

MEMORANDUM

TO: Brian Pedrotti, Director of Community Development, City of Arroyo Grande
Andrew Perez, Planning Manager, City of Arroyo Grande

FROM: Michael Gibbons, Project Manager | Mintier Harnish

CC: Brent Gibbons, Nikki Zanchetta | Mintier Harnish

DATE: March 12, 2025

RE: Land Use Scenarios Workshop and Survey Results

Introduction

On February 5, 2025, the City held a community workshop to introduce four potential land use scenarios for the General Plan Update. The workshop included a presentation, informational posters, and interactive activities to solicit community feedback on each land use scenario in relation to each of the three focus areas. Following the workshop, the city released a community survey with questions similar to those included in the workshop activities. The survey was available online from February 6, 2025, through March 10, 2025, and was promoted via the City of Arroyo Grande social media channels, the project website, and eblasts sent to the project email list.

Workshop Activities and Survey Questions

Workshop Activities

The workshop included three activities for participants to complete:

Land Use Scenarios Preference Worksheet

Each workshop attendee was given a one-page (front and back) worksheet to gather feedback on their preferred land use scenarios for each of the three focus areas. One side of the worksheet included a brief description of each land use scenario. The other side of the worksheet included three sections, one for each focus area. Participants were asked to select which scenario they prefer for each focus area and provide a brief explanation for their decision. A total of 28 worksheets were collected during the workshop.

City of Arroyo Grande General Plan Update

Land Use Alternatives Preference Worksheet

Using the boxes below, please select which land use alternative you prefer for each focus area. Visit the workshop stations to learn about each focus area!

STATION 2 - EAST GRAND CORRIDOR FOCUS AREA
Which alternative strategy do you prefer for this focus area? Select one.
Alternative 1 Alternative 2 Alternative 3 Alternative 4
Why?

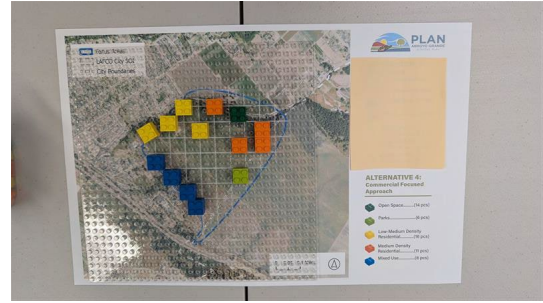
STATION 3 - NORTH FAIR OAKS FOCUS AREA
Which alternative strategy do you prefer for this focus area? Select one.
Alternative 1 Alternative 2 Alternative 3 Alternative 4
Why?

STATION 4 - FREDERICK FOCUS AREA
Which alternative strategy do you prefer for this focus area? Select one.
Alternative 1 Alternative 2 Alternative 3 Alternative 4
Why?

Are there any other considerations or concerns the City should consider?

Frederick Focus Area Lego Activity

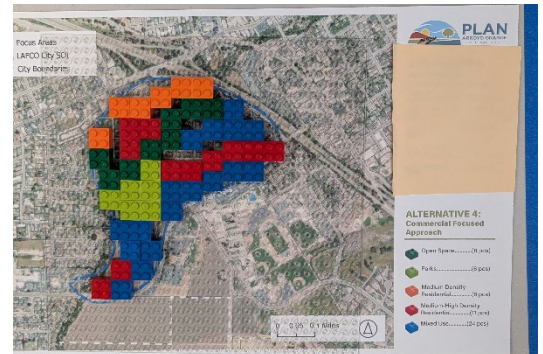
The goal of this activity was for participants to provide their input on how they would distribute land uses within a theoretical specific plan using the specific plan land use percentages allocated for Scenarios 3 and 4. Each participant received a set of pre-assigned Lego pieces representing the ratio of area dedicated to each land uses for the scenario the participant indicated as their preferred scenario for the Frederick Focus Area. The ratios were derived from prior outreach efforts that asked about the land use preferences for this area. Participants were asked to arrange the Legos on a gridded map of the focus area to reflect their preferred development pattern. A copy of each activity response is included at the end of this memo.



Example of Frederick Focus Area Lego activity.

North Fair Oaks Focus Area Lego Activity

This activity was the same as the Frederick Focus Area Lego activity described above, but for the North Fair Oaks Focus Area, using the specific plan land use percentages allocated for Scenarios 3 and 4. Each participant received a set of pre-assigned Lego pieces representing the ratio of area dedicated to each land use for the scenario the participant indicated as their preferred scenario for the North Fair Oaks Focus Area. The ratios were derived from prior outreach efforts that asked about the land use preferences for this area. Participants were asked to arrange the Legos on a gridded map of the focus area to reflect their preferred development pattern. A copy of each activity response is included at the end of this memo.



Example of North Fair Oaks Focus Area Lego activity.

Online Survey Questions

The online survey included a total of eight questions, plus four optional demographic questions. The first two questions asked respondents if they attended the community workshop on February 5th, and if so, did they submit a Land Use Scenarios Preference Worksheet during the workshop.

The remaining six survey questions were identical to those on the Land Use Scenarios Preference Worksheet, asking respondents to select which land use scenario they prefer for each focus area and provide a brief explanation for their decision. The front end of the survey included a brief description of each proposed land use scenario and the three focus areas. Additionally, respondents were encouraged review the workshop materials and land use scenarios information posted on the project website or to contact a project team member with questions before completing the survey.

A total of 92 survey responses were received, nine of which indicated they attended the community workshop on February 5th. Of those nine respondents, four indicated that they completed and submitted the activity worksheet. To ensure that responses from community members are not double counted, these four responses are excluded from the survey results evaluation in the following section



with the assumption that these responses are accounted for in the evaluation of the worksheet responses from the workshop.

Survey Demographics

The following demographic information was collected as part of the online survey. Demographic information was not collected during the community workshop and is not reflected in the data reported in this section.

Age. A majority of respondents are older adults, with about 34 percent aged 65 and over and 24 percent aged 55 to 64 years. Middle-aged adults (35-54 years old) account for 25 percent of respondents, while younger adults (18-34 years old) make up nine percent of respondents. Only about one percent of respondents are under 18 years of age. Eight percent of respondents did not provide a response regarding their age.

Race/Ethnicity. A majority of respondents (70 percent) are White/European American. Thirteen percent of respondents preferred not to provide race/ethnicity information and five percent reported “other”.

Household Income. A majority of respondents reported a household income of \$100,000 or more, with 27 percent making between \$100,000 and \$150,000 and 27 percent making over \$150,000. About 13 percent of respondents reported making between \$50,000 and \$74,999, and 12 percent reported making between \$75,000 and \$99,999. About five percent of respondents reported making less than \$50,000. Fifteen percent of respondents did not provide income information.

Gender. About 45 percent of respondents identify as male and 37 percent of respondents identify as female. The remaining 18 percent of respondents did not provide gender identity information.

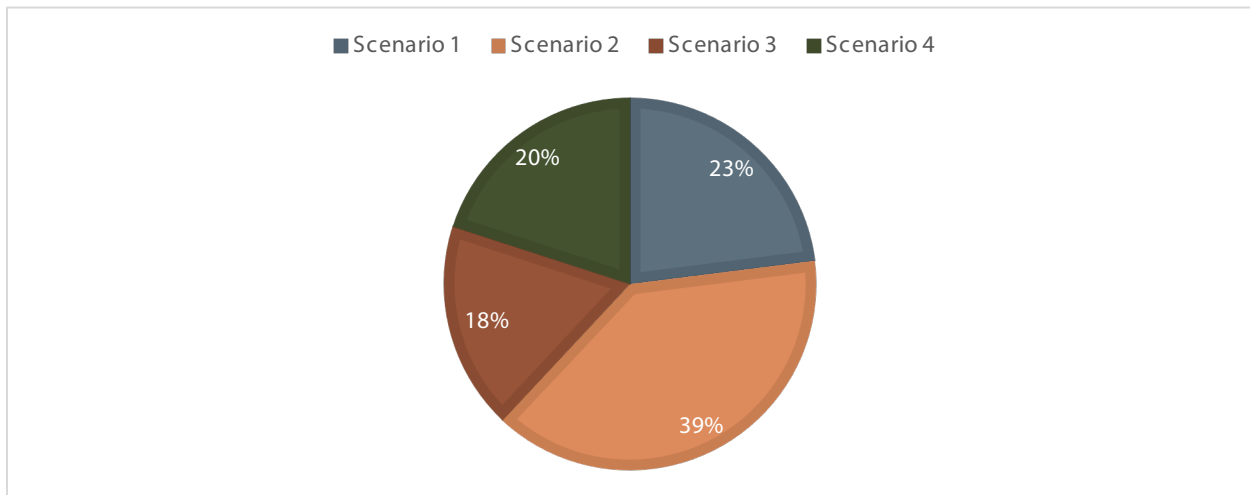


Preferred Land Use Scenarios by Focus Area

This section includes an overview of community input received on preferred land use scenarios for each focus area identified as part of the land use scenarios process. These summaries include responses from both the worksheet from the community workshop and the online community survey.

East Grand Corridor

Community members prefer Scenario 2 (Infill Development) for the East Grand Corridor Focus Area accounting for 39 percent of responses, followed by Scenario 1 (Baseline) with a 23 percent response rate. Scenarios 3 (Residential and Complimentary Uses) and 4 (Commercial Focused Approach) received similar response rates of 18 and 20 percent respectively.



Scenario #1 (Baseline) Response Summary

Respondents that selected Scenario 1 as their preferred land use scenario for the East Grand Corridor Focus Area expressed strong support for preserving Arroyo Grande’s rural and agricultural character and expressed concern over increasing commercial and residential density and its impact on the community’s character. These respondents value that Arroyo Grande isn’t overdeveloped and expressed opposition to any significant growth or population increases. Concerns were raised about potential negative impacts of growth, including increased traffic congestion, loss of agricultural land, and potential environmental consequences such as increased greenhouse gas emissions.

Scenario #2 (Infill Development) Response Summary – COMMUNITY PREFERRED

Respondents that selected Scenario 2 as their preferred land use scenario for the East Grand Corridor Focus Area favor a balanced approach to growth, emphasizing the need for more housing while preserving agricultural land and open space. Many appreciate its focus on mixed-use and infill development to create a walkable, bikeable, and vibrant community while minimizing sprawl. There is strong interest in revitalizing underutilized properties along East Grand Avenue, enhancing pedestrian and bike access, and maintaining its role as a key commercial corridor. Commenters also stress the need to mitigate traffic congestion and ensure new housing remains affordable. Supporters highlight the benefits of adding condos and apartments rather than single-family homes, noting that increased density could boost local businesses and minimize the need to expand the reach of public services and infrastructure.



Scenario #3 (Residential and Complimentary Uses) Response Summary

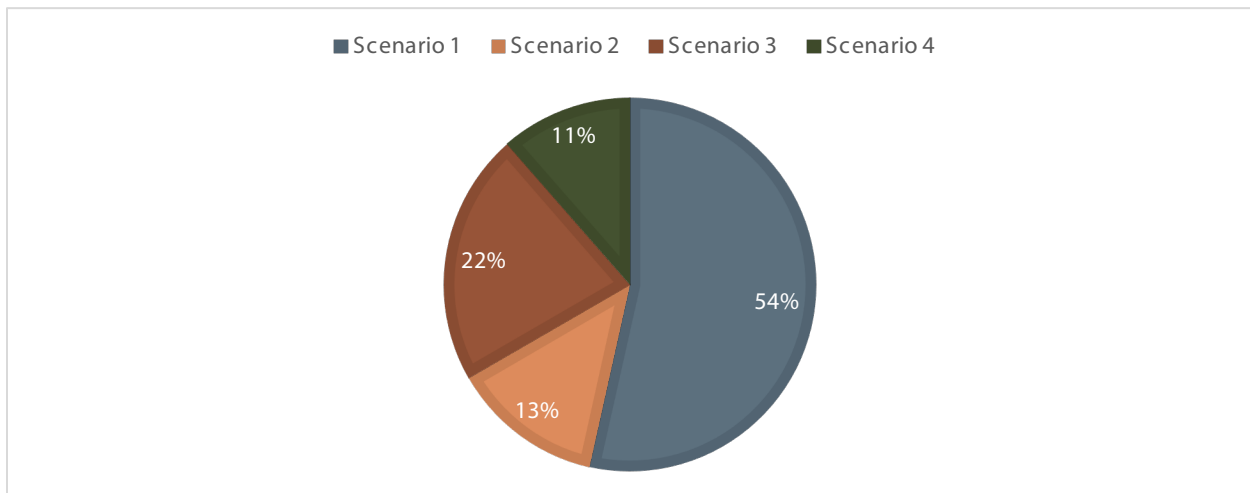
Respondents that selected Scenario 3 as their preferred land use scenario for the East Grand Corridor Focus Area expressed the potential for mixed-use developments that combine residential and commercial spaces in a well-connected area with good access to Highway 101. There is a strong focus on increasing housing, particularly multi-family units or condos, by repurposing vacant commercial properties. Commenters emphasize the need for walkable, livable neighborhoods with features like bike paths, walking trails, parks, and even a trolley to connect residents and tourists to the beach. Although respondents generally advocate for more housing along East Grand Avenue, there is a desire to maintain and encourage commercial development to meet the needs of residents and visitors, especially low-income groups, and create a more walkable neighborhood.

Scenario #4 (Commercial Focused Approach) Response Summary

Respondents that selected Scenario 4 as their preferred land use scenario for the East Grand Corridor Focus Area expressed support for enhancing the Grand Avenue corridor as a commercial center of the City. Respondents liked that this scenario focuses on employment opportunities and generating more tax revenue for the City. There is strong support for maintaining Grand Avenue's commercial character, with a minimal increase in housing development in this area. Commenters highlight the importance of attracting tourists and local visitors by developing underutilized properties into attractive, upscale venues, boosting the city's economic growth. Respondents also emphasized the importance of improvements to pedestrian and bike infrastructure to support dining, shopping, and public facing spaces as part of this Scenario.

North Fair Oaks Focus Area

Community members prefer Scenario 1 (Baseline) for the North Fair Oaks Focus Area accounting for 54 percent of responses, followed by Scenario 3 (Residential and Complimentary Uses) with a 22 percent response rate. Scenario 2 (Infill Development) had a 13 percent response rate, and Scenario 4 (Commercial Focused Approach) was the least preferred, accounting for 11 percent of responses. The following sections include an overview of why respondents selected their preferred scenario.



Scenario #1 (Baseline) Response Summary – COMMUNITY PREFERRED

Respondents that selected Scenario 1 as their preferred land use scenario for the North Fair Oaks Focus Area strongly advocate for preserving this agricultural land and avoiding housing development. Many emphasize the importance of prime farmland for future generations, food production, and environmental sustainability. Commenters also highlight Arroyo Grande’s agricultural heritage and the value of maintaining its rural character, scenic beauty, and historical ties to farming. Additionally, many respondents are concerned about increased traffic if this area is developed, particularly near the high school and major roads like Halcyon Road and Fair Oaks Avenue, which already experience serious traffic congestion. Some commenters were open to increased recreational access.

Scenario #2 (Infill Development) Response Summary

Similar to those that selected Scenario 1, respondents that selected Scenario 2 as their preferred land use scenario for the North Fair Oaks Focus Area emphasize the importance of preserving prime agricultural and open space to maintain Arroyo Grande’s character and heritage. Respondents in support of Scenario 2 recognize the need for housing and commercial development but feel infill development should be prioritized over converting farmland. Additional concerns include increased traffic and congestion near the high school, flood risks, and infrastructure improvements.

Scenario #3 (Residential and Complimentary Uses) Response Summary

Respondents that selected Scenario 3 as their preferred land use scenario for North Fair Oaks Focus Area recognize the opportunity this area presents for development in the future and feel this scenario balances growth without overwhelming existing infrastructure, compromising native open space, or changing Arroyo Grande’s character. Respondents like that this scenario provides opportunity for diverse housing options, including apartments, townhomes, and single-family residences, but minimizes commercial development in this area. Many respondents feel developing this area could present opportunities for better connectivity throughout the community, linking neighborhoods to schools, downtown, and the Village. Some respondents expressed concerns regarding traffic, infrastructure improvements, connectivity enhancements, and maintaining the Arroyo Grande Creek riparian area. Some respondents feel this area is an ideal location for community amenities such as a multi-use trail along the creek, sports fields, an exercise park, a permanent farmer’s market square, and community spaces.

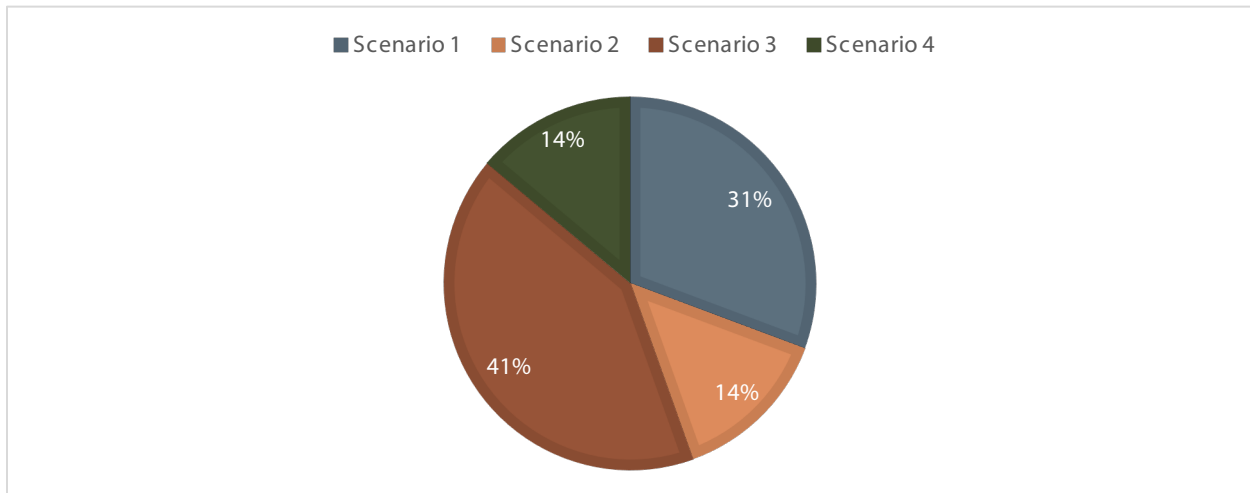
Scenario #4 (Commercial Focused Approach) Response Summary

Respondents that selected Scenario 4 as their preferred land use scenario for the North Fair Oaks Focus Area envision a vibrant, multi-use development near the high school that serves families and teenagers with affordable food options, convenience stores, and recreational spaces. Many feel the area’s central location is optimal for community events, concerts, and holiday celebrations. There is strong interest in a mix of housing and jobs rather than single-family homes or strip malls, with some advocating for commercial development that enhances tourism and economic growth. Overall, respondents emphasize the need for thoughtful development that strengthens the city’s identity and promotes economic development.



Frederick Focus Area

Survey respondents prefer Scenario 3 (Residential and Complimentary Uses) for the Frederick Focus Area accounting for 41 percent of responses, followed by Scenario 1 (Baseline) with a 31 percent response rate. Scenarios 4 (Commercial Focused Approach) and 2 (Infill Development) received similar response rates, at approximately 14 percent. The following sections include an overview of why respondents selected their preferred scenario.



Scenario #1 (Baseline) Response Summary

Respondents that selected Scenario 1 as their preferred land use scenario for the Frederick Focus Area emphasize the importance of preserving agricultural land, open space, and Arroyo Grande's rural character. Concerns include urban sprawl, negative traffic impacts, infrastructure limitations, and environmental harm to local ecosystems and wildlife. While a few respondents suggest limited or carefully planned development, most advocate for focusing growth within existing residential areas rather than expanding outward. Some suggested making part of this area improved open space.

Scenario #2 (Infill Development) Response Summary

Respondents that selected Scenario 2 as their preferred land use scenario for the Frederick Focus Area support infill development in other areas of the city to accommodate growth and preserving existing farmland and open space. Respondents expressed concerns that developing this area would stress infrastructure demands, increase costs of City services, and cause traffic congestion issues.

Scenario #3 (Residential and Complimentary Uses) Response Summary – COMMUNITY PREFERRED

Respondents that selected Scenario 3 as their preferred land use scenario for the Frederick Focus Area support residential development in the area, but with differing views on density. Many favor a mix of uses focused primarily on residential development with smaller lot sizes and affordable housing options, emphasizing walkability and a balanced approach to growth. Others prefer new residential development in this area to be lower-density, estate-style housing to preserve the rural character of the area while still providing additional housing options. Most respondents feel any development in the area should be accompanied by parks, recreational areas, or open space areas.



Concerns about future development in this area include traffic flow, city services, and resource availability. Several comments highlight the need for thoughtful planning to ensure new development enhances the city's livability, tax base, and long-term sustainability.

Scenario #4 (Commercial Focused Approach) Response Summary

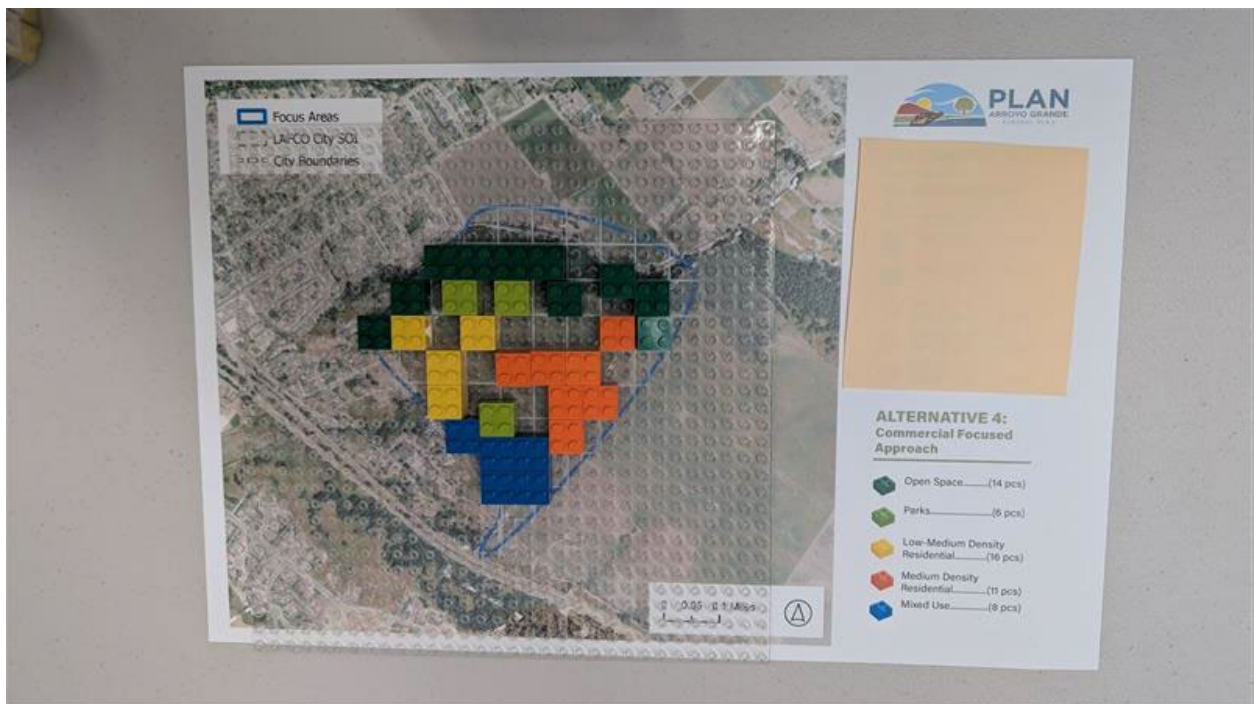
Respondents that selected Scenario 4 as their preferred land use scenario for the Frederick Focus Area like that this scenario provides opportunities for new types of commercial, manufacturing, and light industrial uses in Arroyo Grande. Some see the location as ideal for large-scale manufacturing, business centers, and retail due to its freeway access and does not infringe on already congested roadways. Others suggest a self-contained neighborhood with housing and small retail and personal services businesses (e.g., restaurants, barber shops, pet grooming). There is an interest in using the area to improve truck routing, reducing traffic impacts on the Village. Some respondents expressed concerns about the strain on infrastructure and traffic congestion, especially in connection with Highway 101.



Frederick Focus Area Lego Exercise Responses



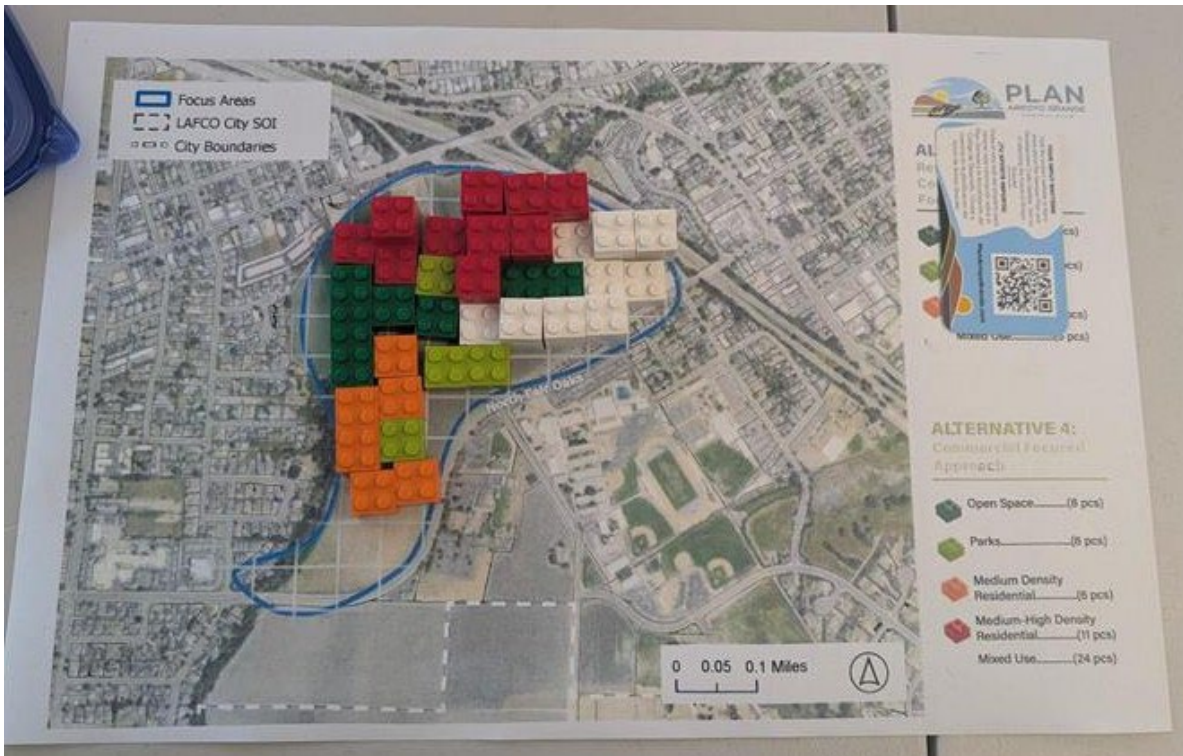
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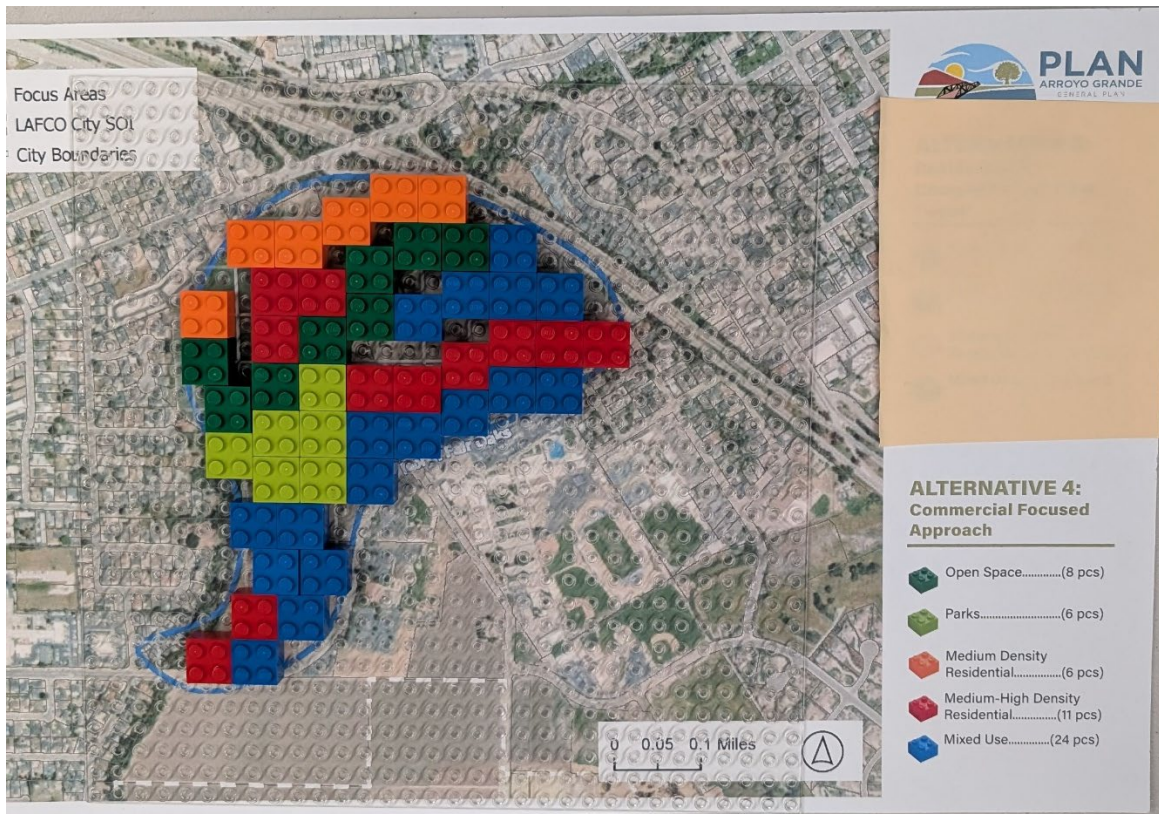
Frederick Focus Area Lego Exercise Responses Continued



North Fair Oaks Focus Area Lego Exercise Responses



North Fair Oaks Focus Area Lego Exercise Responses Continued



North Fair Oaks Focus Area Lego Exercise Responses Continued

