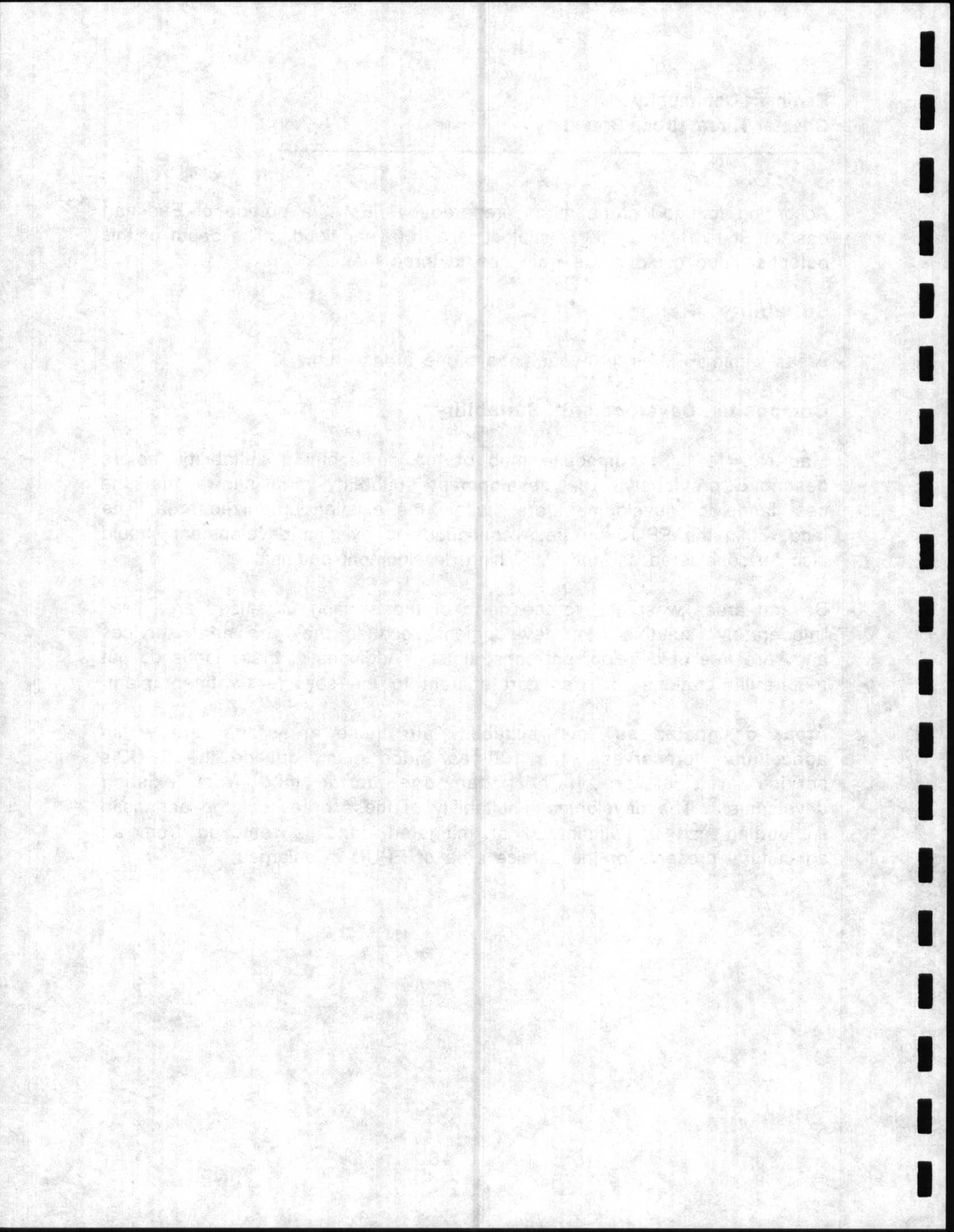
Areas within FEMA's 100-year flood prone areas - Low

**Composite Development Suitability**

Map No. 11 is a composite map of the development suitability factors described previously. The development suitability map shows that the best lands for development are within the existing urbanized area. The land within the EPUD or areas contiguous to existing development should also be considered as land with high development potential

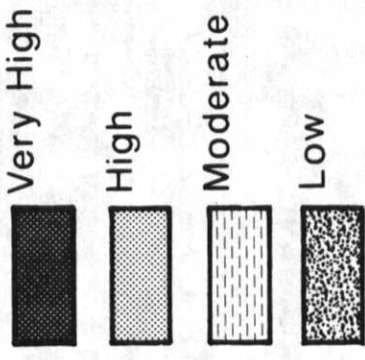
Several areas west and to the north of the existing urbanized area are "moderately" suitable for development because they are near services and are free of development constraints. Additionally, these lands do not require lift stations to transport effluent to the sewage treatment plant.

Areas designated as "low" suitability are those areas that are within agricultural preserves, the 100-year flood plain, outside the EPUD's service area or are further than one-quarter mile from existing development. The development suitability of these areas can be enhanced if flooding can be eliminated or mitigated, land is removed from an agricultural preserve or the service area of EPUD is enlarged.





# Development Suitability Analysis

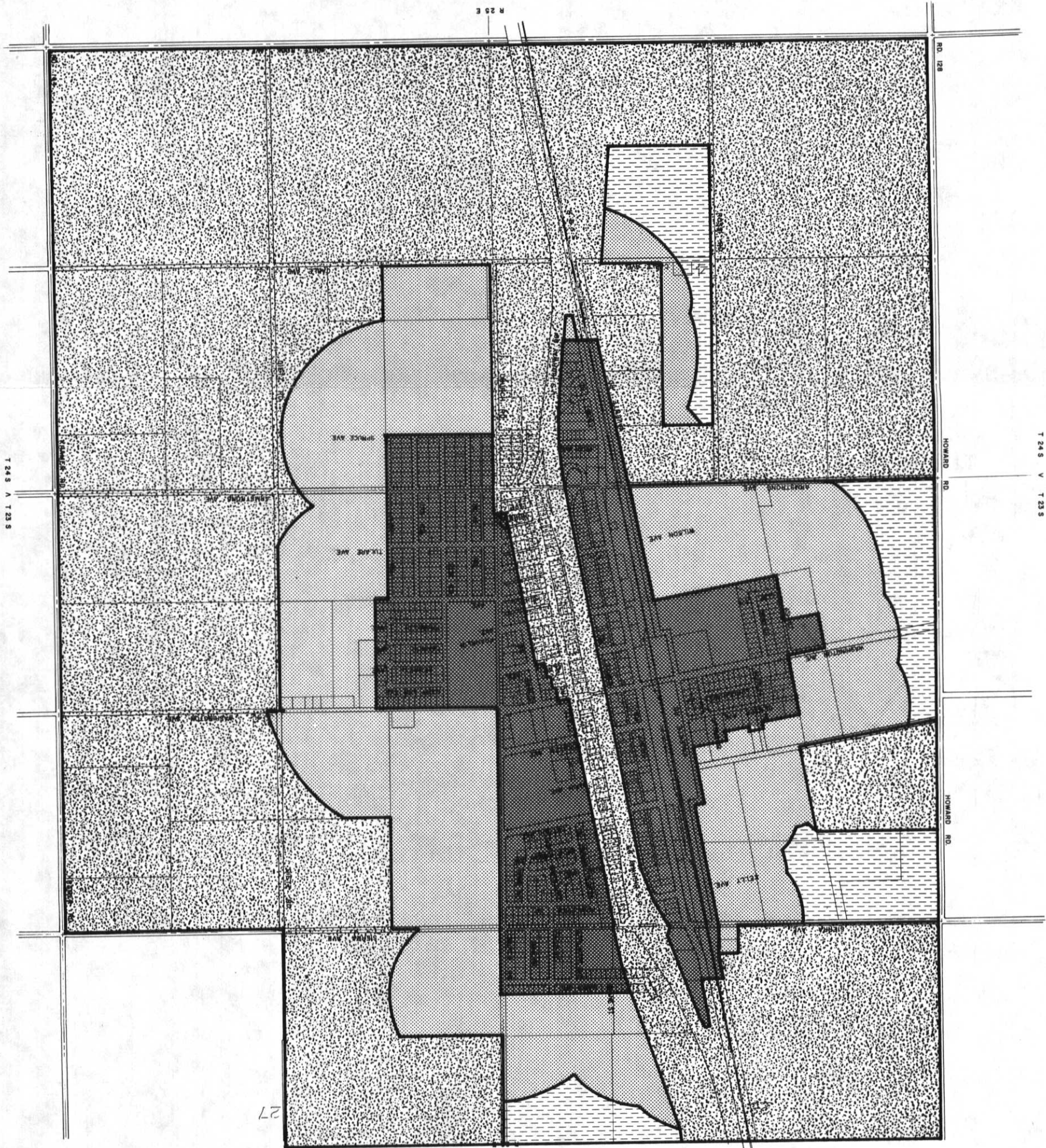


## Earlimart Community Plan

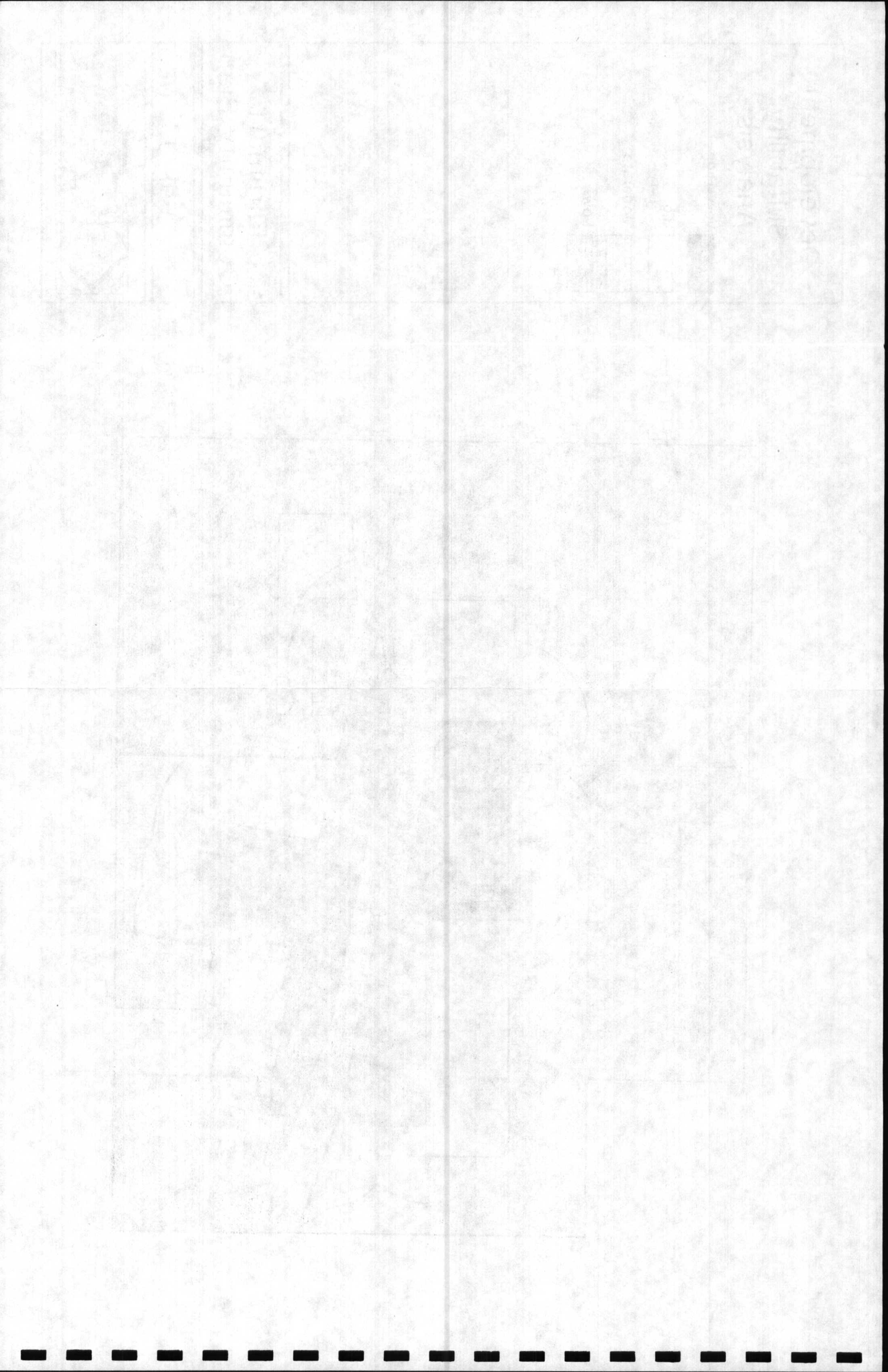
### Map 11



COLLINS & CASTRILLO  
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**Earlimart Community Plan**  
**Chapter Three: Urban Boundary**

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**RECOMMENDED URBAN DEVELOPMENT BOUNDARY**

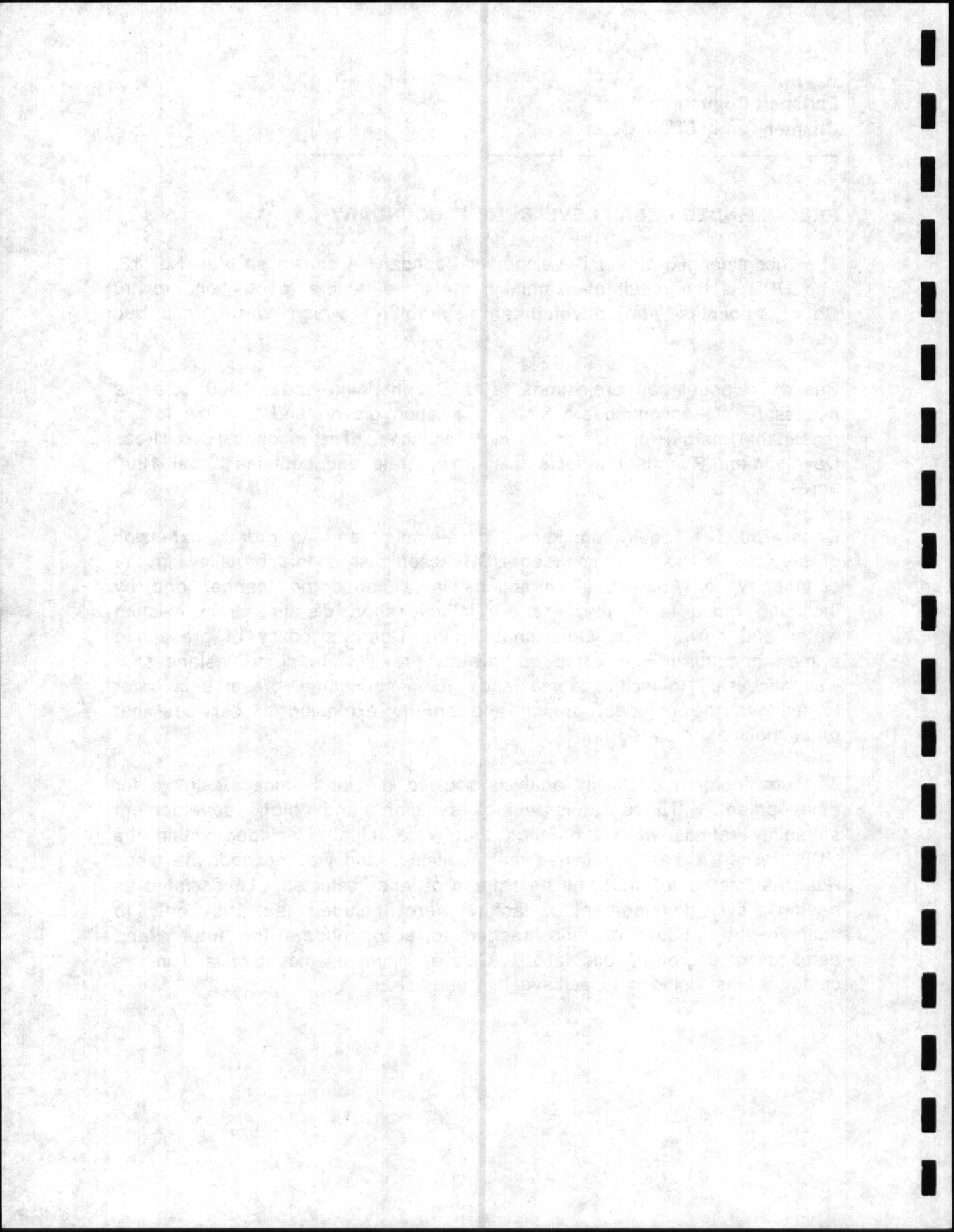
The recommended Urban Development Boundary is shown on Map No. 12. The UDB is the result of examining the three factors (population growth, County policies and development suitability) which were described earlier.

Based on population projections, a UDB containing about 1300 acres is necessary to accommodate future population growth and to allow for a reasonable margin for unforeseen circumstances. The recommended Urban Development Boundary reflects this growth rate and contains about 1300 acres.

County policies require contiguous development and an orderly extension of services. The recommended UDB accomplishes this by allowing the community to grow in all directions in a concentric manner and by including those lands that are a relatively short distance from existing water and sewer lines. Unfortunately, the County's policy of preserving prime agricultural land could not always prevail. In some instances, it was necessary to include some lands in an agricultural preserve in order to achieve the compact growth and orderly extension of services that other policies dictated.

The development suitability analysis showed the lands most desirable for development. Those lands with "very high" and "high" development suitability ratings were the lands that were initially included within the UDB. When it was determined that additional land was needed, the lands rated as "moderate" were the next group of lands selected. Lands rated as having "low" development suitability were included last, but only to achieve the amount of land needed to accommodate the future land demands of a growing population. Only a minimum amount of land in this category was included to achieve this purpose.







# Urban Boundaries



Urban Development  
Boundary (UDB)  
1300 AC

# Earlimart Community Plan

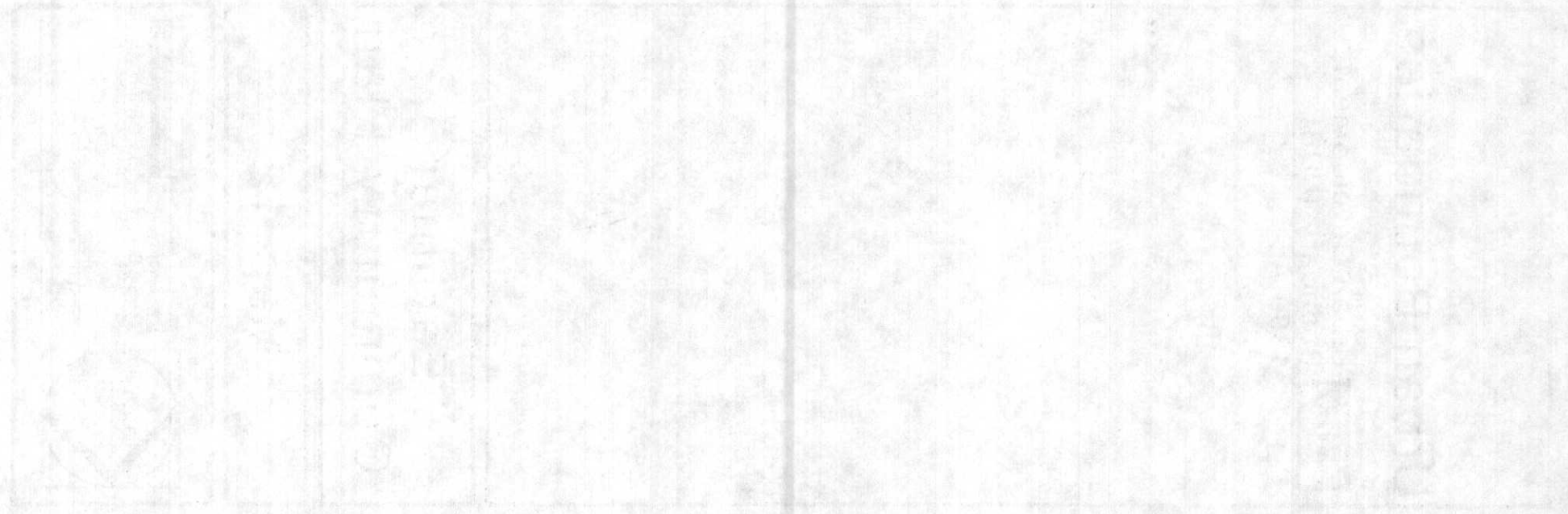
# Map 12



**COLLINS & CASTRILLO**  
PLANNING CONSULTANTS







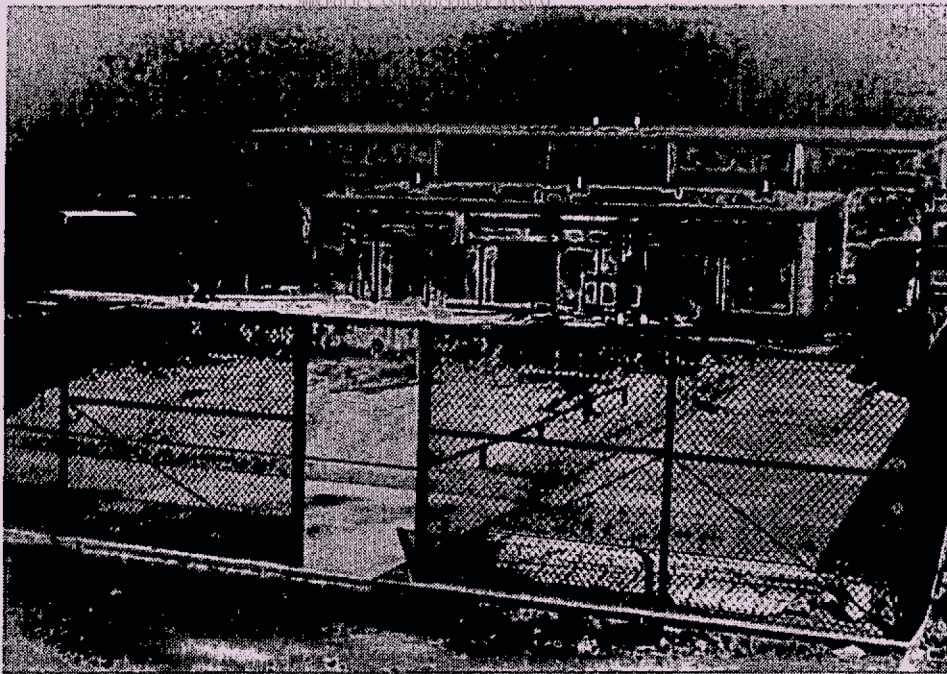
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## **CHAPTER 4: POLICY PLAN**

**This chapter specifies policies and implementation measures which will guide development in Earlimart for the next 20 years.**







## **REDEVELOPMENT**

As reported in other sections of this plan, Earlimart's housing and commercial areas are in need of significant rehabilitation. Nearly 40 percent of the housing is in need of rehabilitation, and the condition of the downtown area may be adversely affecting the ability of the community to attract new commercial enterprises. Unfortunately, the problem is large enough that governmental assistance is required to provide effective solutions. This Plan recommends the adoption of a redevelopment plan to respond to these conditions. By establishing a redevelopment project area a portion of the community's property tax revenues can be used to improve the community. When a redevelopment plan is adopted, the Earlimart Town Council should assist the County Board of Supervisors (acting as the Redevelopment Agency) in determining projects the agency should undertake.

### **Policy**

- 1.1 The County shall establish a redevelopment district within the Earlimart planning area.
- 1.2 The Redevelopment Agency will take appropriate steps to minimize or eliminate blight in Earlimart.
- 1.3 The Redevelopment Agency shall examine the feasibility of establishing an amnesty program for all illegal residential units in Earlimart. The amnesty program would allow all units, registered by the owners with the County, to remain for a fifteen to twenty year time period if they can be brought up to a minimum level of health and safety standards. These standards could be below the existing Uniform Building Code requirements. Such a program could also involve rehabilitation efforts by non-profit organizations.

**Implementation**

- 1.11** The Tulare County Executive's Office and the Planning and Development Department shall determine the proposed location of the redevelopment district.
- 1.21** The Earlimart Town Council shall assist the Redevelopment Agency in determining projects and funding priorities.
- 1.31** Before new conditional use permits are issued, the Tulare County Planning and Development Department shall determine the impacts of the use on surrounding land uses. If any proposed or existing uses will contribute to creating blight in Earlimart, they shall not be approved.



## **HOUSING**

The greatest concentration of residential development in Earlimart occurs east of Highway 99. This area contains a mix of older residential neighborhoods as well as tracts of newer homes. Most of the problems confronting residential development in Earlimart are especially prevalent in this area. Although many public facilities which support residential development such as schools, a fire station and park are located in this area, recent studies have concluded that the cost of providing additional sewer service to this area may not be economical. The short term cost of installation and the long term costs of maintaining the lift stations may hinder future development, especially housing aimed at lower income households.

The residential area west of the highway and east of Front Road is interspersed between industrial and commercial businesses. Residents of this area must cope with highway noise as well as noise and traffic from businesses in the area. Based on the land use survey conducted for this plan there is little vacant land available for new residential development in this area. Given this shortage of good sites and the constraints of noise and traffic, the focus of new residential development should be outside this area.

More recently, new residential development has occurred west of the railroad. Both single family and multi-family residential development has been constructed in this area. While this portion of Earlimart lacks public facilities, like parks and schools, it is more suitable for development than the east side of the community because it will not require lift stations for sewage disposal. Furthermore, this area does not suffer from blight or deterioration evident in the eastern portion of Earlimart.

Earlimart is growing moderately but steadily. By the year 2010 approximately 2200 units are needed to house its population at a person per unit rate equal to the County's existing rate of 2.98 persons per unit. This amount of new housing will double the number of housing units that currently exist within the community. Providing this amount of housing will not be an easy task, and therefore the County must take an active role

## **Earlimart Community Plan**

### **Chapter Four: Policy Plan**

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in assisting non-profit and for-profit organizations interested in building in Earlimart. To make the task even more difficult, a great percentage of the housing must be affordable to low income households.

One way to provide the necessary housing is for the County to zone additional sites for multi-family and mobile home parks. Currently, multi-family zoning in the planning area is scarce. These two types of uses can provide a significant amount of the necessary housing at prices local residents can afford.

Earlimart's existing housing stock suffers from a number of problems which make quick and easy solutions non-existent. Most of the community's housing problems stem from the low economic conditions of the area. Without sufficient income it is difficult, if not impossible, for area residents to house themselves without private or governmental assistance. Examples of economically related housing problems include:

#### **Illegal Units**

A recent survey shows that there are many instances in which two or more housing units have been placed or constructed on single family lots in Earlimart. The majority of these extra units are believed to be illegal. Many of the units have been constructed or placed on the lots without regard to building or zoning regulations, and therefore may pose health and safety problems. For example, the proximity of the units to one another and to units on adjacent lots may present problems if a structural fire occurs. Additionally, since some units do not meet building codes they may present a safety threat to the occupant if they do not have adequate electrical or heating systems. This issue is not a simple one to correct. These units, although in many cases in very poor shape, provide shelter to families with low incomes. A program aimed at removing these units would result in displacement of low income persons with few housing options.



### **Deterioration**

It is estimated that nearly 30 percent, or 429 housing units, in Earlimart are deteriorated. This housing situation is a direct reflection of the community's poor economic condition. Although Self-Help Enterprises has rehabilitated 25 dilapidated units since 1980, there remains a significant amount of housing in need of attention. If further steps are not taken to rehabilitate these units, they will become more deteriorated, or worse yet, become dilapidated.

### **Dilapidation**

In addition to the amount of deteriorated housing in Earlimart an estimated eight percent, or 114 units, are dilapidated and in need of replacement. Generally, these housing units are in such disrepair that rehabilitation is not feasible. Some of these dilapidated units are illegal second or third units but there are also many units that are the only unit on the lot. In replacing these units, great care must be exercised so that the residents of these units will have adequate housing if their existing unit is removed.

### **Blight**

There is a significant amount of blight in Earlimart, especially in the central and southeastern sections. This results from poorly maintained housing, mixes of incompatible land uses, and unsightly conditions, such as abandoned or inoperable cars, littered and unpaved alleys, and unkempt streets.

To encourage neighborhood revitalization and rehabilitation, the County must reduce blight. Efforts by non-profit organizations to rehabilitate housing should be encouraged and assisted by the County whenever possible. The County should also actively enforce State or local codes regarding the removal of abandoned or inoperable automobiles, the abandonment of unnecessary alleys, and removal of housing units which pose a public health hazard. The County should determine if there are illegal non-conforming uses and take steps to have them abated.



**Policy**

- 2.1 The County will strive to ensure that the an adequate number of housing units are constructed to meet the housing needs of Earlimart.
- 2.2 The County will strive to ensure that housing is affordable to all economic segments of Earlimart.
- 2.3 The County will ensure that there are adequate sites and will work with the EPUD and other agencies to ensure that there are adequate public facilities to support future housing needs in Earlimart.
- 2.4 The County will work diligently towards the rehabilitation of the Earlimart housing stock.
- 2.5 Mobile home parks and subdivisions, trailer parks and multifamily development shall be encouraged in Earlimart in order to provide affordable housing opportunities.
- 2.6 The County will attempt to maintain a balance between owner and renter housing stock in Earlimart.
- 2.7 Sites for multi-family development shall be identified which do not overburden any one area of the community or neighborhood. Large developments shall be located on collector streets.
- 2.8 Single family development shall be located in areas free of excessive noise and traffic, adequately buffered from incompatible land uses, and serviceable with sewer and water.
- 2.9 The Tulare County Planning and Development Department will actively enforce all planning and zoning laws in order to abate illegal, non-conforming non-residential uses.

## **Implementation**

- 2.11** The County will periodically review zoning in Earlimart and will maintain enough residentially zoned land so that the lack of adequately zoned residential sites does not become a constraint to housing production.
- 2.21** The County will work with Self-Help Enterprises, the Tulare County Housing Authority, and other entities interested in constructing or replacing low income housing in Earlimart.
- 2.32** The County will investigate or be aware of service needs, police and fire protection, and other services required to support new residential development. In addition, it will coordinate with the EPUD and the Earlimart School District when they expand or enlarge their services to support future population growth.
- 2.41** The County will encourage and assist non-profit and for-profit groups who demonstrate the ability and skill to undertake rehabilitation programs, to apply for State and federal funds for rehabilitation programs.



## **COMMERCE**

### **Lack of Commercial Development**

Earlimart has very little general commercial development. Most persons must either travel to Tulare or Delano for their shopping needs. Even for grocery shopping, many persons travel to Pixley because of the wider variety available.

One reason for the lack of significant commercial enterprises is the lack of building space necessary to house any large retail outlets. Another problem is that, in general, the condition, size and the location of the community's commercial buildings is not conducive to attracting new commercial enterprises.

Additional commercial development would stimulate the local economy by providing employment. The new employment would in turn help support other commercial enterprises. Area residents would benefit because of the greater shopping opportunities and may not have to travel to shop. The County would also benefit from the additional sales tax revenues that might be generated. For a community the size of Earlimart, a small shopping center could probably be supported.

Earlier, this Plan recommended the revitalization of the downtown area through the establishment of a Redevelopment Agency. While other communities have taken steps to limit the construction of shopping centers to encourage revitalization, allowing a shopping center in the planning area would not be counter productive to Earlimart's revitalization efforts. This is because the existing buildings in the area are simply not large enough, nor do they have enough parking, to attract the types of commercial enterprises the community needs.

### **Planning Criteria**

Three types of commercial uses exist in Earlimart: general commercial, service commercial and highway commercial. General commercial includes uses such as retail shops, offices, restaurants, and certain kinds of



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commercial services. Service commercial includes outdoor sales and repair services. Gas stations, restaurants, truck stops, and motels are uses included under the highway commercial designation. The location of future commercial uses must be based on a set of criteria specific to each. General commercial uses should be located in areas in close proximity to the population they serve and which have good access. Location and access are not as important to service commercial uses. By their nature, these uses are often noisy and may require outside storage, and therefore they are usually incompatible with residential development.

For these reasons, new service commercial uses should be located away from existing or planned residential areas or mitigation measures should be incorporated into the design of the project that will eliminate any undesirable conditions. Highway commercial requires a high degree of visibility and is therefore generally located near freeway off ramps.

#### **Policy**

- 3.1 Tulare County shall designate and zone enough land for commercial uses to meet the existing and future needs of the area's population.
- 3.2 All new commercial uses shall be designed in such a manner that will minimize land use compatibility problems with surrounding and planned land uses.
- 3.3 The County shall work towards marketing Earlimart's two highway commercial sites by improving signage, access and infrastructure services.
- 3.4 New commercial uses should be located away from existing or planned residential areas or mitigation measures should be incorporated into the design of the project that will eliminate any undesirable conditions.

#### **Implementation**

- 3.11 The County will designate and zone an area north of Sierra Avenue near the highway and a site on Washington Street west of the

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railroad for general commercial uses. The area shall be of sufficient size to permit the construction of a shopping center which can serve the commercial needs of Earlimart residents.

- 3.12** The County will designate and zone areas east of Highway 99 on the south side of Earlimart and west of Highway 99 on the north side of the community for highway commercial uses.
- 3.13** The county will designate and zone areas between Highway 99 and Front Road for service commercial uses. These areas are located in areas which are inappropriate for residential development due to noise, traffic and appearance.

## **INDUSTRY**

### **Lack of Economic Opportunities**

Earlimart's economy is based primarily on the agricultural sector. Most of the people who live in the community are engaged in agricultural pursuits and most of the community's industry is agriculturally oriented. Unfortunately, this sector of the economy is plagued with low incomes, unstable market conditions and many of the jobs are seasonal in nature. It is for this reason that the median income of Earlimart residents is far below the median income for the rest of the County. The lack of economic opportunities can often have significant land use implications. Low incomes are a major reason for the depressed housing conditions in the area and a primary cause for the number of illegal second and third dwelling units in single family residential areas. The lack of economic opportunity is also a reason for the deteriorating conditions of the downtown area.

To improve incomes and to provide greater stability in its economic base, non-agricultural industries, or less seasonal agricultural industries that provide higher wages, are needed.

### **Locational Factors**

Industry considers a number of factors when seeking a site for a plant. Some of these factors include the cost of labor, land and utilities, properly zoned and available sites; rail and freeway access; adequate infrastructure; and protection from conflicting land uses. All of these factors are present in Earlimart or are embodied in this Plan. With some assistance from the County, new industry could be persuaded to locate in this area. However, this plan recognizes this will not be an easy task given the competition between communities for new jobs. However, given the economic conditions of the area, the County should make a special effort to target some of its economic development efforts in the Earlimart area.



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**Policy**

- 4.1 The County shall encourage industrialization of Earlimart, especially to industries that provide non-seasonal employment.
- 4.2 Land well suited for industrial development because of access, availability of infrastructure and proximity to similar land uses should be designated for industry and protected from the encroachment of incompatible uses.
- 4.3 When the County reviews permit applications for prospective industries that wish to locate in Earlimart several criteria should be applied which include:
- The water and sewer requirements of new industry should be considered with respect to the limitations of EPUD's water and sewer systems.
  - Adequate access must be provided so local streets do not operate beyond a "D" level of service rating.
  - Industry shall be generally downwind of residential dwellings.
  - Industry which requires lift stations should work with the County and the EPUD to seek ways to finance the installation, maintenance and replacement of these facilities.
  - Industry shall be encouraged to pretreat effluent which is difficult to process prior to disposal at the treatment plant.

**Implementation**

- 4.11 The County should encourage the Tulare County Economic Development Corporation (EDC) to seek out industries which require a rural community with rail and Highway 99 access.
- 4.12 The Tulare County Redevelopment Agency should begin to design the Earlimart Industrial Park.

## **AGRICULTURE**

### **Importance**

The importance of agricultural land as a resource is underscored by the level of attention State Planning law and County policies have placed on it. Three State mandated elements - land use, conservation and open space- require policies on agricultural land. Tulare County has adopted many policies to achieve the preservation of agricultural land.

Agricultural land is a resource of limited availability. It is economically important and provides other benefits such as wildlife habitat, groundwater recharge and open space lands. It also contributes to the rural character of the area.

### **Timing of Conversion**

Some land presently being used for agricultural purposes should be considered for more intensive uses because of its proximity to residential, commercial or industrially designated lands. However, in order to fulfill the County's goals of preserving agricultural land, the land should remain in agricultural use until the supply of developable land is diminished. The County should also consider changing the designation if a specific project is presented which would not work in other locations. In the meantime, this land should be retained in parcels as large as possible to preserve future planning options.

### **Policy**

**5.1** Properties within the UDB of Earlimart which meet the following criteria shall be classified in an agricultural holding zone prior to conversion to urban use (as defined in the Urban Boundaries Element of the General Plan):

- (1) The property is subject to an agricultural preserve contract;
- (2) full urban services and infrastructure sufficient to serve

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urban development either are not available or cannot be made available;

- (3) the property is not contiguous on at least one side to existing urban development.

- 5.2 Until productive agricultural lands are ready to be developed they shall be retained in parcels of sufficient size to allow agricultural uses.
- 5.3 Agricultural uses outside the UDB shall be protected from conflicting urban uses by aligning the UDB along streets, railroads or other man-made or natural features in order to buffer the two uses.
- 5.4 The county shall carefully coordinate the extension of public water and sewer services in the planning area with the EPUD, to promote logical and orderly development patterns.
- 5.5 New agricultural preserves shall not be approved for properties within the UDB of Earlimart.

**Implementation**

- 5.11 Large lot agricultural zoning such as AE-40 shall be applied as a holding zone to properties which meet the criteria set forth in policy 5.1 above.
- 5.51 The county should consider filing a notice of nonrenewal on lands in an agricultural preserve which are designated for an urban use under the Earlimart Community Plan.



## **COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT**

This Plan contains a number of policies that over the years will affect the Earlimart planning area. However, the adoption of this Plan will not end the planning process in the area. The County must continue to review development permit applications and must continue to amend and update the Plan to reflect changing conditions. While the County Board of Supervisors is the governing body for land use decisions in the area, local opinions and recommendations must be sought whenever significant issues could affect the community. Therefore, this Plan recommends the following policies and implementation measures to provide a means for citizens, special districts and other public entities that have an interest in the community to participate in the future development of Earlimart.

### **Policy**

- 6.1 The County of Tulare will solicit recommendations from the Earlimart Town Council, the Earlimart School and Public Utility Districts and other interested public agencies on matters regarding the Earlimart Community Plan.
- 6.2 The Earlimart Community Plan will be reviewed every five years to determine if amendments are appropriate.

### **Implementation**

- 6.11 When considering any land use proposal, capital expenditure or other matters of community importance, the County of Tulare will request input from the Earlimart School and Public Utility Districts, and the Earlimart Town Council.

## **SCHOOLS**

### **Overcrowding**

Schools are an especially important component of a community. Not only do they provide educational services to our children, but the physical facilities of the schools also serve the community at large. The quality of residential development is often measured by whether schools exist in close proximity to the neighborhood. As result, schools are often a gravitational factor in attracting residential development to certain areas of a community.

Presently, the elementary school is at capacity and the intermediate school will be at capacity by 1988. To deal with the overcrowding problems, the district recently implemented a school impact fee and attempted to levy a tax via a bond measure to construct additional classrooms. The bond measure failed. The district is now seeking other methods of financing to overcome the lack of sufficient classroom space.

Many other school districts in the State are faced with similar overcrowding problems. In some areas, when schools are pushed to their capacity limits, local governments have placed moratoria on new development in those areas until enough new classrooms or schools were built to alleviate the overcrowding. Because of local housing conditions this approach should not be used in Earlimart. The population data suggests the growth in Earlimart is the result of natural growth (births) rather than immigration. Curtailing housing production would, therefore, have little effect on the overcrowded conditions facing the schools and would not help achieve the housing policies recommended in this Plan.

### **Location**

Historically, most residential development has occurred in the eastern sector of Earlimart. More recently, new residential development has taken place on the west side and is expected to continue to do so because sewer and water can be provided more efficiently in this area. Unfortunately, schools do not exist on the west side of the community and



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the residents of this area, especially school age children, must travel to the east side to use these facilities. In order to "balance" the community, a school site of approximately ten acres should be purchased on the west side of the community when the school district has the necessary funding. A school in this area can serve existing development and anticipated future development. This strategy of balancing the school facilities in the community allows the school district to provide more neighborhood oriented schools, additional open space in the immediate area and possibly eliminate the need for busing some children.

The land use map of this Plan recommends a school site in the western sector of the community, however, this location is intended to be a general guideline, and is not site-specific. Although the issue of establishing a high school in southern Tulare County is under consideration, designation of a site for such a facility is premature at this time.

**Policy**

- 7.1 The County shall cooperate with the Earlimart School District to provide the highest quality educational services and school facilities possible.
- 7.2 Any new site selected shall conform to the following locational criteria:
- Located near residential development.
  - Located along an existing or future street system that will provide easy access.
  - Located away from land uses that generate high noise levels or that create excess dust.
  - Located away from or buffered from areas in which agricultural sprays are routinely applied.

**Implementation**

- 7.11 The Land Use Map of the Earlimart Community Plan will



designate the general area where a new school site on the western side of the community should be located.

- 7.12** Investigate multiple use of the school facilities such as day care, adult school and community center.

## **PARKS**

Except for the open space and recreational amenities on the school grounds and a small park located at the intersection of Washington and State, Earlimart is seriously deficient in parks. Recent studies suggest that three acres of land for every thousand people should be available for parks. With a population of approximately 5600 persons, Earlimart should have about 17 acres of park land. Developing additional parks should be a high priority of the community and the County. Additional park lands will provide the space necessary to conduct a meaningful recreation program in the area and improve the overall quality of life. Like schools, there are no park facilities on the west side of Earlimart. As the western area develops there will be an especially critical need for parks in this area. Additional park land in this area will help eliminate the open space deficiency and will make residential development in this area more attractive.

### **Policy**

- 8.1 The County, in conjunction with the EPUD and Earlimart School District, shall investigate the funding sources to provide sufficient park facilities to fulfill the recreational needs of Earlimart residents.
- 8.2 In conjunction with the proposed school site, a new park should be considered for construction.

### **Implementation**

- 8.11 The County, EPUD and the Earlimart School District should meet to determine how each agency could cooperate to meet the recreational needs of the community. The County Building Services and Parks Department shall report the findings of this meeting to the County Board of Supervisors.

## **FIRE PROTECTION SERVICES**

The County of Tulare contracts with the California Division of Forestry (CDF) for fire protection in Earlimart. The station is staffed by one paid full-time firefighter and supported by ten volunteers. A large and small pumper are used to respond to brush and structural fires. As the community grows additional staffing and equipment will be necessary. In addition, much of the growth that will occur in Earlimart will probably occur west of Highway 99. Adequate response times to this area may not be acceptable because of the greater distances and railroad delays.

### **Policy**

**9.1** Tulare County shall, within its authority, protect the public from danger to life and property caused by fire.

### **Implementation**

**9.11** The Tulare County Fire Warden, through the countywide fire study, shall assess the requirements for future fire protection services in Earlimart. The study shall include recommendations regarding staffing, equipment and need for an additional fire station. If a new station is needed, it should be constructed west of the Southern Pacific Railroad tracks.



## **SEWER AND WATER FACILITIES**

Most of the area within the recommended UDB will be urbanized within the next twenty years. However, much of the area lacks the sewer or water facilities needed to support urban type development. Community water and sewer services must be made available to the planning area before the land uses envisioned in the Plan can become a reality. However, once these facilities are in place they can prove to be a powerful influence in determining the location and timing of new growth. The County and EPUD must work together to coordinate the location and timing of sewer or water services. Unless a coordinated effort to provide these services is carried out, the policies of this Plan and those contained in the County's general plan will be difficult to implement.

Another issue which must be considered in determining the location of new sewer service is that lift stations will be required to serve substantial new development on the east side of the community. While growth should be allowed to continue in this area, the County should require the developers to pay for the lift stations and form assessment districts to pay for the long term operation and maintenance costs.

Water service is sufficient to meet future population and land use demands. The District must continue to monitor the condition of its system and perform routine maintenance to ensure continued dependable service.

### **Policy**

- 10.1 The extension of water and sewer facilities into the planning area shall implement the policies of this Plan and the goals and policies of the Tulare County General Plan.
- 10.2 Developers of land served by new lift stations shall form an assessment district, or devise other means to finance the long-term costs of operation and maintenance of these stations.
- 10.3 The County should encourage industry to locate in Earlimart which

is clean and does not generate effluent which is difficult and expensive for the EPUD to treat.

**Implementation**

**10.31** The discharge and collection requirements of all new development in Earlimart shall be reviewed by the EPUD. Recommendations and comments on new development shall be forwarded to the County by the EPUD prior to final project approval.



# Circulation Plan

State Route



Arterial



Collector



Local



Urban Development  
Boundary

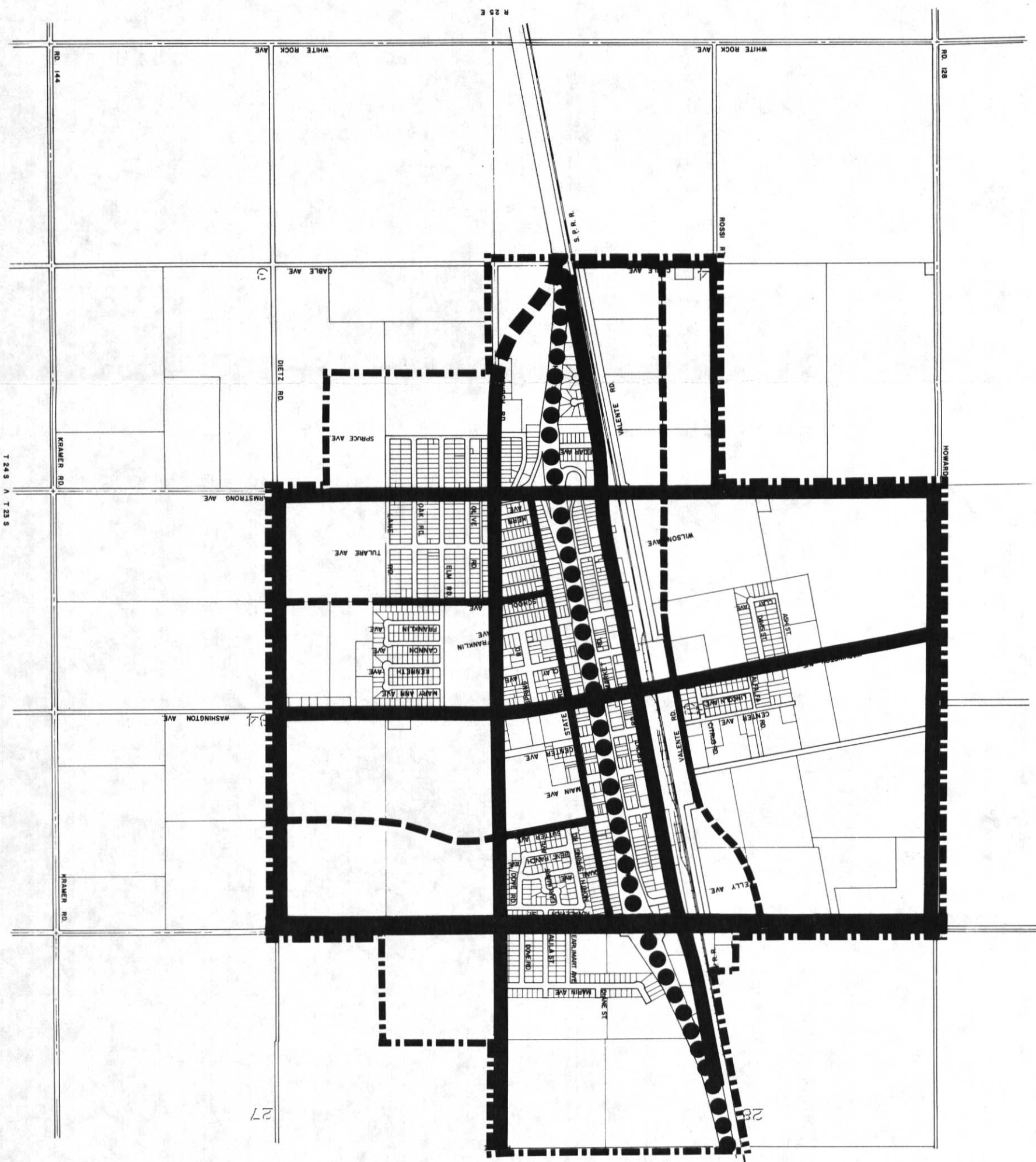


# Earlimart Community Plan

## Map 13



**COLLINS & CASTRILLO**  
PLANNING CONSULTANTS



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## **CIRCULATION**

The circulation element is an especially important component of this Plan because an efficient transportation network is necessary to implement the future land use patterns it recommends.

Within the planning area, traffic congestion is not now, nor is it projected to be, a problem. The circulation needs of the community involve adding new streets in order to connect existing roadways and thereby open up areas for additional development and to make the existing system more efficient.

The specific improvements needed to support the policies of the Plan and achieve the recommended land uses are shown on Map No.13.

### **Policy**

- 11.1 Within the planning area, the County shall provide a transportation system that provides safe and efficient service for the travel needs of all persons, the movement of goods and as a means to implement the other policies and implementation measures of this Plan.
- 11.2 The Circulation Plan shall identify a functional street classification system consistent with the Tulare County Circulation Element.
- 11.3 The county shall explore with CALTRANS the feasibility of constructing a new Highway 99 off-ramp on the southern end of Earlimart.
- 11.4 The County shall require applicants for new development projects to construct or upgrade the roads which will serve their projects to County standards.
- 11.5 The Tulare County Public Works Department shall determine the feasibility of the realignment and construction of Valente Road



and the construction of Armstrong Avenue at the Southern Pacific Railroad. These improvements are meant to enhance industrialization and improve access to Highway 99.







- 11.6** The Tulare County Public Works Department shall establish engineering design standards for the streets identified in the Plan.






**Implementation**

- 11.61** Improvement standards for collector streets shall include perpendicular curbs, gutters, and sidewalks, when the collector street serves as a major pedestrian route for school children.
- 11.62** Improvement standards for local and minor streets shall include perpendicular curbs, gutters, and street lights.



# Land Use Plan

-  Low Density Residential
-  High Density Residential
-  General Commercial
-  Service Commercial
-  Highway Commercial
-  Industrial

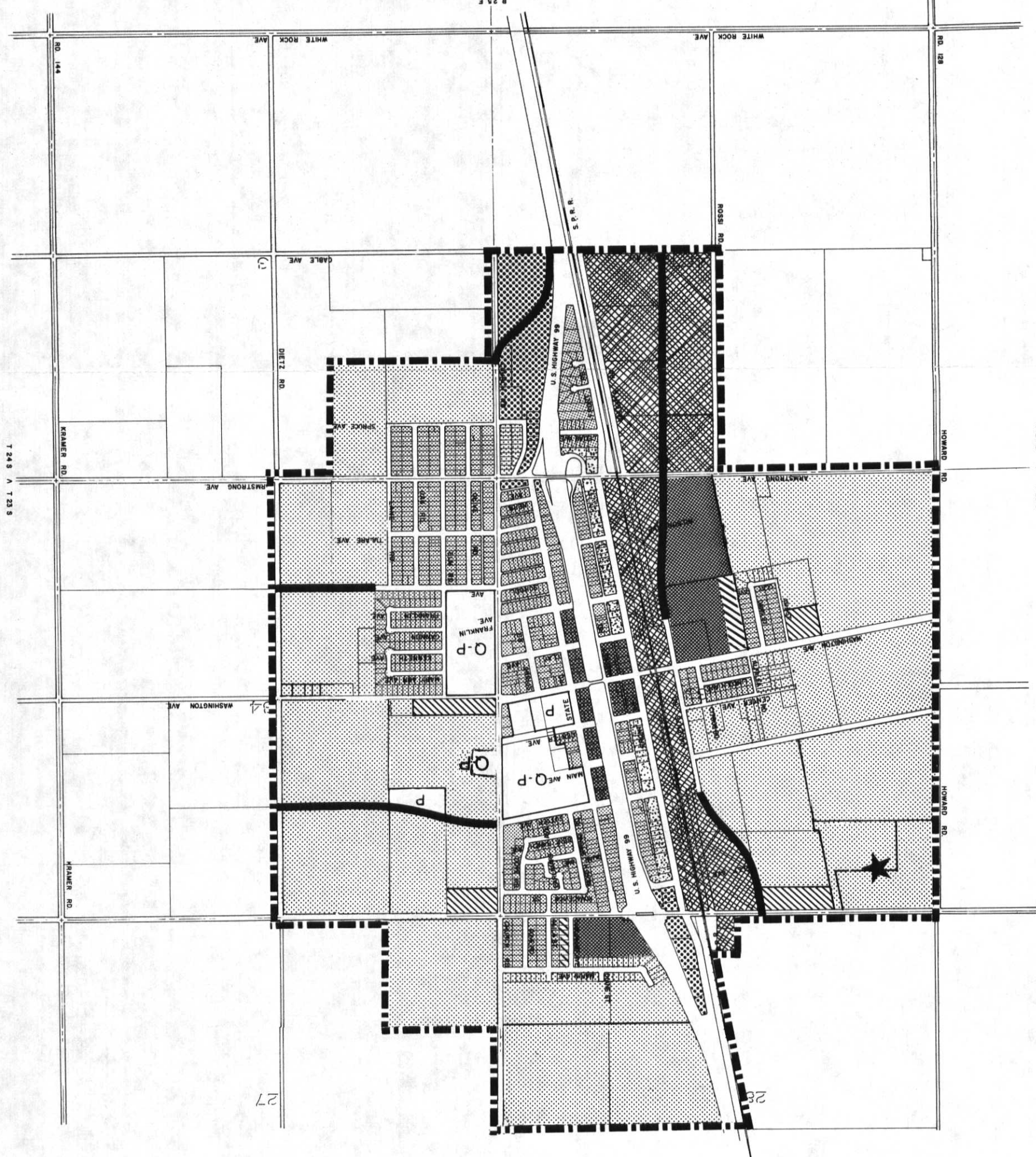
-  Quasi-Public
-  Park
-  New Street
-  Urban Development Boundary
-  Future School Site

# Earlimart Community Plan

## Map 14



**COLLINS & CASTRILLO**  
PLANNING CONSULTANTS



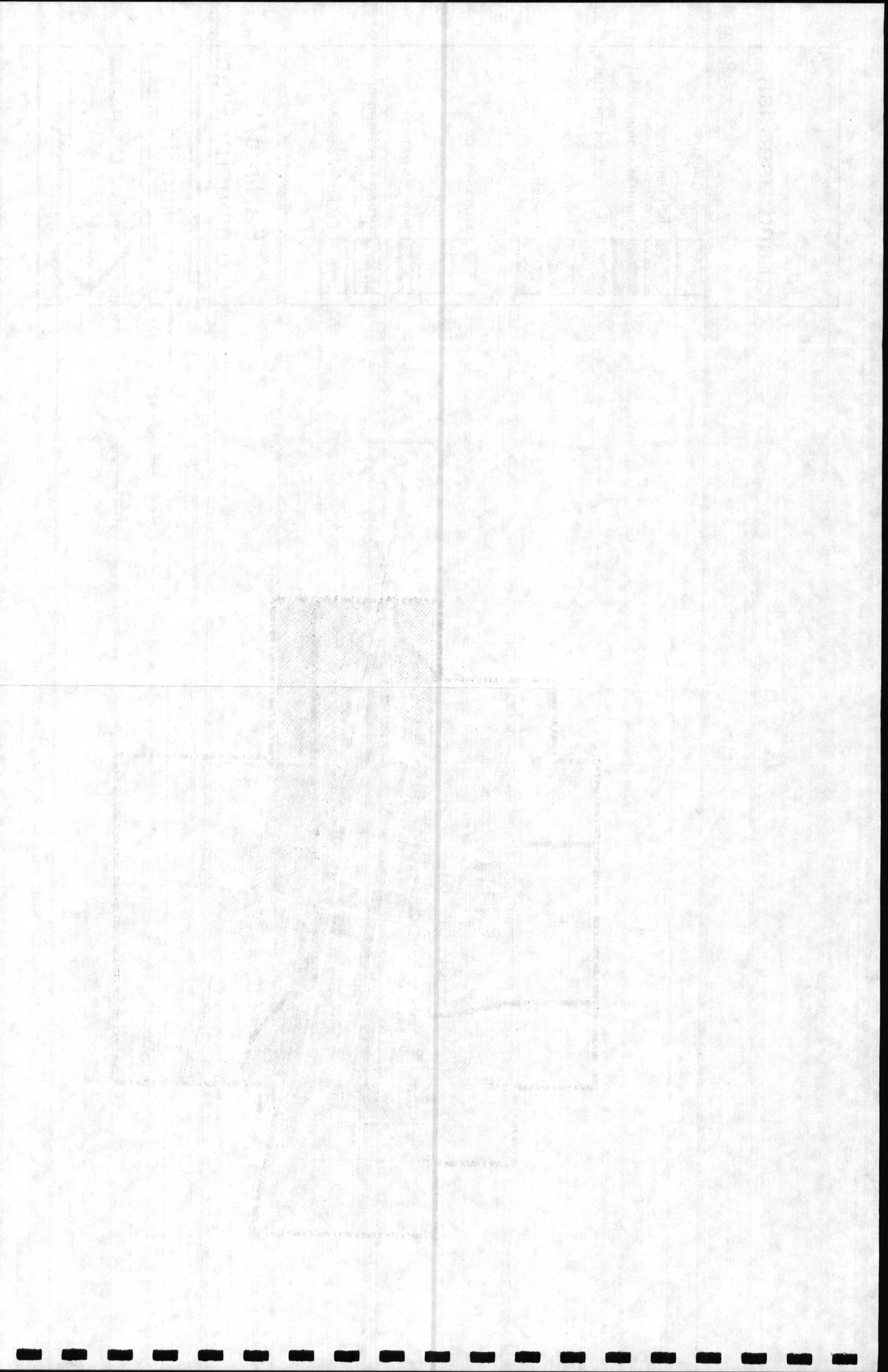
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## **NOISE**

The purpose of including a discussion of community noise is to establish a land use pattern that results in noise compatible uses. A noise compatible use pattern is one in which noise sensitive uses are not adversely affected by surrounding uses and in turn, noise generating land uses are located in areas tolerant of their noise impacts.

As shown by Map No. 9, Earlimart is impacted by noise primarily caused by the traffic along Highway 99. About two-thirds of the existing urbanized area is exposed to noise levels greater than 60 dB. The County Noise Element indicates noise levels will increase along Highway 99 as truck and auto traffic volumes increase.

Figure No. 8 indicates that as noise levels begin to exceed 55 dB, noise compatibility problems involving single family residential development begin to occur. When noise levels approach 60 dB these problems begin to affect high density housing, schools and other public facilities. Industrial and commercial uses, however, are far less sensitive to noise.

In establishing a land use pattern for the community, noise must be considered. If the community is allowed to grow in a north/south fashion (along Highway 99), only those types of land uses that can be adapted to higher noise levels should be allowed. Conversely, noise sensitive uses such as housing and public facilities should be directed to the east and west, away from Highway 99.

### **Policy**

- 12.1 The County shall protect noise sensitive land uses from existing or future noise generators by locating them within compatible noise environments or by requiring noise mitigation measures as provided in the Noise Element of the Tulare County General Plan.
- 12.2 The Tulare County Public Works Department shall request the Transportation Planning Agency to construct sound walls along both sides of Highway 99 in Earlimart in order to reduce



noise levels in neighborhoods adjoining the highway as long as it does not impact construction funds.

### **Implementation**

**12.12** Through the project review process, the County will insure that new development is located and designed in a manner consistent with the Tulare County Noise Element.

## **FLOODING**

State law (Section 65302 (a)) requires general plans to identify areas subject to flooding. The purpose of the requirement is to reduce the loss of life, damage to property and the economic and social dislocation resulting from flooding.

According to flood insurance maps prepared by the Federal Emergency Management Agency a portion of the planning area east of Highway 99 is subject to 100-year flooding (See Map No. 8). The Tulare County Flood Control District has indicated that the magnitude of flooding could be reduced if the culverts beneath Highway 99 could be enlarged and vegetation and sand is removed from the drainage channel.

The 100-year flood plain is the basic planning criteria to identify areas in which precautions should be taken. The 100-year flood plain boundary defines the areas which have a one percent chance of flooding in any given year. The National Flood Insurance Act offers an important incentive for implementing a flood management program. Property owners within flood plain areas may obtain federally subsidized flood insurance if their local government adopts flood management regulations and participates in the federal program.

### **Policy**

- 13.1** New development shall be protected from flooding resulting from overflow from the White River and Deer Creek.
- 13.2** The Tulare County Flood Control District shall work with irrigation districts, CALTRANS, and other responsible agencies to reduce flooding potential in Earlimart.

### **Implementation**

- 13.11** The ground floor level of new buildings and accessory structures shall be higher than the flood elevations noted on the National Flood Insurance Rate Map for this portion of the County.



**GENERAL PLAN CONSISTENCY AND AMENDMENTS**

The text and map of the County Zoning Ordinance and the text of the Subdivision Ordinance must be consistent with the policies, implementation measures, and direction of the Earlimart Community Plan. These two ordinances are the primary land use planning tools available to the County for implementing its land use policies. The Zoning Ordinance establishes the rules and regulations necessary to govern the use and development of land within the county, while the Subdivision Ordinance regulates the design and improvement of all land proposed to be divided. State law recognizes the important relationship between zoning, subdivisions and the General Plan by requiring the Zoning Ordinance and the design and improvements of all subdivisions to be consistent with the Plan.

The following are the definitions of the land use and street classifications shown on the Earlimart Community Plan maps. These definitions serve to specify the intent of the Plan with regard to land use and circulation objectives. Further, the definitions are helpful in determining which county zoning districts are consistent with each land use classification (see Zoning Consistency Matrix, Table No. 11). The definitions are as follows:

**Policy**

**14.1 Land Use Designations**

**Low Density Residential** Land designated for single and two family residential development, with a minimum of 3000 square feet of lot area per dwelling unit. Low Density Residential allows eight units or less per acre.

**High Density Residential** Land designated for multifamily residential development, with a minimum of 1500 square feet of lot area per dwelling unit. High Density Residential allows nine to 29 units per acre.



**Quasi-Public Uses** Land designated for quasi-public and public uses, including churches, sewage treatment plants, schools, and public offices.

**Parks/Open Space** Land reserved for parks, flood plains and land suitable for open space.

**General Commercial** Land designated for a full range of retail commercial uses and offices. General Commercial uses should be located in areas in close proximity to the population they serve, and which have good access.

**Service Commercial** Land designated for commercial uses which provide wholesale or heavy commercial services. It also provides for light industrial uses which manufacture, assemble or package products from previously manufactured materials. Said uses may include automobile service and repair, lumber yards, heavy equipment sales and service, cabinet shops, and wholesale establishments. New service commercial uses should be located away from existing or planned residential areas or mitigation measures should be incorporated into the design of the project that will eliminate any undesirable conditions.

**Highway Commercial** Land designated for commercial uses which cater to the traveling public, including such uses as service stations, hotels/motels, restaurants and rest stops. Highway commercial development requires a high degree of visibility, and is therefore generally located near freeway offramps.

**Industry** Land designated for industrial uses or agriculturally related industries. Heavy industrial uses shall be processed under a conditional use permit.

## 14.2 Functional Classification of Routes and Streets

**State Route** A State route is owned and maintained by the State of California. Its primary function is to provide for through traffic. A State Route is a continuous thoroughfare over a long distance.

**Arterial Street** An arterial street or road is owned and maintained by Tulare County. As with a State Route the primary function of an arterial is to provide for through traffic movement. An arterial is typically continuous over a long distance. An arterial is also a Select System Road as defined by the Improvement Standards of Tulare County.

**Collector Street** A collector provides for traffic movement between local streets and arterials or state routes. It is not necessarily continuous for a long distance. According to the Improvement Standards of Tulare County, a collector is also a Select System Road.

**Local Street** The primary function of a local street or road is to provide access to abutting properties. All roads not shown on the circulation plan are classified as local roads. According to the Improvement Standards of Tulare County, a local road is a Class 1, 2, or 3 road.

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**Table No. 11  
Zoning Consistency Matrix**

<u>LAND USE DESIGNATIONS</u>	<u>TULARE COUNTY ZONE DISTRICTS</u>										
	<u>R1</u>	<u>R2</u>	<u>R3</u>	<u>Q</u>	<u>PQ</u>	<u>C1</u>	<u>C2</u>	<u>C3</u>	<u>M1</u>	<u>M2</u>	<u>AE20&amp;40</u>
Quasi-Public	+	+	+	+	+						+
Parks/Open Space	+	+	+	+							+
Low Density Residential	+	+									+
High Density Residential			+								+
General Commercial						+	+				+
Service Commercial								+			+
Highway Commercial								+			+
Industrial									+	+	+

Note: "+" denotes consistency between land use designation and zone district; a blank denotes lack of consistency.

Note 2: Agricultural zones (AE-20 and 40) may serve as "holding zones" until demand and changing conditions warrant application of other zoning classifications.

(Source: Collins & Castrillo, Planning Consultants, 1987)



