



IMPLEMENTATION PLAN, PHASE 1

chapter 2

loomis town center

EXISTING CONDITIONS

People have a nice sense of the number that is right for a place, and it is they who determine how many is too many. They do not, furthermore, seek to get away from it all. If they did, they would go to the lonely empty places where there are few people. But they do not. They go to lively places where there are many people. And they go there by choice - not to escape the city, but to partake of it.

*William H. Whyte
The Social Life of Small Urban Spaces.
(The Conservation Foundation, 1979) 100*



CHAPTER TWO

existing conditions

in this chapter

REGIONAL AND LOCAL CONTEXT

HISTORY & DEVELOPMENT PATTERN

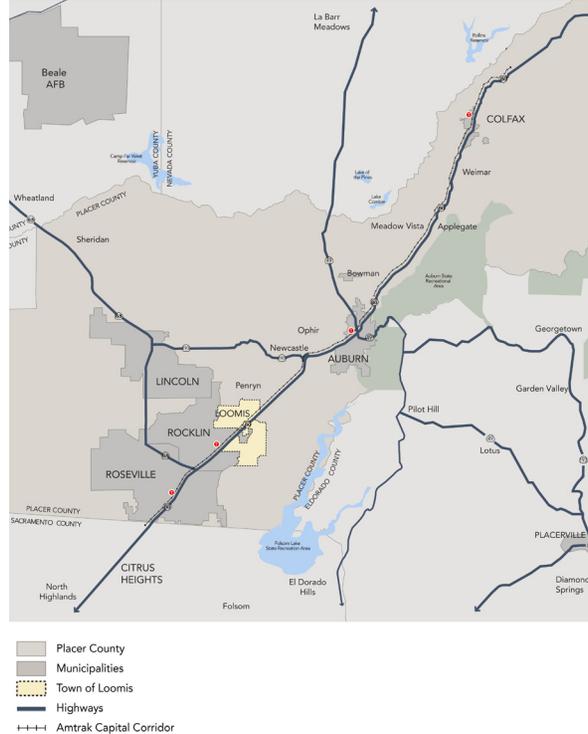
ASSETS

CHALLENGES & OPPORTUNITIES

LOOMIS TOWN CENTER HAS MANY STRENGTHS, as well as some challenges to overcome. Planning should build on the existing assets of Taylor Road, Horseshoe Bar Road, and the Town-owned properties; it should maximize promising opportunities and work to counter challenges. This Chapter describes Loomis' regional and local context, development pattern and assets, and discusses challenges and potential opportunities that relate to the project area.

Figure 2.10, included at the end of the chapter, provides a comprehensive summary of the primary assets, challenges and opportunities as they relate physically to the project area.

FIGURE 2.1 - REGIONAL CONTEXT



REGIONAL & LOCAL CONTEXT

The Town of Loomis is set in the southwestern part of Placer County, in a prime location of the Sierra Nevada foothills called the Loomis Basin. The Sacramento Capitol is less than 30 minutes away to the southwest, and the beautiful Lake Tahoe region is about 2 hours to the northeast. Once an internationally known agricultural producer, the Town has a rich heritage, an entrepreneurial spirit, and bountiful natural resources.

The Town is served by Interstate 80, the major east-west arterial across northern California. Sierra College Boulevard is a major arterial linking

Loomis with the City of Lincoln to the northwest, and the City of Rocklin to the southwest. A major east-west rail line passes through town, carrying both freight and passengers but at present it does not stop.

Currently, almost 6,500 people live in Loomis (from 2009). There is currently one proposed project—the Village at Loomis—which at completion would result in an approximately 15% population increase.



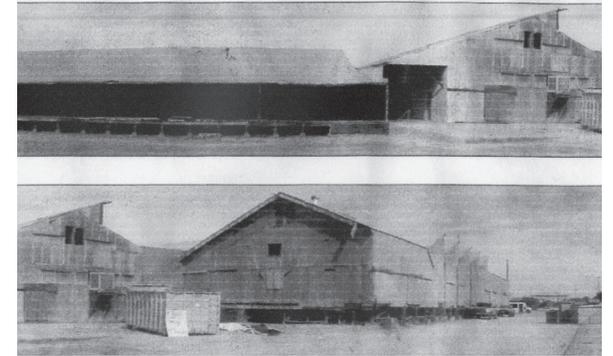
HISTORY & DEVELOPMENT

Loomis has grown from its 1850 origins when early settlers came looking for gold along the rivers. It began as a place called Pine Grove, but in 1890, it ultimately settled on “Loomis” in honor of saloon keeper and postmaster James Loomis (see timeline below). In 1910 when the Southern Pacific Railroad built a new train depot and additional tracks to serve the fruit packing sheds, Loomis’ future seemed assured. In those days, the Loomis Basin was a major agricultural region, and Loomis was one of the largest fruit-shipping stations in Placer County. To preserve its small town character, the Town of Loomis officially incorporated in 1984.

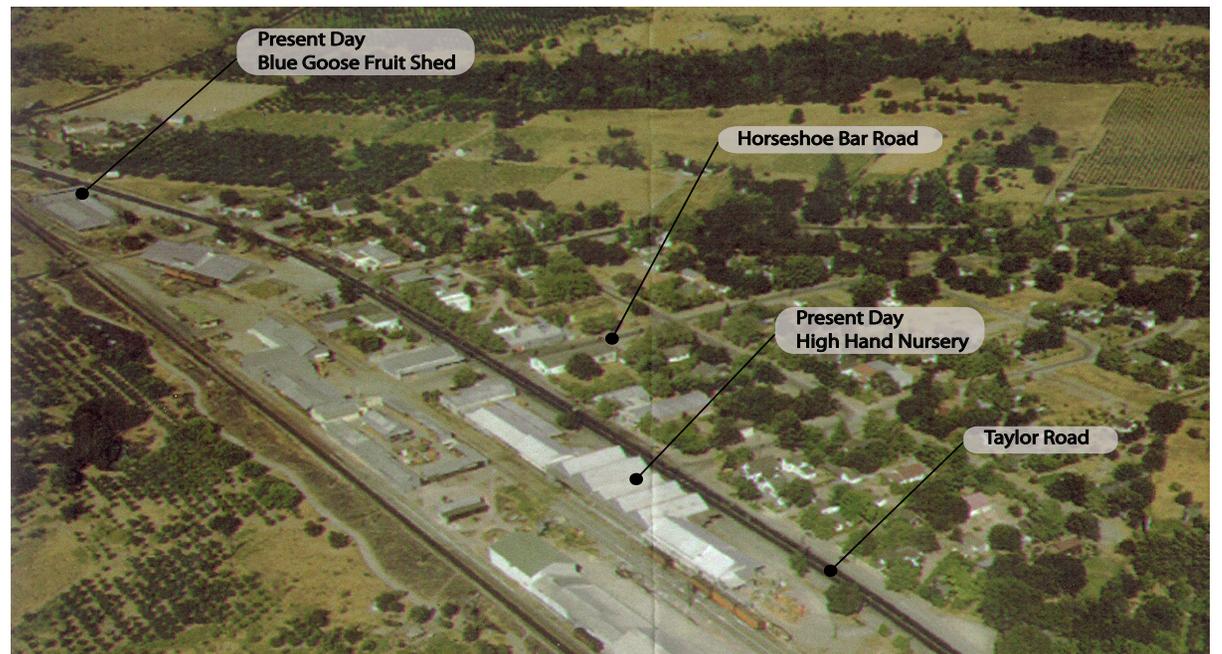
Until Interstate 80 was built in the early 1950’s, the Loomis Town Center was located along the Lincoln Highway (US 40), a transcontinental highway and the region’s primary east-west automobile route. Part of the old US 40 alignment can still be seen near the Town’s Blue Goose Fruit Shed on Taylor Road. Present day Taylor Road is still a primary local east-west route, connecting Loomis with adjacent communities via King Road, Sierra College Boulevard and Horseshoe Bar Road.



Fruit Packing Label



Historic Blue Anchor Fruit Shed



Loomis Town Center Pre World War II Aerial View Looking East



ASSETS

The Loomis Town Center has many positive attributes with its location, history, mix of uses, community amenities, multi-modal access, catalyzing development forces, distinctive character, and environmental beauty. Recognizing and capitalizing on these strong points in this Implementation Plan will help maintain Loomis' distinct character and attract people from throughout the Loomis Basin and the Sacramento region. It is critical that Loomis' distinctly rural character and attractiveness be enriched, since it is a major

tool allowing the Town to compete with the great square footage of retail space currently being developed on its Rocklin border.



Recently Restored Blue Goose Fruit Shed

MIX OF USES

Currently, there is a strong mix of land uses along both Taylor and Horseshoe Bar Roads. Land uses include commercial, residential, institutional, and civic.

On Taylor Road, retail/commercial uses are concentrated in the “shed-to-shed” area, which is the area between High Hand Nursery to the west, and Blue Goose Fruit Shed to the east. Many buildings in this area are historic, and most businesses are locally owned. This area includes a few residences, as well as a mix of retail, office, and restaurants. In the core of this area, the new

Loomis Train Depot community building and the newly renovated Town Hall provide strong civic presence. Outside of the “shed-to-shed” area, to the west we find more retail/commercial as well as undeveloped land, and to the east Loomis Elementary and Del Oro High School are institutional anchors.

On Horseshoe Bar Road, we find a concentration of retail/commercial uses at each end. The south end that intersects with I-80 focuses on the Raley’s supermarket development, with adjacent chain fast food restaurants, as well as services such as dry

cleaners or beauty shops. At the north end, the retail/commercial efforts are small businesses or restaurants. In the middle, Horseshoe Bar Road features a mix of single-family residences, small businesses (some in old single family homes), and institutional uses, such as the Veteran’s Memorial Hall, the Loomis branch of the Placer County Library, and Station 28 of the Loomis Fire Protection District.



Veterans Memorial Hall



Main Drug Store



Wild Chicken Cafe

COMMUNITY AMENITIES

Several key community amenities that serve the entire Town of Loomis are located on or near Taylor and Horseshoe Bar Roads. Loomis Elementary has recreational and parking facilities that also serve the greater community. The Blue Goose Fruit Shed, is not only a performance/event space, but it also houses a “locally grown” produce store that also hosts a weekend farmers market in the summertime. Numerous restaurants, auto repair shops, a major appliance supplier, the post office, the library, Town Hall, and the gardens at

High Hand Nursery all provide a strong supply of amenities that serve the entire Loomis Basin.

Moreover, Blue Goose and High Hand also draw visitors from the greater region as well as even further distances. High Hand hosts a variety of classes and festivals that draw hundreds of people. The Blue Goose hosts the Annual Fall Gathering of Cowboy Poets, as well as numerous concerts and other entertainment events that draw visitors from across the United States.

The proximity of so many community amenities to and along the corridors represents a wealth of destinations and social infrastructure. Capitalizing on this wealth of amenities by enhancing the connections to them and providing additional amenities like small plazas, can greatly increase the benefit to the community.



Loomis Depot

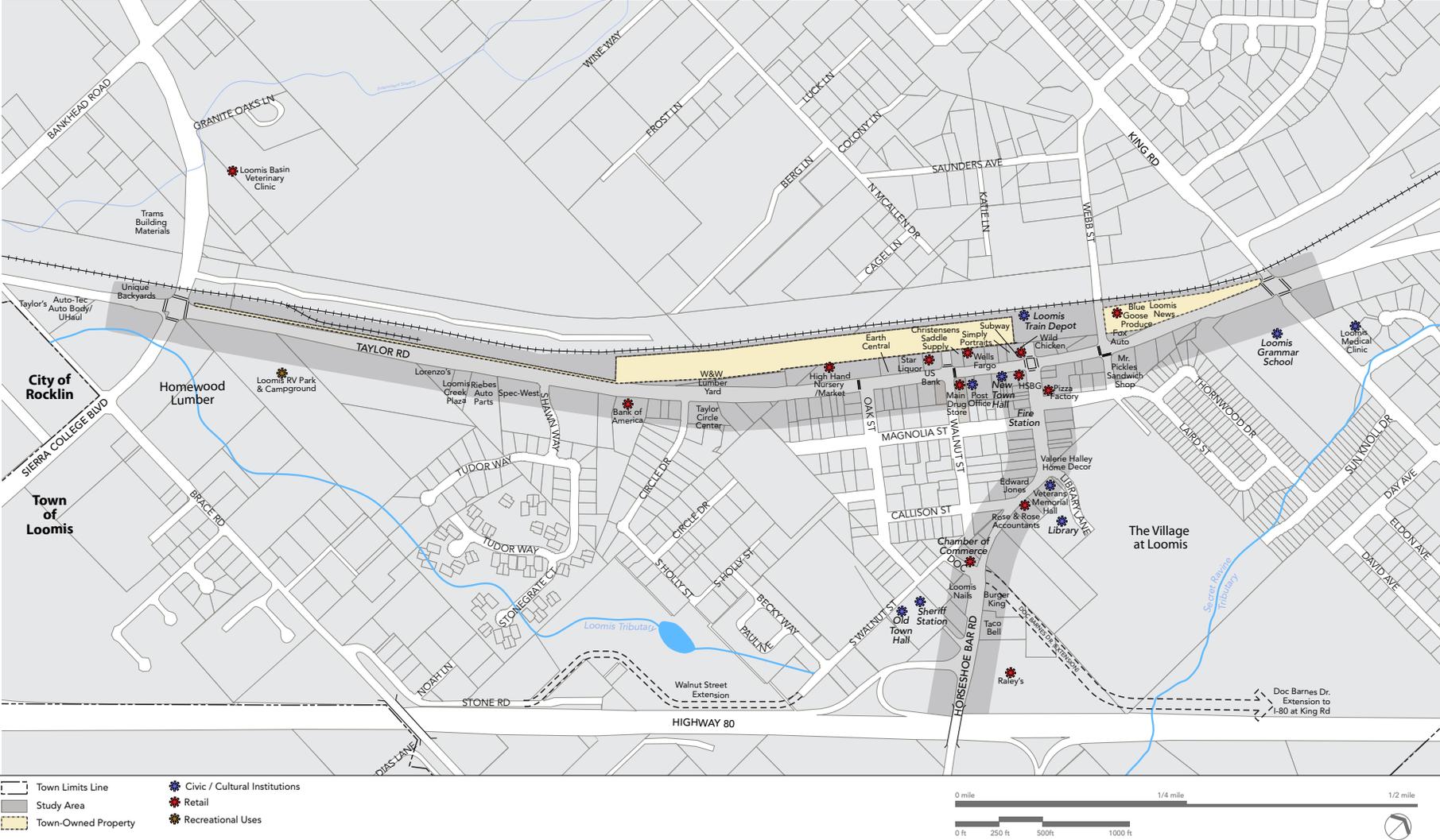


Station 28 on Horseshoe Bar Road



Recently Restored Blue Goose Fruit Shed

FIGURE 2.2 - COMMUNITY AMENITIES



MULTI MODAL ACCESS

Although Interstate 80 serves regional travel needs beyond Loomis, Taylor Road and Horseshoe Bar Road remain important routes for local automobile and truck access. A number of major and minor arterials intersect Taylor Road and connect it with the rest of the Town. Horseshoe Bar Road is the main entry point to Loomis from Interstate 80. A planned extension of Doc Barnes Drive west from Horseshoe Bar Road, as well as other road projects the Town may consider when it updates its transportation element, will increase connectivity to Interstate 80.

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Taylor Road is a local transit corridor served by hourly Placer County Transit shuttle service connection. The shuttle allows public transit connection to Amtrak in nearby Auburn, Rocklin and Roseville, as well as a connecting bus to Sacramento Light Rail. The Multi-Modal Transit Center adjacent to the Loomis Train Depot is a “park-and-ride” facility, encouraging commuters to use public transit.

While Taylor Road and Horseshoe Bar Road both serve auto and truck traffic, the opportunity exists to create a better balance between all modes of

transportation. An Amtrak passenger rail stop would be very well received, but would also require additional parking. Also, the planned Doc Barnes Extension, together with other projects under consideration, will provide an opportunity to eliminate large truck traffic from Horseshoe Bar Road, increasing safety and reducing noise in the Town Center area.



Loomis Depot Multi-Modal Transit

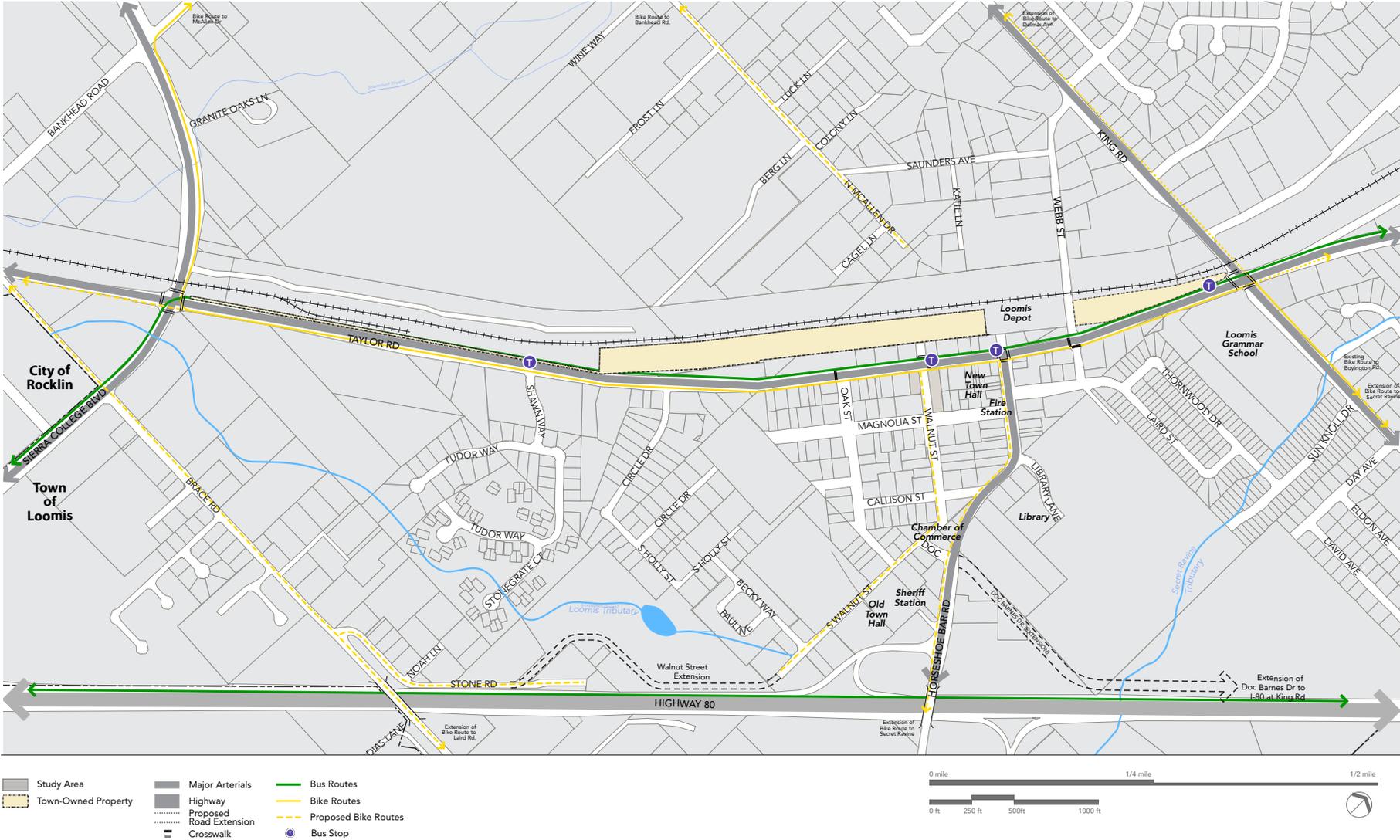


Placer County Transit Shuttle



Bicycle Commuter on Taylor Road

FIGURE 2.3 - MULTI-MODAL CONNECTIONS



DEVELOPMENT SYNERGY

New development in the Taylor and Horseshoe Bar corridors have the potential to serve as catalysts for change, both for the physical environment and the Loomis Town Center image. The recently renovated Loomis Train Depot provides a strong architectural and social focal point for this area, where the community gathers for festivals and other weekend events, as well as official meetings (Council and Planning Commission). The South Placer Heritage Foundation’s successful preservation of the Blue Goose Fruit Shed provides a similar strong anchor for the “shed-to-shed”

corridor, and High Hand’s expansion to include a restaurant, conservatory, nursery, art gallery and other retail activities, provides a strong anchor at the west end. The establishment of Town Hall within Town Center will also bring both workers and community members to Town Center on a daily basis. Maintaining this momentum created by the combined efforts of public and private entities is essential to the continued revitalization of Loomis Town Center. Vacant and under used lots and buildings on both Taylor and Horseshoe

Bar Roads provide unique opportunities for new development.

While current market conditions may preclude the development of new retail buildings in the immediate future (see a complete discussion of development potential in Appendix C, Market Analysis Report), this plan encourages reserving some of the Town-owned property for possible future development.



New Loomis Town Hall

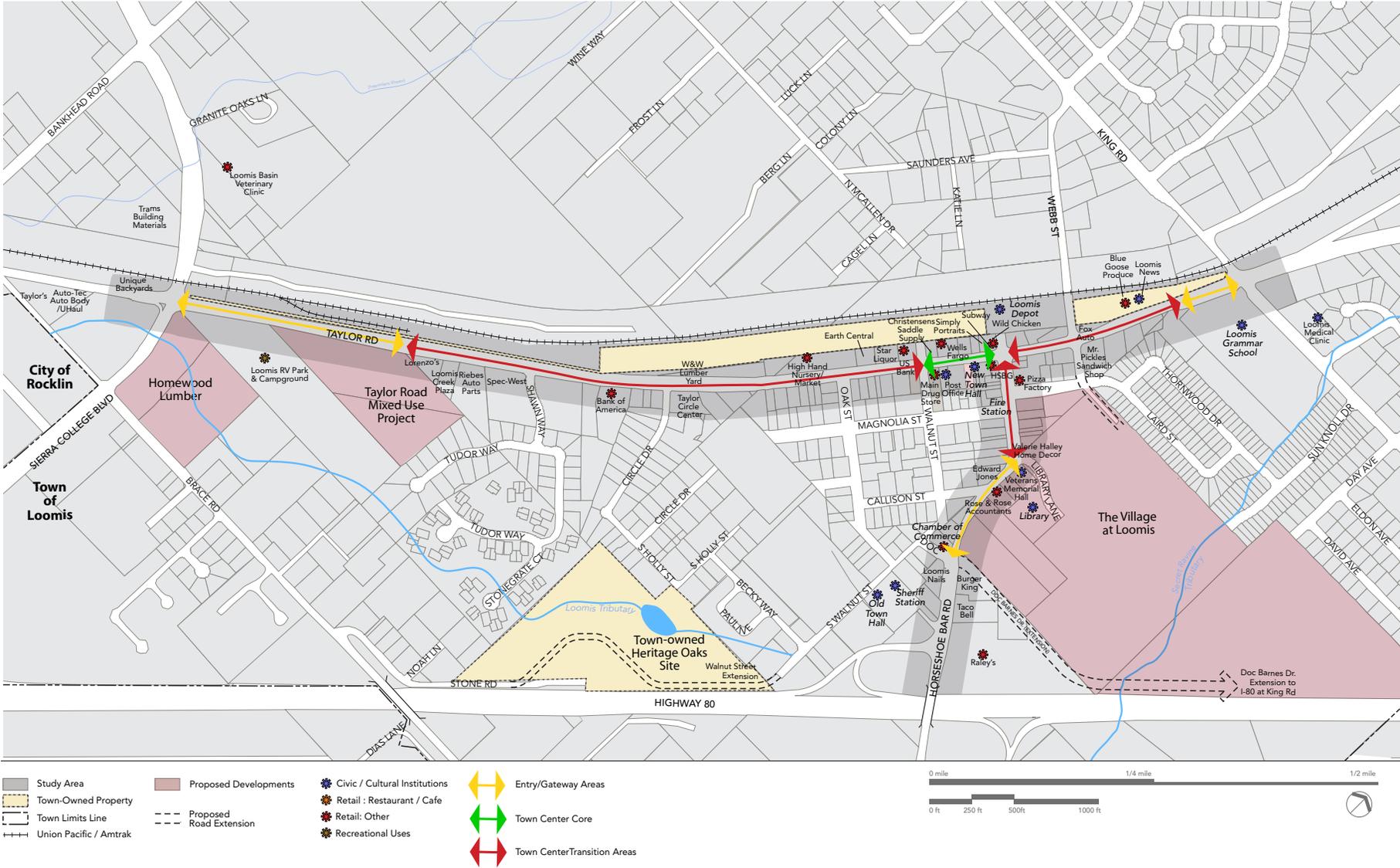


High Hand Nursery



Blue Goose Fruit Shed

FIGURE 2.4 - DEVELOPMENT SYNERGY



DISTINCTIVE CHARACTER

Loomis Town Center’s character comes from its agricultural roots combined with firmly planted twenty-first century feet. Although many of the buildings are pre World War II structures, most of its citizens were born post World War II, and the majority of these were born after 1965. The Town has a rural, small town style: the downtown drug store with a soda fountain, the saddle shop in the midst of downtown (where you can not only buy a saddle, but go for a ride to test it out), informal parking areas at the side of the road, houses mixed in next to growing fields, and children that

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walk home from school. Many of Loomis’ annual events honor their agricultural past, such as the nation’s only Eggplant Festival and the Annual Fall Gathering of Cowboy Poets. Quiet streets lined with healthy, mature trees characterize the residential neighborhoods adjacent to Town Center. On the west end of Taylor Road, large parcels of undeveloped land with healthy native oaks and cottonwood provide a hint of historic views. Alongside this rural style, the Town has modern aspirations and pastimes. The teens like skateboarding, children want a waterspray play

area, and adults are interested in modern technology, locally grown and sustainable food, solar panels and other ways to make Town Center both more “Green” and economically sustainable.

Loomis Town Center divides itself into three district types, starting from a core area on Taylor Road between Horseshoe Bar and Walnut, with buildings sitting closely side-by-side. Radiating from here along both Taylor and Horseshoe Bar are transition areas with old and new architecture less evenly spaced, and ending at Town entry points (see Figure 2.4 on previous page).



Teens Skateboarding at Loomis Depot



Loomis Mural



Egg Plant Festival

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSETS

Loomis Town Center has a number of environmental strong points. There are numerous healthy and beautiful mature trees along Taylor and Horseshoe Bar Roads, and also on the Town-owned properties in the study area. Many of these are native oaks or cottonwoods, which are remnants of the areas native foothill woodlands. Also, the proximity to the Sierra Nevada and testament to the granite mining industry that once thrived in Loomis, is expressed in the number of granite out-crops that appear near the Town Center corridor. An impressive example of these out-crops is featured in a small park in the core of Town

Center, which is a memorial to Town founder James Loomis. Another great natural feature is a tree-covered granite hill on the project area’s western parcel of Town-owned property. Lastly, there are several more recent landscape improvements, which provide visual and environmental benefits within the project area:

- Chinese Pistache street tree planting on Taylor Road between Horseshoe Bar Road and Walnut Street;
- Mandarin orange trees planted on the perimeter of the Blue Goose Fruit Shed;

- Multi-Modal Transit Center planting: the Memorial Iris Garden, the Twenty-Fifth Anniversary Tree, and parking lot planting.

Lastly, Loomis has long differentiated itself from its neighbors through its efforts to promote slow growth, a major component of “green” and sustainable development. Given the current trend towards the new “Green Economy,” Loomis is well positioned to promote green products and services offered by Loomis businesses.

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Chinese Pistache Trees on Taylor Road



James Loomis Memorial

CHALLENGES & OPPORTUNITIES

Understanding the primary challenges and opportunities facing Loomis Town Center will help ensure effective implementation strategies.

IMAGE & IDENTITY

Loomis Town Center has spots of high activity mixed in with low energy areas, and both the Taylor and Horseshoe Bar Road corridors lack a cohesive look. While there are some areas that are well-kept, well-used and profitable, there are a number of vacant or underused parcels, vacant buildings, and buildings in disrepair. Also, the main entry points at Taylor Road and Sierra

College Boulevard, and Taylor and King Roads have nothing to call attention to them as gateways. The challenge is to build on the strong areas, drawing their strength outward to the areas of weakness. The Town-owned properties in the project area are key opportunity areas to provide activity connections in the core “Shed-to-Shed” area.



Unmarked Gateway at Sierra College Boulevard



Underused Land Adjacent to Loomis Depot

DESIGN OF THE PUBLIC REALM

The current design of the public realm along Taylor and Horseshoe Bar Roads presents a challenging, disconnected, pedestrian unfriendly environment. Challenges include:

- Discontinuous, non-existent and/or narrow sidewalks
- Inadequate ADA access
- Steep cross-slopes
- Tree roots, raised pavement, pavement gaps, or similar hazards within the path-of-travel
- Wide right-of-ways at Taylor and King Road, Taylor and Sierra College Boulevard, Horseshoe Bar Road and Doc Barnes Road, and Horseshoe Bar Road and Library Drive.
- Lack of crosswalks at Shawn Way and Circle Drive; lack of mid-block crossings where the distance between blocks is more than 200-400 feet, or activities on either side of the street create a great desire for people to cross.
- Lack of shade and physical comforts in some areas

The wide right-of-ways present a two-fold problem for pedestrians and bicyclists. First of all, they are difficult to navigate, especially for children, the elderly, or others who may need extra time to cross. Secondly, wide right-of-ways tend to increase traffic speeds, which is currently very

apparent along Taylor Road, where trucks and cars routinely speed, especially as they fly through the intersections at King Road and Sierra College Boulevard.

Implementing improvements to the existing public realm will help Taylor and Horseshoe Bar Roads become a place that welcomes people and bicyclists, and minimizes the impact of cars and trucks.

The Town-owned properties in the project area also have challenges. Large trash receptacles are scattered in some areas, and others hide “junk” that has been dumped. The interim pathways suffer from misuse (horses using paths only built to support people), and the gravel parking areas are difficult for people with disabilities to maneuver on. Overall, while these areas do function as parking, special event space, or hangout spots for teens, the lack of structure makes them something of a no-man’s land. Implementing landscape improvements and programmed spaces will help these areas become community destinations, increase social and recreational opportunities, and provide more reasons for people to visit the Town Center.



Uneven Pavement



No Sidewalk, Steep Cross-Slopes

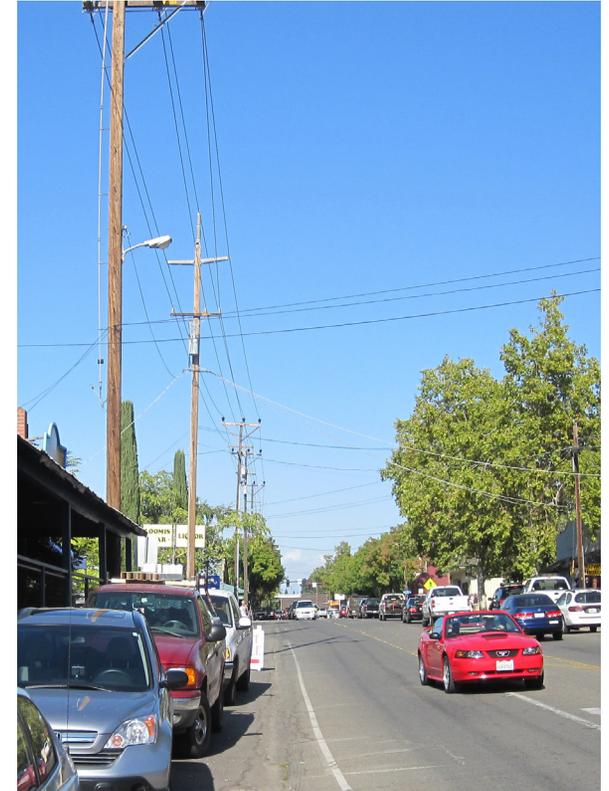


Narrow Sidewalk

EXISTING INFRASTRUCTURE

The existing infrastructure along Taylor Road, including water, storm drain, and electrical transmission need some improvements:

- Although Placer County Water Agency is working on improving capacity, it has limited ability to serve new high water usage development. It recommends that improvements emphasize water conservation strategies like low-water use landscaping and low-flow fixtures. Implementing such measures in the landscape is also necessary due to the recently passed AB 1881 (Model Efficient Landscape Ordinance).
- The Loomis Drainage Master Plan Update identified Taylor Road between King Road and Sierra College Boulevard as a candidate for underground storm drain system improvements to alleviate current problems in this area.
- High voltage overhead electrical lines are visible along Taylor Road throughout the project area, and an effort to underground these in conjunction with street improvements is recommended. A detailed discussion of these infrastructure issues can be found in Appendix A.



Overhead Electrical Wires to be Placed Underground

TRAFFIC VOLUME & FLOW

The 2030 traffic analysis and projection assumes build-out of Loomis’ General Plan and incorporates likely development and infrastructure changes. This model estimates significant increases in traffic volume and flow. (Look for a detailed discussion of the traffic analysis and modeling in Appendix D.) The modeling revealed the following key findings:

- Daily traffic volume on Taylor Road is likely to increase through downtown, but construction of the Doc Barnes Drive extension is likely to moderate the increase between Horseshoe Bar Road and King Road
- Daily traffic volume on Taylor and Horseshoe Bar Roads, as well as major signalized intersections, is likely to exceed the established minimum service levels, which would only be achieved if Taylor Road were to become four lanes

However, to maintain the Town’s rural character, Loomis has consistently agreed that a four lane Taylor Road would harm its rural character. This Plan aims to preserve Loomis’ rural character while improving access for pedestrians and bicyclists. It adheres to the Town’s desire to give these goals priority over long-term vehicular traffic service levels.

FIGURE 2.5 - AVERAGE DAILY TRAFFIC VOLUME - 2009

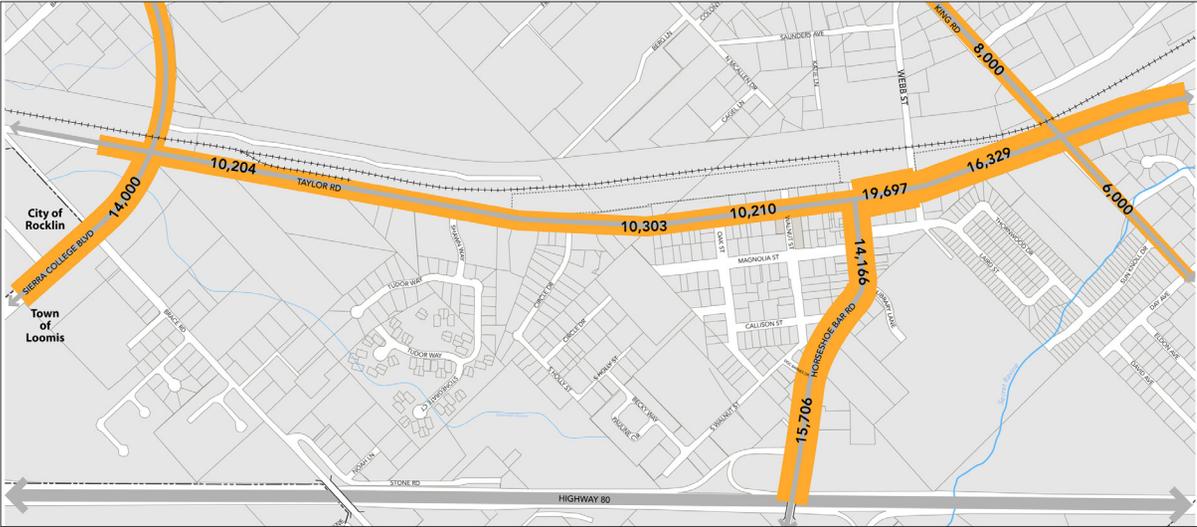


FIGURE 2.6 - AVERAGE DAILY TRAFFIC VOLUME - 2030

