





# 2.0 Existing Conditions

## 2.1 Land Use, Future Growth Patterns, Physical Barriers

### Geographic Overview

Sutter County's land use pattern is characterized by extensive agricultural areas, significant natural and recreational resources, and relatively low population and employment intensities. A majority of the County has historically been set aside for agriculture and other resource uses, with rural development focused within the County's unincorporated communities.

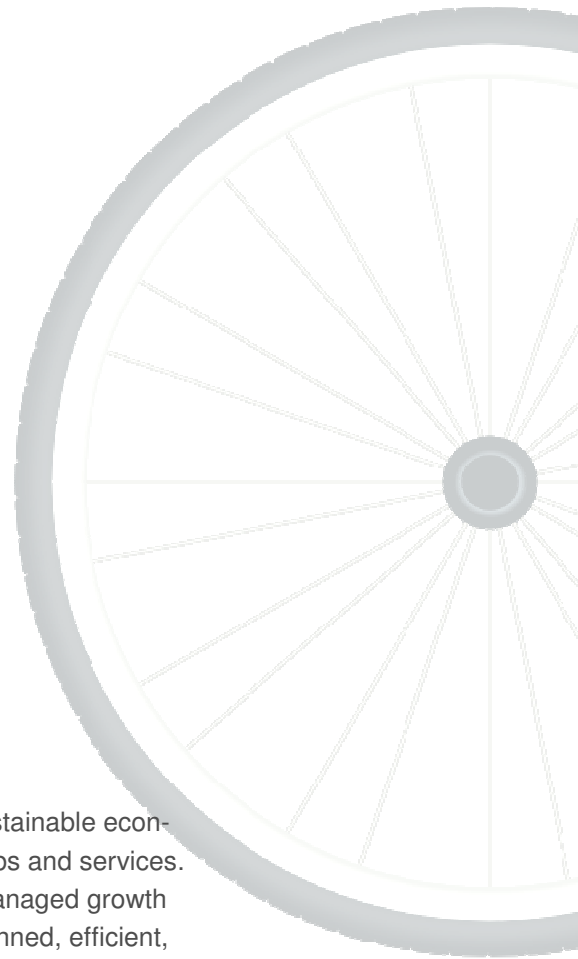
Urban growth has largely been directed to the incorporated cities, Yuba City and Live Oak. The 2030 General Plan supports a broad continuation of the current land use pattern, while affording new opportunities for growth and change. It balances the County's vision to maintain and enhance its high quality rural lifestyle, agricultural heritage, and natural resources, with a commitment to

promoting a vibrant and sustainable economy that attracts diverse jobs and services. It does so by advocating managed growth that is comprehensively planned, efficient, and compatible with adjacent uses and valued resources.

The County of Sutter Land Use patterns are illustrated on *Figure 2, 2030 General Plan Land Use Patterns*.

### Water Barriers To Pedestrian & Bike Facilities

There are multiple barriers to constructing bike facilities in Sutter County, including water courses, flood control facilities, irrigation canals. One major crossing issue is that State Highway 99 is the only intra-County crossing of the Feather River connecting the southeast portion of the County to the north/west portions of the County. Highway 99 is also a limited access roadway with no bike lane facilities. Although the Feather River bridge crossing is being improved (circa 2011), the improvements do not include designated bike or pedestrian facilities. Consequently, bikes and pedestrians must use the bridge



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shoulder if wanting to cross from the north County to south County areas.

Second and third barriers are the all-weather crossings of the Sutter By-pass flood control area from the southwest to the north east on Highway 113, and the east-west crossing on Highway 20. Both of these roads are high capacity/high speed roadways without a designated bike lane or pedestrian path.

There are other minor road crossings of the Sutter By-pass at Franklin Road and Hughes Road. However, these roads are flood prone during the rainy season and are in various states of maintenance.

North of Highway 20, the Lower Pass Road provides an all weather east-west opportunity across the Butte Sink area.

Roadway connection to Colusa County to

the west is limited to Highway 20.

Connections to Yuba County are limited to Highway 20, Highway 70, and Forty Mile/ Pleasant Grove Road. Connections to Sacramento County are via Highway 99, and the Garden Highway. Placer County connections of any significance include Riego Road, Howsley Road and Bear River Road.

### Roadway Conditions

As a part of the field research conducted by the preparers of this document, an extensive roadway and bike facility analysis was conducted either by riding a bike along specific routes in order to get a first hand account of the conditions, and/ or visiting each route by car and documenting / photographing conditions.

As noted earlier, the major roadways connecting major centers and counties together are primarily high speed state

*Roadway crossings of water courses and flood plains are very limited and consist mainly of high speed highways.*





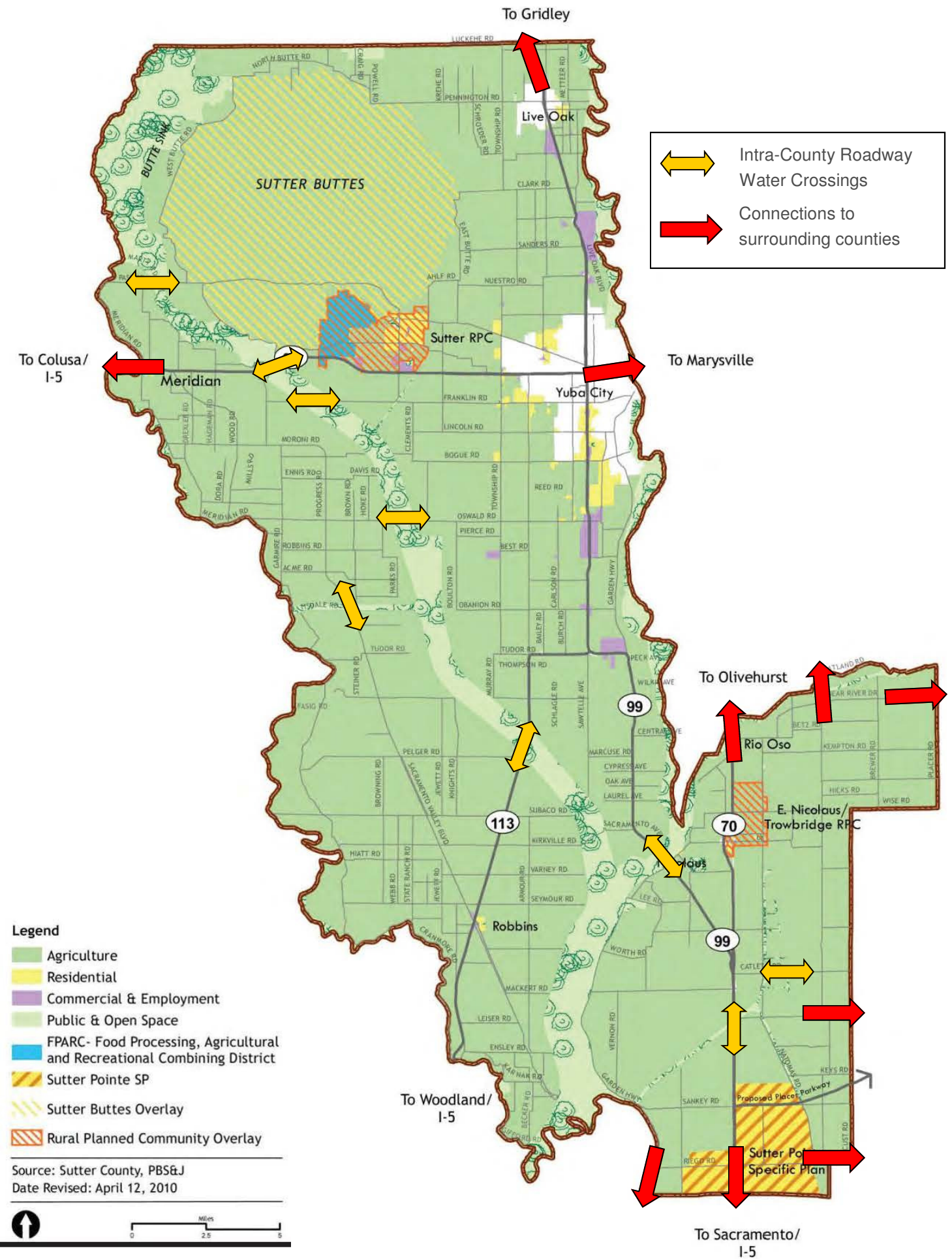


Figure 2: 2030 General Plan Land Use Patterns

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highways, typically not conducive to bike travel. High volumes of traffic, including trucks, high speeds, and non-designated bike facilities would present an un-nerving bicycle experience, except to the most fearless and experienced bike rider.

The other roadways throughout the County are typically two lane low to medium volume roads with minimum to no shoulder areas. Many of these roads contain low volumes of traffic. However, auto traffic was noted to travel at high speeds (even when lower speeds are posted) due to limited barriers to restricting speeds. When speeds on these non-highway roads were relatively lower, the primary speed limiting factor is the road surface, which is many times rough from heavy farm truck use or old paving. Neither of these conditions is attractive to bike riders. However, the lower traffic volume roads do provide safer route opportunities than using major highways or

arterials to connect from one point to another.

### Limited Directional Signage

During the consultant's field investigation it was noted that many roads indicated on maps (hard copy or from internet) are little more than wide access lanes connecting farm fields. Many of the roads have received limited maintenance (broken pavement, or gravel only), which makes planning and utilizing these routes difficult.

In an effort to determine alternate routes for bikers throughout the County it was quickly realized that designated signage guiding bike riders between potential destinations would be an important part of any future bike facility routing. Without way-find signage, it is very easy to turn down a road that may start out in good condition only to have it turn into an unpaved road, or worse, a road that does not connect to another road.

*The majority of roadways in the County can be characterized as narrow two-lane roads with little or no paved shoulders.*





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*A lack of directional wayfinding signs can lead to the bicyclist getting lost, ruin the experience, and create apathy in riding County bike facilities in the future.*

### 2.2 Existing Bikeway Facilities

#### Existing Bike Network

The existing bikeway network within the unincorporated County is comprised of only a few corridors which were a result of partial implementation of the 1995 Yuba-Sutter Bikeway Master Plan. *Figure 3, Existing County Bike Facilities*, illustrates existing bike facilities in the unincorporated area of the County and the connection points to the existing facilities in the incorporated Cities of Yuba and Live Oak.

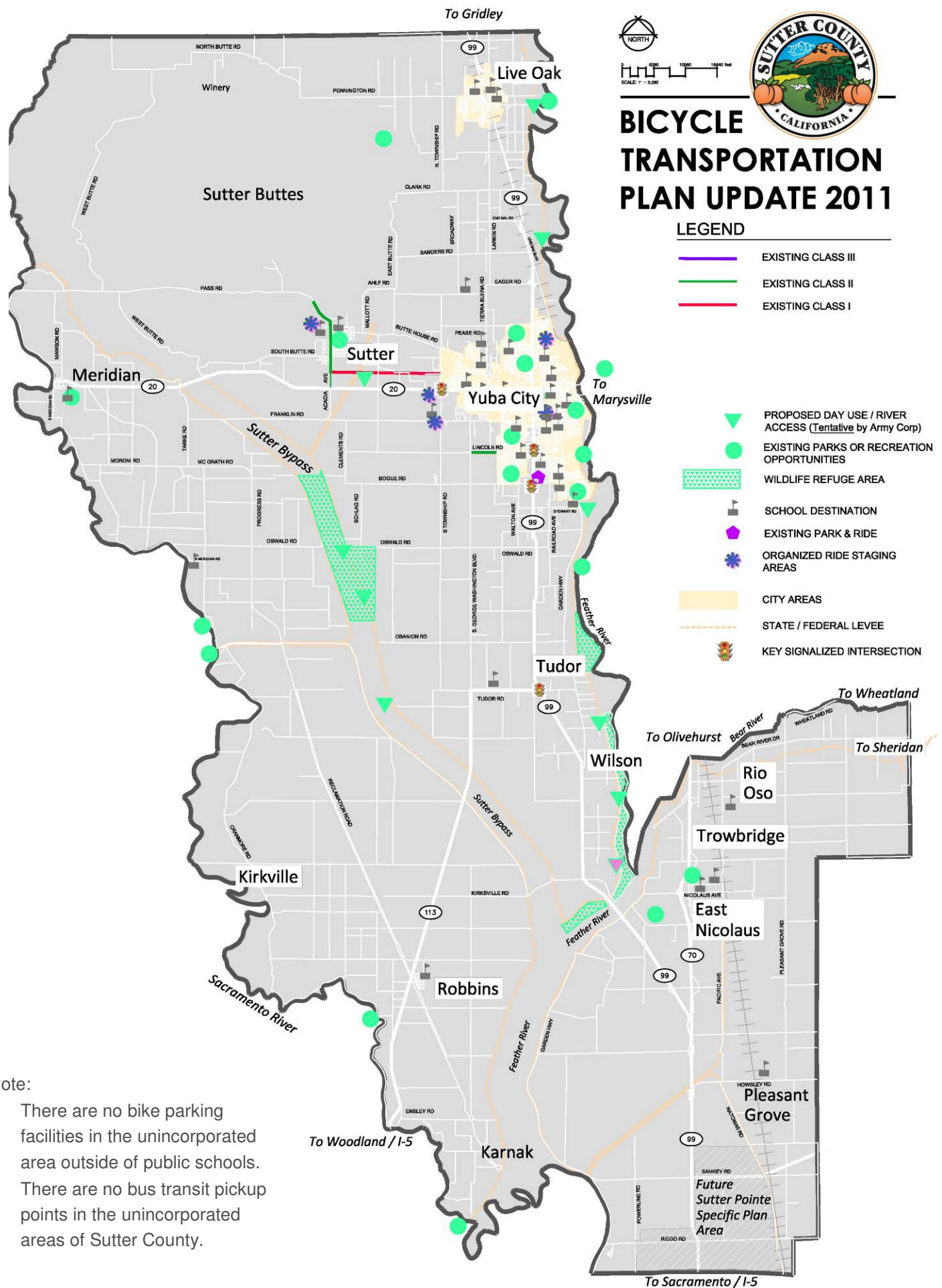
#### Existing Class I Facilities

The one Class I Bike Path facility is located along an abandoned railroad ROW and provides 4.66(+/-) miles of a paved, flat off-street bike opportunity. The path begins inside the Yuba City limits and ends at

Acacia Avenue (bike lane connection) in the Community of Sutter. The facility consists of a minimal width (8-ft. maximum to less in some areas) asphalt path with no painted center striping, uneven edges, and gravel shoulders of varying width.

According to community input, this facility is a favorite spot for families to bike and walk. However, it was also noted that serious bikers typically avoid the path due to the narrowness of lanes (limited passing opportunities), lack of striping, wandering pedestrians, and people walking their dogs with leashes stretching across pathways.

Informal parking areas are present at the southwest intersection of Township Road and the Bike Path, and at the southwest intersection of Humphrey Road and the Bike Path.



**Note:**

- There are no bike parking facilities in the unincorporated area outside of public schools.
- There are no bus transit pickup points in the unincorporated areas of Sutter County.

Figure 3: Existing Bike Facilities (unincorporated areas only)



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*The one Class I facility runs east/west from Yuba City to Acacia Avenue in the Community of Sutter.*

The path crosses various canals and is generally void of trees and landscape plants.

### **Existing Class II Bike Lanes**

There are only two different Bike Lane facilities in the County (outside Yuba City limits). Located along Acacia Avenue from the end of the east/west Class I Bike Path, to a location on Pass Road just north of Sutter High School, this path provides minimal bike lane facilities along curbed and uncurbed sections of the roadways.

The second Class II facility in the unincorporated County is located on Lincoln Road between George Washington Blvd. and Sanborn Road.

### **Existing Class III Bike Routes**

There are no designated Class III Bike Routes in the unincorporated portions of Sutter County.

### **Existing Parking Facilities**

A field review of the unincorporated County reveals that there are no bike parking fa-

cilities outside of local schools.

### **Existing Changing Facilities**

Beyond local high schools, changing facilities are difficult to inventory as a component of the existing bikeway system. It is assumed that certain large employment centers (IE government facilities in Yuba City, and large stores) provide areas to change clothing. However, it is unknown as to the extent of shower facilities.

### **Existing Multi-modal / Transit**

#### **Connections**

Multi-modal and transit facilities are located in the City of Yuba and the City of Live Oak. See *Figure 3, Existing County Bike Facilities*, for locations

Park & Ride: A Caltrans Park & Ride facility is located in Yuba City at the northeast intersection of Bogue Road and State Route 99. This facility provides (88) parking spaces, and (3) bike lockers that can be rented. The facility is next to a convenience store and a Yuba-Sutter Tran-



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sit bus stop.

**Bus Transit:** Yuba-Sutter Transit offers (6) continuous routes which serve primary destinations within the City of Yuba and scheduled connections to Live Oak, Marysville (Yuba County). All buses are designed to carry bicycles. However, it should be noted that bus transit is not currently (2011) available to other areas in Sutter County.

### Informal Bike Ride Staging Areas

Members of local bike groups noted that there are a few locations within the County where the groups meet to stage various group rides. These are typically located at school parking lots as indicated on Figure 3: Existing Bike Facilities.

### Related City Bikeway Master Plans

**Yuba City:** Yuba City approved a comprehensive Bicycle Master Plan update in January 2011. This plan identifies all existing routes and facilities within the City

limits. See Figure 4 illustrating Yuba City's existing Bike Facilities Plan.

A majority of the existing bike facilities within Sutter County are located within Yuba City and are mostly comprised of Bike Lanes (Class II) and two primary Bike Paths (Class I). There are a limited number of existing Bike Routes (Class III) designated in Yuba City. One Bike Path continues into the unincorporated County area. The other Bike Path is a paved section of the Feather River levee inside the City limits that ends near the City boundary.

**Live Oak:** The City of Live Oak does not have a stand alone Bikeway Master Plan. However, the General Plan for Live Oak does provide a map illustrating Bike Lane and Bike Path facilities. The exhibit illustrates a future expectation that includes a Bike Path generally circumnavigating the city boundary, with Bike Lanes providing connections into the interior

*The loop road around the Sutter Buttes is a very active bike route used by riders of all skill levels.*



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areas. See Figure 5, Live Oak Bikeway System.

**Sacramento County:** Sacramento County adopted an updated Bicycle Master Plan in 2011. In this plan, the County has identified “Future Class I” routes along the east side of the Feather River (associated with the Garden Highway, and along the East Levee Road where it would connect to the future Sutter Point Specific Plan area. The plan also identifies a “Future Class II” route along Powerline Road.

**Colusa County:** As of 2011 Colusa County does not have a Bicycle Master Plan. However, policy language related to bicycles was being introduced in the Colusa County General Plan Update.

**Placer County:** In their Bicycle Master Plan, Placer County does identify any bikeways in the western part of the county that would propose connections to Sutter County.

**Butte County:** Butte County’s Bicycle Master Plan does not identify any bikeways in the southern part of the county that would propose connections to Sutter County.

**Yuba County:** Except for City of Maryville’s Bicycle Master Plan identifying bikeway connections to Yuba City, the county’s plan does not identify bikeway connections to Sutter County.

### 2.3 Existing Pedestrian Facilities

#### Off-street Paths

As indicated earlier in this chapter, an 8-ft. (+/-) asphalt path running from Yuba City to the community of Sutter is often used by pedestrians and bicyclists. This is the only off-street trail facility in the unincorporated County designed for pedestrian use.

#### Sidewalks

Given the rural nature of the County, sidewalks in the unincorporated County are few, with those sidewalks being associated within “newer” housing developments, at or around schools, and at a few roadway improvements on major highways.



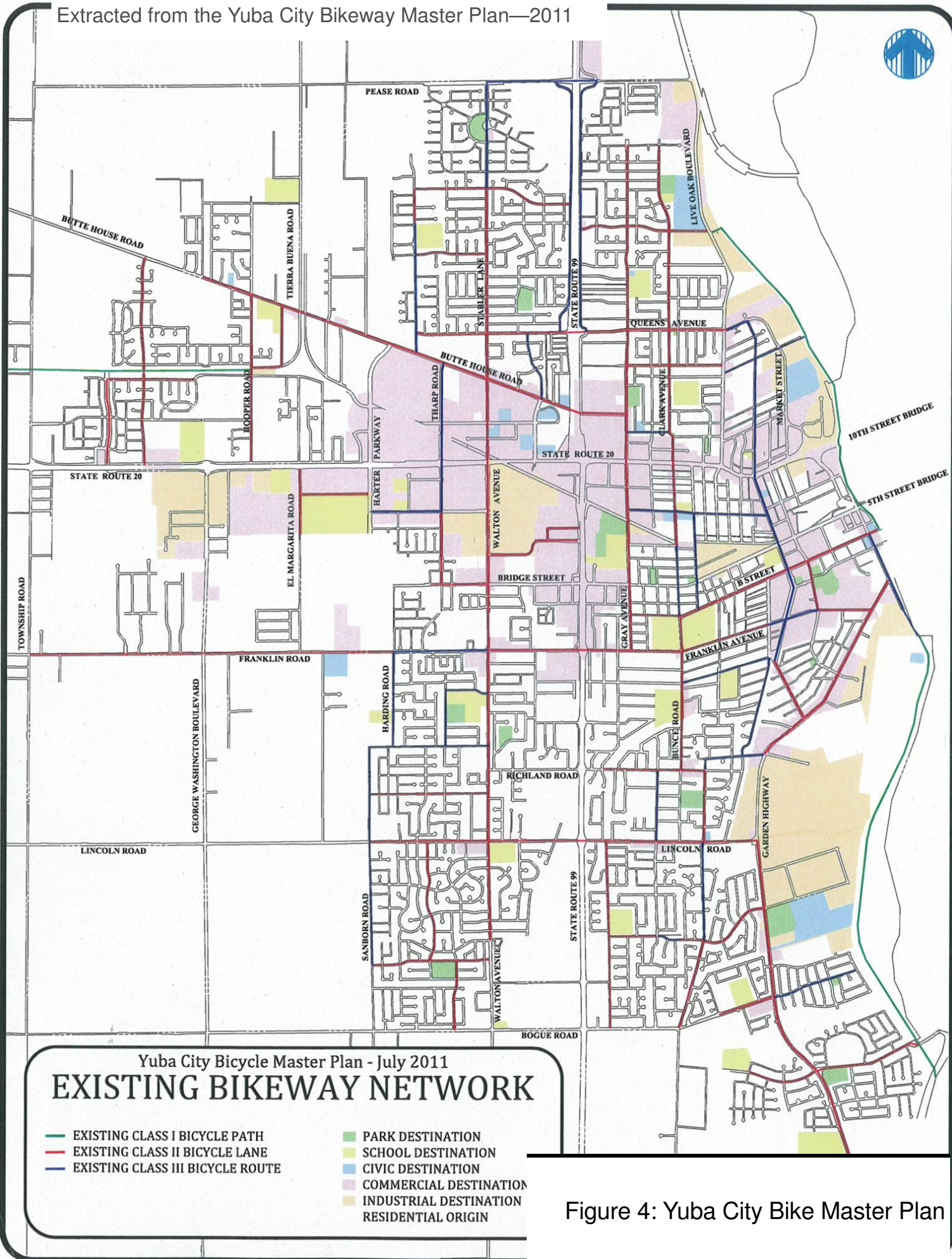
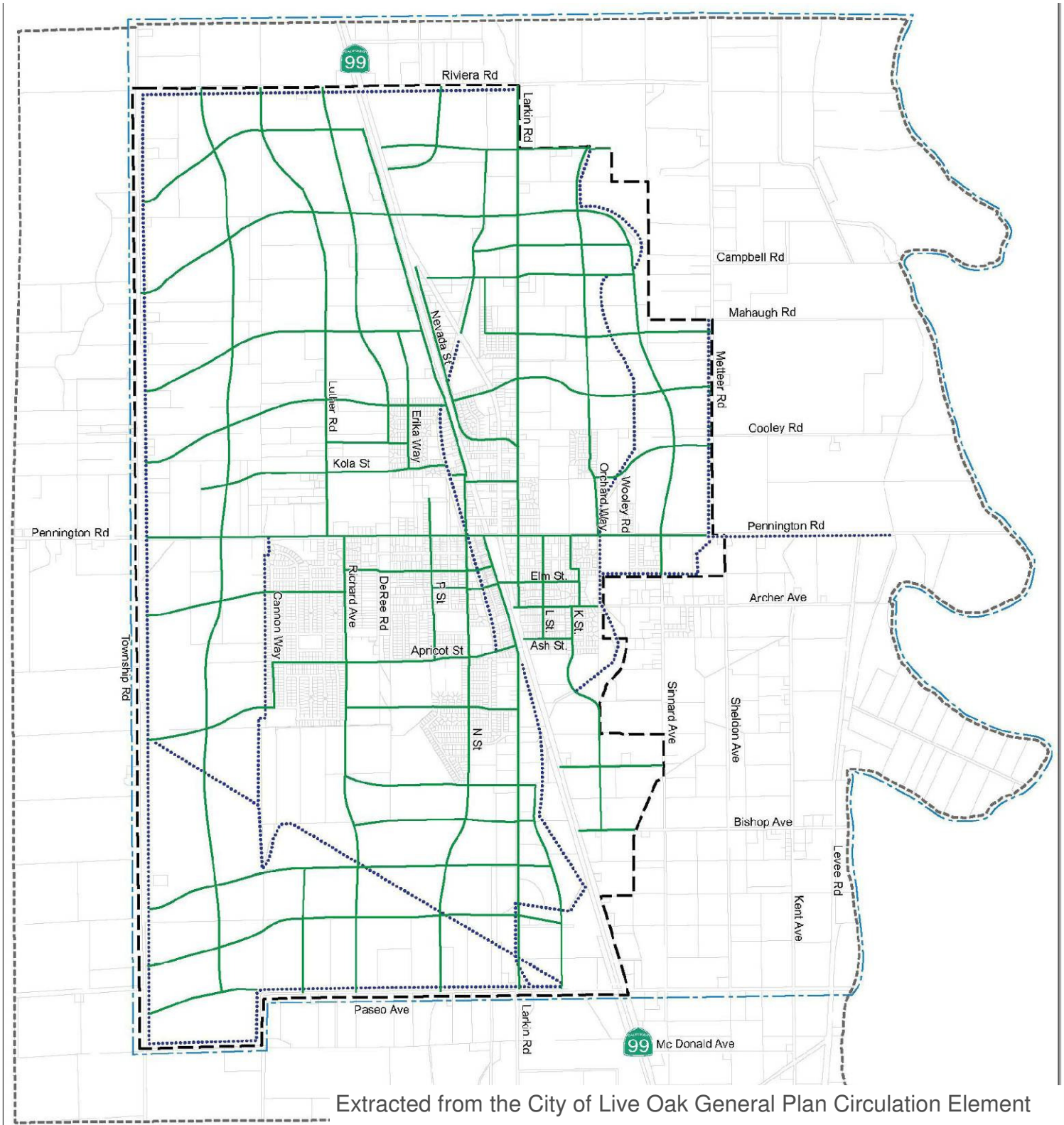


Figure 4: Yuba City Bike Master Plan





**LEGEND**

- |                               |                    |
|-------------------------------|--------------------|
| Boundaries                    | Bicycle Routes     |
| ----- Study Area              | ..... Bicycle Path |
| ----- Planning Area           | ----- Bicycle Lane |
| - . - . - Sphere of Influence |                    |
| ----- Parcels                 |                    |

Figure 5: Live Oak Bike Plan