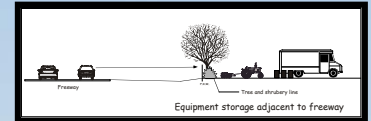


TULARE COUNTY HIGHWAY 99 ENHANCEMENT AND BEAUTIFICATION STRATEGIES



*A PLAN TO BEAUTIFY AND INSTILL PRIDE IN THE
PLACE WE CALL HOME, ATTRACT ECONOMIC
DEVELOPMENT AND CREATE JOBS*

TULARE COUNTY HIGHWAY 99 ENHANCEMENT AND BEAUTIFICATION STRATEGIES



Prepared by

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Visalia, CA

2017

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Why I wrote this plan

I am a lifelong resident of California, born and raised in Fresno, but I've lived in Visalia since 1991. California is the most geographically diverse State in the nation - we have mountains, coastline, desert, major cities and the most productive agricultural land in the world.

It's easy to drive around the state and see some of the most scenic landscapes on the planet, but that is often not what the visitor sees of Tulare County.

Because Highway 99 is our "front door" to the world, the view is sometimes not an attractive one. In some places the roadway is bordered by junk yards, equipment storage, decrepit houses and trailers. It's amazing that a short distance away in our County are Sequoia groves and mountain scenery that people travel from the other side of the world to see.

The unattractive views are not inevitable. With a little effort at screening a few places, and minor changes to zoning standards, we can make the Highway 99 corridor an attractive roadway that stands above the rest of the counties in the valley. Visitors will think - "this place is different from Kern and Fresno and the other counties".

It may sound like these recommendations are geared solely toward "prettying-up" the highway corridor, but it goes deeper than that. Tulare County has some of the most grinding poverty in the nation. If we create a more attractive County, it may lure new businesses and industries to set up shop. It can also help instill pride in our residents, who are more likely to make investments of their own in homes and businesses.

I hope the following document is illuminating and inspiring. I would like to note that while I work as a city planning consultant, I am seeking no income from this document and its recommendations.

Thank you

*Karl Schoettler
Visalia, CA*

1.0 Introduction

Highway 99 is Tulare County's "front door" to the world. For better or worse the scene along the highway provides thousands of travelers their only impression of the County.

While views of verdant agricultural fields showcase the best of Tulare County, other views reveal a less attractive landscape. Unscreened storage and junk yards, truck and equipment lots as well as poorly-maintained properties and other developments detract from the view of the County and leave a less than desirable image.

This report presents a brief overview of the issues and offers some simple, low cost strategies for the County to improve the image of the County along Highway 99. The payoff for these strategies will be an attractive image that sets Tulare County apart, and garners notice throughout the state – helping to attract travelers and prospective businesses, to help build our economy.



"Highway 99 is Tulare County's "front door" to the world – for better or worse."

Strategies are offered to address the following issues:

- How can new development be designed in a way to create an attractive image along the freeway?
- How can existing unsightly areas be screened from view?
- What sort of landscape improvements can be installed within the freeway right-of-way that are inexpensive, low-maintenance and use little to no water?
- Can “Welcome to Tulare County” signs be designed and installed?
- How can billboards be used to improve the image of Tulare County?
- How can code enforcement strategies be used sparingly (and as a last resort) to improve the corridor?
- How can periodic trash pickups be used to improve the County’s image?



- What sources of funding are available for improvements to the corridor, and what other strategies are available?

Applicability

It should be clarified that the recommendations of this report apply only to portions of Highway 99 that are unincorporated, and not those portions within the cities of Tulare and Visalia – although those agencies are certainly free to borrow from and incorporate these recommendations into their own planning and beautification efforts.

What is In This Report?

The chapters of this report are as follows:

1. **Introduction.** *This chapter establishes the purpose of the document and its contents.*
2. **Existing Conditions.** *This section profiles existing conditions along the Highway 99 corridor in Tulare County – both the “good” and the “bad”.*
3. **Existing Models and Examples.** *This chapter profiles positive existing examples of development and screening along highways in Tulare County as well as other locations in the San Joaquin Valley.*
4. **Design Guidelines for Development.** *This chapter establishes strategies that should be applied to future development projects that occur along the highway corridor. Ultimately these simple strategies should be incorporated into the Tulare County Zoning Ordinance as development standards.*
5. **Screening Recommendations and Other Strategies.** *This chapter contains concepts for the screening of existing unsightly areas that exist along the freeway. Other ideas to improve the corridor are offered, such as establishing “Welcome” signs and using billboards to improve the corridor.*
6. **Funding Sources and Other Recommendations.** *This chapter profiles sources of funding that can be used – primarily to establish plantings and screening within selected portions of the corridor.*

2.0 Existing Conditions

Highway 99 is one of four major north-south highway corridors in Central California. The others are US 101, I-5 and US 395. Whereas the three other highways are almost always in view of natural scenery - mountains, hills, forests (and even the ocean), Highway 99 travels through the flat land of the valley with no natural scenic backdrop. So, virtually everything the traveler sees is man-made – whether it be agricultural fields or urban development.

Therefore, the view might be dominated by a junk yard or truck storage facility. These types of uses exist along the other major highways listed above, but there is usually some kind of visual relief in the background, like mountains, hillsides or trees. There is no such visual relief along Highway 99. What you see is all you get.

Fortunately, the vast majority of the 99 corridor in Tulare County is agricultural land – which usually lends an attractive appearance. In these areas agricultural fields and orchards form the scenic backdrop – no improvement is needed to enhance the view.



HIGHWAY 99 IMPROVEMENT PLAN

2: EXISTING CONDITIONS

However there are some stretches of the corridor that are not attractive. Actions should and can be taken to improve the appearance of these limited areas. Improvements proposed in this plan are surprisingly easy to implement – low cost and low maintenance and low/no-water using.

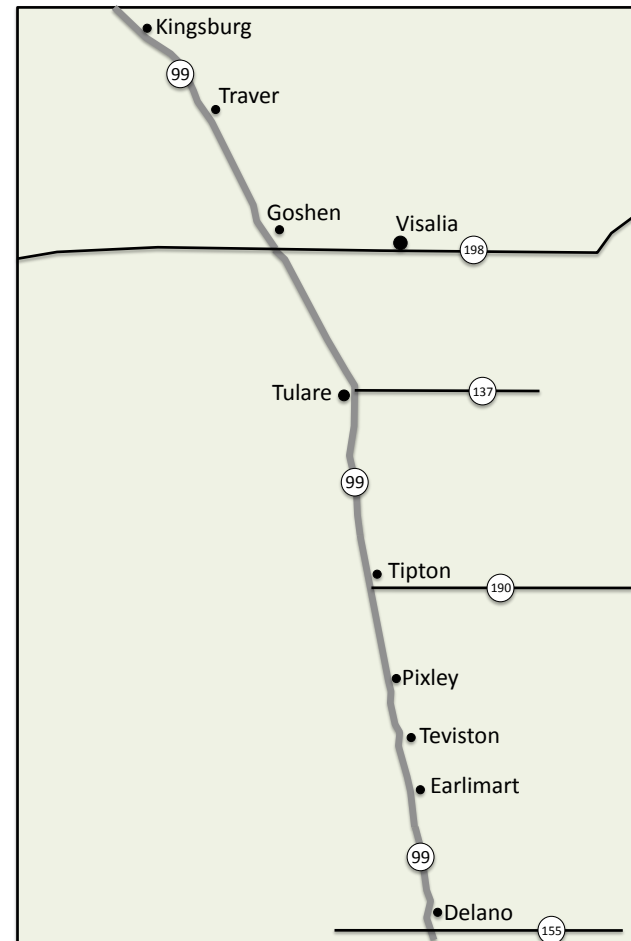


Simple screening in Earlimart. Here, climbing vines are trained onto a chain link fence along the edge of the highway.

The Corridor

The Highway 99 corridor travels approximately 54 miles through Tulare County. There are many attractive vistas along the highway -both agricultural/open space areas well as some attractive examples of urban development along the corridor. At the same time there are some areas that are downright repulsive in appearance.

The following brief photo survey presents some examples, both good and not so good of the Highway 99 roadside in Tulare County.



Highway 99 stretches 54 miles in Tulare County, from Delano in the south, to Kingsburg to the north. The highway passes through six unincorporated communities and two incorporated cities.

“The Good” – Agricultural Vistas

It is easy to forget that highway 99 offers many beautiful views of the County’s agricultural bounty.



A livestock pasture near Kingsburg accented with white fencing.

Vineyards near Teviston



Field and tree crops



*An overpass affords a unique
aerial view of a vineyard near
Teviston*



*A curve along the roadway
offers a unique view of
orchard rows.*



The Good – Developed Areas

Some development projects have been designed to take the view from the highway into consideration – and present a positive and attractive view to the freeway.

The Family Tree Farms facility north of Goshen capitalizes on its exposure to the freeway





Barn style building and split rail style fence at the Martella auction facility south of Tulare reinforces an architectural sense of place.

A service station near Visalia “opens up” to the freeway.



The “Bad” - Visual Clutter

This report wishes to stress that every use along the highway is a legitimate and valuable activity – important to the County’s economy and individual property owners. However there are many instances where little or no thought is given to how some areas make the County look – and the poor impression they may leave with travelers. This section give a brief overview of some examples.



An unscreened storage yard near Pixley. This facility could easily be screened with a line of oleanders or climbing vines on the chain link fence.

HIGHWAY 99 IMPROVEMENT PLAN

2: EXISTING CONDITIONS

The storage and sale of pallets is an important part of the agriculture industry, but they don't need to be displayed along the highway. This facility should be screened from view



Tire shop with tire storage adjacent to the freeway near Pixley. The storage of materials should be screened with landscaping and/or fencing.



HIGHWAY 99 IMPROVEMENT PLAN

2: EXISTING CONDITIONS

Approaching Traver, numerous signs (some illegal) compete for attention and clutter the view.



A gas station near the Kings River was designed to "back up" to the highway, with no landscaping or screening.



HIGHWAY 99 IMPROVEMENT PLAN

2: EXISTING CONDITIONS

Scenes like this illustrate the need for selective use of code enforcement.



A common practice in recent years is to use agricultural trailers wrapped with banners serving as “billboards”.



3.0 Models for Attractive Corridor Design

Simple examples of good design and ways to treat views along the freeway abound in the County and other areas of the Valley (and the state). Following are several existing examples of attractive freeway-side development, as well as good ways to screen unsightly views.

Service station at Caldwell Avenue

This service station at the Highway 99/Caldwell Avenue interchange utilizes Spanish style architecture and has abundant landscaping, presenting an attractive and welcoming image along the freeway. The facility does not “turn its back” to the freeway. Recommendation: Some of the outdoor storage tanks could be better-screened and banner signs removed to improve the image.



Service station near Earlimart



The Akal Travel Plaza south of Earlimart has an abundance of landscape screening and the building uses attractive contemporary architectural styling.

Tejon Ranch development



The Tejon Ranch company has spared no expense in designing attractive commercial facilities at the base of the Grapevine, creating a grand entrance to the San Joaquin Valley. However many design strategies are relatively simple and inexpensive, as shown in this photo. Elements like a ranch style split-rail fence and well-maintained shade trees make this an inviting first impression of the San Joaquin Valley.

*Junk yard screening near Clovis Avenue near
Fowler*



Very simple. A row of mature oleanders effectively screens a junk yard south of Fresno. This strategy is low/no maintenance and low/no water-using.

Tractor dealership south of Fresno



Farm equipment sales and repair is a common activity in the valley. Fresno Equipment Company is located along a Highway 99 frontage road south of Fresno. Abundant landscaping, low profile signage and well-maintained fencing combine to present an outstanding example of good freeway-side design.

Tulare outlet mall



Decorative ants crawling out of the back of the movie theater at the Tulare Outlet Mall offer a whimsical view for the traveler. Some landscaping in the foreground would improve this view.

City of Tulare - trees and shrubbery



A combination of trees, oleanders and other shrubs thoroughly screens the sides of the freeway through the City of Tulare.

Hotel along the freeway in Tulare



*A new hotel (accented with landscaping)
punctuates the skyline near Prosperity Avenue in
Tulare.*

4.0 Guidelines and Standards for new development

As new development occurs it is important to design projects to present an attractive image to the highway. This can mean the way a building and other site improvements are oriented to the freeway, or it can simply mean screening the site with landscaping and fencing.

The County's existing zoning standards pertaining to appearance and aesthetics are minimal, and there is essentially no consideration for how projects appear from the freeway.

This chapter offers strategies for how projects can be designed to present an attractive image along the freeway – from service stations, restaurants and retail centers, to intensive industrial uses and storage yards.

Display to the freeway



Screening from the freeway



Site Design Strategies – Orientation to the Freeway

Where practical, new uses that cater to travelers such as service stations, restaurants and retail commercial development should be designed to orient the front of the building and parking lots toward the freeway, whereas equipment storage areas should be screened or out of site. Several examples of this design are shown in the following photos, and include the former car dealership (now farm equipment dealership) south of Tulare, portions of the Tulare Outlet Center, and the Ritchie auction facility near Pixley.

Farm Equipment Dealership – Tulare

The Krone farm equipment dealership is oriented toward the freeway with some attractive landscaping.



Orientation to the Freeway



Portions of the Tulare Outlet Center are designed to orient toward the freeway.



The Martella Auction facility south of Tipton is oriented to the freeway but would have benefited from some landscaping to soften the view.

Site Design – Orientation Away from the Freeway and Screening Strategies

Some types of uses cannot be oriented to the freeway, and in this case screening is very important. Screening can be accomplished by landscaping, or a combination of landscaping and fencing. However fencing alone should be avoided. Where fencing is used, it should always be combined with landscaping on the freeway side of the site, even if this is only climbing vines.

The following photos show examples of good screening along the freeway.

This example shows the use of oleanders to screen a junk yard along Highway 99 near Fowler





This photo shows how climbing vines trained onto a chain link fence completely obscure the view beyond.

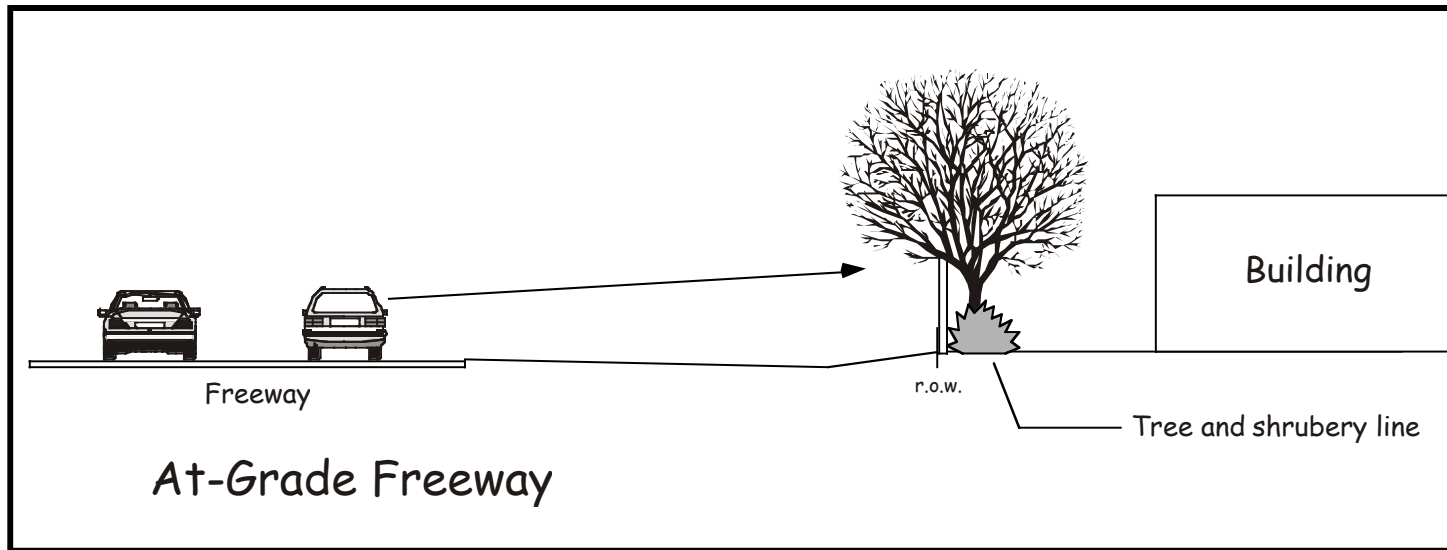
Design Guidelines

The following design guidelines apply to a variety of types of development projects, including:

- projects that are designed to be viewed from the freeway (retail commercial, restaurants, service stations) or
- developments where vehicles and equipment are meant to be displayed for passing motorists; or
- Storage yards and other normally unsightly uses that should be screened from view

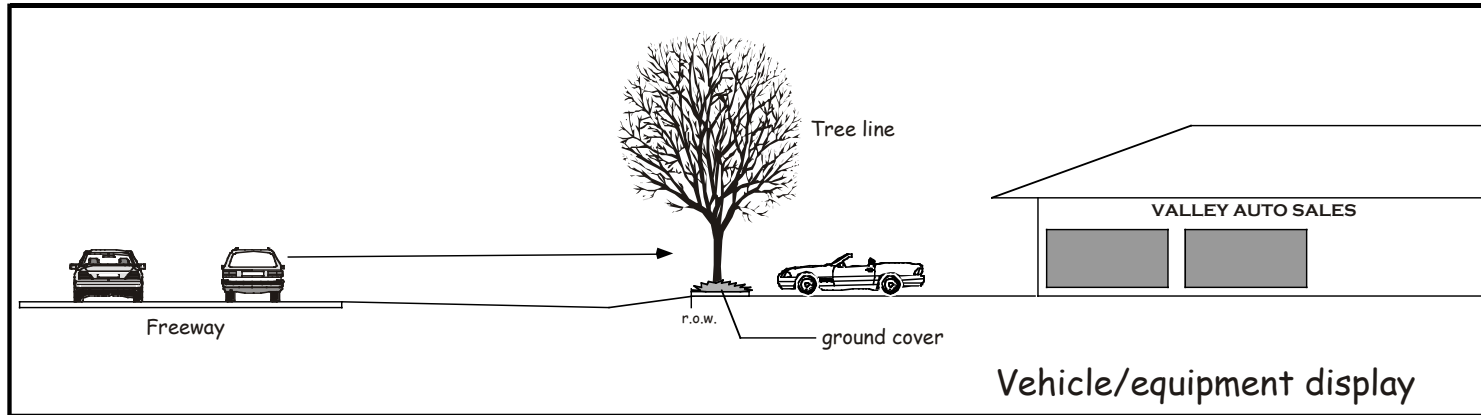
Ultimately these guidelines should be worked into the Tulare County Zoning Ordinance so they are applied consistently to all future development occurring along the freeway.

1. Screening along at-grade freeway for uses that don't need freeway exposure:



Where the freeway is at-grade, abutting uses that don't need freeway exposure should be screened with trees and shrubs. Solid masonry or wood fencing may also be used but should be planted with climbing vines on the freeway-side. Chain link fencing with slats can also provide screening but should be planted with climbing vines.

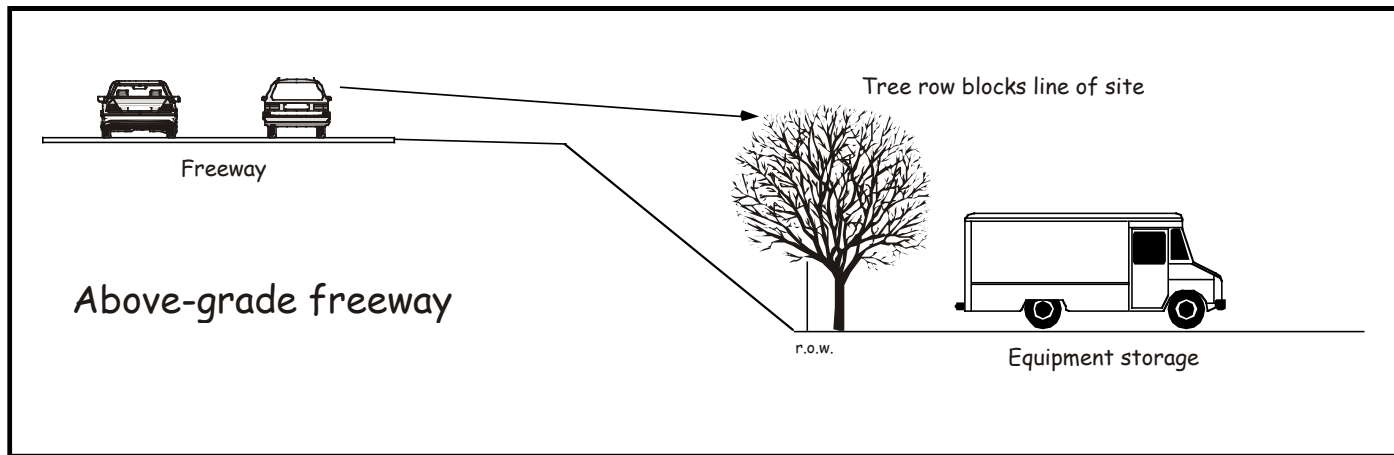
2. Freeway at-grade where business wishes to display vehicles and equipment to the freeway:



Where a business displays vehicles or equipment for sale along the freeway, it is critical that landscaping be provided to “soften” the view. A landscape planter along the right-of-way line with a combination of trees and ground cover plants is recommended.

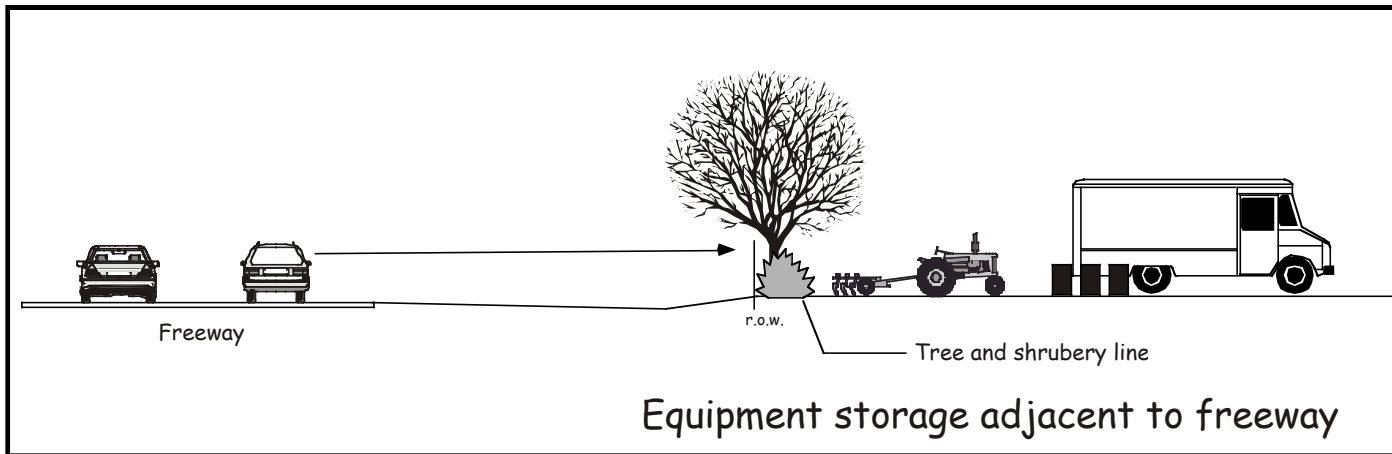
The County must require this treatment – not leave it to chance.

3. Freeway above-grade



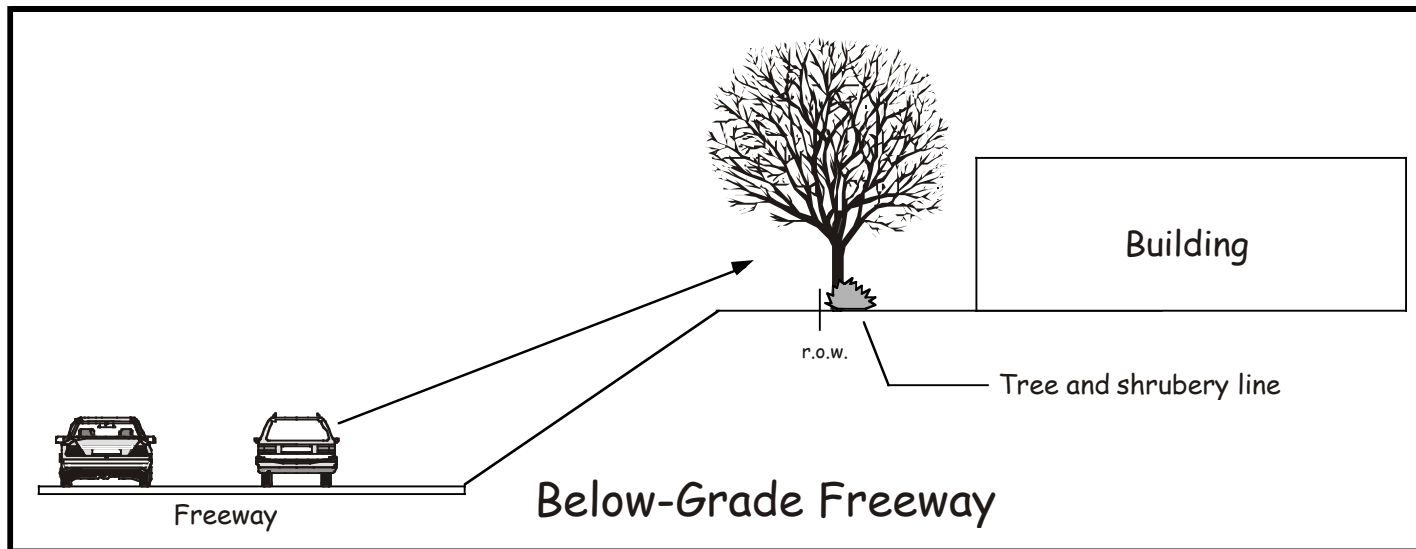
Where the freeway is above-grade, it is important that unsightly storage areas be screened with a solid line of trees. Caltrans could also be prevailed upon to install a small screening wall at the top of the grade.

4. Equipment storage adjacent to freeway



Regardless of the freeway's orientation to abutting property, unsightly equipment and vehicle storage yards must be screened with an appropriate combination of landscaping and fencing. Fencing should be solid masonry, wood or chain link with slats. All fencing should be accented with climbing vines.

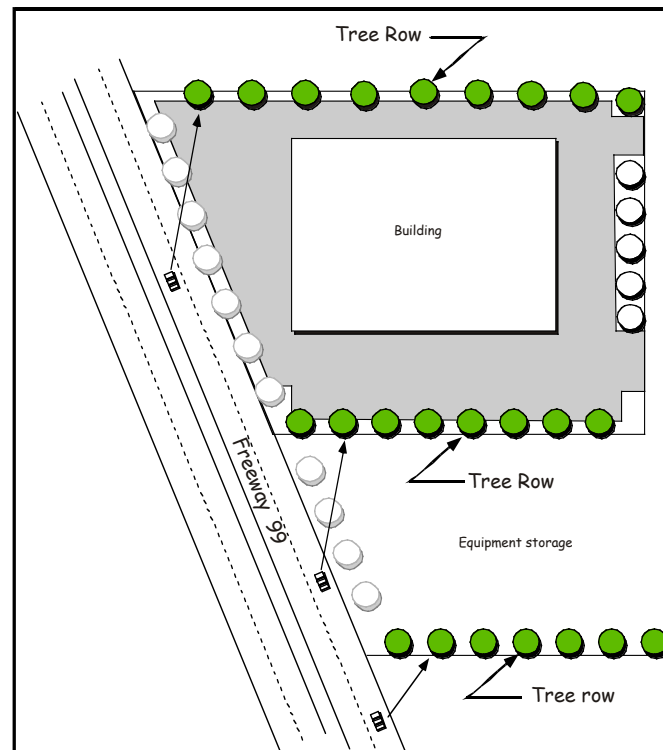
5. Freeway below-grade



Though not as critical as above- and at-grade views, where the freeway is below grade, abutting uses can be screened with trees and shrubs.

6. Tree Rows/Side Screening

Because Hwy. 99 travels through much of the County at an angle, unsightly side-angle views of storage and equipment areas are common. These views can be screened through the use of tree rows along the side property line, as illustrated below.



"DO"



Tree row screens side storage area of business adjacent to freeway.

7. Signs

Freeway-oriented signs should be designed as an integral part of the project they advertise. Architectural elements from the project's buildings (stucco, bricks, siding, etc.) should be applied to the sign design. Monument signs are preferred over pole signs. Signage should be kept to the minimum height necessary to achieve visibility from the freeway.

"DO"



Monument-style sign advertises multiple uses - negating the need for individual pole signs - *Valencia, CA*

"DON'T"



Forest of pole signs.

8. Requiring New Development to Install Landscaping in the Freeway Right-of-Way

Some other jurisdictions (including Fresno County) have been requiring new developments along the freeway to install irrigation and landscaping within the freeway right-of-way – adjacent to the development. This is shown in the photo below. Tulare County could take a proactive stance by establishing this as a requirement for future development adjacent to the freeway. In fact, uses that plant the freeway shoulder could qualify for reduced landscaping on site.

This development south of Fresno was required to install low-maintenance landscaping within the freeway right-of-way, adjacent to the business. The planting could have benefitted more from climbing vines and a taller fence for them to grow on.



Recommendations for Amending the Zoning Ordinance.

This document proposes standards for both screening and landscaping for various types of projects along the freeway.

Screening will most often be appropriate for industrial and storage uses. However there are always exceptions. For example, the Kraft dairy processing facility south of Tulare is an industrial use that has been designed with an attractive frontage on the freeway, even though truck loading facilities are visible from the freeway. These parts of the facility are accented with attractive landscaping. Furthermore there is no unsightly equipment storage along the freeway side of the facility.

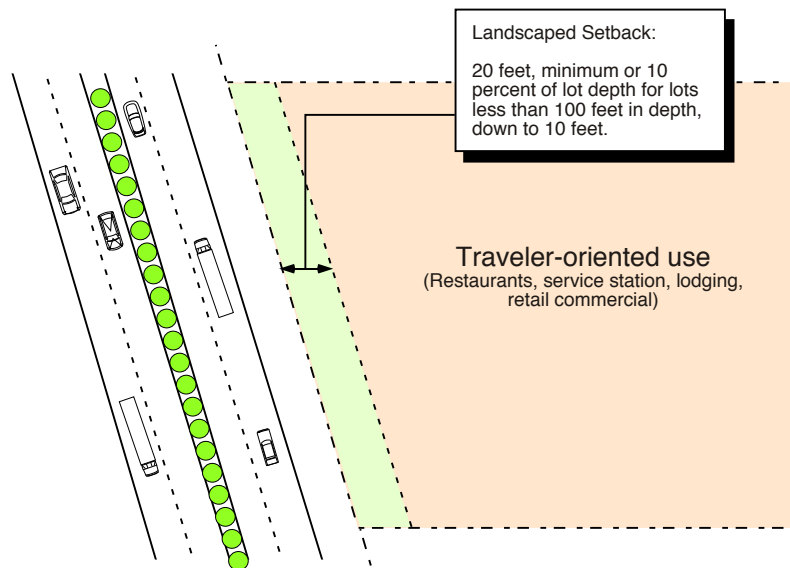


The Kraft facility south of Tulare uses landscaping to soften and accent industrial activities.

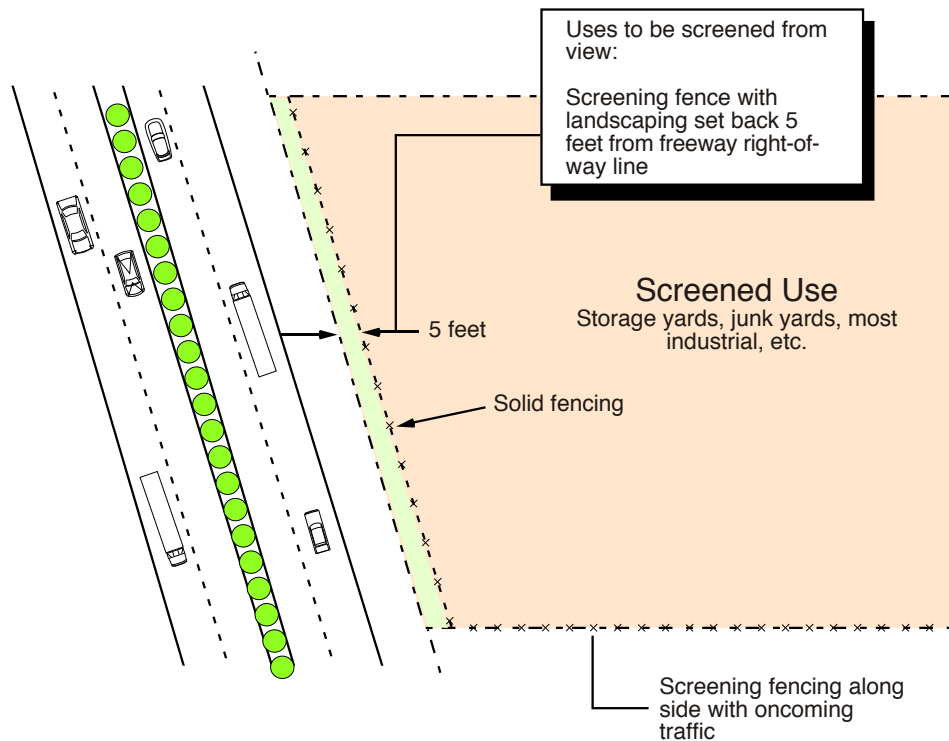
The following amendments to the Zoning Ordinance are proposed:

- All new development that does not require screening shall provide a 20 foot landscaped setback along the freeway. Parcels shallower than 100 feet shall provide a landscaped setback that is 20 percent of the depth of the parcel, down to a minimum of 10 feet.

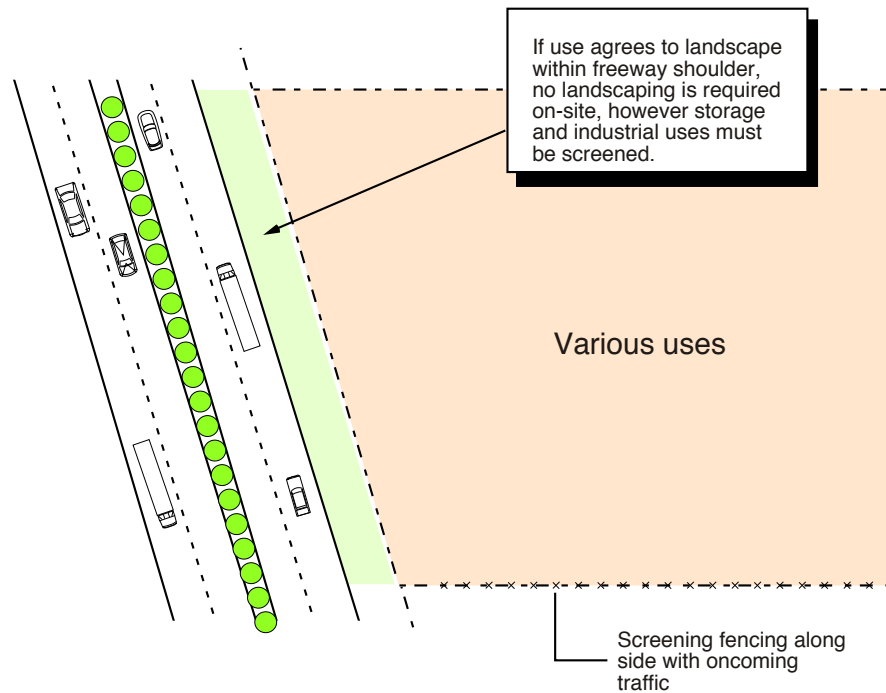
A sample amendment to the Tulare County Zoning Ordinance is shown in Appendix B.



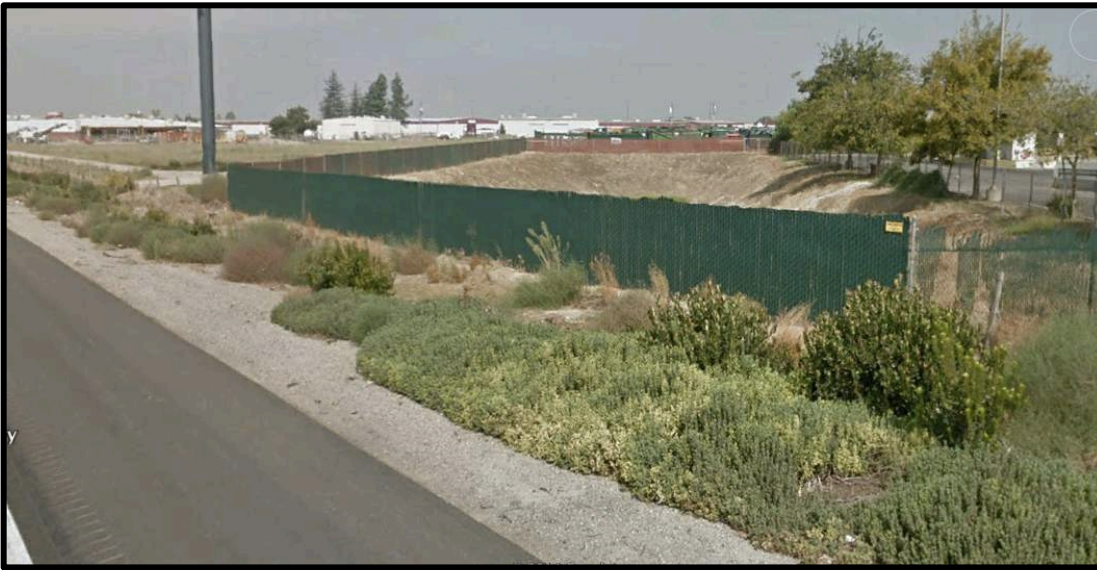
- Uses such as storage and equipment yards, junk yards, industrial uses, etc. shall provide screening and landscaping adjacent to the freeway. A minimum five foot wide landscaped setback along the freeway shall be provided, with a screening fence behind the landscaping.



- Uses that provide landscaping and irrigation improvements within the freeway right-of-way (in coordination with and permitted by Caltrans) do not need to provide landscaping setback, although storage yards and similar facilities must still provide screening via fencing and landscaping.



- Screening fencing shall include installation of fencing at least eight feet high. Higher fencing may be required depending on the position of the site with respect to the freeway and the nature of the proposed use. Fencing shall be either solid masonry or chain link with vinyl screening slats, or a suitable alternative. All fencing shall be planted with climbing vines on the freeway side of the fence.



Chain link fencing with vinyl slats along with landscaping in the freeway right-of-way.

Use Classifications

All zone districts that apply to land adjacent to the freeway should be amended to require Site Plan Review for new uses that are established adjacent the freeway.

Project Review Requirements for New Developments

As noted previously the County's standards for development review are minimal (or sometimes non-existent). For example a storage yard can be established (in appropriate zones) as a permitted use with no standards for screening or landscaping and no review by County staff. As an example, a storage yard was recently established along the freeway in Goshen with minimal review and no requirement for any landscaping or screening along the freeway.

This storage yard was established along the freeway in Goshen and had virtually no planning review or site improvement requirements. This project complies with all "standards" for development in Tulare County. A building permit was required for the storage building – and nothing else. This is "state of the art" zoning and design in Tulare County.



For projects along the freeway these minimal review requirements need to be changed. All new development must be subject to at least site plan review – to ensure that aesthetic issues are considered.

Re-Use of Existing Sites

The re-use of existing previously-developed sites along the Highway presents a difficult situation but can also present an opportunity for positive change. Many existing uses were developed with no consideration to aesthetics. The zoning ordinance considers these to be “legal non-conforming” sites – they were designed according to the standards at the time, but do not necessarily conform to current zoning standards. The County should encourage improvement of these sites whenever expansion occurs or a new use is established. As an incentive for beautification the County could eliminate business license fees, reduce or waive other fees like impact fees, etc.

“Creeping Uses”

The County must remain vigilant about the issues of “creeping uses”. This is when someone establishes a use along the freeway without obtaining permits – and the use grows incrementally until it is considered “established”. A common example is where someone begins storing farm equipment and before long the site has evolved into a large equipment yard. Such uses should be enforced quickly.



An unlicensed storage/sales yard growing along Highway 99 near Goshen.

Signage

Signs for new development should be limited to the maximum height needed to ensure visibility. No sign should be higher than 50 feet. Where practical, signs should be grouped on one monument-style sign. This will help to preclude a “forest” of pole signs.

The County should also adopt a limitation on the maximum area (size) of signage for each business. Without such a limitation a clutter of signs can occur.



Example of a monument-style freeway sign that combines businesses.

5.0 Other Strategies for Improving the Corridor

This chapter presents other concepts and suggestions for improving the visual environment of the Highway 99 corridor through Tulare County, including:

- Strategies for screening or otherwise visually improving existing developed areas
- Welcome signage
- Wayfinding signage
- Billboards
- Code enforcement strategies
- Trash pickup
- Beautification awards



Strategies for Improving Existing Unsightly Areas

There are some key portions of the 99 corridor in Tulare County that have a less than desirable appearance. Fortunately some simple, relatively low cost, low-water-using strategies could go a long way toward improving the image along Highway 99.

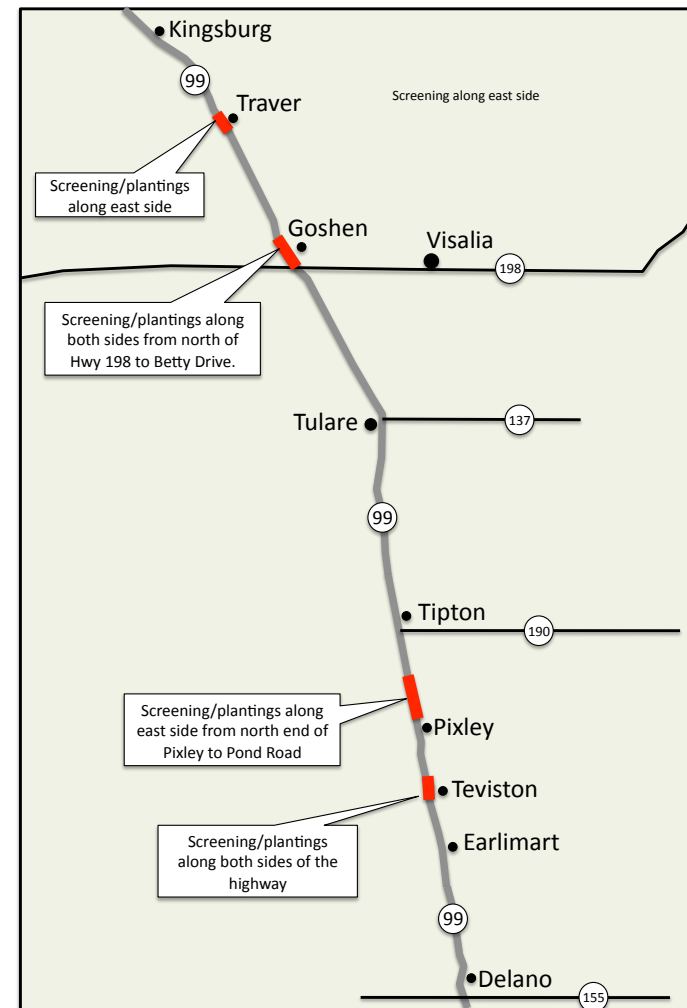
Key areas that suffer from visual blight and which could be enhanced are identified on the map to the right.

Screening unsightly views includes two strategies:

- the establishment of screening plantings (shrubs and trees); and
- the establishment of screening fencing.

The establishment of plantings is the preferred strategy, since fencing can be expensive.

Map 5-1: Key Areas for Screening and Landscaping



Landscaping

Any new landscaping must be simple, low maintenance and drought tolerant. Plant species must be on Caltrans' approved planting list. A screening plant that meets these qualities and which has proven itself over decades is the oleander. Thousands were planted in the median of Highway 99 but unfortunately many have been removed to accommodate widening of the freeway. There is no reason that oleander can't be established along selected portions of the margins of the freeway to screen unsightly views.

Climbing Vines on Fences for Screening

Climbing vines can be trained onto existing chain link fences along the freeway's borders to screen views from the road. This is especially appropriate where narrow shoulders prevent planting shrubs and trees.



Goshen Improvements

The segment of Highway 99 through the Goshen area is an example of one area proposed for visual enhancement. Simple strategies illustrated below are proposed, including the use of vines on fences and oleanders.

Screening vines on fence

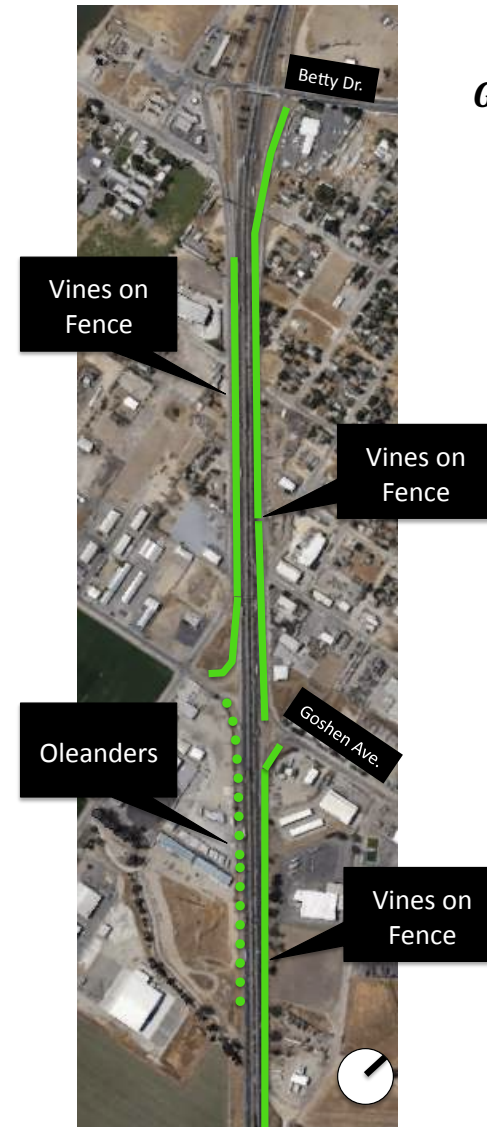


Oleanders to screen view



Recommended Improvements

Goshen Area



Pixley Improvements

The enhancements proposed for the Pixley area are actually from the north end of the community to Avenue 120. Key recommendations include establishing oleanders (especially on the east side of the highway) as well as climbing vines.

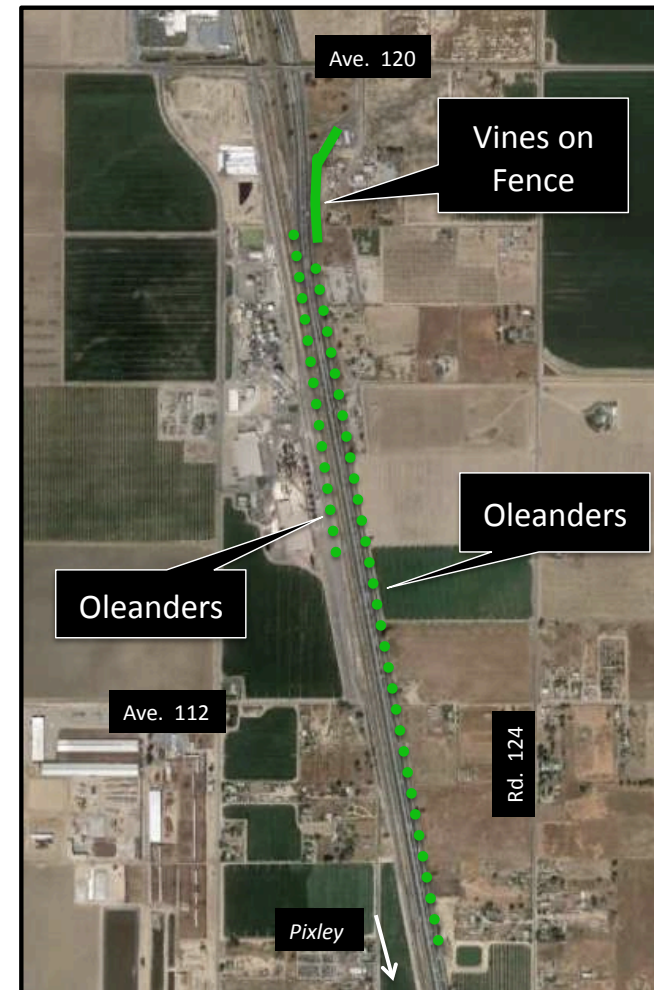
“Existing”



“Proposed”: Oleanders to screen view



Pixley Area Recommended Enhancements



Teviston Improvements

Teviston is located between Earlimart and Pixley. Shrubs and trees are recommended to screen views along the highway.

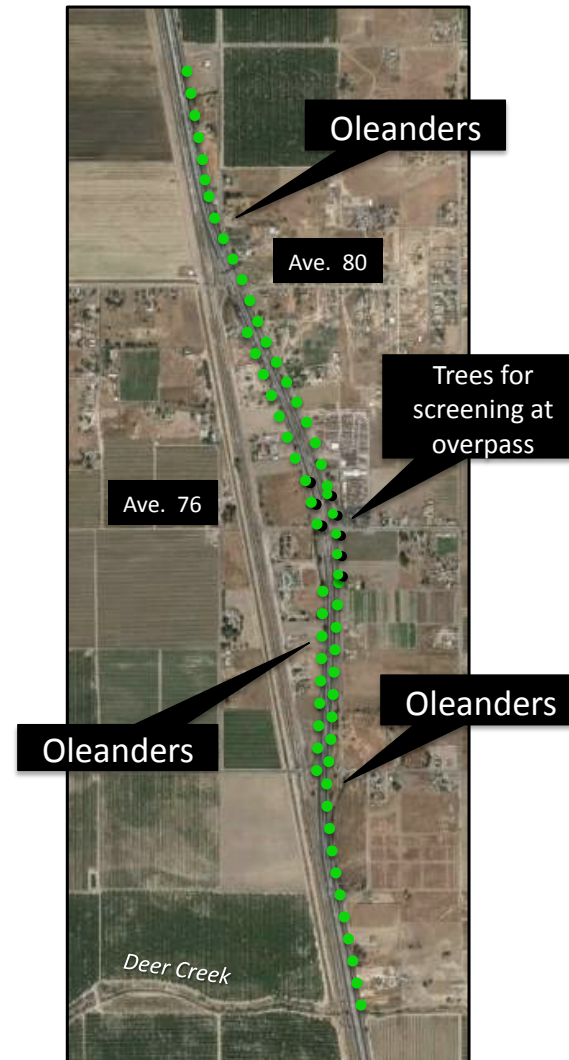
“Existing”



“Proposed”: Trees to screen view



Teviston Area



Traver Improvements

Improvements in the Traver area include shrubs for screening along the east side of the highway.

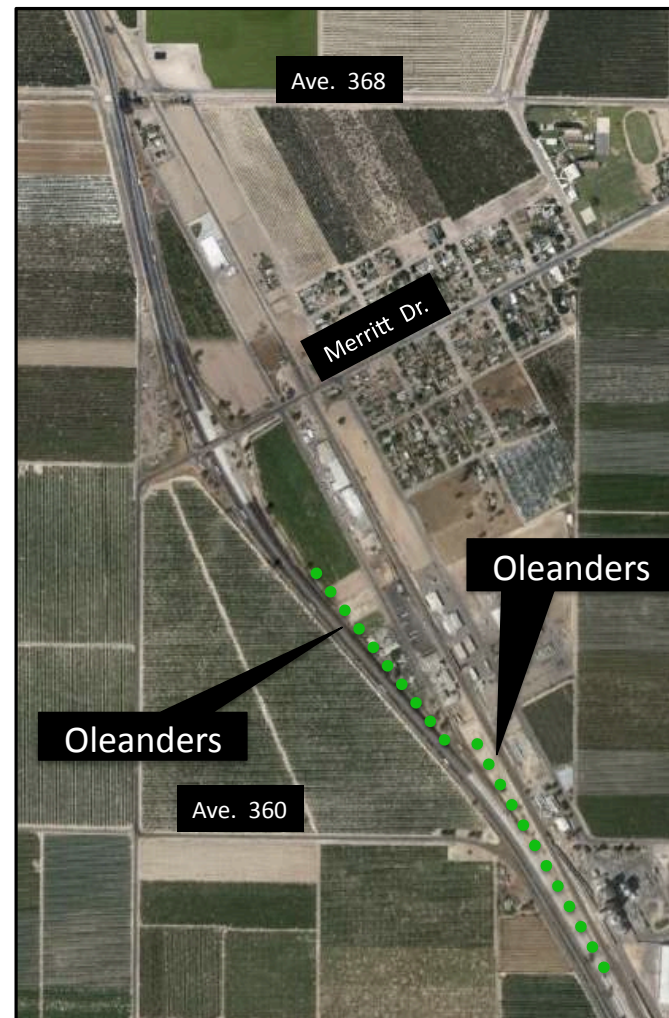
“Existing”



“Proposed”: Oleanders to screen view



Traver Area



Creative ideas for irrigation

Most new plantings will require irrigation (at least to get established). This can be a challenge in many areas as there are no existing water systems. In some areas water lines could be extended from existing Caltrans facilities or local water systems. However in other areas there is no water supply.

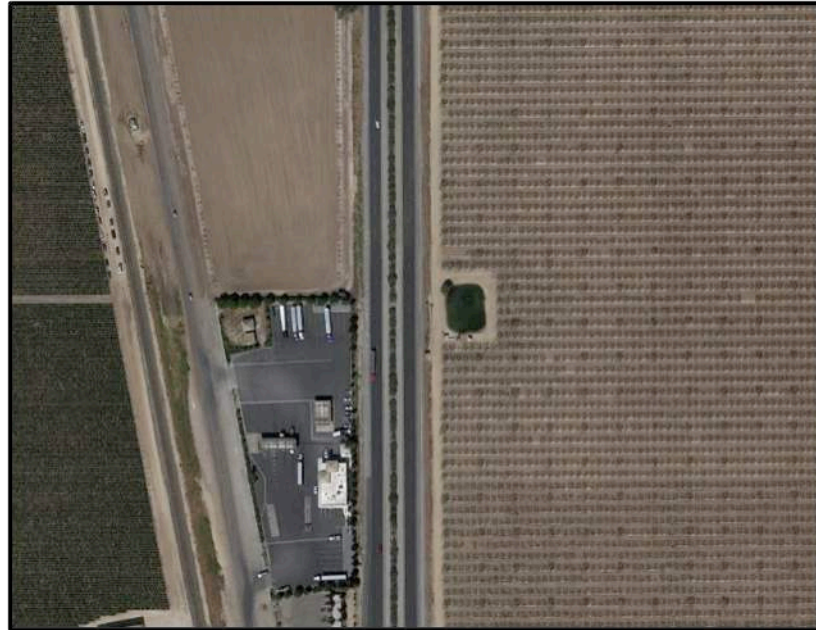
There are some creative ideas for providing water:

- *Water Trucks/Tanks.* In areas with no water source nearby a water tank could be placed along the freeway margin in a safely-accessible location (such as adjacent to a frontage road). A water truck would fill the tank as needed and a valve with a timer (perhaps solar powered) would open to provide drip irrigation to plants. Once the plants are established and don't need supplemental water, the tank could be removed and used elsewhere.



In areas where no water supply is available, a solar powered water storage tank could be used to provide drip irrigation to new plantings. The tank would be refilled periodically by truck.

- *Use Irrigation Tail Water.* There are several irrigation tail-water ponds adjacent the freeway. It might be possible to draw water from these ponds or use other irrigation tailwater from adjacent agricultural operations. Solar powered pumps could be used to draw water, thereby eliminating the need to connect to the power grid.
- *Low-Water Demand plants.* A key to reducing the need for irrigation is the selection of plants with a low demand for water. Some species like oleanders require no water once established. Appendix A contains a list of recommended trees, shrubs, groundcovers and climbing vines.



Aerial photo shows a tail water pond adjacent to the freeway, south of Earlimart. This pond represents a potential source of irrigation water.

Use of Compost for Weed Control

Weed control is a constant task along the freeway. The use of herbicides is being curtailed and mechanical methods (mowing) is expensive. An idea that could be considered is the application of compost. Public agencies are now producing significant quantities of compost (as they are required by State law to divert increasing amounts of landscape waste from landfills). Compost could be applied along freeway shoulders to reduce weed growth – as long as the application of compost does not interfere with storm drainage.



Welcome signage

It is proposed that attractive “Welcome to Tulare County” signs be established at the borders to the County (at the south and north entrances to the County). A sample design is shown to the right.

Whatever design is used for welcome signs it is recommended that historic styles and native materials be used, such as stone, cobbles and timber (as opposed to materials like plastic and stucco).

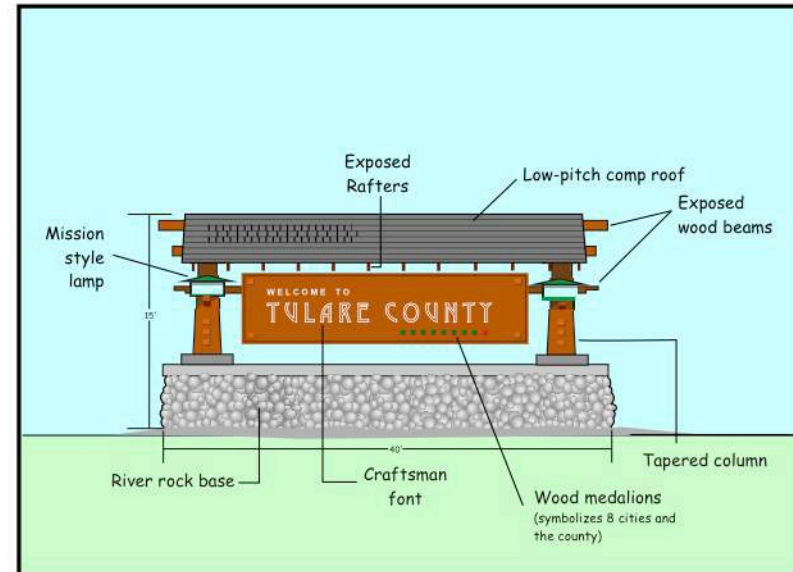


Figure 1: “Sample Welcome to Tulare County” signs

Wayfinding Signage

More and more communities are using special "wayfinding" signage to help visitors locate areas of interest. This type of signage typically provides directions to local landmarks and areas of interest and is located along roadways, often at entrance areas to the community, on heavily traveled streets.

The County should consider such signage along County roads at freeway interchanges along the Highway 99 corridor. Signs would be placed at the end of off ramps, where appropriate.

Signage could be placed in major communities in the corridor, including Earlimart, Teviston, Pixley, Tipton, Goshen and Traver, as well as other appropriate locations.



Billboards

Billboards are an important form of advertising along the corridor. This plan proposes no policies to restrict billboards but does provide some suggestions for ways that billboards can improve aesthetics of the corridor, including:

Require Visual Mitigation:

Any new billboards should be required to establish a certain number of trees within the vicinity of the billboard. For example, a new billboard could be required to plant ten 15-gallon trees in the vicinity of the billboard, along with establishing an irrigation supply

Improving the appearance of existing small billboards:

When billboards first began to appear along highways (in the early 1900's they were typically designed with architectural treatments so they were visually attractive. Typical treatments included lattice panels and decorative wood framework.



Billboards come in a variety of sizes from very tall to low profile.



This is contrasted with utilitarian billboard architecture of today – typically massive steel structures.

There are actually several existing small billboards along Highway 99 that harken back to the old style in the area (see photo to the right).

The County could promote (or even require) architectural treatment of new small billboards in this fashion.

“Old Fashioned” Billboard Style



“Old Fashioned” billboard style – lattice and attractive wood frame work.

Code enforcement strategies

One way to improve unsightly properties along the highway is through code enforcement. This should generally be used as a last resort. Code enforcement should be targeted primarily toward illegal signs (an example is where truck trailers and cotton trailers are being used as billboards) as well as unscreened equipment storage and junk yards, and also as substandard structures.



Illegal signage – banners attached to cotton trailers and truck trailers are becoming more common. These should be targeted for code enforcement.

Trash pickup

Unfortunately trash accumulating along the margins of the highway is a constant problem. Two key ways to address this problem have been the use of the County work crews and also Caltrans's adopt-a-highway program. The use of work crews is likely a more effective method of highway cleanup but can be expensive.



Beautification Awards

The County could recognize businesses and property owners who beautify their properties along the freeway.

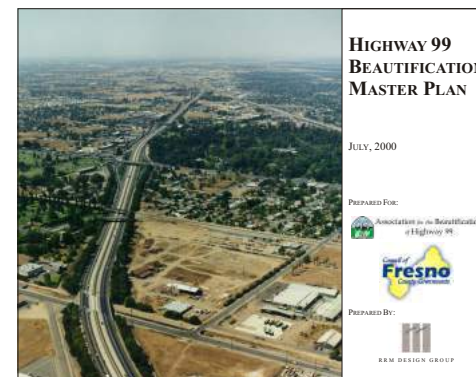
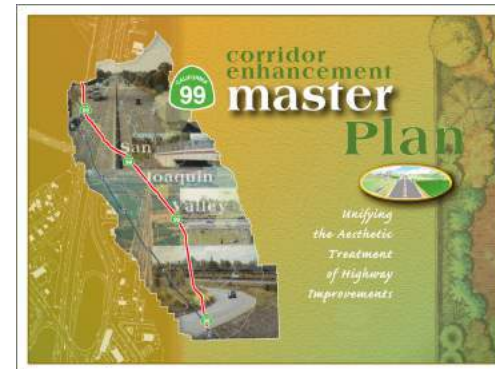


6.0 Precedence, Funding and Schedule

In 1998 the Great Valley Center established a task force to generate ideas for improving the image of the San Joaquin Valley along Highway 99. Members of the task force recognized that 99 is the “Main Street” of the valley and it sometimes doesn’t leave a good impression for visitors.

After several months the task force produced a document called Highway 99 Main Street Plan. The Plan includes a number of strategies for improvements along the corridor, including design suggestions for public agencies to apply as new development occurs as well as landscape and screening improvements within the right of way.

Closer to home a group of interested individuals in Fresno County has worked to adopt the Highway 99 Beautification Master Plan - increasing landscaping along the 99 corridor in that county. To date, several miles along the shoulders of the freeway have been planted with landscaping. Within the past year several miles of oleanders were recently established near Herndon Avenue. Also, the City of Kingsburg has adopted special zoning standards that



require new development to establish landscaping and screening where they abut the freeway.

Caltrans has adopted its own policy document about improving aesthetics along the highway. This document is called the 99 Corridor Enhancement Master Plan: Unifying the Aesthetic Treatment of Highway Improvements”.

Funding Strategies

There are a variety of funding sources that could be tapped for corridor improvements.

United States Environmental Protection Agency-
EPA

Region 9 Office:

75 Hawthorne Street

San Francisco, CA. 94105

<http://www.epa.gov/region09/funding/index.html>

- EPA's Continuing Program Grants
- Project Grants

Funding Sources for Communities:

1. Brownfields Assessment Demonstration Pilots
2. Clean Water state Revolving Fund
3. Environmental Education (EE)



4. Environmental Justice through Pollution Prevention (EJP2)
5. Nonpoint Source Water Pollution Control
6. Pollution Prevention Incentives for States (PPIS)
7. Small Business Innovation & Research (SBIR)
8. Sustainable Development Challenge Grants (SDCG)

CALTRANS TRANSPORTATION ENHANCEMENT
ACTIVITIES PROGRAM

Office of State Landscape Architecture
<http://www.dot.ca.gov/hq/TransEnhAct/index1.htm>

Links to other useful sites: Environmental
Enhancement and Mitigation (EEM) Program

CALTRANS ADOPT-A-HIGHWAY PROGRAM
California Department of Transportation
<http://adopt-a-highway.dot.ca.gov/index.htm>

RESOURCES AGENCY OFFICE OF THE
SECRETARY, CALIFORNIA

Applications available for \$10 million in Grants
for Environmental Enhancement and Mitigation
Projects.

EEM Program applications are available from the
Resources Agency.



1416 Ninth Street, Room 1311
Sacramento, CA. 95814 or at
(916) 653-5656
<http://ceres.ca.gov/CRA/eemp.htm1>

Great Valley Center
911 13th Street
Modesto, CA. 95354
(209) 522-5103
info@greatvalleycenter.org

Regional Transportation Enhancement Activities
(TEA)
Agency: Fresno COG

Air Pollution Control Monies
San Joaquin Air Quality Management District



San Joaquin Valley
AIR POLLUTION CONTROL DISTRICT

Schedule of Actions

Adopt policies: Within six months

Adopt zoning standards: Within one year

Apply for grants: Within one year

Install screening and landscaping improvements within right-of-way: Begin within one year and complete within five years

Install Welcome to Tulare County signs:
Within one year

Conduct highway cleanups: Twice per year

Code enforcement: Immediately. In general a sweep should be conducted once a year, as needed.



Appendix A: Recommended Planting List

The following is a list of recommended plant species. Many other species are available but this list was selected for:

- Ability to screen
- Ability to beautify
- Drought tolerance
- Hardiness



Recommended Trees



Valley Oak (*Quercus Lobata*)



Engelmann Oak (*Quercus engelmannii*)



Coast Live Oak (*Quercus agrifolia*)



Interior Live Oak *Quercus wislizeni*

Recommended Shrubs



Western Redbud (*Cercis occidentalis*)



California Coffeeberry (*Rhamnus californica*)



Toyon (*Heteromeles arbutifolia*)



Coyote Brush (*Baccharis pilularis*)

Recommended Shrubs *(continued)*



Manzanita (Arctostaphylos 'Howard McMinn')



Deer Grass (Muhlenbergia rigens)



Oleander (Nerion oleandrum)

Recommended Groundcovers



Salvia bee's bliss Salvia
leucophylla



Dwarf Coyote Brush (Baccharis
pilularis 'pigeon point')

APPENDIX B: SAMPLE ZONING AMENDMENT

This appendix shows amendments to a typical zone (C-2) to incorporate yard (setback) standards as well as standards for freestanding signs on parcels that abut State Highway 99. These standards could easily be applied to all zones that abut the highway.

SECTION 12: "C-2" GENERAL COMMERCIAL ZONE

(Revised and reorganized by Ord. No. 2714, effective 7-17-86)

The following regulations shall apply in the "C-2" General Commercial Zone unless otherwise provided in this Ordinance.

PURPOSE

- A. The General Commercial Zone is intended for retail stores and businesses which do not involve the manufacture, assembling, packaging, treatment or processing of articles of merchandise for distribution and retail sale. (Revised by Ord. No. 2714, effective 7-17-86.)

USE

- B. No building or land shall be used and no building shall be hereafter erected or structurally altered, except for one or more of the following uses (Re-designated from Subsection A to Subsection B by Ord. No. 2714, effective 7-17-86):
1. Any use permitted in the "C-1" Neighborhood Commercial Zone. (Renumbered from Paragraph A.1 to Paragraph B.1 by Ord. No. 2714, effective 7-17-86)
 2. Retail stores, businesses, or services, as follows: (NOTE: Prior to the effective date of Ord. No. 2714, the C-2 Zone did not contain an extensive use list. Instead, the C-2 Zone permitted all "Retail

stores and businesses not involving any kind of manufacturing, processing, or treatment of products" except certain incidental activities subject to the stipulation which now appear in Paragraph D.1. Therefore, a number of the uses in the following list were considered to have been allowed in the C-2 Zone under the forgoing provision even though they were not specifically identified until the adoption of Ord. No. 2714.)

Antique and art store*

Arcades, including video**

Automated car wash (coin operated only)**

Automobile supply stores**

Automobile storage garage (including repair and servicing)*

Automotive sales, lease and rental, provided (a) that no repair or reconditioning of automobiles shall be permitted except when enclosed in a building, and (b) the outdoor parking or display area is located and developed as required in Section 15*

Bakery goods store**

Bath House, public *

Batting cage if completely enclosed**

Bicycle shops**

Billiard or Pool hall

Bird store or pet shop

Blueprinting and Photostatting shops*

APPENDIX B
Sample Zoning Amendment

Business and professional schools and colleges*	Ice storage house of not more than five (5) ton capacity
Card room**	Interior decorating store
Catering Shops**	Leather goods and luggage stores**
Ceramic shops**	Locksmiths**
Clothing and costume rental** Conservatory of Music Department store	Massage or physiotherapy establishment**
Electric appliance stores and repairs	Medical laboratory
Electric distributing substation	Medical and orthopedic appliance stores**
Fast food restaurant**	Motels
Frozen food locker plants (excluding wholesale processing or cold storage	Music or vocal instruction Music store
Funeral parlor or mortuary*	Newsstand
Furniture store	Newspaper plant
Furniture warehouses for storing personal household goods, provided ground floor front is devoted to stores	New tire sales and service**
Gift, novelty or souvenir**	Nursery, flower or plants and garden supply stores*
Glass shop, retail, excluding major service activities**	Offices**
Hobby and art supply store**	Opticians and optometrists shops**
Household appliance stores**	Paint and wallpaper stores**
	Pet shops**
	Photographic supply stores**

APPENDIX B
Sample Zoning Amendment

Picture framing shops**

Plumbing fixtures for retail sales**

Printing, lithography, engraving**

Private club, fraternity, sorority and lodge whose chief activity is a service customarily carried on as a business (Added by Ord. 703, effective 8-27- 59; relocated from Paragraph A.32a. by Ord. 2714, effective 7-17-86)

Radio and television stores*

Retail office equipment sales**

Satellite antenna sales**

Scientific instrument stores**

Secondhand stores, pawn shops and thrift shops**

Soda fountains**

Stamp and coin stores**

Studios (except motion picture)

Super service station

Taxidermist

Telegraph offices**

Telephone exchange

Tinsmith

Tire sales (no retreading or recapping)**

Tobacco and cigar stores**

Toy store**

Travel agencies**

Variety store**

Watch and clock repair shop**

Wedding chapel

3. Similar uses when determined in the manner prescribed in Section 15, Subsection A, USE, paragraph 1, subparagraph b. (Added by Ord. No. 2714, effective 7-17-86):
4. Accessory buildings and uses including warehousing, customarily incident to any of the above uses when located on the same lot. (Renumbered from Paragraph A.46 and amended by Ord. No. 2714, effective 7-17-86)
5. Incidental manufacturing, processing and treatment of products in conformance with Subsection D, Paragraph 1. (Added by Ord. No. 2714, effective 7- 17-86)
6. Outdoor advertising display signs, including off-site signs in conformance with this Section and Section 15. (Renumbered from Paragraph A.3 and amended by Ord. No. 2714, effective 7-17-86.)

7. Public parking area when located and developed as required in Section 15. (Renumbered from paragraph A.33 by Ord. No. 2714, effective 7-17-86.)
8. Mobilehome for use by caretaker or night watchman of a commercial use when located on the same lot or parcel as the commercial use or a lot contiguous to the lot on which the commercial use is located. (Added by Ord. No. 2299, effective 1-17-80; renumbered from Paragraph A.26.5 by Ord. No. 2714, effective 7-17-86)
9. Jail or correctional institution in conformance with the Public Buildings Element of the Tulare County General Plan. (Added by Ord. No. 2430, effective 8-28-81; renumbered from Paragraph A.25.5 by Ord. No. 2714, effective 7-17-86)

USES REQUIRING A CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT

Because of considerations of noise, fumes, dust, odors, and other hazards, the following uses shall be permitted in the C-2 Zone only if a special use permit has been approved in the manner provided in Section 16, Part II.B.

1. Retail stores, businesses or services as follows:

Feed and seed stores, when the business is in conjunction with any use permitted in Paragraph 1, Subsection B of this Section.
2. Similar uses when determined in the manner prescribed in Section 15, Subsection A, USE, Paragraph 1, Subparagraph b.

Additional uses which are permitted in the "C-2 Zone" only if a Special Use Permit has been approved are set forth in Section 16, II.B. (Amended by Ord. No. 2714, effective 7-17-86; amended by Ord. No. 2878, effective 7-20-89)

DEVELOPMENT STANDARDS

1. Use Conditions: Manufacturing, processing and treatment of products which is clearly incidental to the retail business conducted on the premises is permitted provided that no more than five (5) persons are employed in the manufacture, processing or treatment of products, and that such operations or products are not objectionable due to noise, odor, dust, smoke, vibration or other similar causes, and provided also that unless otherwise permitted all such uses be conducted inside of a building. (Renumbered from Paragraph A.2 and amended by Ord. No. 2714, effective 7-17-86)
2. Height: No building hereafter erected or structurally altered shall exceed six (6) stories or seventy-five (75) feet to uppermost part of roof. (Renumbered from Section B by Ord. No. 2714, effective 7-17-86).

3. Yards

- A. Parcels Abutting Freeway 99: Where a lot abuts the right of way of State Highway 99 there shall be a yard of not less 20 feet, which shall be landscaped with a combination of turf, shrubs and trees. For industrial and storage uses that do not desire visual exposure to the freeway, a setback of five feet shall be provided along with solid fencing and landscaping between the fence and freeway right-of-way.
- B. Front Yard: There shall be a front yard of not less than ten (10) percent of the depth of the lot provided such front yard need not exceed ten (10) feet, and further provided that buildings erected or structurally altered and used exclusively for dwelling purposes shall comply with the front yard requirements of the "R-3" Zone. However, where lots comprising forty (40) percent

or more of the frontage on one side of a street between intersecting streets are developed with buildings having an average front yard with a variation of not more than six (6) feet, no building hereafter erected or structurally altered shall project beyond the average front yard line so established. (Added by Ord. No. 2714, effective 7-17-86)

- C. Side Yard: Where a lot abuts upon the side of a lot in any "R" Zone (R-A, R-O, R-1, R-2 and R-3), there shall be a side yard of not less than five (5) feet. Where a reversed corner lot rear upon a lot in any "R" Zone, the side yard on the street side of the reversed corner lot shall be not less than fifty (50) percent of the front yard required on the lots in the rear of such corner lot. In all other cases, a side yard for commercial buildings shall not be required. However, buildings erected or structurally altered and used exclusively for dwelling purposes shall comply with the side yard requirements of the "R-3" Zone. (Added by Ord. No. 2714, effective 7-17-86.)
- D. Rear Yard: Where a lot abuts upon the rear of a lot in any "R" Zone (R-A, R-O, R-1, R-2, and R-3), there shall be a rear yard of not less than fifteen (15) feet. In all other cases, a rear yard for a commercial building shall not be required. However, buildings erected or structurally altered and used exclusively for dwelling purposes shall comply with the rear yard requirements of the "R-3" Zone. (Added by Ord. No. 2714, effective 7-17-86.)
6. Lot Area: The minimum lot area shall be ten thousand (10,000) square feet; provided, however, that where a lot has less area than herein required and was of record at the time this paragraph became effective, said lot may be occupied by not more than one (1) main building subject to the provisions of this Section. (Added by Ord. No. 2714, effective 7-17-86.)

7. Parking and Loading: Off-street parking and loading space shall be required in conformance with Section 15. (Renumbered from paragraphs A.47 and A.48)
8. Outdoor Advertising Display Signs: No requirements, **except that freestanding signs for uses abutting Highway 99 shall be limited to 50 feet in height, with a maximum of 100 square feet of sign face per side. Multiple uses on a single site (or group of parcels functioning as a single site) shall be limited to one freestanding sign for all uses.**
9. Fences, Walls and Screening: Where the side or rear lot line of a site adjoins or is located across an alley from any "R" Zone (R-A, R-O, R-1, R-2 or R-3), there shall be a solid wall, fence or equivalent landscaping screening at least six (6) feet in height located along the common lot line, except in a required front or side yard. Fulfillment of the requirements of this paragraph shall not be required for buildings and uses which were established in accordance with all applicable building and zoning regulations and which were existing in the C-2 Zone on the effective date of this paragraph, until such time as a permit or other grant of approval for expansion, alteration or development of the property is approved by the County. (Added by Ord. No. 2714, effective 7-17-86.)
- E. (Rescinded by Ord. No. 2714, effective 7-17-86.)
- F. (Rescinded by Ord. No. 2714, effective 7-17-86.)