

NORTHWEST AREA MASTER PLAN

Town of Ridgway
November 25, 2008, as amended

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I. INTRODUCTION

1. Background Information

For over a century the Town of Ridgway's central roads, blocks and alleys have remained a traditional grid network. This network consists of 36 historically platted blocks measuring 300' x 300' arranged in a 6 block x 6 block square grid pattern and encompasses the Historic Residential, Historic Business and Downtown Service Districts. Subsequent to a number of annexations and subdivisions, the perimeter lots, alleys, streets, and open spaces have expanded the original Town boundary into a varied arrangement of lots, blocks, roads and alleys. The Town now also consists of residential, commercial and industrial districts surrounding the historic core.

Commencement of the Northwest Area planning process is subsequent to the Town of Ridgway's 1982 and 1991 Comprehensive Development Plans, the 2000 Master Plan Update and the adoption of both the Transportation Element and Downtown Streetscape Master Plan in 2007. The 2000 Master Plan Update encompasses the 1999 Land Use Element, outlining goals, policies, implementation measures and growth boundaries for the Town. This 2000 document is the primary guidance instrument for land use decisions affecting the Town.

2. Northwest Area Planning Process

At the direction of the Planning Commission, town staff appealed to the community for participation in an Area Planning Task Force. A group of 13 individuals including community members, elected and appointed officials, property owners and staff convened in early 2008 to identify growth and development patterns in this Northwest Area. The Task Force was asked to review the 2000 Comprehensive Plan and evaluate the nine land use goals in the 1999 Land Use Element. Thorough discussion and analysis of these goals resulted in consensus to proceed through a sub-area planning process for the Northwest Area with recognition that the ensuing discussion will contribute significant insight and parallel discussion toward a pending, Town-wide, master plan update.

The services of the land use planning firm, Design Workshop, Inc., were secured to facilitate a sub-area planning process that included public meetings with the Task Force and the community. A series of meetings commenced, including interim joint discussions with the Town Planning Commission.

The boundary for the study area was defined based on developed and undeveloped areas of Town and existing natural boundaries. Design Workshop presented a variety of visual concept plans during the ensuing meetings, which were based largely on the discussions of the Task Force, natural slopes, drainages, existing development patterns within the Town and adjoining property uses. In addition, targeted discussion points identified by the group included land use, transportation, infrastructure (water, sewer, roads, storm water, pathways, and connectivity),

pace/timing/phasing, density, growth boundaries/ annexation and the natural environment/ open spaces.

The sub-area plan and conceptual map present community preferences and objectives identified during this process and are intended to guide development decisions for this area. However, the plan is also designed with flexibility to accommodate future consideration of unidentified or unknown factors, including environmental constraints and sensitive areas such as wetlands and soil conditions, within the Northwest Area.

3. Boundary Definition

The Northwest Area Plan boundary encompasses approximately 138 rural, undeveloped, agricultural acres. The northern portion, which is roughly 74 acres, abuts the northwest boundary of the Town to the west and lies within the Urban Growth Boundary as defined in the 2000 Master Plan. The remaining 64, or so, acres to the south are within the existing Town boundary with zoning designations of Historic Residential and Future Development. The sub-area is generally defined, without metes and bounds, and described as follows (*see vicinity map below*):

Southern Boundary

Town of Ridgway Blocks 8 and 17 abutting Charles Street and bordered by North Elizabeth and North Mary Streets, and Block 19 abutting Frederick Street and bound to the east by North Laura Street

Western Boundary

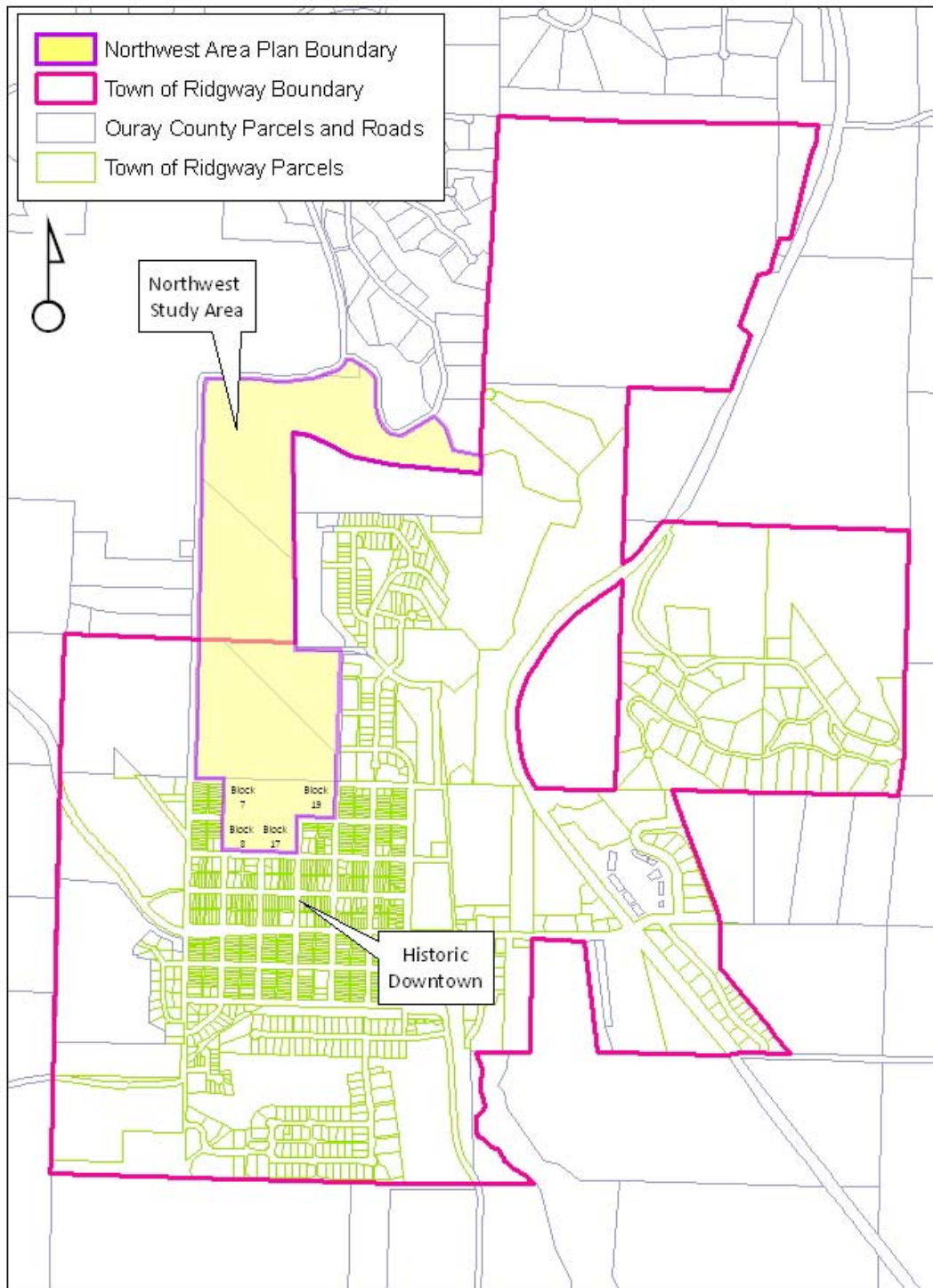
Amelia Street/ CR 5 to Town of Ridgway Block 6, and the western edge of Blocks 7 and 8 abutting Elizabeth Street

Northern Boundary

Southern boundary of Eagle Hill Ranch Subdivision and County Road 5 (east/west)

Eastern Boundary

Beginning at the north: the western boundaries of The School Addition, Parkside PUD and Ridgway River Park Industrial Park PUD



Town of Ridgway Boundary, parcels and Northwest Study Area

II. LAND USE SUMMARY

1. Land Uses

General land uses recommended for the Northwest Area are Residential, Mixed Residential/ Commercial, and Parks/Trails/Open Spaces. Within the residential use areas are High, Medium and Low-Density uses. Much of the area is recommended for Medium-Density Residential, which is generally consistent with the existing density target for the Historic Residential district. The Town's existing Residential (R) zoning requires a minimum lot size of 10,000 square feet, which more accurately reflects a Low-Density designation. The Town may wish to consider developing a Medium-Density zoning district in the future or during a future master planning process.

Lower residential density is recommended for the northern aspect of the study area as a transitional buffer to lower density development in the county and where topographic and geologic constraints will likely prohibit any higher density development. High-Density Residential and Mixed Use areas are planned abutting existing open spaces and industrial uses. Although not defined on the conceptual map for the area, parks, trails and open spaces are to be incorporated into the 138 acre plan, with pedestrian and bicycle pathways creating connectivity throughout the area and into the developed neighborhoods of the Town.

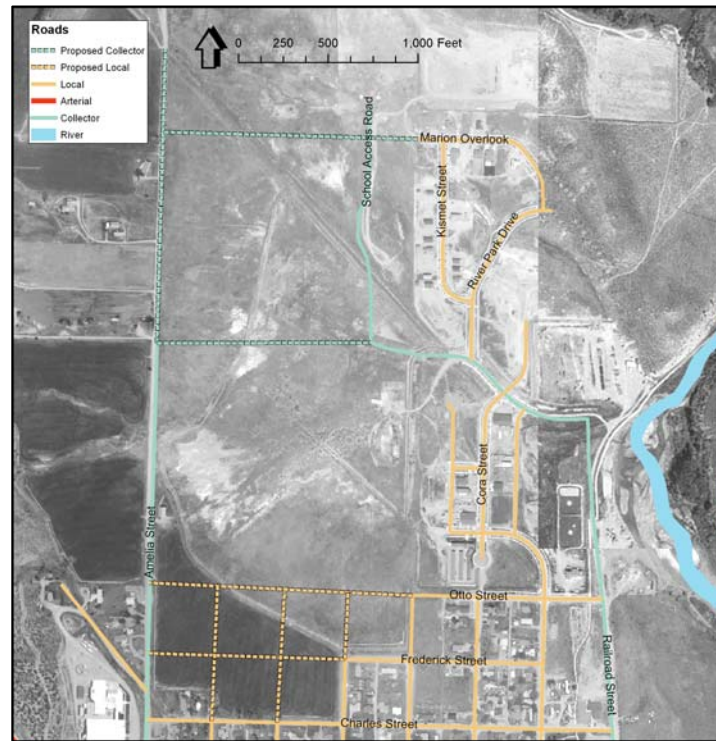
The land west of the existing River Park Industrial Park is identified as appropriate for mixed commercial and residential uses, incorporating structures up to three stories, with a maximum of 35 feet in height. The land west of the Town's 6.9 acre Park, which abuts the western boundary of Green Street and the adjoining Parkside Planned Unit Development (PUD), is appropriate for High-Density Residential structures up to two stories, with a maximum of 27 feet in height. In addition, light commercial uses may be appropriate when planned in conjunction with the Higher-Density Residential area abutting the western edge of the 6.9 acre Town Park west of Green Street, when planned in conjunction with an overall development plan and open spaces.

2. Transportation/ Road Networks

a. Streets

While a number of objectives are stated here, the Town's 2007 Transportation Element shall also assist in shaping the transportation network, specifically regarding North Railroad and Amelia Streets (County Road 5). Goal II of the 2007 Transportation Element proposes some road configurations within and adjoining the Northwest Study Area. This network includes connectivity between the schools, connectivity of North Railroad Street and County Road 5, and a grid-pattern road network for the southern part of this Northwest Study Area. The Transportation Element recommends a perimeter and bisect road system for connectivity of the schools and for North Railroad Street to intersect County Road 5. This connectivity consists of an east/west collector street between North Railroad and County Road 5 and an east/west local street connecting Marion Overlook and County Road 5.

Finally, citing continuity and efficiency, the Transportation Element recommends completion of the grid pattern in at least the area of blocks 7, 8, 17, 18, 19, which comprise the southernmost boundary of this Northwest Study Area.



Framework Transportation Plan for Northwest Area from the 2007 Transportation Element

Continuation of the grid (i.e.: the alignment of roads generally in a north/south and east/west pattern) throughout the Northwest Area is recommended in order to provide a natural extension of the existing grid from the historic core exists, at least up to a point where the natural environment may dictate a varied network (e.g.: interruption of slopes and drainages). Absolute adherence to the grid may be forgiven if the arrangement is designed to calm traffic, including interventions in long, straight sections of road. Nonetheless, long, curved arrangements of roads and alleys are not advised or desired. Finally, lot, block, street and alley arrangements shall, to the extent possible, consider maximum solar gain for each of the planned properties.

The Northwest Area Boundary directly intervenes between the elementary and secondary schools, which are located at the southern aspect of North Amelia Street and the northern aspect of Green Street, respectively. As such, a logical, direct and clearly defined connectivity between these schools, as originally stated in the Transportation Element, shall be present through this Northwest Area. Having stated this, the recommendations of the Transportation Element to provide accesses to Amelia Street (CR 5) via Marion Overlook and North Railroad Street shall be

considered when determining access points along Amelia Street (CR 5) and school connectivity. In addition, access points to Amelia Street (CR 5) shall occur no more frequently than every 660 feet. Individual accesses shall not be allowed directly via Amelia Street (CR 5), as it is planned collector street and not conducive to a significant number of access points.

Transitional buffering at Amelia Street from the western edge of the Northwest Plan Area toward the ranchlands to the west received significant discussion throughout the planning process with no clear consensus on the defined transition. There was general agreement that some buffering should be present in this area. Ideas for buffering include incorporation of green space, landscaping with berms and trees, and a pedestrian pathway.

b. Alleys

Alley arrangements shall be considered as part of the desired grid network of roads, lots and blocks. Alleys are beneficial for buried infrastructure as well as general access points, including deliveries for commercial properties. Design and layout of alleyways should maximize and encourage alley access, where possible, to maintain streetscape features and amenities.

Although alley intersections at Amelia Street are not encouraged, any alley connecting into Amelia Street (CR 5) shall be carefully considered and determined an access point, subject to the minimum 660 feet separation as identified previously for street intersections at Amelia Street.

3. Trails, Parks, Open Spaces

The Town currently has a Parks, Trails and Open Space Task Force that is nearing completion of planning a Town-wide Trails, Parks and Open Space Element for inclusion in the Town's Master Plan. While this Element is not yet complete, it will consider this Northwest Area and include overall pedestrian and bicycle connectivity to the currently platted, developed areas of Town. In addition, Goal V of the 2007 Transportation Element addresses desired extensions, linkages and connectivity of pedestrian and bicycle routes and street crossings throughout the Town. These general objectives and goals defined in the Transportation Element shall also be considered and guide planning efforts as development is planned for this area.

A number of objectives specific to the Northwest Area are defined here to facilitate future detailed planning for parks, trails and open spaces within and connecting through this Northwest Area. Recognizing the need to further examine specific geologic parameters including soils, topography, drainages, wetlands, slopes and other natural features as well as land use development proposals, this sub-area plan does not provide great detail on locations of these amenities, but does suggest that one primary objective shall be good connectivity from developed areas of Town and throughout the Northwest Area.

Pedestrian and bicycle connectivity shall be comprehensively planned throughout the Northwest Area. Trails and pathways shall connect into the platted area of Town as well as to the schools, parks and commercial/ mixed-use areas. Ideally natural drainages and slopes may be incorporated as part of the trails and parks network, although a primary objective is to connect parks, schools and residential / commercial uses.

Parks should be designed, sized and located as functional community gathering areas. In particular, higher residential and mixed use developments shall incorporate park spaces such that there is functional buffering and green space for shared recreation. When planning the park network consideration shall be given to connectivity and usability of the parks.

Due to the complexity of open space dedications and a need to identify and consider open space requirements on a town-wide basis there are not specific requirements or locations identified for parks and open spaces. Rather, it is recommended that the Town proceed with development of a parks / open space dedication policy that identifies and incorporates a linkage between the dedication requirement and the development demand for open space, incorporating community desires. This requirement should become part of the Town's land use policy such that open space dedications are identified and commensurate with annexation and/or development proposals.

It is also recommended that the policy development consider the National Parks and Recreation Association Standards, which identify parks and open space dedications based on population estimates for planned growth areas. Generally, in this Northwest Area, larger open spaces are preferred to smaller, narrow strips or boulevards and higher density areas shall abut park and open space uses.

4. Pace/Timing/ Phasing of Development

The first goal of the 1999 Land Use Element is to limit growth at "5% or less per year based on the number of new residential lots approved for development as a percentage of existing residential lots". Significant, conclusive dialogue on pace, timing and phasing of development in this area has not been had, although it is generally agreed that the Town has adhered to the 5% goal over this last decade and will likely continue with this maximum growth rate until such time there is community need to do otherwise. It is estimated that between 800 - 1500 dwelling units (based loosely on the proposed land uses with minimum and maximum development densities accounting for the wide range) may eventually occupy this 138 acres. As such, development in this area is likely to be dependent upon infrastructure availability and existing capacity to serve any proposed development.

While within the Urban Growth Boundary, nearly half of the Northwest Study Area is outside of the Town boundary. With no pending development proposals for the study

area, it is recommended that the pace, timing and phasing of development in this area be considered by the Town upon request for development or annexation.

5. Land Use Density

The northernmost area of the study boundary abutting Eagle Hill Ranch is appropriate for Lower-Density Residential with lots sizes of approximately 10K - 20K sq. ft. This recommendation is based on the desire for transitional buffering between the denser area of Town and the platted properties in the county to the north. In addition, within this Lower-Density Residential region there are areas of steep topography as well as areas of apparent moisture where denser development is not desired or practical. Transitional buffering and open spaces appear to be conducive to the topographic and apparent geologic constraints of this northern area.

Most of the subject area is suited for Medium-Density Residential use with lot sizes of 4K-8K square feet and interspersed with trails, parks and open spaces. Currently, this Medium-Density Residential is primarily found in the Historic Residential District as well as a handful of planned unit developments within the Town.

High-Density Residential uses consisting of 12-18 dwelling units per acre and limited to 2 stories above grade with a maximum height of 27' may be appropriate when abutting parks and open spaces commensurate with the development. Higher density uses should be located internal to the overall Northwest Area in order to avoid stark transitions to the rural areas to the north and west. As such, the preferred location for any High-Density Residential use is abutting the western edge of the 6.9 acre Town Park that is west of Green Street and the Parkside PUD. Medium and heavy commercial uses do not appear compatible with this area; however, lighter commercial uses such as a neighborhood coffee shop, neighborhood store, or ice cream shop may be considered with an application for development, as appropriate.

Mixed-Use Density (12-18 dwelling units/ acre) includes mixed-use development (residential and commercial) with a maximum height of 3 stories up to 35' when incorporating architectural features and roofline variations. This use is appropriate for the area west of the existing River Park PUD Industrial Park, to accommodate work/live arrangements and transition from industrial to medium density residential uses.

Strong consideration shall be given to geotechnical information, such that wetlands and other sensitive areas are not planned for inappropriate densities. Relocation of density may be appropriate to accommodate environmental concerns and sensitive areas, as defined in the 2000 Master Plan. In particular but not singularly, the northern area of the plan retains natural slopes and drainages as well as apparent wetland areas. The Town may consider the costs and benefits of full and partial density transfers commensurate with discussions on open space requirements and cluster development. Regardless, dedications of open spaces and parks shall

incorporate useable land for community gatherings and not consist solely of environmentally constrained areas.

It is noted that the preference for higher density uses in much of the Northwest Area, and perhaps other areas within the Urban Growth Boundaries, may illustrate the need for a higher density residential zoning district to be considered as a policy matter by the Town.

6. Natural Environment

Chapter III-2 of the 2000 Comprehensive Plan addresses Environmental Constraints and Sensitive Areas such as riparian areas and wetlands, steep slopes and geological features, wildlife areas and migration corridors, wildfire, agricultural lands, soils, visual resources. As the specific environmental constraints and sensitive areas in this Northwest Area are not known at this time, the sub-area plan does not directly address these town-wide objectives. However, it is understood that these constraint areas will be identified and analyzed as part of a development plan and commensurate with the goals of the Town.

It is apparent that there will need to be consideration for nearly all of the environmental constraint and sensitive areas defined in the 2000 Master Plan. When planning for open spaces, transportation corridors and variable densities, significant consideration shall be given to these constraint areas.

In conformance with the planned street and alley layout, lots should be arranged in a complementary grid fashion at least up to the area where natural drainage(s) interrupt the grid. Ideally, the lot layouts will optimize solar pathways such that homes might be constructed and oriented for active and passive solar benefits.

7. Affordable Housing

Late in 2007 the Town of Ridgway, City of Ouray and Ouray County completed a county-wide housing needs assessment. Coincidentally, the three jurisdictions created a Multi-jurisdictional Housing Authority as a coordinated effort to pursue affordable housing objectives within the County. The Housing Needs Assessment acknowledged a defined housing need and the Town is working to act on the desired recommendations of the report. At this time, there is a county-wide effort to develop a strategic plan for implementing affordable housing programs in follow up to the recommendations of the 2008 report.

Due to the complex nature of affordable housing policy, the need for Town-wide housing considerations and the desire for a comprehensive approach for housing and other policy objectives, the affordable housing in this Northwest Area shall be provided commensurate with Town regulations at the time and/or as determined by the Town based on the affordable housing need for the area.

8. Water and Wastewater Infrastructure Demands

As with any annexation or development request, the Property Owner(s) will need to identify and demonstrate that sufficient resources are available for the proposed development demand. In particular, the potential wastewater treatment and water demands in this Northwest Area will certainly impact the Town's existing infrastructure. The Owner(s) will need to comply with state and local laws governing sufficient water supply and compulsory connectivity to sewer systems. Specific demands and proposed infrastructure designs have not been addressed for this area, although it is understood that with an estimated growth of between 800-1200 dwelling units in this Northwest Area alone, sufficient infrastructure will need to be provided commensurate with any consideration of development or annexation. Dedication to the Town of existing water rights for this area shall be a consideration.

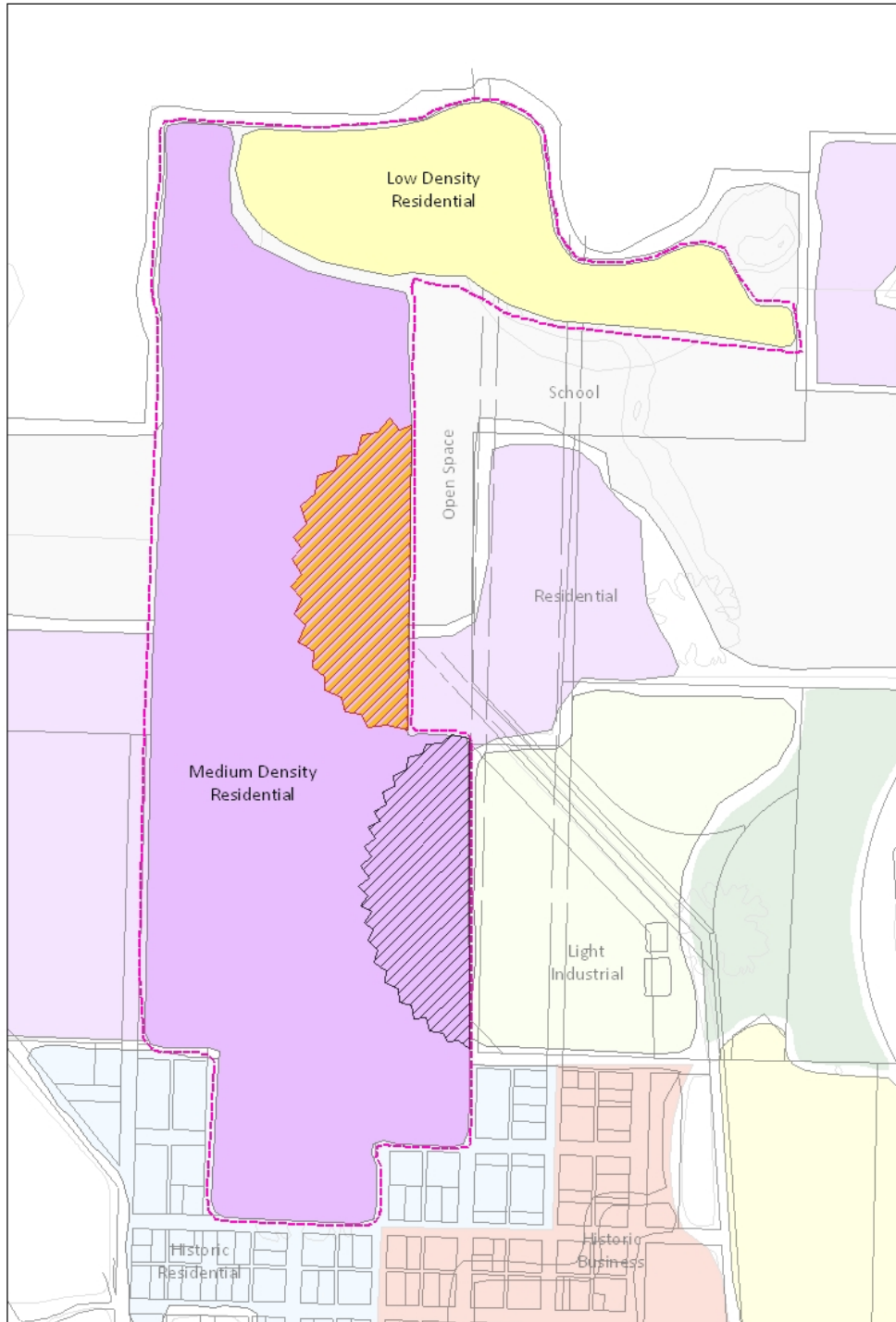
9. 1999 Land Use Maps and 2000 Comprehensive Plan






The Urban Growth and Initial Growth Boundaries, as defined on the 1999 Land Use Maps and 2000 Comprehensive Plan, have not been and are not intended to be, relocated by this sub-area plan and map. The Northwest Area Plan is intended to complement these documents and serve as a guidance document for future development of the Northwest Area and future master planning of the Town.

This plan does not attempt to relocate, plan or otherwise modify any area outside of the Northwest Area Plan Boundary. Any inconsistencies, discrepancies or propagated errors between this Northwest Area Conceptual Map and the 6/29/1999 Comprehensive Plan Land Use Map, outside of the Northwest Area Plan Boundary, are not intended to supersede the 1999 Land Use Map.

Boundaries and lines on the Northwest Area Plan Map are conceptual, not held by metes and bounds, and subject to change.

III. NORTHWEST AREA PLAN CONCEPTUAL MAP



-  NW Area Plan Boundary
-  Low Density Residential (10-20K sf lots)
-  Medium Density Residential (4-8K sf lots)
-  High Density Residential (12-18 du/ac)
-  Mixed Use High Density (12-18 du/ac)

*Location of parks and open space shall be determined per the guidance document accompanying this map.

