

**CITY OF TAFT PLANNING COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING AGENDA
WEDNESDAY, APRIL 20, 2016
CITY HALL COUNCIL CHAMBERS
209 E. KERN ST., TAFT, CA 93268**

AS A COURTESY TO ALL - PLEASE TURN OFF CELL PHONES

Any writings or documents provided to a majority of the Planning Commission regarding any item on this agenda are made available for public inspection in the lobby at Taft City Hall, 209 E. Kern Street, Taft, CA during normal business hours (SB 343).

REGULAR MEETING

6:00 P.M.

Pledge of Allegiance
Invocation

Roll Call: Chairman Orrin
 Vice Chair Jones
 Commissioner Leikam
 Commissioner Livingston
 Commissioner Thompson

1. CITIZEN REQUESTS/PUBLIC COMMENTS

THIS IS THE TIME AND PLACE FOR THE GENERAL PUBLIC TO ADDRESS THE COMMISSION ON MATTERS WITHIN ITS JURISDICTION. STATE LAW PROHIBITS THE COMMISSION FROM ADDRESSING ANY ISSUE NOT PREVIOUSLY INCLUDED ON THE AGENDA. COMMISSION MAY RECEIVE COMMENT AND SET THE MATTER FOR A SUBSEQUENT MEETING. PLEASE LIMIT COMMENTS TO FIVE MINUTES.

2. MINUTES

March 16, 2016 Regular
April 6, 2016 Special

Recommendation – Approve as submitted.

3. 2016 ARBOR DAY/EARTH DAY CELEBRATIONS

Recommendation – Motion to recognize National Arbor Day and Earth Day on Thursday, April 21, 2016.

4. CITY OF TAFT MUNICIPAL SERVICE REVIEW UPDATE

Recommendation – This is an information item only, the Planning Commission will act on final draft at a future public hearing.

5. PLANNING DIRECTOR REPORT

6. CITY ATTORNEY STATEMENTS

7. COMMISSIONER COMMENTS

8. IDENTIFICATION OF REPRESENTATIVE TO THE CITY COUNCIL

ADJOURNMENT

AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT (Government Code Section 54943.2)

The City of Taft City Council Chamber is accessible to persons with disabilities. Disabled individuals who need special assistance (including transportation) to attend or participate in a meeting of the Taft City Planning Commission may request assistance at the Office of the City Clerk, City of Taft, 209 E. Kern Street, Taft, California or by calling (661) 763-1222. Every effort will be made to reasonably accommodate individuals with disabilities by making meeting material available in alternative formats. Requests for assistance should be made five (5) working days in advance of a meeting whenever possible.

AFFIDAVIT OF POSTING

I, Brenda Johns, declare as follows:

That I am the Recording Secretary for the City of Taft; that an agenda was posted on a public information bulletin board located near the door of the Civic Center Council Chamber on April 15, 2016, pursuant to 1987 Brown Act Requirements.

I declare under penalty of perjury that the foregoing is true and correct.
Executed April 15, 2016, at Taft, California.

Date/Time _____ Signature _____

**CITY OF TAFT PLANNING COMMISSION
MINUTES
WEDNESDAY, MARCH 16, 2016**

REGULAR MEETING

6:00 P.M.

The March 16, 2016 Regular Meeting of the Planning Commission of the City of Taft, held in the City of Taft Council Chamber, 209 E. Kern Street, Taft CA 93268, was opened by Chairman Orrin at [6:02:20 PM](#). The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Chairman Orrin, followed by an invocation given by Pastor Scott Pearson of the First Baptist Church.

PRESENT: Chairman Ron Orrin, Vice Chair Shannon Jones,
Commissioners, Bob Leikam, Jerry Livingston and Robert Thompson
Planning and Community Development Director Mark Staples
City Attorney Jason Epperson and Recording Secretary Brenda Johns

1. CITIZEN REQUESTS/PUBLIC COMMENTS

There were none.

2. MINUTES

February 17, 2016 Regular

Motion: Moved by Jones seconded by Livingston to approve Minutes as submitted.

AYES: Orrin, Jones, Leikam, Livingston

ABSTAINED: Thompson

PASSED: 4-0-1

3. PUBLIC HEARING – ZONING ORDINANCE AMENDMENT NO. 2016-01

Planning Director Staples presented his staff report and recommendation.

Jones asked if a fact sheet for yard and garage sales would be provided to the public on the City website.

Staples stated there would be a flyer available for distribution.

The Public Hearing was opened at [6:08 PM](#) to receive testimony from proponents and opponents. Seeing none the public hearing was closed.

Motion: Moved by Livingston, seconded by Thompson to adopt **A RESOLUTION OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF TAFT RECOMMENDING APPROVAL TO THE CITY COUNCIL OF ZONING ORDINANCE AMENDMENT NO. 2016-01, AN AMENDMENT OF CHAPTERS 1 AND 12 OF TITLE 6 OF THE TAFT ZONING ORDINANCE RELATING TO GARAGE OR YARD SALES. (Resolution No. 2016-01)**

AYES: Orrin, Jones, Leikam, Livingston, Thompson

PASSED: 5-0

4. PUBLIC HEARING – ZONING ORDINANCE AMENDMENT NO. 2016-02

Planning Director Staples presented his staff report and recommendation.

The Public Hearing was opened at [6:11 PM](#) to receive testimony from proponents and opponents. Seeing none the public hearing was closed.

Motion: Moved by Jones, seconded by Livingston to adopt **A RESOLUTION OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF TAFT RECOMMENDING APPROVAL TO THE CITY COUNCIL OF ZONING ORDINANCE AMENDMENT NO. 2016-02, AN AMENDMENT OF SECTION 6.11.90 OF TITLE 6 OF THE TAFT ZONING ORDINANCE RELATING TO FENCES AND WALLS. (Resolution 2016-02)**

AYES: Orrin, Jones, Leikam, Livingston, Thompson
PASSED: 5-0

5. PUBLIC HEARING – CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT NO. 2016-04

Planning Director Staples presented his staff report and recommendation.

Leikam asked if the project area was zoned for a commercial gardening. He also asked where the applicant would be obtaining the koi fish from and if the fish would be bred on site.

Staples stated a commercial garden is not defined by the commercial section of the City's Zoning Ordinance.

Kimberly Jackson of 4400 Marella Way, Bakersfield, stated the koi fish would be obtained from Bucks Pond Supply and would not breed fish on site.

Leikam asked if in the future someone wanted to grow marijuana would they go through the same application process.

Staples stated someone wanting to grow marijuana would go through the same application process but noted the city has an ordinance against dispensaries and would also deny farming of marijuana.

Jones asked if the Conditions of Approval could limit or exclude certain products if they are not defined in the code.

Staples stated during the application process he would speak with an applicant and would determine what condition may be warranted.

Orrin expressed concern with the encroachment on to Kern St. Orrin also asked if California Department of Transportation (CAL-Trans) had any comments regarding the project.

Staples stated the location was in a mixed use zone and single family residence (R-1) would not be allowed to move the structure forward, however a commercial development does not have a setback requirement which is what is being proposed for this project. Staples noted CAL-Trans was aware of the project and stated they did not require an encroachment permit.

Thompson asked if the business would be accessed from Kern St. or the alley.

Staples responded Kern Street.

Orrin asked what the fish would eat and what type of vegetables would be grown.

Kimberly Jackson stated the fish feed is United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) approved and initially kale, leafy greens, squash and peppers would be grown in the aquaponics system.

Leikam and Orrin asked if the product would be made available to the general public and if it required a permit from the Health Department.

Shari Rightmer, owner of Up-Cycle Aquaponics, stated she had been in contact with the Health Department and Agriculture Department and that as long as the vegetables are grown on the property she can sell without a permit.

Lance England of Four Seasons Sunrooms & Windows presented the Commission with additional information for the solarium.

Shari Rightmer presented letters from both her neighbors in support of the project.

Orrin and Jones expressed the need to further research and review the project.

The Public Hearing was opened at [6:52 PM](#) to receive testimony from proponents and opponents. Seeing none the public hearing was closed.

Motion: Moved by Thompson seconded by Leikam to continue the Public Hearing to the next regular calendar meeting of the Planning Commission of the City of Taft.

AYES: Jones, Leikam, Livingston, Thompson , Orrin
PASSED: 5-0

- A request was made by Commissioner Livingston for reconsideration.

Motion: Moved by Livingston seconded by Thompson for reconsideration

AYES: Jones, Leikam, Livingston, Thompson , Orrin
PASSED: 5-0

- Commissioner Thompson amended his original motion to continue the Public Hearing to a Special Meeting on April the 6, 2016 of the Planning Commission of the City of Taft so that the applicant may provide additional information on existing aquaponics operations in Kern County to the best of her ability.

Motion: Moved by Thompson seconded by Leikam to schedule a Special Meeting for April the 6, 2016 to continue the Public Hearing of the Planning Commission of the City of Taft.

AYES: Jones, Leikam, Livingston, Thompson , Orrin
PASSED: 5-0

6. PUBLIC HEARING – CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT NO. 2016-05

Planning Director Staples presented his staff report and recommendation. Staples also presented additional items for Conditional Use Permit No. 2016-05 (copies were submitted to the clerk for the permanent file).

Commissioner Orrin asked if the applicant would extend their evening hours.

Scott and Jeff owners of Route 33 Sandwich Company stated their business hours would extend to 6pm and would gladly speak with any concerned neighbors regarding noise level.

Jones asked if this Conditional Use Permit would carry over to the next owner if the business was sold.

Staples noted liquor licenses can be sold for transfer of ownership so it depends on the license owner and whether they wanted to sell/transfer the license.

The Public Hearing was opened at [7:35:46 PM](#) to receive testimony from proponents and opponents. Seeing none the public hearing was closed.

Motion:

Moved by Jones, seconded by Leikam to adopt **A RESOLUTION OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF TAFT APPROVING CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT NO. 2016-05 TO PERMIT SCOTT BROWN TO ACQUIRE A TYPE 41 ABC LICENSE FOR THE SALE OF BEER AND WINE FOR CONSUMPTION ON THE PREMISES, WITHIN AN EXISTING COMMERCIAL BUILDING (ROUTE 33 SANDWICH COMPANY), ON TWO LOTS TOTALING 0.10 ACRES, WITHIN THE DOWNTOWN COMMERCIAL (DC) ZONE DISTRICT LOCATED AT 700 KERN STREET. (Resolution 2016-03)**

AYES: Jones, Leikam, Livingston, Thompson, Orrin
PASSED: 5-0

7. PLANNING DIRECTOR REPORT

Staples announced:

- The Housing and Community Development progress report was approved by Council.
- Special Event Permit for Taft Westside Little League was approved by Council.

8. CITY ATTORNEY STATEMENTS

No Statement.

9. COMMISSIONER COMMENTS

Jones announced:

- The fundraising for the 4th of July fireworks will start April 1st, May 6th and June 3rd.
- Taft Chamber is holding mixers every second Thursday of the month at 5pm.

Leikam announced the Rotary Club is holding reverse drawing ticket sells for April 13th and the Rotary Health Fair will be April 16th.

Orrin and Thompson thanked Staples for an excellent job on the agenda packet.

10. IDENTIFICATION OF REPRESENTATIVE TO THE CITY COUNCIL

Commissioner Thompson was selected to be the representative to the City Council on April 5, 2016 meeting.

ADJOURNMENT

With no further business to conduct it was moved by Leikam, seconded by Livingston and approved unanimously, to adjourn the meeting at [7:52:15 PM](#).

Brenda Johns, Recording Secretary

Ron Orrin, Chairman

**CITY OF TAFT PLANNING COMMISSION
SPECIAL MEETING
WEDNESDAY, APRIL 6, 2016**

SPECIAL MEETING

6:00 P.M.

The April 6, 2016 Regular Meeting of the Planning Commission of the City of Taft, held in the City of Taft Council Chamber, 209 E. Kern Street, Taft CA 93268, was opened by Chairman Orrin at [6:00:36 PM](#). The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Chairman Orrin, followed by an invocation given by Chairman Orrin.

PRESENT: Chairman Ron Orrin, Vice Chair Shannon Jones,
Commissioners, Bob Leikam, Jerry Livingston and Robert Thompson
Planning and Community Development Director Mark Staples
City Attorney Jason Epperson and Recording Secretary Brenda Johns

1. CITIZEN REQUESTS/PUBLIC COMMENTS

There were none.

2. CONTINUED PUBLIC HEARING – CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT NO. 2016-04

Planning Director Staples presented his staff report and recommendation, along with the additional conditions requested by the Planning Commission.

Leikam noted the question had been raised if aquaponics could be used to grow marijuana, he appreciates the disclaimer but after doing his own research has found the system can be used to do so and for that reason he does not trust the information. Leikam also asked what the hours of operations would be for the business.

Ms. Rightmer stated business days and hours would be Thursday thru Sunday 4-6 hours a day.

Leikam is concerned with the limited business hours; he believes a business on Kern St. should be open fulltime not part time.

Rightmer stated she had no problem opening additional hours.

Jones asked if Rightmer would be differentiating the business from the residential.

Ms. Rightmer stated there would be no access to the residence from the business side.

Orrin asked if the restroom structure required a Conditional Use Permit (CUP) for a zero lot line.

Staples stated commercial zoning has zero setbacks and did not require a CUP.

Jones asked if the restroom was a requirement.

Staples noted the restroom was not required but the applicant was opting to provide one.

Orrin expressed concern with vagrancy in the community and asked if the applicant would replicate Solutions for Change in providing a homeless program in hopes of training them with different skills; he does not want to contribute to the increased vagrancy and crime in Taft.

Ms. Rightmer noted that was not the intention for her business, she stated 5% of her proceeds would be donated to the Shar-On Corporation which is not only for the homeless but also for the rest of the community in providing instructional classes.

Leikam asked if the applicant had commitment letters from Albertsons or other stores.

Ms. Rightmer said she had been in contact with Ron Sousa the manager of the local Albertsons and was advised once the CUP was approved an appointment could be made with headquarters. Rightmer has also spoken with Chef Jeff of Taft College which is interested in purchasing produce.

Orrin asked if Kimberley Jackson of EcoCentric Farms was profitable in her aquaponics business.

Ms. Rightmer believes Kimberly Jackson profits 4,000 to 6,000 a week in produce and is the director and manager at Moo Creamery as well.

Jones asked for clarification on condition two in the Planning Department section of the CUP.

Staples stated this CUP is solely for the aquaponics operation and any other conditional use for this location would require a separate CUP.

Orrin asked if fire sprinklers were required for the project.

Staples stated the Kern County Fire Department will review the project for fire and safety compliance and make the determination.

Jones asked if the applicant could expand the commercial portion of the property in the future.

Staples noted to expand the applicant would require a revision or a new CUP.

Rightmer agrees to the additional three conditions that have been added to the CUP.

The Public Hearing was opened at [6:10:32 PM](#) to receive testimony from proponents and opponent. Seeing none the public hearing was closed.

Motion: Moved by Thompson, seconded by Livingston to adopt **A RESOLUTION OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF TAFT APPROVING CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT NO. 2016-04 TO ESTABLISH A MIXED-USE DEVELOPMENT BY CONSTRUCTING A 309 SQUARE FOOT COMMERCIAL ADDITION ON THE FRONT OF AN EXISTING 675 SQUARE FOOT SINGLE FAMILY RESIDENCE, FOR THE AQUAPONICS GROWTH OF AND RETAIL SALES OF ORGANIC PRODUCE; ON A 0.11 ACRE LOT, WITHIN THE DOWNTOWN COMMERCIAL (DC) ZONE DISTRICT LOCATED AT 610 KERN STREET (*Resolution No. 2016-04*).**

AYES: Orrin, Jones, Livingston, Thompson
NOES: Leikam
PASSED: 4-1

3. COMMISSIONER COMMENTS

Leikam wishes Shari Rightmer the best of luck with her business and announced the Rotary Club is holding their reverse drawing next Wednesday.

Jones stated she is pro-business and wants to see the community thrive also the Chamber raised \$3,200 dollars for the fireworks show and is looking to do additional fundraisers the first Friday in May and June.

Livingston would like to see more businesses along Kern Street and support of the mixed use properties.

Thompson stated he has served on the Planning Commission over eight years and this has been one of the most difficult CUPS to review.

Orrin agrees with the rest of the Commissioners and thanked Director Staples on a job well done and announced the Bakersfield Symphony Orchestra will be performing at Taft Union High School on Sunday the 17th.

ADJOURNMENT

With no further business to conduct it was moved by Livingston, seconded by Jones and approved unanimously, to adjourn the meeting at [7:00:18 PM](#).

Brenda Johns, Recording Secretary

Ron Orrin, Chairman



City of Taft Planning Commission Staff Report

Agenda Item: #3

DATE: April 20, 2016

TO: Chairman Orrin and Members of the Planning Commission

FROM: Mark Staples, Director
Brenda Johns, Office Assistant
Planning and Community Development

SUBJECT: 2016 Arbor Day / Earth Day Celebration

RECOMMENDATION: Motion to designate Thursday, April 21, 2016 as Arbor Day/Earth Day in the City of Taft

SUMMARY STATEMENT:

National Earth Day is Friday, April 22, 2016, and Arbor Day is Friday, April 14, 2016. Staff has coordinated with the community garden volunteers and with Parkview Elementary students to participate in Arbor Day/Earth Day activities.

The City of Taft would like to hold this year's Arbor Day/Earth Day with an educational tour of the planter beds and a tree planting event at Taft Community Garden. The students attending the event will assist with the various activities as well as interact with the local Bureau of Land Management staff and fire truck. Arbor Day/Earth Day festivities will conclude at Veterans Memorial Park where the students will be provided with food and refreshments.

Therefore, staff is recommending that the Planning Commission designate Thursday, April 21, 2016, as Arbor Day and Earth Day for the City of Taft.

ATTACHMENTS:

1. History of Earth Day – www.earthday.org
2. What is Arbor Day? – www.arborday.org
3. Map of Community Garden Location



(<http://www.earthday.org>)

THE HISTORY OF EARTH DAY

Each year, Earth Day—April 22—marks the anniversary of the birth of the modern environmental movement in 1970.

The height of counterculture in the United States, 1970 brought the death of Jimi Hendrix, the last Beatles album, and Simon & Garfunkel’s “Bridge Over Troubled Water.” War raged in Vietnam and students nationwide overwhelmingly opposed it.

At the time, Americans were slurping leaded gas through massive V8 sedans. Industry belched out smoke and sludge with little fear of legal consequences or bad press. Air pollution was commonly accepted as the smell of prosperity. “Environment” was a word that appeared more often in spelling bees than on the evening news.

Although mainstream America largely remained oblivious to environmental concerns, the stage had been set for change by the publication of Rachel Carson’s New York Times bestseller *Silent Spring* in 1962. The book

represented a watershed moment, selling more than 500,000 copies in 24 countries, and beginning to raise public awareness and concern for living organisms, the environment and links between pollution and public health.

Earth Day 1970 gave voice to that emerging consciousness, channeling the energy of the anti-war protest movement and putting environmental concerns on the front page.

The Idea

The idea for a national day to focus on the environment came to Earth Day founder Gaylord Nelson, then a U.S. Senator from Wisconsin, after witnessing the ravages of the 1969 massive oil spill in Santa Barbara, California. Inspired by the student anti-war movement, he realized that if he could infuse that energy with an emerging public consciousness about air and water pollution, it would force environmental protection onto the national political agenda. Senator Nelson announced the idea for a “national teach-in on the environment” to the national media; persuaded Pete McCloskey, a conservation-minded Republican Congressman, to serve as his co-chair; and recruited Denis Hayes from Harvard as national coordinator. Hayes built a national staff of 85 to promote events across the land. April 22, falling between Spring Break and Final Exams, was selected as the date.

On April 22, 1970, 20 million Americans took to the streets, parks, and auditoriums to demonstrate for a healthy, sustainable environment in massive coast-to-coast rallies. Thousands of colleges and universities organized protests against the deterioration of the environment. Groups that had been fighting against oil spills, polluting factories and power plants, raw sewage, toxic dumps, pesticides, freeways, the loss of wilderness, and the extinction of wildlife suddenly realized they shared common values.

Earth Day 1970 achieved a rare political alignment, enlisting support from Republicans and Democrats, rich and poor, city slickers and farmers, tycoons and labor leaders. By the end of that year, the first Earth Day had led to the creation of the United States Environmental Protection Agency and the

passage of the Clean Air (<http://www.epa.gov/air/caa/>), Clean Water (<http://www.epa.gov/owow/watershed/wacademy/acad2000/cwa/>), and Endangered Species (<http://www.epa.gov/regulations/laws/esa.html>) Acts. “It was a gamble,” Gaylord recalled, “but it worked.”

As 1990 approached, a group of environmental leaders asked Denis Hayes to organize another big campaign. This time, Earth Day went global, mobilizing 200 million people in 141 countries and lifting environmental issues onto the world stage. Earth Day 1990 gave a huge boost to recycling efforts worldwide and helped pave the way for the 1992 United Nations Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro. It also prompted President Bill Clinton to award Senator Nelson the Presidential Medal of Freedom (1995)—the highest honor given to civilians in the United States—for his role as Earth Day founder.

Earth Day Today

As the millennium approached, Hayes agreed to spearhead another campaign, this time focused on global warming and a push for clean energy. With 5,000 environmental groups in a record 184 countries reaching out to hundreds of millions of people, Earth Day 2000 combined the big-picture feistiness of the first Earth Day with the international grassroots activism of Earth Day 1990. Earth Day 2000 used the power of the Internet to organize activists, but also featured a drum chain that traveled from village to village in Gabon, Africa. Hundreds of thousands of people gathered on the National Mall in Washington, DC for a First Amendment Rally. Earth Day 2000 sent world leaders the loud and clear message that citizens around the world wanted quick and decisive action on global warming and clean energy.

Much like 1970, Earth Day 2010 came at a time of great challenge for the environmental community. Climate change deniers, well-funded oil lobbyists, reticent politicians, a disinterested public, and a divided environmental community all contributed to the narrative—cynicism versus activism. Despite these challenges, Earth Day prevailed and Earth Day Network reestablished Earth Day as a relevant, powerful focal point. Earth Day Network brought 250,000 people to the National Mall for a Climate Rally, launched the world’s

largest environmental service project—A Billion Acts of Green®—introduced a global tree planting initiative that has since grown into The Canopy Project, and engaged 22,000 partners in 192 countries in observing Earth Day.

Earth Day had reached into its current status as the largest secular observance in the world, celebrated by more than a billion people every year, and a day of action that changes human behavior and provokes policy changes.

Today, the fight for a clean environment continues with increasing urgency, as the ravages of climate change become more manifest every day. We invite you to be a part of Earth Day and help write many more chapters—struggles and victories—into the Earth Day book.

Stay tuned! 2020 marks the 50th anniversary of Earth Day. In honor of this milestone, Earth Day Network is preparing to announce an ambitious set of goals to shape the future we need.

TAKE ACTION

Get Involved

Join the movement

ACT NOW

([HTTP://ACTION.EARTHDAY.NET/P/DIA/ACTION3/COMMON/PUBLIC/?ACTION_KEY=18946](http://ACTION.EARTHDAY.NET/P/DIA/ACTION3/COMMON/PUBLIC/?ACTION_KEY=18946))

Give To The Cause

Help power the movement

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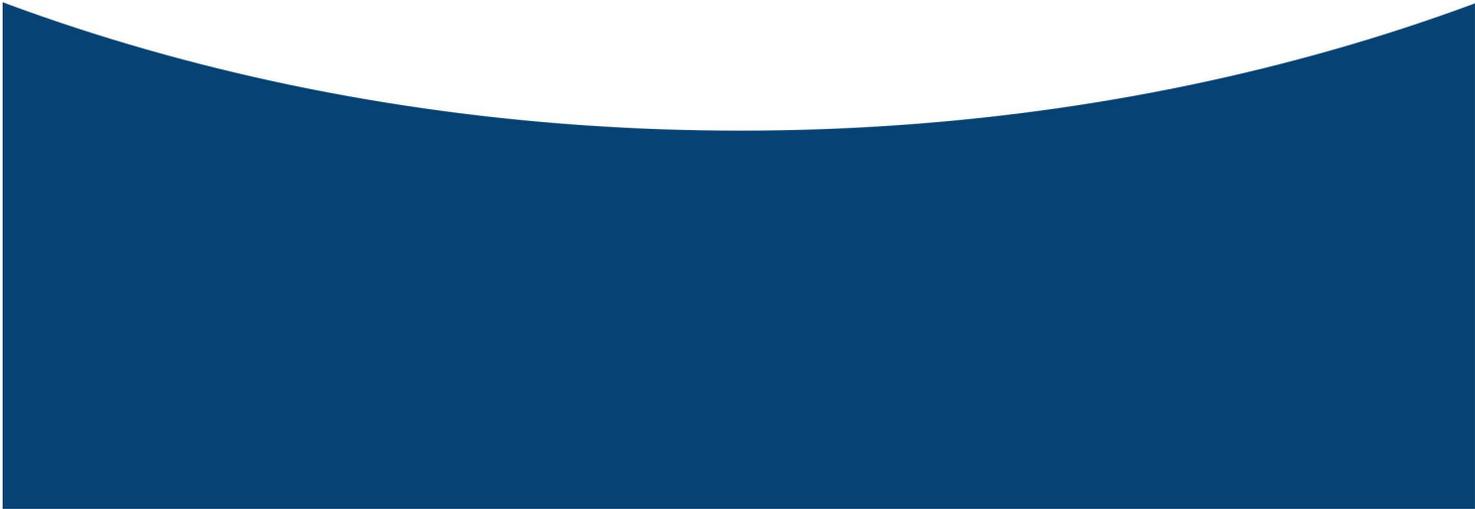
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The History of Arbor Day

Among the pioneers moving into the Nebraska Territory in 1854 was J. Sterling Morton from Detroit. He and his wife were lovers of nature, and the home they established in Nebraska was quickly planted with trees, shrubs and flowers.





Morton was a journalist and soon became editor of Nebraska's finest newspaper. Given that forum, he spread agricultural information and his enthusiasm for trees to an equally enthusiastic audience.

His fellow pioneers missed their trees. But, more importantly, trees were needed as windbreaks to keep soil in place, for fuel and building materials, and for shade from the hot sun.





Morton not only advocated tree planting by individuals in his articles and editorials, but he also encouraged civic organizations and groups to join in. His prominence in the area increased, and he became secretary of the Nebraska Territory, which provided another opportunity to stress the value of trees.

O n January 4, 1872, Morton first proposed a tree-planting holiday to be called "Arbor Day" at a meeting of the State Board of Agriculture. The date was set for April 10, 1872. Prizes were offered to counties and individuals for planting properly the largest number of trees on that day. It was estimated that more than one million trees were planted in Nebraska on the first Arbor Day.



Arbor Day was officially proclaimed by the young state's Governor Robert W. Furnas on March 12, 1874, and the day itself was observed April 10, 1874. In 1885, Arbor Day was named a legal holiday in Nebraska and April 22, Morton's birthday, was selected as the date for its permanent observance.

According to accounts from the *Nebraska City News*, April 1885, the city celebrated Arbor Day with a grand parade and a speech by J. Sterling Morton. Students of different grades met at their respective school rooms in the morning for the purpose of planting at least one tree. Each tree that was planted was labeled with the grade, the time planted, and was to be specially cared for by that grade.



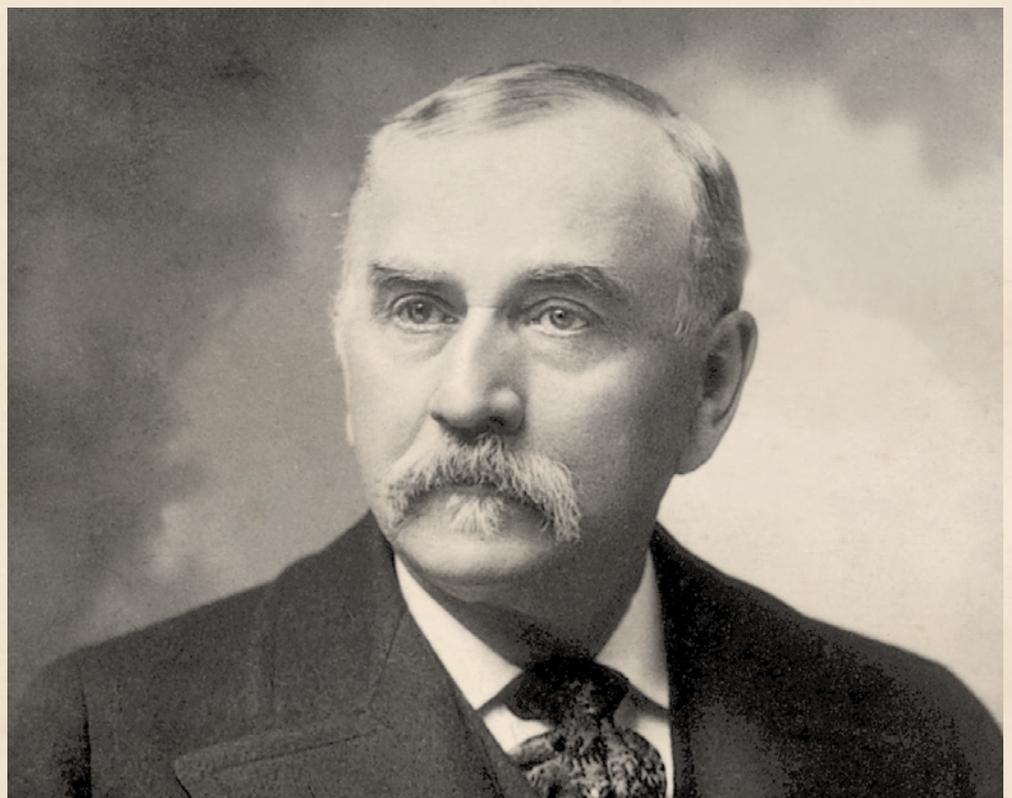
When the plantings were completed, 1,000 students formed a line to begin the parade from the various schools to Nebraska City's opera house.



In the parade, each class carried colorful banners made of satin with silk lining and trimmed with gold fringe. The letters on the banner were painted in oil colors. By the time the parade reached the opera house, the throng numbered well over 1,000 as townspeople joined the march. Every available foot of space in the opera house was occupied, the students having the front seats and gallery, while the older persons stood.

At 11:00, the throng of celebrants was addressed by J. Sterling Morton. Mr. Morton was listened to with much attention, and loudly applauded at the close of his address. (Hear his speech.) At the conclusion of the ceremonies, the students sang "America," and the large audience was dismissed.

This ended the first celebration of Arbor Day as a legal holiday, and, as reported by the newspaper, "To say that it was a complete success but faintly expresses it. A celebration of this kind results in good to all, and is worthy of imitation by every school in the state."





During the 1870s, other states passed legislation to observe Arbor Day, and the tradition began in schools nationwide in 1882.

Today the most common date for the state observance is the last Friday in April, and several U.S. presidents have proclaimed a national Arbor Day on that date. But a number of state Arbor Days are at other times to coincide with the best tree planting weather, from January and February in the south to May in the far north.

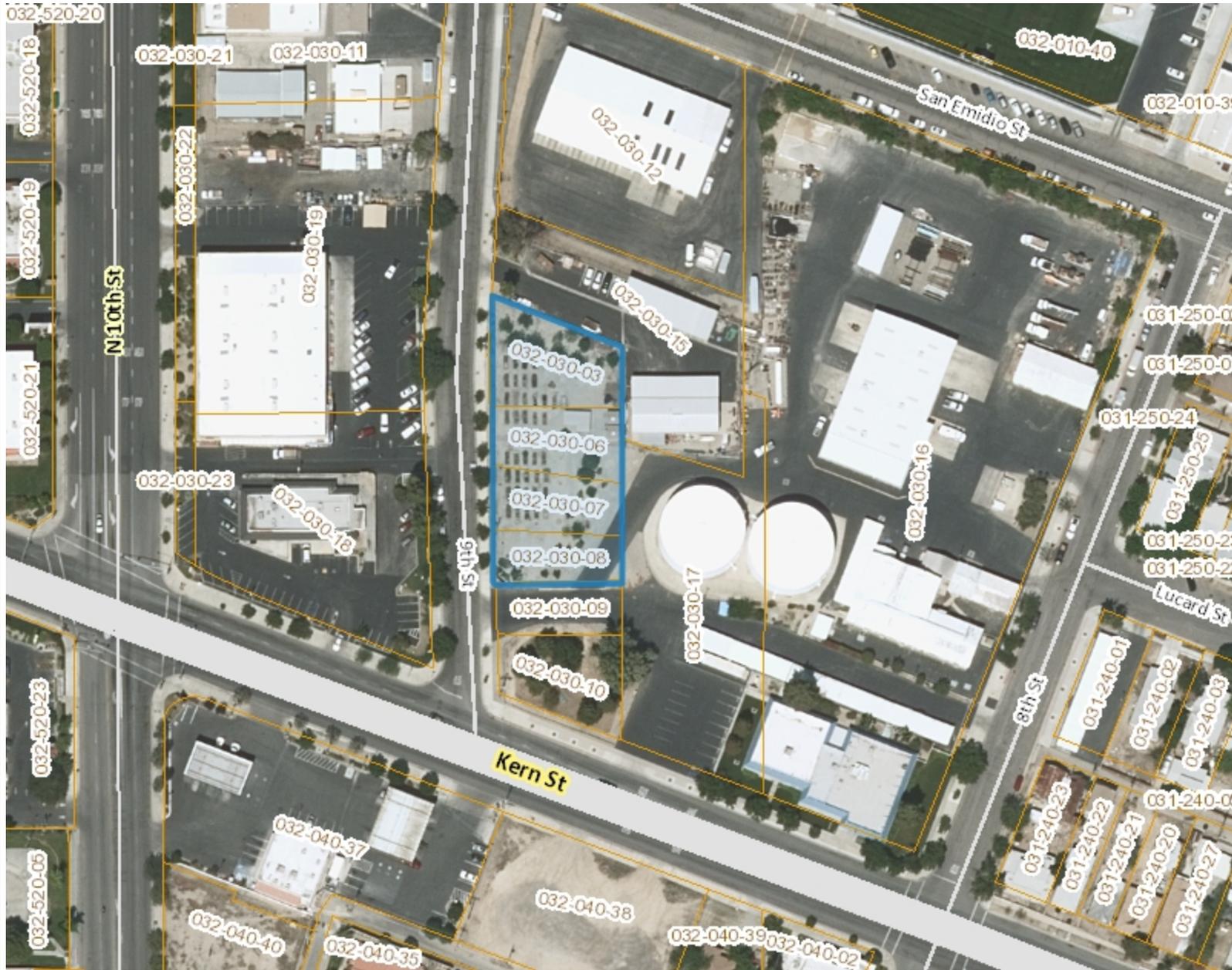
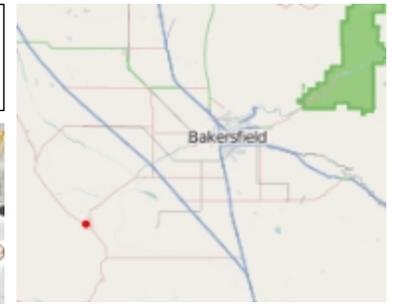




“ Each generation takes the earth
as trustees.”

—J. Sterling Morton

Taft Community Garden - Kern St and 9th St



Legend

- Roads**
- Freeway
 - Highway
 - Major
 - Minor
 - Local
 - Ramp
 - Unpaved
- Other Features**
- Parcels
 - Lakes & Ponds
 - Water Course
 - Canals
 - County Parks
 - Bakersfield Parks
 - Golf Courses

1 : 2,000



0.1 0 0.03 0.1 Miles

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Notes

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City of Taft Planning Commission Staff Report

Agenda Item #4

DATE: April 20, 2016

TO: Chairman Orrin and Members of the Planning Commission

FROM: Mark Staples, Director
Planning and Community Development

SUBJECT: City of Taft Municipal Service Review Update

RECOMMENDATION: This is an information item only, the Planning Commission will act on final draft at a future public hearing.

LOCATION: Citywide

PROJECT ANALYSIS:

On September 17, 2014, the Planning Commission reviewed and recommended approval by the City Council of an update to the Municipal Service Review (MSR) for the City of Taft, which included sections on the West Side Recreation and Park District. A MSR is a comprehensive study designed to better inform Local Agency Formation Commissions (LAFCo), local agencies, and the community about the provision of municipal services. Service reviews attempt to capture and analyze information about the governance structures and efficiencies of service providers, and to identify opportunities for greater coordination and cooperation between providers. The service review is a prerequisite to a sphere of influence determination and may also lead a LAFCo to take other actions under its authority.

Kern LAFCo has yet to take the updated MSR to their board as state law requires that adequate water utilities are available to the City of Taft and the adjacent county communities. They are working with the West Kern Water District (WKWD) to update their MSR, so that both documents can be approved together. Furthermore, the City needs to update their MSR once more to include discussion on Disadvantaged Unincorporated Communities (DUCs) per state Senate Bill 244. Attached is a revised MSR that includes new Sections 2.10 Disadvantaged Unincorporated Communities (DUCs) and 2.11 Water Services. Additional revisions to Section 2.12 Determinations for the City of Taft on pages 2-27 through 2-29 include the analysis and plans required to address DUCs in future annexation efforts.

This revised MSR is not ready as an action item as staff is waiting for direction from LAFCo regarding the WKWD completing their detailed MSR. Commissioners are welcome to ask questions and have an open discussion on the revisions to the Taft MSR.

CEQA:

The project is exempt from the requirements of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) as set forth in Section 15061(b)(3) of the CEQA Guidelines as the proposed amendment will have no significant effect on the environment.

ATTACHMENTS:

1. City of Taft Municipal Service Review – April 2016 Revisions

2.0 THE CITY OF TAFT

The City of Taft is located in southwestern Kern County, adjacent to the southwest edge of the San Joaquin Valley. The City is located on State Highways 119 and 33, west of Interstate 5. Taft is about 28 miles southwest of Bakersfield and about 6 miles northwest of Maricopa, which is the closest incorporated City. The regional location of the City is shown in Figure 2.1.

Currently Taft's sphere of influence contains 36.63 square miles or 23,441 acres, and the City limits contain approximately 15 square miles or 9,634 acres. The potential for physical expansion to support new growth is constrained by the existence of three unincorporated residential areas (Taft Heights, South Taft, and Ford City) located north and south of Taft; the City's airport and wastewater treatment plant east of the City; and oil fields, ponds, and tanks south and west of the City. These constraints are shown in Figure 2.2. Additionally, most of the vacant land within the City is owned by oil companies. Oil company property in and adjacent to the City is very difficult to obtain. This land is made available for sale only when the companies forecast that it will not be needed for oil extraction or related uses. These existing conditions severely restrict Taft's options in terms of future growth.

The potential for annexing unincorporated areas surrounding the City (including South Taft, Taft Heights, and Ford City) has been discussed several times in Taft, and was addressed in the 2003-2004 Kern County Grand Jury Final Report. However, the City has no immediate plans to pursue any annexations. Prior to consideration of annexing land, a fiscal evaluation would be needed. Fiscal constraints include the lack of funding to provide an adequate level of service. Most of the land uses, which generate sales tax, are already included within the City limits and property values within the surrounding County areas are low. Furthermore, the surrounding disadvantaged unincorporated communities lack adequate infrastructure, such as sewer availability and fully improved streets with curb, gutter, and sidewalk. Since 1965, the City of Taft has undergone 21 annexations. Table 2.A is a history of City annexations approved by LAFCO.

2.1 ADMINISTRATION, MANAGEMENT, AND OPERATIONS

The City of Taft is a general law city incorporated on November 7, 1910, and was named after the 27th President of the United States. William Howard Taft. Taft has a Council/Manager structure of government and employs 135 full-time (including police personnel and correctional facility employees) and part-time employees. The City Council has five members who are elected by the City residents for staggered four-year terms. The City Clerk and the City Treasurer are also elected officials who are elected to four-year terms. Municipal elections are consolidated within the statewide general elections. At the first regularly scheduled meeting of December in an election year, the Council selects a Mayor and a Mayor Pro Tern from among its members, and appoints City Council members to various Council committees and selects representatives for other community organizations. The Mayor is designated as the principal spokesperson for City government and presides at all meetings of the City Council. Additionally, the Mayor performs tasks for the City as directed by the Council and performs certain statutory and ceremonial duties on behalf of the City. In the absence of the Mayor, these duties are performed by the Mayor ProTem. Regular Council meetings are held twice a month on the first and third Tuesdays at 6:00p.m. in the evening at City Hall. The City Council is required to deal with administrative services of the City through the City Manager, and does not directly manage any of the subordinates of the Manager.

FIGURE 2.1
City of Taft Regional Location with
City Limits and Sphere of Influence

FIGURE 2.2 Flood Hazards and Development Constraints

Table 2.A - Annexations to the City of Taft Since 1964

Proceeding Number	Proposal	Year
21	Industrial Tract	1964
39	Countryside Homes	1964
103	Lincoln Street Number 1	1966
130	1-67	1967
427	Number 25	1974
499	Number 26	1976
582	Number 27	1977
626	Number 28	1978
748	Number 29	1980
749	Number 30	1980
810	Number 31	1983
876	Number 32	1985
907	Number 33	1986
928	Number 34	1987
929	Number 35	1987
956	Number 36	1987
1111	Number 37	1992
1131	Number 38	1992
1155	Number 39	1994
1197	Number 39	1995
N/A	Number 40	1995
Withdrawn	Number 41	2001
1544	Number 42	2009

The City Manager is appointed by the City Council, and functions under direction from the Council. The Manager is responsible for the efficient administration of all the affairs of the City. Specifically, it is the Manager's duty to give direction to all heads of departments, subordinate officers, and employees of the City; except for the clerk, treasurer, and City attorney. Additional responsibilities of the City Manager include keeping the Council at all times fully advised as to the financial conditions and needs of the City and to prepare an annual budget and report.

Like many California cities, Taft formed the Taft Community Development Agency (TCDA), a redevelopment agency (RDA), which was activated in October of 1986, with the objective to eliminate and prevent the spread of blight and deterioration, and to promote the conservation, rehabilitation and redevelopment of the Project Area. Other objectives were to control unplanned growth to the area, develop Taft as a business hub and to create job opportunities. In 2011, the Taft City Council expanded the area when it purchased land from Sunset Railway Company and Union Pacific Railway Company. However, in January 2012, the State of California dissolved all of the California RDA's and the Taft City Council was named the Successor Agency of the RDA. The Oversight Board was then established on April 10, 2012, with a seven (7) member Board of Directors appointed by various stakeholders in the community. The Board meets on the 1st and 3rd Wednesday of each month at 2:30 p.m. in the Taft City Hall Conference Room.

The Taft Public Improvement Corporation was organized in September of 1989, as a nonprofit public benefit corporation for the betterment of the City of Taft. The services included constructing various capital improvements in the City. A major project in 1989 was to participate with the City of Taft to facilitate the execution and delivery of the City's \$2,065,000 Certificates of Participation for the Sewer

Facilities Improvement Project. The Corporation has one annual meeting in August of each year, held in the Taft City Council Chamber. Members of the City Council serve as the Board of Directors. An additional agency, the Taft Public Financing Authority, was created in 1993 to provide financing for public capital improvements through the issuance of bonds. The City Council also serves as the Board of Directors for the Authority.

The City of Taft has policies contained within the City's Municipal Code, which guides the City's procurement of goods and services. Pursuant to these regulations, the City Manager serves as the City's Purchasing Officer and as head of the Purchasing Department. All purchases exceeding \$10,000 are subject to a bidding process, which requires a sealed bid to be submitted to the City. Also, these purchases are required to be made by purchase order or other written contract. The City policy regarding the procurement of professional technical services is to provide a public announcement of the need, which shall be conducted in a manner that provides the maximum practical extent of open and free competition. Public notice of this need is required when the anticipated cost of services is in excess of \$20,000. This notice shall be in a written announcement directed toward interested persons and no less than three candidates are required to be selected and ranked for contract negotiations.

The City has established budget procedures, which are used as a guideline for preparing the budget each year. A draft budget is prepared by the City Manager with input from the City's department heads and finance director. The draft is then sent to the finance committee for review and revisions and then onto the City Council for approval. Prior to approval, public meetings are conducted to include citizen concerns. The City's operating budget clearly articulates revenue sources and expenditures. The City Council has the legal authority to amend the budget at any time during the fiscal year and the City Manager has the authority to make adjustments to the budget within program areas. The transfers of appropriations between program areas or involving reserve accounts, the use of unappropriated funds, cancellations of appropriations, and all changes in capital improvement project budgets require the approval from the City Council. The City's budget and accounting practices are audited every year by a certified public accountant. In addition to the City's budget, a Working Capital Reserve for Operating Fund ensures the financial viability of the City. Approximately 15 percent of the General Fund expenditures are transferred to this fund at the end of each fiscal year. Financially, the City is operating "in the black" and continues to work to offset State budget cuts as they occur.

The City of Taft has an investment policy designed to enhance opportunities for the investment of public money. Pursuant to this policy, the criteria for selecting investments include: safety, liquidity, yield, market-average rate of return, diversification, and public trust. The management of the investment program is delegated to the City Treasurer, who is required to submit a monthly investment report to the City Council and City Manager.

The City encourages public participation in Council meetings and other City business. For example, the City's website provides information about upcoming Council and Planning Commission meetings and provides minutes of previous meetings. Also, the public City Council meetings are broadcast tape-delayed on a local television channel and posted on a City YouTube channel. Other public participation initiatives include the use of citizen advisory committees and mailings to residents and businesses of Taft. These mailings are distinguished from advertisements by the City using envelopes containing the City's logo.

The City has several cooperative arrangements with other agencies that provide both management efficiencies and cost savings for both Taft and the partner agency:

- The operations of the City and the West Side Recreation and Park District are examples of public agencies working together to provide services and facilities for residents to utilize. Joint projects include the Skate Park development. The City paid for the engineering and construction of the Skate Park and the Park District maintains and insures the facility. Also, the City utilized per capita park bond monies to pay for a retrofit of the Taft Skate Park.
- The Police Department and the Kern County Sheriff's Department have a cooperative agreement. County prisoners brought into custody near the City of Taft are booked in the City Police Station and held in the Police Department jail facility. In exchange, the County provides a bailiff and transportation to court for the City's prisoners.
- The City is a member of a joint powers agreement with the Taft Heights/Ford City Sanitation Districts in the operation of the wastewater treatment plant. The City operates and maintains the wastewater treatment facilities, which serve the City and the sanitation districts. The City's Financial Department maintains the accounting records for the treatment plant.
- The City participates with other public agencies in a joint powers agreement, which establishes the Central San Joaquin Valley Risk Management Authority (CSJVRMA) as a common risk management and insurance program. The CSJVRMA is a consortium of 54 cities in the San Joaquin Valley and is governed by a Board of Directors, consisting of one member appointed by each member city.
- The City contracts for engineering and refuse collection services. This saves the City the funding required to pay an in house engineer and for the salaries of the refuse collectors. In addition, this saves the cost of refuse truck acquirement and maintenance.
- The City provides funding to the Taft Chamber of Commerce in the amount of 25% of the actual Transient Occupancy Tax (TOT) received by local hotels. In the 2013 calendar year, the City provided approximately \$12,000. In return, the Chamber provides marketing brochures and services to the City. Additionally, the City contributes funds to the Chamber for the July 4th fireworks show and other like activities that are attended by City residents.
- The City's transit drivers are allowed to participate in driver training provided by Taft Union High School to its bus drivers.

The City consistently applies for grants that will benefit the community and its citizens. Recent grants that have been allocated to Taft include:

- Community Development Block Grant and HOME Investment Partnership Program funds for First Time Home Buyers (FTHB) and rehabilitation of housing units owned by low-income eligible families or by owner-investors of rentals occupied by low income eligible families;
- Caltrans and Strategic Growth Council (SGC) grants for emissions reduction projects such as Rails to Trails extensions and other bicycle and pedestrian improvements;
- Economic and Social Research Institute (ESRI) Grant for a geographic information system (GIS) facility at the City for land use planning and evaluation within the City.

Pending grants include:

- PetSmart Charities Program for a spay and neuter program;
- San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District, New Alternative Fuel Vehicle Purchase Program, for up to 5 new vehicles for use by City Hall and Police Department staff, and installation of electrical vehicle (EV) charging stations at City Hall and future Park n Ride project;

2.2 POPULATION AND GROWTH

Total Population

The California Department of Finance estimates the ~~2013-2014~~ population of the City of Taft to be ~~8,9119,456~~. According to the U.S. Census in the ten years between 2000 and 2010, the population of Taft increased from 6,400 to 9,327; an average of 292 persons per year (4.6%, annually). During the same ten-year period, the housing stock increased from 2,478 to 2,525 units; an average of 4.7 units per year (0.2%). The ~~significant~~ population ~~decrease-increase~~ of 9,327 to ~~8,9119,456~~ persons was due to the ~~closure-increase in regional oil industry related jobs and the reopening~~ of the City's ~~Modified~~ Community Correctional Facility (MCCF) in ~~2011~~2014. The population of a MCCF is counted toward the total population for the city or county jurisdiction that it is located within, ~~which also explains the 2000 to 2010 population increase that may have omitted the inmate population at the Federal Taft Correctional Institute~~. Table 2.B shows population and housing growth in Taft for 2000, 2010, and 2013.

Table 2.B - City of Taft Population and Housing, 2000 – 2013

Year	Population	Increase	Housing	Increase
2000	6,400	-	2,478	-
2010	9,327	2,927	2,525	47
2013 2014	8,9119,456	-416129	2,522	-3

Source: 2000 and 2010 U.S. Census, 2013 California Department of Finance Estimate.

Housing Inventory

As shown in Table 2.C, the California Department of Finance estimates that there are 2,522 dwelling units within the City of Taft in ~~2013~~2014. Of these dwelling units, approximately 75 percent are detached single-family homes. Almost 10 percent are located in structures of 5 or more units.

Table 2.C - Composition of the Housing Stock, ~~2013~~2014

Housing Type	City of Taft		Kern County	
	Number of Units	Percentage	Number of Units	Percentage
Single-family, Detached	1,882	74.6	204,884 208,257	71. 10
Single-family, Attached	113	4.5	7,325 7,350	2.5
2 to 4 Unit Structure	198	7.9	28,928 29,144	10.0
5 or More Unit Structure	240	9.5	24,552 25,002	8.5
Mobile Home	89	3.5	22,935 23,021	8.07.9
TOTAL	2,522	100.0	288,624292,774	100.0

Source: State of California, Department of Finance. E-5 City/County Population and Housing Estimates, 1/1/~~2013~~2015

Average Household Size

The 2010 Census reports that there were 2,525 households in the City of Taft, with an average household size of 2.83. Of these households, it is estimated that 1,586 (70.4%) were family households, while 543 households (24.1%) were individuals living alone. The balance of Taft's households was non-family households with more than one occupant.

Taft's ~~existing~~ population per household as identified in the 2010 Census (~~2.83~~) is very low at 2.83 persons. The California Department of Finance estimates that Taft person per household population has increased in the 2014 year to 2.87 persons, but that is low relative to:

- Kern County (3.15 in 2010, 3.20 in 2014)
- Fresno County (3.15 in 2010, 3.19 in 2014)
- Tulare County (3.36 in 2010, 3.40 in 2014)
- Kings County (3.19 in 2010, 3.15 in 2014)

The Taft/Maricopa Regional Statistical Area population per household is projected by Kern COG to decrease from 3.03 in 2010 to 2.99 in 2013, and 2.89 in 2023.

Projections

The most recent growth projections adopted by the Kern COG indicates that population growth in the Greater Taft/Maricopa Regional Statistical Area between 2013 and 2023 will be more than what occurred between 2010 and 2013 (488 persons annually or 2.2%). The number of households will have slightly less growth (128 households annually or 1.9%). as shown in Table 2.D.

Table 2.E utilizes the 2010 – 2013 Department of Finance data and the growth rates adopted by Kern COG as shown in Table 2.D to determine the estimated population and households within the City through the year 2017. Based on a population growth rate of 3.3 percent annually (as projected by Kern COG), Taft would grow by 299 persons per year; and based on a household growth rate of 1.1 percent, the number of households would grow by 28 per year.

Most of the growth indicated above would be infill development due to the land use constraints caused by the adjacent unincorporated residential areas, endangered species and other environmental constraints, the location of the airport and wastewater treatment plant, the large percentage of land owned by the oil companies, and the ponds and tanks adjacent to the City.

Table 2.D - Greater Taft/Maricopa Regional Statistical Area Projections, 2010 – 2023

Year	Population	Households	Employment
2010	21,884	6,189	10,866
2013	23,233	6,578	11,326
2023	28,115	7,863	12,964

Source: Kern Council of Governments, Kern Regional Housing Data Report June 2013/October 2014

Table 2.E - Growth within the City of Taft, 2010-~~2017~~2023

Year	Population	Households
2010	9,327	2,525
2011	9,284	2,525

2012	8,905	2,525
2013	8,911	2,522
2014	9,210	2,550
2015	9,509	2,578
2016	9,808	2,606
2017	10,107	2,634
<u>2018</u>	<u>10,406</u>	<u>2,662</u>
<u>2019</u>	<u>10,705</u>	<u>2,690</u>
<u>2020</u>	<u>11,004</u>	<u>2,718</u>
<u>2021</u>	<u>11,303</u>	<u>2,746</u>
<u>2022</u>	<u>11,602</u>	<u>2,774</u>
<u>2023</u>	<u>11,900</u>	<u>2,800</u>

Source: US 2010 Census, California Department of Finance E-5Estimates, Kern COG Preliminary 2014 RTP

2.3 WASTEWATER COLLECTION AND TREATMENT

Wastewater (effluent) treatment involves cleaning used water and sewage so it can be returned safely to the environment. Wastewater treatment protects public health from disease-causing bacteria and viruses and protects local and regional water quality.

The Taft Wastewater Treatment Plant (WWTP), located at 1120 East Ash Street, is shown on Figure 2.3. The City is a member of a joint powers agreement with the Ford City-Taft Heights Sanitation District in the ownership and operation the WWTP. The City of Taft owns 52 percent and Ford City-Taft Heights Sanitation District owns 48 percent of the plant. The City of Taft operates and maintains the wastewater treatment facilities via a contractor, Severn Trent Services. Also, the City's Financial Department maintains the accounting records for the treatment plant.

The WWTP was constructed in 1974. In 2002 the City upgraded and expanded the WWTP in order to meet new waste discharge requirements set by the Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board and to meet wastewater treatment demands through the year 2012. These improvements involved the maximum use of valuable existing City assets, including the four existing treatment ponds. The improvements to the WWTP processes included the removal of trash from the influent flow, which improved the solids handling capability of the plant and reduced the nuisance of trash from the ponds. Also, a new technology utilizing a combination of diffused air and large rotating blades has been implemented. This system makes oxygen transfer more efficient, causes a faster reaction rate than for typical aerated lagoons, and uses half of the horsepower of the old system. Additionally, Lagoon 3 has been converted into a settling basin and Lagoon 4 has been converted into an emergency storage area. This upgrade/expansion increased the plant's capacity to an average daily flow of 1.5 million gallons per day (MGD), and corrected all known deficiencies. This project was financed by wastewater reserve funds. The wastewater service operations within Taft are routinely evaluated by the Taft Public Works Director, who reviews monthly reports that include the quantity of flow and the treatment results. Additionally, Kern County reviews the WWTP operations monthly to ensure adequate service.

The City discourages the use of septic tanks, as there typically is insufficient land area for a proper septic system with appropriate leeching area. New private septic systems require the review and approval of the City's Building Official and Kern County Environmental Health Division. When sewer service is made available within 300 feet of a building using a septic tank and the tank is no longer adequately servicing the building, the City would require the building to be connected to the sewer system.

FIGURE 2.3 Public Facilities

As stated in Section 2.2, the City of Taft and surrounding areas are expected to have a population growth rate of 3.3 percent annually, which means that the City can expect an additional 112 households by 2017. The City of Taft Director of Public Works has stated that at a 0.5 to 2 percent growth rate, the City will be able to provide adequate wastewater services for the next 15 years with no additional infrastructure needs.

Sewer Rate Comparison

Residential accounts are billed at a flat rate for sewer services. A residential sewer bill, which is dependent upon housing type, (e.g., apartments, mobile home, single-family) will either be (in 2014-2015) \$18.67 or \$25.32 per month. Commercial and industrial accounts are also billed at a flat rate. The flat rate for a commercial/industrial water customer, which is dependent upon the type of business (e.g., beauty shop, school, restaurant), ranges from \$25.32 to over \$75.68 per month. The City also considers unit figures, such as a room total for motels, a student total for schools, a washer total for laundromats, and a stall total for self-serve car washes. There are currently no metered sewer accounts. Table 2.F compares Taft's sewer rates to those of nearby jurisdictions.

Table 2.F - Monthly Sewer Rates in ~~2014-2015~~ 2015-2016

	Taft	Shafter	Bakersfield	
Residential – Single-family	\$25.32 \$27.60	\$21.60 – 22.40	\$17.08	25.52
– Multi-family	\$18.67 \$20.35 per unit	\$23.00 per unit	\$12.81 per unit	\$1.60/Tgal + \$13.42 fixed charge
Commercial and Industrial	\$25.32 \$27.60 – over 75.68 82.49 Depending on business type	\$8.65 – 1,079.55	\$1.19 - \$2.30 per cu. ft. Depending on use	Calculated depending on use, a quantifier is multiplied by the service charge of \$13.42

Sources: City of Taft Ordinance No. 799-13; City of Shafter Municipal Service Review July 2014; <http://www.bakersfieldcity.us/cityservices/pubwrks/wastewater/revenue.html>;

2.4 LAW ENFORCEMENT

The Taft Police Department is headquartered on Commerce Way adjacent to the Taft Community Correctional Facility, as shown in Figure 2.3. The department consists of the Police Chief, one Lieutenant, 3 sergeants and 8 patrol officers. In addition, there are 3 School Resource Officers, 5 Dispatchers, 1 Community Service Officers, 1 Animal Control Officer, 1 Code Enforcement Officer, 1 Administrative Assistant to the Chief of Police, 3 reserve officers, and 2 volunteers. These personnel provide full-time 24-hour police coverage with a full-time dispatch center for police, fire and ambulance services. The County's Sheriff's Department has a station just north of the City at 315 North Lincoln Street.

The Police Department also administers a 600 bed Taft Modified Community Correctional Facility (MCCF) under contract with the State of California Department of Corrections to house State inmates. In 2011, the CCF facility was closed due to the state AB 109 Prison Realignment bill; however, the facility was reopened in February 2014 as an MCCF. This correctional facility is staffed by a Facility Manager, 1 police captain, 4 correction lieutenants, 5 correctional sergeants, 5 senior correctional officers and 40 correctional officers. This MCCF facility houses mid-level non-violent sex offenders.

The MCCF contains eight dormitories housing 64 inmates each in a two story configuration. There is also a full medical section, Receiving and Releasing area, Kitchen, Dining room, Laundry, Canteen or Commissary, Library, Classrooms, Computer lab, Maintenance section, and offices both in the secure and non-secure areas. The facility includes a large Recreation yard with a basketball court, weights, an exercise area, and a handball court. The administrative staff includes an Administrative Lieutenant/Program Manager, a Maintenance Supervisor, 6 Education/Program Instructors, 3 Accounting staff, and Dental services.

The Department's Mission Statement states:

"The mission of the Taft Police Department is to protect and serve the citizens of the City of Taft by providing superior law enforcement service which includes the highest levels of patrol, investigative capabilities, and secure custody of prisoners.

To strive for recognition as an outstanding, fiscally responsible law enforcement agency, maintaining excellence of performance in managing the range of services required to meet our responsibilities to the citizens of the City of Taft.

Dedicated to achieve the highest possible community involvement in the team of Police and Citizens working together in solving the many problems that confront the citizens of the City of Taft today."

The current rate of sworn officers to population based on the California Department of Finance's estimated 2013 population of 8,911 is 1.46 officers per 1,000 residents. The Taft police department's goal is to maintain a minimum of 1.5 sworn officers per 1,000 residents. Hence, the department is currently slightly lower than its staffing goals. The Department states that response times average 4 minutes for Priority- I calls and 10 minutes for other calls. The response time goal is between 3 and 6 minutes. The Police Chief checks the response times each month to ensure that the Department's goals are being reached. In addition to response times and the ratio of officers to population, the Chief utilizes crime rates to ensure that staffing levels are adequate. Table 2.G lists the number of calls the Department has received since 2006.

Table 2.G - Taft Police Service Calls

Year	Number of Calls
2006	4,590
2007	4,205
2008	4,570
2009	4,376
2010	4,378
2011	4,267
2012	4,364
2013	4,418

In order to maintain an adequate fleet of police vehicles and equipment, the City budgets for one or two new police vehicles and related equipment per year. The construction of the police station was planned for the growth of the Department and can accommodate up to 30 officers. At this time the Department employs 13 sworn officers. Hence, this facility is not expected to need expansion for at least 10 years. Additionally, this facility serves as the City's Emergency Operation Center.

The operations of the Department are reviewed daily by the Police Chief, training records are reviewed by the California Commission on Peace Officer Standards & Training (POST), and the State of California reviews the correctional facility every two years. The Taft Police Department has received an award for outstanding training. Additionally, the Taft Community Correctional Facility has previously received California's highest rating possible. Statewide, other stations and correctional facilities often seek advice from the Chief about officer training, the facility, and also implementation of Taft MCCF Programs. Also, the findings of the 2003-2004 Kern County Grand Jury state that the "City of Taft Police Department is considered to be one of the best Police Departments in the State."

The Police Department has several agreements for shared facilities and services. These cooperative agreements help the Department provide additional services without needing additional funding. In addition to the mutual aid agreements, the City and County have a cooperative working agreement. County prisoners brought into custody near the City of Taft are booked in the City Police Station; in exchange the County provides a bailiff and transportation to court for the City prisoners. Unfortunately, the current class of inmate at the MCCF does not allow them to be used as maintenance workers for the City, County, animal shelter, or other agencies in the area.

2.5 FIRE PROTECTION

The City of Taft had operated its own Fire Department and station located at 801 Center Street. In 2008, the City found that fire protection services would be more cost effective by contracting with the Kern County Fire Department. The City has since leased out the City fire station property to the Bureau of Land Management for their fire protection services. The Kern County Fire Department provides fire protection services for the City of Taft and surrounding unincorporated communities, approximately 400 businesses, the Federal Prison, and the Taft Modified Community Correctional Facility.

The Kern County Fire Department responds from Station 21 in Taft, which is located at 303 North 10th Street, as shown on Figure 2.3. This station, which has one engine, one ladder truck and a patrol, is staffed by six firefighters and a battalion chief, with a seventh firefighter .. Station 21 is staffed 24 hours per day, with staffing configured around a three platoon system – A, B and C Shifts.

The Station 21 crew, Battalion 2 and the Kern County Fire Department are full service institutions. Kern County Fire Department's comprehensive and multiple service capabilities provide City of Taft residents - permanent and transient, consistent protection from all types of emergency and exigent hazards. To this end, Kern County Fire Department professionals are:

"Committed to proudly serve in the safest, most professional and efficient manner; and actively participate in the Taft community, serve as role models, and continually seek ways to maximize resources, while preserving essential services."

Emergency services offered by Station 21 and the Kern County Fire Department include, but are not limited to:

- Structure Firefighting
- Wildland Firefighting
- Vehicle Firefighting
- Petro-Chem Firefighting and Hazardous Materials Mitigation

- Vehicle Rescues
- Emergency Medical Services (All personnel are EMTs, with some EMTPs)
- Technical Rescue Operations
- Disaster Preparedness and Resolution

Additionally, the Department provides many special fire services to the community, which includes:

- Weed abatement program;
- Full fire prevention services that include fire code compliance, fire plan checks, and building and planning coordination;
- Home fire safety inspections as requested; and
- Fire investigation services.

The Kern County Fire Department is a professional firefighting institution, which provides "all-risk" emergency and various hazard/threat mitigation services for the City of Taft. The Kern County Fire Department's mission-driven intent is to *protect life and property by providing effective public education, fire prevention, and emergency services*. In concert with this mission, the Kern County Fire Department furnishes the above mentioned educational, preventative and emergency assistance to the citizens of Taft.

2.6 SOLID WASTE

The collection of solid waste, green waste, and recyclable materials are services that are provided to the City of Taft by Westside Waste Management, which is under contract/franchise to the City. Westside Waste Management has been providing services to the City since July 1, 1995. The current contract with the City expires on June 30, 2016. Westside collects solid waste twice per week from all residences and as needed from commercial facilities. Also, each resident is provided the collection of bulky items that are placed in the alley once per week at no additional cost. Additional requests for the collection of bulky items will be accommodated for \$25.00 or less. Westside is also required to patrol alleys within the City at least once every two weeks to collect accumulated refuse and debris, including green waste and bulky items.

Over 99 percent of the solid waste that is collected within the City is hauled to the Taft Landfill, which is operated by the Kern County Waste Management Department and is located about 4 miles north of the City at 13351 Elk Hills Road, as shown in Figure 2.3. The facility is a Class III landfill, which means a landfill that accepts non-hazardous resources such as household, commercial, and industrial waste, resulting from construction, remodeling, repair, and demolition operations. The Taft Landfill is currently permitted to accept 800 tons per day of refuse and the estimated closure date is August of 2076.

The City of Taft reached a solid waste peak of 5,715.0 tons in the 2006 and 2007 calendar years. In the 2013 year, the City of Taft disposed of 5,040.0 tons of solid waste, which is an approximate 12% reduction from 2007. Compared to the previous seven years, the disposal demand in the 2013 year was below normal. However, the lowest total of solid waste occurred in 2012, which was 4,928.5 tons. As shown in Table 2.H. the solid waste demand has been on a steady decline for the last eight years.

Diversion rates are defined as the percentage of total solid waste that a jurisdiction diverted from being disposed in landfills through reduction, reuse, recycling programs, and composting programs. The

California Integrated Waste Management Board (CIWMB) adopted a diversion rate of 50 percent for the year 2000 and beyond. Per the CIWMB, the City of Taft has far exceeded the goal and reached a 75 percent diversion rate in 2012, which is the most recent data posted. The City is required to continue to demonstrate compliance through annual reporting directly to CIWMB.

Table 2.H - City of Taft Solid Waste Disposal Demand

Year	Total Tons Annually
2006	5,715.0
2007	5,715.0
2008	5,505.8
2009	5,300.0
2010	5,256.6
2011	5,224.5
2012	4,928.5
2013	5,040.0

Source: Westside Waste Management, August 2014

The solid waste disposal generation factor is 1.75 tons per year per household (based on a household size of 2.5 persons). This equates to 1,400 pounds per person per year (per Kern County Waste Management). Waste generation factors for industrial facilities vary with the use of the facility; however, an average disposal generation factor would be one square foot equals 3 pounds of solid waste per year.

As shown in Section 2.2, the estimated number of residents, within Taft in 2017 is expected to be approximately 10,107. This would mean that approximately 7,074.9 tons (in 2017) of solid waste would be generated and disposed of yearly by the residential population. Additionally, any commercial or industrial development that would occur prior to 2017 would generate additional disposal demands. Currently, a new 63-room hotel and a 2,200 square foot fast food restaurant will complete construction within the next year that may contribute significantly to the demand for solid waste disposal services. However, increasing diversion requirements by the state may reduce such impacts.

Solid Waste Facility Supply and Demand

The ability to dispose of solid waste for the City of Taft is tied to available landfill capacity and the compliance with CIWMB diversion rate of 50 percent. Table 2.I shows the increased demand by the City on solid waste services in 2017, which is the planning horizon for this Municipal Services Review. Table 2.I also demonstrates the long-term disposal capacity of the Taft Landfill. As shown, the capacity of the landfill was planned to accommodate future solid waste disposal needs for the region through 2076. Since the projected growth rates are expected to be less than what occurred in the 1990s, and further state mandated diversion and recycling requirements, the capacity of the landfill will be able to meet the future needs of the community.

Table 2.I - Solid Waste Capacity and Demand

	Taft Sanitary Landfill
Remaining Capacity as of January 2014	4,337,461 tons
Estimated Closure Date	August 2076
Currently permitted to accept	800.00 Tons/day
Taft Disposal (2013)	5,040.0 Tons
Projected Taft Disposal (in 2017)	7,074.9

Source: Kern County Waste Management Department, 2014.

Solid Waste Rate Comparison

The City of Taft bases its refuse rates by either the type of residence (e.g., single-family, multifamily) or by number of refuse cans and the number of pick-ups per week for commercial and industrial customers. In 2013, the City of Taft established new sewer rates, with rates incrementally increasing from fiscal year 2013-14 to 2017-18. Table 2.J compares Taft's solid waste rates and those of nearby jurisdictions within Kern County for the 2013-14 fiscal year.

Table 2.J - Monthly Solid Waste Rates in ~~2013-14~~ 2015-16

	Taft	Shafter	Bakersfield	Delano
Residential	\$14.35 – 28.93 <u>20.41 – 33.12</u>	\$13.15 – 24.75	\$13.66 – 15.11	\$11.57
Commercial and Industrial	\$60.64 <u>69.42</u>	\$11.82 – 283.15	\$18.43 – 747.06	\$13.96 + \$6.98 – \$41.88 per pick-up

2.7 STORMWATER DRAINAGE

Taft lies next to the rolling foothills of the Temblor Range of the Sierra Madre Mountains at elevations ranging from 900 to 1,200 feet above sea level. The average rainfall is 5.39 inches. Within the City of Taft there are a few major drainage improvements; there are no major drains serving the urban core and no drainage sumps in the City of Taft. Runoff is generally conveyed in streets, open swales, and natural channels. Throughout the City there are a number of graded swales along roadways that act to intercept and convey runoff. The two major creeks that run through the City (Sandy Creek and Enault Wash) are unimproved, except at road crossings, and where bridges and culverts have been constructed. Sandy Creek flows from the west edge of the City in a sweeping crescent path along the north City boundary to the east edge of town. Enault Wash runs in the same direction and is located to the south of Sandy Creek. As shown in Figure 2.3, there are several areas within the City and its sphere that are within 100- and 500-year flood zones. Generally, these flood zones are adjacent to the creeks and natural channels.

The City of Taft completed a Master Grading/Drainage Plan in March of 2002. The primary purpose of this plan is to formulate a plan for controlling stormwater runoff. The goal of the plan is to facilitate orderly development within the City and promote the efficient use of City resources in addressing stormwater needs. The overall theme of the Plan is for as much stormwater runoff as possible to be routed by a combination of storm drains, open channels, culverts, and streets to the existing creeks. The existing and proposed drainage facilities were designed to carry peak runoff flows anticipated from a 10-year frequency storm. Storm events of a greater magnitude can also be accommodated through the overflow provisions provided for the drainage facilities.

Additional recommendations contained within the Master Plan include establishing a routine drainage maintenance schedule. Currently, drainage channels are cleaned every fall and all street drains are cleared after any sizeable rain event. Since the intent of the Master Grading/Drainage Plan is to provide an adequate means of removing storm runoff from the City, thereby preventing flood damage, the facilities designed to remove the runoff must be able to function to their intended capacity for the whole system to work efficiently. The capacities of facilities, which are clogged with trash and debris or even partially filled with silt and mud, are drastically reduced, causing a potential flood hazard. The

routine maintenance schedule will greatly enhance the effectiveness of the City's existing and proposed drainage facilities. Also, the Master Plan recommended the establishment of a Planned Drainage Area and to levy a drainage fee. The drainage fee could be collected along with other already established fees, such as the sewer connection fee, as a part of the parcel or tract map procedure.

The City of Taft is also affected by the lack of flood protection within Taft Heights (an unincorporated area adjacent to the City). In the past, overflows and floods in Taft Heights have impacted the City of Taft, due to the lack of drainage facilities. Because stormwater is not managed in Taft Heights, flooding has occurred south of the City. However, because Taft Heights is beyond the City limits, Taft's obligation and authority to make improvements in this area are limited. The ultimate solution to resolve Taft Height's flooding hazards would be to construct new and improve natural drainage facilities to convey storm flows either by street or underground pipe to the nearby creeks, which would prevent runoff flows from entering the City of Taft.

2.8 ROADS AND CIRCULATION

State Highways

Two State highways currently exist within the City of Taft: State Highways 33 and 119. State Highway 119 runs north-south and Highway 33 runs east-west through Taft. Each of these facilities provides interregional travel to and from the City.

The City of Taft required the use of Level of Service methodologies presented in the Highway Capacity Manual for quantification of traffic operations on all City facilities. The City has adopted LOS "C" as the level of service threshold standard for traffic operations on City facilities in general. For special cases where cost of improvements and/or other considerations as determined by the City, LOS "D" may be used as an acceptable standard upon obtaining a recommendation from the City Traffic Engineer and upon approval from the City Council.

The existing conditions traffic operations (2008) and anticipated future (2035) conditions are shown in Tables 2.K and 2.L. As indicated in Table 2.K, all roadway segments are currently operating at a Level of Service (LOS) "A" or better. Also, as indicated in Table 2.L, in 2035 all roadway segments are projected to operate at LOS "C" or better.

The City of Taft completed a Pavement Management System (PMS) in 2003. This document was designed to coordinate and manage the planning, design, construction, maintenance, scheduling, evaluation, and research associated with roadway improvement projects. One of the key elements of the PMS is the evaluation of the most cost-effective maintenance, including when it should be scheduled, to optimize the expenditure of available funds. As indicated in the PMS, roads represent a large investment of public funds and the protection of this investment through proper maintenance is crucial. The proper maintenance of pavement can significantly improve performance and lifespan of the roadway. The City's PMS details the existing condition of the roadways within Taft, what maintenance or repairs are recommended, and an estimate of the cost of the work.

Table 2.K - Roadway Level of Service – Existing Conditions, 2008

Roadway	From	To	Type of Road	ADT ¹	LOS ²
State Highway 33	Midway Road	10 th Street	4-lane State Highway	13,800	A
State Highway 33	10 th Street	6 th Street	4-lane State Highway	13,000	A
State Highway 33	6 th Street	1 st Street	4-lane State Highway	9,400	A
State Highway 33	1 st Street	State Highway 119	2-lane State Highway	5,800	A
State Highway 119	State Highway 33	East Kern Street	2-lane State Highway	5,400	A
State Highway 119	East Kern Street	Second Street	2-lane State Highway	5,900	A
State Highway 119	Second Street	Harrison Street	2-lane State Highway	7,300	A
10 th Street	Ash Street	State Highway 33	4-lane arterial	9,700	A
Ash Street	10 th Street	6 th Street	2-lane collector	2,532	A
Ash Street	6 th Street	State Highway 119	2-lane collector	1,300	A

¹ Average Daily Traffic Volume

² Level of Service

Source: City of Taft General Plan Draft Environmental Impact Report, July 2009

Table 2.L - Roadway Level of Service – Proposed General Plan Year 2035 Conditions

Roadway	From	To	Type of Road	ADT ¹	LOS ²
State Highway 33	Midway Road	10 th Street	4-lane State Highway	22,600	A
State Highway 33	10 th Street	6 th Street	4-lane State Highway	23,400	A
State Highway 33	6 th Street	1 st Street	4-lane State Highway	19,000	A
State Highway 33	1 st Street	State Highway 119	2-lane State Highway	9,100	A
State Highway 119	State Highway 33	East Kern Street	4-lane State Highway	21,200	A
State Highway 119	East Kern Street	Second Street	4-lane State Highway	17,400	A
State Highway 119	Second Street	Harrison Street	4-lane State Highway	19,100	A
10 th Street	Ash Street	State Highway 33	4-lane arterial	28,500	C
Ash Street	10 th Street	6 th Street	2-lane collector	5,500	A
Ash Street	6 th Street	State Highway 119	2-lane collector	8,300	A

¹ Average Daily Traffic Volume

² Level of Service

Source: City of Taft General Plan Draft Environmental Impact Report, July 2009

Parking

Parking within the City and downtown area is accommodated by off-street lots and spaces provided by commercial, residential, and industrial land uses. Public parking is provided by on-street spaces and at municipal parking lots along Center, Main, and North Streets. The demand for parking is dependent upon the traffic generated by each land use, including seasonal variations, and is regulated by the parking regulations identified within the City of Taft Zoning Ordinance.

Truck Routes

State Highways 33 (north-south) and 119 (east-west) are truck routes in addition to the arterial streets through and around Taft. Additionally, the Caltrans Truck Network designates State Highway 33 and State Highway 119 as Terminal Access Routes.

Bicycle Facilities

The Taft area is very conducive to bicycle transportation. The weather is nearly frost-free and, from mid-April through mid-October, sunny, dry, and warm conditions become almost monotonous. The only

existing bicycle facility is a small segment of Class I bicycle/pedestrian way along a stretch of the Sunset Railway alignment from approximately one-half (1/2) mile west of Hillard Street to Second Street that has been developed as a Rails-to-Trails project. Extensions of this facility have been funded, which will develop a trail along the west side of Hillard between the trail and "A" Street Park, and an additional segment from Second Street eastward to Highway 33 near the West Kern Oil Museum. The 2009 Kern County – City of Taft Bikeways and Pedestrian Trails Map has several planned routes within the City. These routes are listed below and shown on Figure 2.3.

Proposed Bicycle Facilities:

Looped Routes

- 25 Hill Road
- Rails-to-Trails and Sandy Creek Trail

East- West Routes

- San Emidio Street from Highway 119 to Hillard Street/Highway 33
- Rails-to-Trails from Petroleum Club Road to Sandy Creek
- Wood Street from Highway 33 to Shattuck Avenue

North-South Routes

- Hillard Street/Harding Avenue from Rails-to-Trails to city limits
- 6th Street/Harrison Street from Rails-to-Trails to Grevillea Street
- 4th Street/Asher Avenue from Rails-to-Trails to Wood Street
- Williams Way along Highway 119 from Sandy Creek to Main Street

Transit

Taft Area Transit (TAT) provides three fixed route transit lines with Taft Routes 1 and 2, Maricopa-Taft Route; and a Dial-A-Ride service throughout the City of Taft. Taft Route 1 runs a clockwise loop along Olive Street, Wood Street, and travel as far north as Ash Street. Stops along Route 1 include Taft College, K-Mart, Albertsons, Historic Fort, Taft High School, 5th Street Plaza, and K-Mart. Taft Route 2 runs in a counter-clockwise loop as far north as Grevillea Street and as south as Kern Street; with stops near Lincoln Junior High, Taft College, County Administrative Service Building, Jefferson Elementary, K-Mart, Albertsons, Historic Fort, Taft City Hall, and Taft High.

The Maricopa - Taft Route runs three trips per day (Monday – Friday, closed on weekends) throughout the cities of Taft and Maricopa with stops near Taft High School, Taft College, Historic Fort, Albertsons Plaza, Maricopa Post Office, Maricopa High School, and Maricopa City Hall. The two fixed routes generally run Monday through Friday 7:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m., 8:00 a.m. through 4:00 p.m. on weekends, and closed on most major holidays.

TAT offers curb-to-curb Dial-A-Ride service to ADA-certified patrons and to seniors (60+ years). Dial-A-Ride is a reservation-based, shared-ride service that mirrors the service area and hours of the fixed-route service. Dial-A-Ride service is limited to city of Taft and does not travel into Maricopa. Table 2.M below provides a performance summary of the Dial-a-Ride and Fixed Route Services for 2013-2014.

Table 2.M - Taft Area Transit and Dial-a-Ride and Fixed Route Services July 2013 - June 2014

	Dial-a-Ride	Fixed Route		Dial-a-Ride	Fixed Route
Hours of Operation	6,466	4,920	Cost Per Passenger	\$16.25	\$17.94
Miles Driven	67,099	63,808	Cost Per Service Hour	\$63.98	\$64.16
Total Passengers	25,449	17,596	Passengers Per Mile	0.38	0.28
Fares Received	\$21,388.13	\$12,661.01	Passengers Per Hour	3.94	3.58
Total Operation Costs	\$413,672.47	\$315,671.77	Service Hour Per Employee	166.82	166.67
Fare Box Return	5.17%	4.01%	Cost Per Mile	\$6.17	\$4.95
Total Days of Service	353	353	Average Passenger Fare	\$0.84	\$0.72
			Average Passengers Per Week	489.40	338.38
Total Number of Drivers ¹	3.23	2.46	Average Passengers Per Day	72.09	49.85
			No. of Wheelchair Lifts	1,294	132
			No. of Road Calls	0	0
			Accidents	0	0
			No Shows	23	0

¹ Full-time equivalent monthly average

2.9 PARKS AND RECREATION

Park and recreation facilities that serve the City of Taft are provided by three entities: City of Taft, the County of Kern, and by the West Side Recreation and Park District. A summary of park and recreation facilities is provided in Table 2.N.

City of Taft Facilities

Most of the City's park and recreation facilities and services are provided by the West Side Park and Recreation District or the County of Kern. However, the City does own and maintain three facilities. These facilities include the Civic Center Park located at 209 E. Kern Street and a downtown mini-park located at 412 Center Street. The City also owns and maintains "Rails to Trails", which is an approximately one and one-half (1 ½) mile walking and bicycling path located between 2nd Street and one-half mile west of Hillard Street. These facilities are shown in Figure 2.3.

Table 2.N - Park and Recreation Facilities that Serve the City of Taft

Facility	Agency	Description
Buena Vista Aquatic Recreational Area	County of Kern	Regional Park – 1,585 acres – 12 miles away from Taft
Tehachapi Mountain Park	County of Kern	Regional Park – 490 acres – 8 miles away from Tehachapi
Blanco Little League Complex	County of Kern	Neighborhood park within Taft – 6 acres
Taft Veterans Building	County of Kern	Recreation facility within Taft
Ford City Park	County of Kern	Neighborhood park in Ford City – 4 acres

Civic Center Park	City of Taft	Neighborhood park within Taft
Mini Park	City of Taft	Neighborhood park within Taft
Rails to Trails	City of Taft	One and one-half mile path within Taft
Taft Community Center	West Side Rec and Park District	Recreation/conference facility in Taft
Community Center Park	West Side Rec and Park District	Neighborhood Park within Taft – 4 acres
Recreation Center	West Side Rec and Park District	Recreation facility in Taft
'A' Street Park	West Side Rec and Park District	Neighborhood park within Taft – 7 acres
Franklin Field Recreation Complex	West Side Rec and Park District	Community park and recreation complex – 27 acres – in Taft
West Side Mountain Park	West Side Rec and Park District	Regional park – 200 acres – 40 miles south of Taft
The Walter Glenn Natatorium	West Side Rec and Park District	Swimming pool facility in Taft
Skate Park	West Side Rec and Park District	Skate boarding facility – in Taft

Kern County Facilities

There is one regional park operated by Kern County, which is located near the City of Taft. The Buena Vista Aquatic Recreational Area is approximately 2 miles southwest of Bakersfield and 12 miles northeast of Taft. Buena Vista is a man-made site, completed in April 1973, when it took 43 days to fill both Lake Evans and the much larger Lake Webb with over 2,300,000,000 gallons of water. There are many recreational activities offered at this facility. These activities include: boating, jet skiing, fishing, camping, picnicking, and bicycling. There are also many amenities at the recreational area. For example, there are several installations of children's play equipment, two concession buildings, three covered picnic areas reserved for large groups (400 capacity) or small groups (100 capacity), numerous other picnic spots throughout the park, three boat launching sites, and an RV dump station.

There are also several smaller neighborhood or community parks and recreation facilities that are in or adjacent to the City of Taft that are provided by the County of Kern. These facilities include: Ford City Park, Blanco Little League Complex, Taft Heights Park, and Taft Veterans Memorial Building. The details of these facilities are listed below.

- Blanco Little League Complex - Cedar Street, near Taft Highway in the City of Taft. Amenities include: Four little league baseball diamonds, two softball diamonds, concession stands, announcer booths, restrooms, picnic shelter.
- Ford City Park- Date and Polk Streets in Ford City, adjacent to the City of Taft. Amenities include: Barbeques, picnic areas, restrooms, and children’s playground.
- Taft Veterans Building - 218 Taylor Street in Ford City, adjacent to the City of Taft. Amenities include: Two meeting rooms and a kitchen. Seats 575 for assembly, 275 for banquets.

West Side Recreation and Park District

The West Side Recreation and Park District (WSR&PD) was established by a local election in November 1947, and by a joint resolution of the County Board of Supervisors and the Taft City Council. The District is headquartered in Taft and serves an area of about 407 square miles in western Kern County.

The District has adopted a mission statement, which states: "The purpose of the West Side Recreation and Park district is to provide a well-rounded, wholesome program of leisure time activities for people residing in the District. This may be accomplished by acquisition and development of park and recreation center areas, the development of supervised programs, construction and management of recreation facilities, and cooperative efforts with other agencies in the areas in which they provide like services."

The District operates many different facilities and recreational programs. In 2012-2013 the District offered over 60 different activities and programs. Also, during this time over 23,000 people used the Community Center buildings, 35,000 people used the Recreation Center, and approximately 1,700 people used reserved pavilions at the Franklin Field Complex and "A" Street Park. The District's facilities, programs, and activities are described below and shown on Figure 2.3.

The **Taft Community Center** is located at 500 Cascade Place in the City of Taft. The facility is available to the public on a rental basis. Organizations, groups and individuals are welcome to use the facilities for meetings and other gatherings. Available areas include the assembly room, auditorium, kitchen, and conference room. Many of the activities that are offered by the WSR&PD are held at the Community Center.

The **Recreation Center**. The Recreation Center, located at 500 Cascade Place, Building D, in the City of Taft, is a family-oriented 21,000 square foot facility with many activities and amenities. The Recreation Center includes a full-sized gymnasium, weight room, 4-lane bowling alley, and pre-school classroom, and includes activities such as basketball, volleyball, and a batting cage.

"A" Street Park is a seven-acre park located on the corner of "A" Street and Hillard Street in the City of Taft, across from Parkview School. The park is fully accessible and has two covered pavilions, lighted basketball courts, two practice baseball diamonds, off-street parking, restroom facilities, and a new playground. The pavilions and practice diamonds are available on a first-come, first-serve basis unless advance reservations have been made. Both pavilions are covered and have available electricity, lights, water, barbecue grills, and seating for 20.

Franklin Field Recreation Complex is located between Cedar and Ash Streets off Highway 119 adjacent to Taft. This 27-acre park includes four lighted softball diamonds, horseshoe pits, several picnic sites with barbecues, two new playground areas, 18-hole disc golf course, three group picnic pavilions, a 400 space capacity parking lot, over 300 shade trees, two restroom facilities and a concession building. The complex is used for softball leagues and tournaments, instructional baseball, and special events. The softball diamonds and picnic pavilions are available on a first-come, first-serve basis unless advance reservations have been made. Pavilion #1 has water, electricity, lights, barbecue grills, and seating for 130. Pavilion #2 has water, barbecue grills, lights, and seating for 90. Pavilion #3 has water, a barbecue grill and seating for 45.

West Side Mountain Park was established in 1938. It covers 200 acres of land and is located 3 miles north of Pine Mountain Club on Mt. Abel. Elevation ranges from 5,600 - 7,200 feet. Forest, four seasonal weather, natural spring water, hiking and much more make this area an ideal recreation park year round. There is a cabin and Camp Condor group camping facility available for rent at Mt. Abel. The Camp Condor group camping facility includes ten camper cabins, swimming pool, shower house, craft lodge, infirmary, staff quarters, administrations cabin, cook's cabin, and mess hall. The Camper cabins each sleep 12 people, is heated, and each cabin has two entrances. The swimming pool can be used for the three months of summer that camp is in session. Camp Condor is only available to rent during the months of May and September, depending on weather conditions.

During the months of June through August, Camp Condor is used by the West Side Children's Camp Association. They hold a summer camp for boys and girls ages 6- 14. At camp, the children enjoy campfire programs, camp songs, a variety of sports and games, swimming, hiking, cook-outs, arts and crafts, paddle boating, stargazing, fishing, a trading post, and many more fun activities.

The Walter Glenn Natatorium is the District's swimming pool facility located at the corner of 4th and Warren Streets in the City of Taft. The facility consists of two pools, a concession stand, and locker rooms. One pool is for children and beginning swimmers with a depth of 1 to 3 feet. The second is a 35 by 20-yard pool with a 3-meter diving board with a depth ranging from 3 to 12 feet. The pool is open five days a week during the summer months for swim lessons, special events, and open swim sessions. Ages 16 and older are invited to take advantage of evening lap swim sessions at the Natatorium. Also, Family Swim is Tuesday and Thursday evenings.

Taft's **Skate Park** is located near the corner of 10th and Kern Streets in the southeast corner of the Community Center Park. The skate facility, which is 12,000 square feet in size, includes a drop-in, rails, half-pipe, pyramid, flat banks, and transitions as well as grinding rails, benches, and curbs. The Skate Park is fenced with surrounding grass, trees, lights, and restroom facility. The Skate Park is non-supervised and free of charge.

In addition to the above facilities, the District has an agreement for sharing facilities with the Taft City Schools, Taft Union High School and Taft College. In this agreement, the District utilizes the schools' facilities as a place to hold recreational activities. For example, school auditoriums are used for dance recitals, the high school baseball field is used for softball and baseball programs, and the college gym is used for basketball programs. Conversely, the schools utilize the District's buildings for school dances and conference areas. The agreement is cost beneficial for both the District and the schools and allows both to offer more activities to the community.

Activities. The District also offers many different activities for adults and children. The activities offered for adults include: scrapbooking, hunter's safety courses, game nights, Pinochle, Bunco, Fun & Fitness to Music, karate, Bingo, casino bus trips, free-throw contests, coed softball tournaments, senior exercise, and nutrition programs.

The activities offered for children include: tumbling, cheerleading, tap & jazz, basketball, soccer, volleyball, track, football, baseball, softball, and many other one-time activities throughout each month.

Preschool. The District also operates a preschool, which was established in the early 1980s. The District's preschool provides a developmentally appropriate program that promotes the

development of children's social, emotional, cognitive, and physical skills for children ages 3-5. Students are exposed to a variety of art projects; singing, language and motor development; and an understanding of colors, shapes and numbers. The preschool's small class sizes provide for individual attention and varied learning opportunities.

Advertising. To advertise the District's programs, activities, and facilities the District creates brochures, which are mailed out to residents and program participants. These brochures can also be obtained at the District office. Additionally, the District distributes and posts flyers at schools and posts all activities on the District's website. Due to budget constraints, the District will only produce and distribute one brochure this year. However, the website will be updated as needed with new program or facility information. In the past, the District produced three or four brochures per year.

District Operations. The District is governed by a five member Board appointed by the Kern County Board of Supervisors (three members) and the Mayor of the City of Taft (two members). The District Board meetings are conducted at 6:00p.m. on the second Thursday of each month in the Recreation Center Activity Room, 500 Cascade Place, Building D. Each Board member has a copy of the Brown Act and meetings are attended by the District's attorney. Information about the meetings are posted at the District office and included in the local newspaper the Daily Midway Driller. The District provides time at each meeting for public input and encourages groups such as the Little League and Children's Camp Association to give reports.

The District has 10 full-time employees: 2 recreation, 4 parks, 1 administration, and 3 office employees. In the summer months the District has between 60 and 70 part-time employees. The District's 2012-2013 Annual Report states that this year the District utilized over 80 part-time employees and 30 volunteers.

Recreation and park facility and equipment needs are determined by the District's staff and Board of Directors, who meet yearly to discuss needs in an effort to prioritize expenditures. Future service needs are forecasted by citizen input, staff suggestions, and by tracking local and national trends.

The District is funded through user fees, property taxes, and grants. The District is not anticipating any expansion of facilities or services. The revenue constraints are created by the decline in tax revenue and because the Board is hesitant to raise user fees. The District has been under pressure from the residents and the Board of Directors to streamline revenues and increase demands.

The District has been able to work within its financial constraints to continue to provide services and facilities to the Taft area residents. The budget for the 2012-2013 year ended in the black. The District attributes this in part to the use of volunteers and the outstanding effort put forth by the District's staff to conserve money whenever possible. Any excess cash that the District may have is invested with the County Treasury Pool Investments. The yearly budget is prepared by District staff and approved by the Board. Also, yearly audits are prepared by a certified public accounting firm. One method of cost savings that the District utilizes is to have the maintenance staff complete 90 percent of all maintenance to equipment, and to complete the required reports to the State Water Quality Control Board, County Agricultural Commissioner, and to the State Bureau of Automotive Repair.

Per the District's 2012-2013 Annual Report, the District continues to face several challenges for the future.

- The State of California continues to take a portion of the taxes that are collected for the use of the District. For the last several years this amount was approximately \$200,000.
- The assessed valuation for property taxes continues to fluctuate with the price of gas. Since the majority of property taxes to support the District (85%) come from oil field properties, the assessed valuation is difficult to estimate and continue to make budgeting difficult.

The facilities and services of the City, the County, and the West Side Recreation and Park District provide the residents of Taft with access to numerous park and recreational facilities, services, and programs. As shown in Table 2.N, the Greater Taft area currently has over 2,000 acres of regional parkland. Within the City of Taft there are 6 recreation buildings and 94 acres of passive and active parkland. The City of Taft has established a standard of 5 acres of parkland for every 1,000 residents. Currently, the City of Taft is currently providing approximately 10.55 acres of local parkland per 1,000 residents. By 2017, the standard would require a total of 50.54 acres of local parkland (as indicated in Table 2.0). The City of Taft exceeds the parkland standard, and as such, does not need to provide additional facilities in the near future.

Table 2.0 - Park Acreage Standards Located Within the City of Taft

Year	Population ¹	Generation Factor	Acres of Local Park Land Needed
2013	8,911	5 acres per 1,000 residents	44.56
2017 2023	10,107 11,900	5 acres per 1,000 residents	50.54 59.50

¹Source: Table 2.E

2.10 DISADVANTAGED UNINCORPORATED COMMUNITIES

The State legislature approved Senate Bill 244 (SB 244) in 2011, effective July 1, 2012, that requires local agencies and LAFCo's to amend their MSRs to include a description of the location and characteristics of any disadvantaged unincorporated communities (DUCs) within or contiguous to the sphere of influence. SB 244 defines a "disadvantaged community" as a community with an annual median household income that is less than 80 percent of the statewide annual median household income per Water Code Section 79505.5. DUCs are defined as a territory that constitutes all or a portion of a "disadvantaged community" including ten (10) or more dwelling units in close proximity to each other, and where 12 or more registered voters reside or some other standard as determined by the commission.

There are three Census Designated Places that are located within the City of Taft Sphere of Influence and are adjacent to the city boundary. SB 244 identifies communities within a Sphere of Influences as a fringe community. These fringe communities include Ford City, South Taft, and Taft Heights. Below is a table listing the City of Taft and the three fringe communities along with population, household, voter, and income attributes, which may qualify them as a DUC:

Table 2.P – City of Taft and Fringe Communities

Community	Population	2009-2013 ACS Median Income	# of Households	# of Registered Voters
Taft	<u>9,192</u>	<u>\$50,441</u>	<u>2,313</u>	<u>----</u>
Ford City	<u>4,106</u>	<u>\$37,171</u>	<u>1,323</u>	<u>1,065</u>
South Taft	<u>2,381</u>	<u>\$40,027</u>	<u>583</u>	<u>451</u>
Taft Heights	<u>2,183</u>	<u>\$50,929</u>	<u>776</u>	<u>658</u>

The median household income for California per the U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey for 2009 to 2013 was \$61,094. A disadvantaged community with an area median income of \$48, 875 or less would meet the less than 80% threshold. Therefore, the City of Taft fringe communities that meet the SB 244 definition of a DUC are Ford City and South Taft.

Disadvantaged Unincorporated Communities Services

All three fringe communities are services by the Kern County Fire Department Station No. 21 that serves the City of Taft. The Taft Area Transit, West Kern Water District, Westside Waste Management, and West Side Recreation and Park District also currently provide their services to the City of Taft, Ford City, South Taft and Taft Heights.

Ford City and South Taft are currently underserved with regard to right-of-way infrastructure. Most streets are not completed with curb, gutter and sidewalks. The current condition of the roadways and alleyways are poor and need repairs. Along with the roads, Ford City and South Taft do not have adequate drainage improvements or stormwater protection. Most flows from the south and southwest sheet flow down streets and across properties until they empty into Sandy Creek on the north and east side of Taft. An improvement to area roads would aid in providing stormwater protection.

While Ford City and Taft Heights are connected into the same wastewater treatment facility as the City of Taft, many South Taft properties still handle their wastewater with septic tanks. Most South Taft properties are less than a quarter acre in size (approx. 10,000 square feet), which is inadequate for allowing proper overflow leach fields for the septic tanks. In 2014, the County of Kern completed a sewer trunk line extension southward from the intersection of 4th Street and Supply Row in Taft, which extended into South Taft along Asher Avenue. However, only four properties have abandoned their septic tanks and connected to the new sewer line.

2.11 WATER SERVICES

The West Kern Water District (WKWD) is the domestic water supply agency for most of the western portion of Kern County, including the City of Taft and sphere areas, City of Maricopa, and other unincorporated communities of Dustin Acres, Valley Acres, Derby Acres, Fellows, Tupman and McKittrick. The WKWD 2010 Urban Water Management Plan (UWMP) found that the district had sufficient storage, reserves, and contracts on other water sources to adequately provide domestic water service for the City of Taft and fringe unincorporated communities.

Single Family Residential, the predominant land use in the City of Taft and fringe communities, made up 14% of the WKWD water demand for 2010. It should be noted that the single family residential uses in the Maricopa, Dustin and Valley Acres, and other county communities are included in the 14% demand. The WKWD provides water predominantly to industrial customers, which is 80% of the overall demand.

The 2010 UWMP called for a 5% reduction in domestic water use by 2015 and a 10% reduction by 2020 as an agency goal. All new development projects within the City of Taft are required to submit construction plans to WKWD for a water demand analysis. The analysis determines the project's demand on the current supply and fees charged on the project to ensure additional water supplies are secured from WKWD wholesale suppliers.

In 2014 and 2015, with multiple consecutive drought years, the WKWD implemented state emergency water use regulations for a reduction of 28% compared to 2013 usage by February 2016. The emergency measures focused on residential and commercial landscape irrigation by limiting watering days and times, while also requiring shot off nozzles on hoses and prohibiting the watering of streets, sidewalks, driveways, and other surfaces in lieu of sweeping or air blower. Other suggested measures included limiting water serving at restaurants, reducing about of laundered linens at hotels and motels, and encouraging proper maintenance of swimming pools to reduce the frequency of draining and refilling of the pools.

The City of Taft adheres to the California Building Code (CBC), Title 24 Part 5, the California Plumbing Code to ensure all new residential and non-residential developments are water efficient and not a significant burden on water supplies. The CBC also calls for water efficiency upgrades on existing homes if a renovation project exceeds a certain threshold of overall project valuation. City staff work with property owners, developers and contractors to effectively implement these water conservation measures.

2.12 DETERMINATIONS FOR THE CITY OF TAFT

The Service Review guidelines prepared by the State Office of Planning and Research recommend that issues relevant to the jurisdiction be addressed through written determinations called for in the Act. Based on the above information, the following are the written determinations the City of Taft.

Infrastructure Needs and Deficiencies

Purpose: To evaluate the infrastructure needs and deficiencies in terms of supply, capacity, condition of facilities, and service quality.

1. The City's Working Capital Reserve for Operating Fund ensures the financial resources to upgrade or add additional facilities or equipment to meet the service needs of the community.
2. The wastewater treatment plant upgrade and expansion has increased the plant's capacity to an average daily flow of 1.5 MGD, and corrected all known deficiencies. This project gives the City the ability to provide adequate wastewater services for the next 15 years with no additional infrastructure needs other than possible line extensions.
3. The police station can accommodate up to 30 sworn officers and support staff. At this time the Department has 13 sworn officers; hence, this facility has ample room and should be able to accommodate growth of the Department.

4. The capacity of the Taft Sanitary Landfill will be able to accommodate future solid waste disposal needs of City of Taft through 2076.
5. The City has identified two fringe communities, Ford City and South Taft, that meet the SB 244 definition of a Disadvantaged Unincorporated Community (DUC). At such time the City seeks to annex unincorporated land, a more detailed infrastructure needs analysis will be required along with a capital improvement plan to mitigate the found infrastructure deficiencies.
6. Taft's Pavement Management System was implemented to coordinate and manage the planning, design, construction, maintenance, scheduling, evaluation, and research associated with roadway improvement projects within the City.
7. Current roadways and parking facilities that are under the jurisdiction of the City are adequate to handle the expected growth in traffic through the year 2035. However, the roads will continue to require maintenance and improvements regularly.
8. Between the City, County, and West Side Recreation and Park District, the residents of the community have ample parkland, which currently exceeds the City's standard.

Growth and Population

Purpose: To evaluate service needs based upon existing and anticipated growth patterns and population projections.

1. The growth that has been projected by Kern COG shows a moderate growth rate within the Greater Taft/Maricopa Regional Statistical Area through 2023. Specifically, the population of the area is projected to grow 3.3 percent annually and the number of households is projected to grow 1.1 percent annually.
2. The potential for physical expansion of City boundaries is constrained by the unincorporated communities to the north and the south, by the location of existing oil fields, and by land owner constraints.
3. Annexation options are limited due to the unavailability of vacant land and fiscal constraints involved with annexing adjacent existing unincorporated communities.

Financing Constraints and Opportunities

Purpose: To evaluate a jurisdiction's capability to finance needed improvements and services.

1. The City has established budget procedures, which are used as a guideline for preparing the municipal budget each year.
2. The City prepares a comprehensive and thorough annual budget that describes the services provided to the residents and the funds expended for those services.
3. In addition to the City's budget, the Working Capital Reserve for Operating Fund ensures the financial viability of the City.

4. The City is operating in the black, and is hoping to be able to offset upcoming State budget cuts as they occur. Other than State budget issues, there are no other apparent fiscal constraints limiting the ability of the City to serve existing and future residents.
5. The City has in place investment policies that ensure investments will be subject to prudent investor standards.
6. At such time the City seeks to annex unincorporated land, a detailed costs and funding availability analysis will be required along with a capital improvement plan to mitigate the found infrastructure deficiencies in the adjacent fringe communities of Ford City and South Taft.

Cost Avoidance Opportunities

Purpose: To identify practices or opportunities that may help eliminate unnecessary costs.

1. The City of Taft has policies contained within its Municipal Code to guide the City's procurement of goods and services.
2. The City participates in the Central San Joaquin Valley Risk Management Authority, which is a common risk management and insurance program. This allows the City to secure insurance coverage at low rates.
3. The City pursues grant funding where possible for projects designed to benefit the community and its citizens.
4. One of the key elements of the City's Pavement Management System is the evaluation of the most cost-effective maintenance in order to optimize the expenditure of available funds.

Opportunities for Rate Restructuring

Purpose: To identify opportunities to impact rates positively without decreasing service levels.

1. The wastewater service rates imposed by the City of Taft are comparable to those of the City of Shafter and Bakersfield.
2. The rates for solid waste services imposed by the Westside Waste Management are comparable to surrounding jurisdictions in Kern County.
3. Rates and fees for services are established using the City's ordinances and regulations. The City utilizes City Council meetings to invite citizen participation when establishing new or increased fees.
4. Rates charged for services are adequate to cover existing expenses.
5. The rates for wastewater treatment and solid waste services should be analyzed during the annual budget process, to ensure that charges and fees are adequate to cover expenditures and meet the legal requirements for a clear nexus between the fee and the uses.

Opportunities for Shared Facilities

Purpose: To evaluate the opportunities for a jurisdiction to share facilities and resources to develop more efficient service delivery systems.

1. The City has several cooperative arrangements with other agencies that provide both management efficiencies and cost savings for both Taft and the partner agency.
2. The City is a member of a joint powers agreement with the Taft Heights/Ford City Sanitation Districts in the ownership and operation the waste water treatment plant. The City of Taft owns 52 percent and Ford City-Taft Heights Sanitation District owns 48 percent.
3. The Taft Police Department has several agreements for shared facilities and services with the City and other agencies. These cooperative agreements help the Department and its partners provide additional services without needing additional funding.
4. The City contracts for fire protection services with the Kern County Fire Department and leases the former City fire station to the Bureau of Land Management.
5. The City works cooperatively and effectively with other jurisdictions to find cost-effective ways of providing services.
6. The City consistently looks for opportunities to collaborate with other agencies and jurisdictions, but has not identified opportunities beyond those it has implemented.
7. The City has demonstrated its ability to share facilities and services with other jurisdictions.

Government Structure Options

Purpose: To consider the advantages and disadvantages of various government structures to provide public services.

1. It is reasonable to conclude that public services can be provided by the City of Taft under the existing government structure.
2. The mutual aid agreement between the City and the County for police and fire protection services maximizes services to the citizens, while minimizing costs and the need for additional facilities. The City contracts for fire protection services with the Kern County Fire Department, and leases the former City of Taft Fire Department station building to the Bureau of Land Management for their fire protection services on BLM land.
3. The City, County and West Side Recreation and Parks District should continuously evaluate the reorganization of park management, maintenance, and funding of park facilities in order to find opportunities to eliminate and streamline overlapping services and provide more efficient planning of future services.

Evaluation of Management Efficiencies

Purpose: To consider the management structure of the jurisdiction.

1. The City's budget and accounting practices are audited every year by a certified public accountant.
2. The City Treasurer is required to submit a monthly investment report to the City Council and City Manager.
3. The Taft Police Department has received an award for outstanding training; the Taft Community Correctional Facility has received high ratings for its operations and training; and the Kern County Grand Jury has had excellent reviews of the Department's performance.
4. The Police Chief ensures that the Department's goals are being reached and that staffing is adequate by routinely utilizing crime rates and response times.

Local Accountability and Governance

Purpose: To evaluate the accessibility and levels of public participation associated with the agency's decision-making and management processes.

1. The City has historically made reasonable efforts to maintain a public dialogue regarding issues of concern to the community. The City's outreach program utilizes: the local newspaper, the Internet, email, television, mailings, and citizen advisory committees.
2. Prior to budget approval, public meetings are conducted to include citizen concerns.
3. The City encourages public participation in Council meetings and other City business.
4. The City's website provides information about upcoming Council and Planning Commission meetings and provides minutes of previous meetings.
5. City Council meetings are tape-delayed broadcast on a local television channel and posted on a City YouTube channel.
6. The City provides information to residents and businesses through mailings, which are distinguished from advertisements by the City using envelopes containing the City's logo.
7. The City utilizes citizen advisory committees, which include the Beautification, Housing, and Economic Development Committees.

~~2.413~~ DETERMINATIONS FOR THE WEST SIDE RECREATION AND PARK DISTRICT

The Service Review guidelines prepared by the State Office of Planning and Research recommend that issues relevant to the jurisdiction to be addressed through written determinations called for in the Act.

Based upon the above information, the following are the written determinations for the West Side Recreation and Park District.

Infrastructure Needs and Deficiencies

Purpose: To evaluate the infrastructure needs and deficiencies in terms of supply, capacity, condition of facilities, and service quality.

1. The District has ample facilities and services to meet the park and recreation needs of the community it serves.
2. The District is not anticipating any expansion of facilities or services.
3. The District's recreation and park facilities offer numerous different activities and have many different amenities to serve community members of all ages and abilities.

Growth and Population

Purpose: To evaluate service needs based upon existing and anticipated growth patterns and population projections.

1. The growth that has been projected by Kern COG shows a moderate growth rate within the Greater Taft/Maricopa Regional Statistical Area through 2023. Specifically, the population of the area is projected to grow 3.3 percent annually and the number of households is projected to grow 1.1 percent annually.

Financing Constraints and Opportunities

Purpose: To evaluate a jurisdiction's capability to finance needed improvements and services.

1. Due to budget constraints, the District will only produce and distribute one brochure this year. In previous years the District has produced between two and three.
2. The District's Board would like to expand facilities and services; however, the District has revenue constraints, which are created by the decline in tax revenue and the low user fees.
3. Since the majority of revenue supporting the District comes from taxes on oil field property, the assessed valuation and resulting property tax revenue is difficult to estimate and makes budgeting difficult.

Cost Avoidance Opportunities

Purpose: To identify practices or opportunities that may help eliminate unnecessary costs.

1. The District's agreement for sharing facilities is cost-effective, as the District does not need to pay to rent other facilities when needed.

2. District utilizes its maintenance staff to complete 90 percent of all maintenance of equipment and to complete the required reports for the County and State.

Opportunities for Rate Restructuring

Purpose: To identify opportunities to impact rates positively without decreasing service levels.

1. Rates and fees for services are established using the District's regulations. The District utilizes Board meetings to invite citizen participation when establishing new or increased fees.
2. The District's Board is hesitant to raise rates for park and recreation facilities and services.
3. Rates charged for services are sufficient to cover existing expenses.
4. The rates should be analyzed during the annual budget process, to ensure that charges and fees are adequate to cover expenditures and meet the legal requirements for a clear nexus between the fee and the uses.

Opportunities for Shared Facilities

Purpose: To evaluate the opportunities for a jurisdiction to share facilities and resources to develop more efficient service delivery systems.

1. The District has an agreement for sharing facilities with the Taft City Schools, Taft Union High School, and Taft College.
2. The District has been open to opportunities to collaborate with other agencies and jurisdictions to provide increased and better services.
3. The District should routinely explore potential efficiencies that could be achieved through shared equipment and personnel with the City of Taft.

Government Structure Options

Purpose: To consider the advantages and disadvantages of various government structures to provide public services.

1. It is reasonable to conclude that public services can be provided by the District under the existing government structure.
2. The existing government structure is responsive to its citizens and capable of making service and growth decisions about the community.
3. The District should evaluate opportunities that may be gained by restructuring the provision of parkland within the City of Taft and eliminate overlapping service providers. Eliminating the overlapping service areas could result in overall efficiencies by having centralized maintenance and administration.

Evaluation of Management Efficiencies

Purpose: To consider the management structure of the jurisdiction.

1. In an effort to save money and increase efficiency, the District eliminated the Assistant Director position. The responsibilities of this position were divided among the remaining staff members.
2. Yearly audits to ensure fiscal accountability are prepared by a certified public accounting firm.

Local Accountability and Governance

Purpose: To evaluate the accessibility and levels of public participation associated with the agency's decision-making and management processes.

1. The District has historically made reasonable efforts to maintain a public dialogue regarding issues of concern to the community. The District utilizes the local newspaper, the District's website and mailings to communicate to the community.
2. To advertise the District's programs, activities, and facilities the District mails brochures to residents and program participants, posts flyers at schools, and lists all activities on the District's website.
3. Board meetings are held pursuant to the Brown Act and are attended by the District's attorney.
4. Information about Board meetings is posted at the District office, listed on the District's website, and included in the local newspaper.
5. The District provides time at each meeting for public input and encourages groups such as the Little League and Children's Camp Association to give reports.

SIGNAGE FOUNDATION 2016 ANALYSIS

THE STATE OF SIGN CODES AFTER *REED V. TOWN OF GILBERT*

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signage foundation, inc.

THE REED CASE

THE U.S. SUPREME COURT'S JUNE 2015 DECISION

in *Reed v. Town of Gilbert* was, undoubtedly, the most definitive and far-reaching statement that the Court has ever made regarding day-to-day regulation of signs. But the *Reed* case, while very clear about the rules that must be applied to the regulation of temporary non-commercial signs, provided only scant guidance about how courts should treat sign regulations that apply to commercial business signs or that differentiate between on-site and off-site signs. In the nine months since the *Reed* ruling, lower court decisions have begun to provide additional guidance on these questions while some questions remain unanswered.

CONTENT-BASED REGULATION OF SIGNS IS UNCONSTITUTIONAL

The rules that Justice Thomas announced in *Reed* are straight-forward for non-commercial signs: a regulation that “on its face” requires consideration of the content of a sign is “content-based” and will be subjected to strict scrutiny.

Further, a regulation that is facially content-neutral could still be considered content-based if its purpose is related to the message on a sign. For example, a code provision that allowed more lawn signs for election season would be facially content-neutral but might be challenged as being justified by or have a purpose related to allowing “election campaign” messages.

A sign regulation is content-based and subject to “strict scrutiny” even if the government (i.e. local officials) did not intend to restrict speech or to favor some category of speech for benign reasons. Justice Thomas wrote: “In other words, an innocuous justification cannot transform a facially content-

based law into one that is content-neutral.”

Justice Thomas specified that a content-based sign regulation (including a regulation that is facially content-neutral but justified in relation to content) is presumed to be unconstitutional and will be invalidated unless government can prove that the regulation is narrowly tailored to serve a compelling governmental interest. This is known as the “strict scrutiny” test, and few, if any, regulations survive strict scrutiny. We don’t know what, if any, content-based regulations might survive strict scrutiny.

NEARLY EVERY SIGN CODE IS AFFECTED BY REED

Justice Thomas’s opinion calls into question almost every sign code in this country:

Temporary Signs: Few, if any, codes have no content-based provisions under the rules announced in *Reed*. For example, almost all codes contain content-based exemptions from permit requirements (real estate signs, political and/or election signs, “holiday displays,” etc.), and almost all codes also categorize temporary signs by content, and then regulate them differently. For example, a “real estate” sign can be bigger and remain longer than a “garage sale” sign. *Reed* failed to provide an answer to how we provide for the public’s desire for more signage during election campaigns in a wholly content-neutral manner.

Permanent Signs: Many sign codes also have content-based provisions for permanent signs. Because the *Reed* rules consider “speaker-based” provisions to be content-based, differing treatment of signs for “educational uses” vs. “institutional uses” vs. “religious institutions” would be subject to strict scrutiny. The strict scrutiny test could also apply for differing treatment of signs for “gas stations” vs. “banks” vs. “movie theaters.”

“TIME, PLACE OR MANNER” REGULATIONS ARE CONTENT-NEUTRAL, SUBJECT TO INTERMEDIATE SCRUTINY

Reed does not, however, cast doubt on the content-neutral “time, place or manner” regulations that are the mainstay of almost all sign codes, provided they are not justified by or have a purpose related to the message on the sign.

Justice Thomas acknowledged that point, noting that the code at issue in *Reed* “regulates many aspects of signs that have nothing to do with a sign’s message: size, building materials, lighting, moving parts and portability.”

Justice Alito’s concurring opinion, joined by Justices Kennedy and Sotomayor, went further. While disclaiming he was providing “anything like a comprehensive list,” Justice Alito noted “some rules that would not be content-based.” These included rules regulating the size and

location of signs, including distinguishing between building and free-standing signs; “distinguishing between lighted and unlighted signs;” “distinguishing between signs with fixed messages and electronic signs with messages that change;” distinguishing “between the placement of signs on private and public property” and “between the placement of signs on commercial and residential property;” and rules “restricting the total number of signs allowed per mile of roadway.”

But Justice Alito also approved of two rules that seem at odds with Justice Thomas’s “on its face” language. Alito claimed that rules “distinguishing between on-premises and off-premises signs” and rules “imposing time restrictions on signs advertising a one-time event” would be content-neutral. But rules regarding “signs advertising a one-time event” clearly are facially content-based, as Justice Kagan noted in her opinion concurring in the judgment, and the same claim could be made regarding the on-site vs. off-site distinction.

Keep in mind, however, that even content-neutral “time, place or manner” sign regulations are subject to intermediate judicial scrutiny rather than the deferential “rational basis” scrutiny applied to regulations that do not implicate constitutional rights such as freedom of expression or religion. Intermediate scrutiny requires that government demonstrate that a sign regulation is narrowly tailored to serve a substantial government interest and leave “ample alternative avenues of communication.” Because intermediate scrutiny requires only a “substantial,” rather than a “compelling,” government interest, courts are more likely to find that aesthetics and traffic safety meet that standard. That said, courts have struck down a number of content-neutral sign code provisions because the regulations were not “narrowly tailored” to achieve their claimed aesthetic or safety goals.

BEYOND REED

As noted previously, the Supreme Court ruling of *Reed v. Town of Gilbert* provided scant guidance about how courts should treat sign regulations that apply to commercial business signs or that differentiate between on-site and off-site signs. These issues are now being addressed in the lower federal courts, clarifying how these types of signs might be content-based and subject to strict scrutiny.

Commercial signs: To date, the federal courts have ruled unanimously that *Reed* should not be applied to regulations that affect commercial signs. The following quote from *Lamar Cent. Outdoor, LLC v. City of Los Angeles*, 2016 WL 911406, (Cal. Ct. App. Mar. 10, 2016) is typical: “*Reed* is of no help to plaintiff either...; it does not purport to eliminate the distinction between commercial and noncommercial speech. It does not

involve commercial speech, and does not even mention *Central Hudson*.” The *Central Hudson* reference is to the 1980 Supreme Court ruling establishing that regulation of commercial speech should be subject to a form of intermediate scrutiny rather than strict scrutiny.

On-site vs. off-site signs: Treatment of the on-site vs. off-site distinction remains uncertain. Most courts that have addressed the issue have cited Justice Alioto’s concurrence as the basis for dismissing the idea that *Reed* should apply to the on-site vs. off-site distinction. But one federal district court has vigorously disagreed. In *Thomas v. Schroer*, 2015 WL 5231911 (W.D. Tenn. Sept. 8, 2015), the judge noted: “Not only is the concurrence not binding precedent, but the concurrence fails to provide any analytical background as to why an on-premise exemption would be content-neutral. The concurrence’s unsupported conclusions ring hollow in light of the majority opinion’s clear instruction that ‘a speech regulation targeted at specific subject matter is content-based even if it does not discriminate among viewpoints within that subject matter,’ citing *Reed*. Clearly, this issue remains unresolved.

Content-based exemptions: Sign regulations that contain content-based exemptions have not fared well under *Reed*. *Central Radio Co. Inc. v. City of Norfolk, Va.*, 811 F.3d 625 (4th Cir. 2016), is a good example. There, in a challenge first decided before *Reed*, the Court of Appeals had concluded that a sign regulation exempting flags, emblems and works of art was content-neutral and, applying intermediate scrutiny, held that the regulation was a constitutional exercise of the city’s regulatory authority. But when the challenge was renewed after *Reed*, the Court of Appeals reversed its decision and agreed with the plaintiffs that, under *Reed*, the regulation was a content-based restriction that cannot withstand strict scrutiny. Similarly, in *Marin v. Town of Southeast*, 2015 WL 5732061 (S.D.N.Y. Sept. 30, 2015), a federal district court ruled that a regulation that exempted certain signs, but not political signs, from restrictions placed on temporary signage, was a content-based restriction that did not withstand strict scrutiny.

Content-neutral prohibitions: In contrast, courts that have ruled on challenges to content-neutral “time, place or manner” regulations after *Reed* have had little difficulty upholding the regulations. For example, in *Peterson v. Vill. of Downers Grove*, 2015 WL 8780560 (N.D. Ill. Dec. 14, 2015), the court upheld a content-neutral ban on all painted wall signs, and in *Vosse v. The City of New York*, 2015 WL 7280226 (S.D.N.Y. Nov. 18, 2015), the court upheld a content-neutral prohibition on signs extending more than 40 feet above curb level as a reasonable “time, place or manner” restriction on speech.

WHAT NOW?

HOW CAN CITIES RESPOND TO THESE RULINGS?

Some cities are enacting moratoria on sign regulation while they try to figure that out. A court would likely view with disfavor a total moratorium on issuing any sign permits (or, worse yet, displaying any new signs) as an unconstitutional prior restraint on speech. In contrast, a moratorium of short duration – certainly no more than 30 days – targeted at permits issued under code provisions that are questionable after *Reed* is far more likely to be upheld. Cities are also well-advised to suspend enforcement of code provisions – particularly regulation of temporary signs – that are questionable after *Reed*. Obviously, however, *all* sign code structural provisions directly related to public safety should continue to be enforced.

As we all know, drafting a fair and effective sign code that balances a community’s interests is no easy task. Trying to do that during a short moratorium is even harder, but it is certainly not impossible.

TIPS FOR COMPLYING WITH REED

Until the courts provide more guidance on the uncertainties surrounding the *Reed* ruling, arguably the best course of action is to err on the side of allowing for less restrictive, rather than more restrictive, sign regulations.

Remove from the sign code all references to the content of a sign other than the few examples directly related to public safety noted in Justice Thomas’s opinion. Most of these content-based provisions likely will relate to temporary signs. Rather than referring to “real estate” or “political” or “garage sale” signs, your code should treat these all as “yard” signs or “residential district” signs. You then regulate their number, size, location, construction and amount of time they may be displayed, keeping in mind how your residents want to use such signs. You would use the same approach for temporary signs in business districts: replace references to “Grand Opening” or “Special Sale” signs with “temporary business sign” and regulate their number, size, location, construction and amount of time they may be displayed based on business needs for such signs.

All the provisions in your code that refer to number, area, structure, location and lighting of permanent signs are content-neutral and unaffected by *Reed*.

If your code has any content-based provisions for permanent signs, either by specifying content that must (or must not) be on a sign or because you distinguish among uses (e.g., “gas-station signs”), those provisions will be subject to strict scrutiny if challenged. None of these content-based provisions should be retained unless public safety would be so threatened by removal that the provision would survive strict scrutiny. Permanent signs should be regulated in a content-neutral manner with regulations distinguished not by type of use (because that would be “speaker-based”) but by either zoning districts or “character” districts or by reference to street characteristics such as number of lanes or speed-limit. The International Sign Association has a number of resources that can help your community revise your sign code based on the latest research, sign industry expertise and sign-user perspectives.

If your sign code does not have a severability clause and a substitution clause they should be added.

A severability clause provides that if any specific language or provision in the code is found to be unconstitutional, it is the intent of the city council that the rest of the code remain valid. For example: “If any part, section, subsection, paragraph, subparagraph, sentence, phrase, clause, term or word in this code is declared invalid, such invalidity shall not affect the validity or enforceability of the remaining portions of the code.” A substitution clause allows a non-commercial message to be displayed on any sign. While *Reed* did not discuss the commercial/non-commercial distinction, prior U.S. Supreme Court cases established that commercial speech should not be favored over non-commercial speech. A substitution clause thus can safeguard you against liability that could result from mistakenly doing just that by prohibiting the display of a non-commercial message or citing it as a code violation. For example: “Signs containing non-commercial speech are permitted anywhere that advertising or business signs are permitted, subject to the same regulations applicable to such signs.”

IS YOUR COMMUNITY EXPLORING SIGN CODE CHANGES?

CONTACT SIGNHELP@SIGNS.ORG
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