

Delta Stewardship Council
Delta Counties/Cities Land Use Panel Presentation – April 15, 2011
City of Rio Vista

Intro

- Rio Vista was settled in its current location in 1862 and incorporated in 1893.
- Rio Vista has a rich heritage and importance in the Delta – river traffic, agricultural products, shipping, regional center.
- Legislature has declared Rio Vista one of the “Legacy Towns” in the Delta. (Public Resources Code 32301)
- Current population is slightly more than 7,000 (Census 2010) and is expected to grow to more than 20,000 by 2035. (ABAG 2007 projections)

Our Major Concerns Under the Delta Plan:

- Loss of local control of land use decisions
- Loss of the ability to develop industrial land within City limits, including expansion of the airport and the Northwest Wastewater Treatment Plant, and the ability to continue planned residential developments
- Damage to economic sustainability through loss of agricultural land in the rest of the Delta, loss of businesses, jobs, income.
- Impact of planned wetland conversions bringing unknown flooding and salinity impacts.
- Ongoing flood issues: Yolo Bypass flow, Sacramento River flow, storms, high tides.

Economic Impact of Rio Vista

- The economy of Rio Vista is greatly dependent on the viability of the Delta economy:
 - Delta businesses and residents depend on Rio Vista as a regional center for equipment (trucks and tractors), transportation, well drilling and maintenance, shopping, housing, and many other industrial and commercial businesses
 - Rio Vista depends on the regional commerce for business support, employment, sales tax, income.
- Rio Vista is at the hub of the critical transportation corridor of Highway 12, connecting I-5 with I-80 as well as providing a corridor for the movement of goods and services within the northern Delta.

Rio Vista and the Primary Zone of the Delta

- That portion of the Delta north of Airport road, from the Sacramento River to Liberty Island Road, was designated as part of the Primary Zone by the Legislature in 1992. In the early 1990’s, 860 acres north of Airport Road was annexed for a new airport (planning began in 1984), a new wastewater treatment plant, and industrial development.
- During the study of the Primary/Secondary Zone undertaken by the Delta Protection Commission, the City requested that the area within the City Limits be removed from the Primary Zone.
- The area surrounding Airport Road, particularly to the north, is the primary industrial section of the City.
 - This includes the Rio Vista Airport, the Northwest Wastewater Treatment Plant, a large industrial drilling company, a storage facility, a closed land fill.
 - Much of the land is zoned General Industrial (on both sides of Airport Road) or Airport/transportation
 - Primary Zone land within the City limits along the Sacramento River is designated as a study area, but is a mixed use section with dredging company, some housing and large heavy equipment storage yards.
- The north side of town is critical to our industrial economic development.
- Although this land abuts agricultural land, it is used for grazing (as are some currently vacant City parcels).

- None of the surrounding agricultural land is considered prime; most of the soils in Rio Vista are clay.

Rio Vista Development

- Page 9-11 of “Basis of Findings”, Chapter 9, states: “Currently, the majority of future growth within the unincorporated areas of the legal Delta is located within spheres of influence of incorporated cities with (sic) San Joaquin and Contra Costa counties with smaller areas located near Freeport in Sacramento County and Rio Vista in Solano County.”
- Rio Vista has been a responsible steward of the land and has made responsible decisions about land use and the growth of the City.
- Both the Solano County General Plan and the Rio Vista General Plan prevent development outside cities.
- Rio Vista residential developments have been actively planned since the early ‘90’s, most of which have completed development agreements.
- Rio Vista has sufficient vacant land within the City limits to meet all residential and commercial development needs to 2035.
- Future commercial/industrial development areas include:
 - Expansion of the airport as outlined in the Airport Master Plan Update of 2007;
 - Business Park, south of Airport Road;
 - Property surrounding the Northwest Wastewater Treatment Plant, and expansion of the plant;
 - The Army Reserve Center, now deeded to the City and annexed within the City limits
 - The City is working with the Department of Water Resources to bring the multi-agency Rio Vista Estuarine Research Station (RVERS) and a US Fish and Wildlife Service Delta Smelt Refugium hatchery to the site.
 - The City also plans an interpretive center and public amenities.
 - Development of this site will bring at least 200 much-needed jobs to Rio Vista.

The Rio Vista General Plan Land Use Policies

The Rio Vista General Plan of 2001 adopted several goals and policies that support the preservation of agricultural land and the Primary Zone. The following land use policies are pertinent to the Delta:

- Goal 3.5: To retain agricultural lands beyond the City’s urban edge.
 - Policy 3.5A: The City shall not support growth into areas outside the City’s urban growth boundary.
 - Policy 3.5B: The City shall actively oppose any requests for zoning change in unincorporated Solano county that would result in the conversion of productive agricultural land to urban uses in the areas of concern.
 - Policy 3.5C: Impacts of urban development on agricultural operations shall be minimized.
- Goal 3.7: To ensure that growth does not encroach on areas with high-value natural resources
 - Policy 3.7A: The City shall continue to support prohibitions/restrictions on development within the Delta Protection Commission’s Primary and Secondary Zones

Flood Issues and Rio Vista

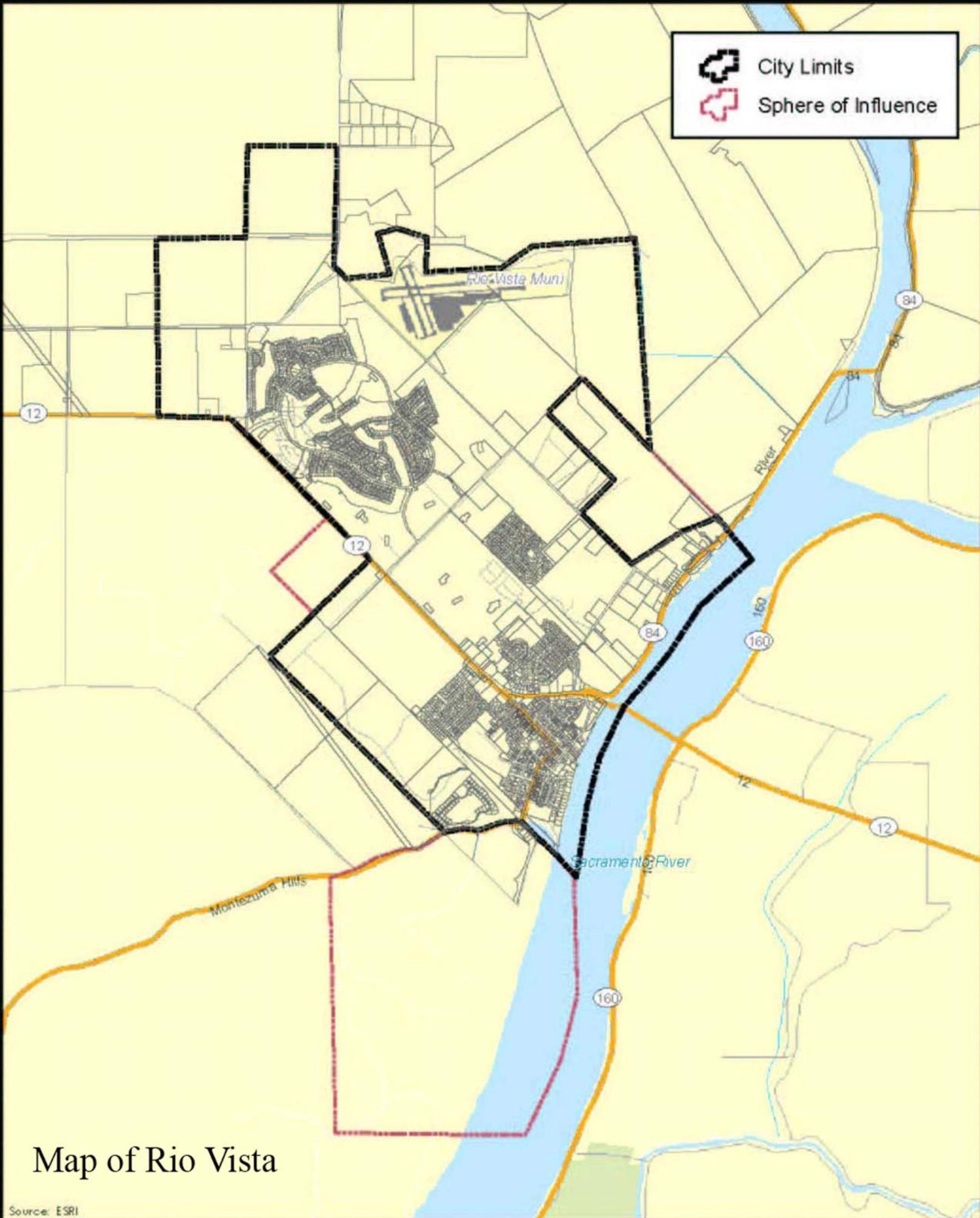
- Proposed developments west of downtown are not at risk for river flooding; they may be at risk for minor stream flooding.
 - The General Plan and Development Agreements now in place require that all homes are built to at least 100-year flood protection.
 - New agreements will require 200-year flood protection.
- Flooding is of great concern along the Sacramento River in several locations. The Solano County Water Authority provided a study of potential flooding currently and with sea level rise of one and two feet:
 - The Mellon levee north of town is designed to protect the downtown area from floods from the Yolo Bypass. However, it is a dry levee, and its efficacy may be questioned.

- Land along the Sacramento River from the northern City limits to the Delta Marina has no flood protection with the exception of small seawalls in some locations, and includes industrial, residential and commercial development:
 - The waterfront area between the Rio Vista Bridge south to Main Street is undeveloped and has no flood protection. Studies are being done preparatory to designing a seawall; however, funding for building a seawall is questionable unless grants or State/Federal money is available.
 - Downtown residential and businesses, including City Hall could suffer flooding.
 - High water is an ongoing issue on Edgewater Drive south of Main Street every winter.
- Egbert Tract north of Rio Vista has a restricted height levee, and has been mentioned as being a location for new fish habitat. The road between the City and the Real McCoy II ferry completely washed out by flooding in 1998, creating great difficulties for the farmers, residents and children on Ryer Island.

Rio Vista's Major Concerns Under the Delta Plan:

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 City Limits
 Sphere of Influence



Map of Rio Vista

Source: ESRI