

As noted above, the Agriculture/Conservation Corridor around the City of Oakdale would also create a break between cities. The continued separation of Oakdale from Riverbank and the expanding Modesto area is important to the visual quality of the community. As new subdivisions and new communities are considered by Stanislaus County, prime consideration should be given to preserving such conservation areas.

4.4 Historical Preservation

The older established areas of Oakdale contain an eclectic variety of residential and commercial buildings, representing over 100 years of architectural styles and building materials. A greater concentration of the older homes and commercial structures are found in the area between Oak, on the west, and Fifth Street, on the east. These older areas also contain a predominance of mature trees and plant materials. This all combines to create an ambiance not found in newer areas of the city. This older, historic part Oakdale should be retained as a basis of the City's heritage.

4.4.1 Existing Historic Sites

There are no historic sites or landmarks that are officially recognized within, or in close proximity to, the Primary Study Area. However, the City of Oakdale sponsored a Historic Sites Inventory in 1986, with funding provided in part by the California Office of Historic Preservation. The 1986 survey was conducted by consultants Judith Cunningham and Julia Costello of Foothill Resource Associates, with assistance provided by members of the Oakdale Historical Society and other knowledgeable residents. The municipal survey was planned to proceed in three phases, which would encompass the entire incorporated city limits. Time and budget constraints limited the survey to two phases (Phases I and II), covering the older central portion of the City. The outer areas of the City (Phase III) remain unsurveyed for historical resources.

The 1986 survey identified and recorded a total of 256 historic properties from the study area, dating from 1870 to 1940. One hundred twenty-one of these properties were recorded individually, while 135 Craftsman Bungalows were recorded as a thematic architectural group. Included in the survey were 214 residences, 34 commercial properties, and eight "service" properties. ("Service"-type properties included post offices, churches, a library, and an IOOF Hall.)

All individually documented properties (121) were evaluated for potential eligibility for placement on the National Register of Historic Places. Of those evaluated, 18 appeared eligible for individual listing, and 179 appeared eligible as contributors to historic districts. Another three were considered eligible for local historic district status, and 49 were considered potentially eligible, with stipulations attached. Only seven of the properties inventoried were determined to be without significance to the history of Oakdale. A survey of the outer areas of the City may identify additional historical/historic architectural resources.

The results of the archival research indicated that, in addition to architectural resources associated with the historical development of Oakdale, there is potential for the existence of historical resources associated with events and activities pre-dating the founding of the City. However, there is no documentary evidence for specific locations in the Oakdale area that may contain archaeological remains associated with Spanish exploration, American trapping, or Euro-American activities from the first half of the 19th century.

The potential exists for historic archaeological resources remain from the Gold Rush period (1842 - ca. 1900). Such resources would include the remains of ferries (Heath and Emory's, Cotton's, Holden's, and Cottle's), and occupation sites associated with ferries, along the present and former channels of the Stanislaus River on the north side of the City. The locations of these historic ferries, in relation to present-day Oakdale, have been mapped by Brotherton (Brotherton 1982:70, 74; Oakdale Leader 1971:33). Other historical resources that may remain from this period are camp sites along the old Mariposa Road and, in particular, the military camp established at Taylor's Ferry (later Heath and Emory's Ferry) in 1849. Recently, the graves of seven soldiers in the vicinity of Kerr Park were located and marked by the Oakdale American Legion post.

Previous bridges that historically cross the Stanislaus River in the vicinity of Oakdale and replaced the ferries, may also qualify as historical resources, pending further research and evaluation. According to the historical literature, some of these may date to as early as the late 19th century.

To the west in the Secondary Study Area the old Langworth townsite, dating from 1860 to 1871, appears to be historically important for its role in the American Period settlement of the Oakdale area and as the source of early Oakdale residents and architecture. The townsite is located approximately 2.25 miles west of the western edge of present-day Oakdale, along Highway 120. Remains in that location include the Langworth cemetery, as well as possible buildings, standing ruins, building foundations, and other archaeological features.

Historical resources associated with the railroads in Oakdale also exist. In addition to railbeds, railroad architecture (depots, warehouses, etc.), bridges, and archaeological remains from railroad construction camps may also be extant.

Finally, other historical resources may exist from Oakdale's agricultural past in the form of early farms and ranches, dating from the late 19th century to the mid-20th century. These would be expected to occur outside the Oakdale city limits, although it is possible that some early farmhouses have been absorbed into the urban matrix of present-day Oakdale and remain in use as residences.

To protect existing cultural resources, the City should require appropriate surveys and necessary site investigations where they have not already occurred, as part of the environmental review process for a proposed project, or in conjunction with the earliest environmental impact report prepared for the project.

For historical resources, the City of Oakdale should require an archival review and a building survey prior to the approval of a project or a zone change. Surveys and investigations should be completed under the supervision of persons qualified in their respective field and approved by the City.

4.4.2 Design Criteria for the Historic District

Policy and implementation guidelines have been developed related to Design Criteria to give guidance for architectural elements; including windows, doors, roofs, height, width, color, material and signage. The central City area as shown in Figure 4-2 is already part of a design district. Identification of the CBD area in no way is intended for expansion of the CC District under the City's 1993 Zoning Code provisions.

It is important to emphasize that a faithful recreation of an architectural type--in size, materials and craftsmanship--is not the intent of the City's policies. If a historical building is being renovated, authentic restoration to a particular time should be encouraged within the bounds of reasonable costs. In the design district area, buildings on F Street and Yosemite Avenue should express the best qualities of their respective architecture with appropriate window treatments, painting (or removal of) and signs. A building of the 1960s or 1970s should not be required portray one of the historical types.

4.4.3 Design Theme for Downtown Oakdale

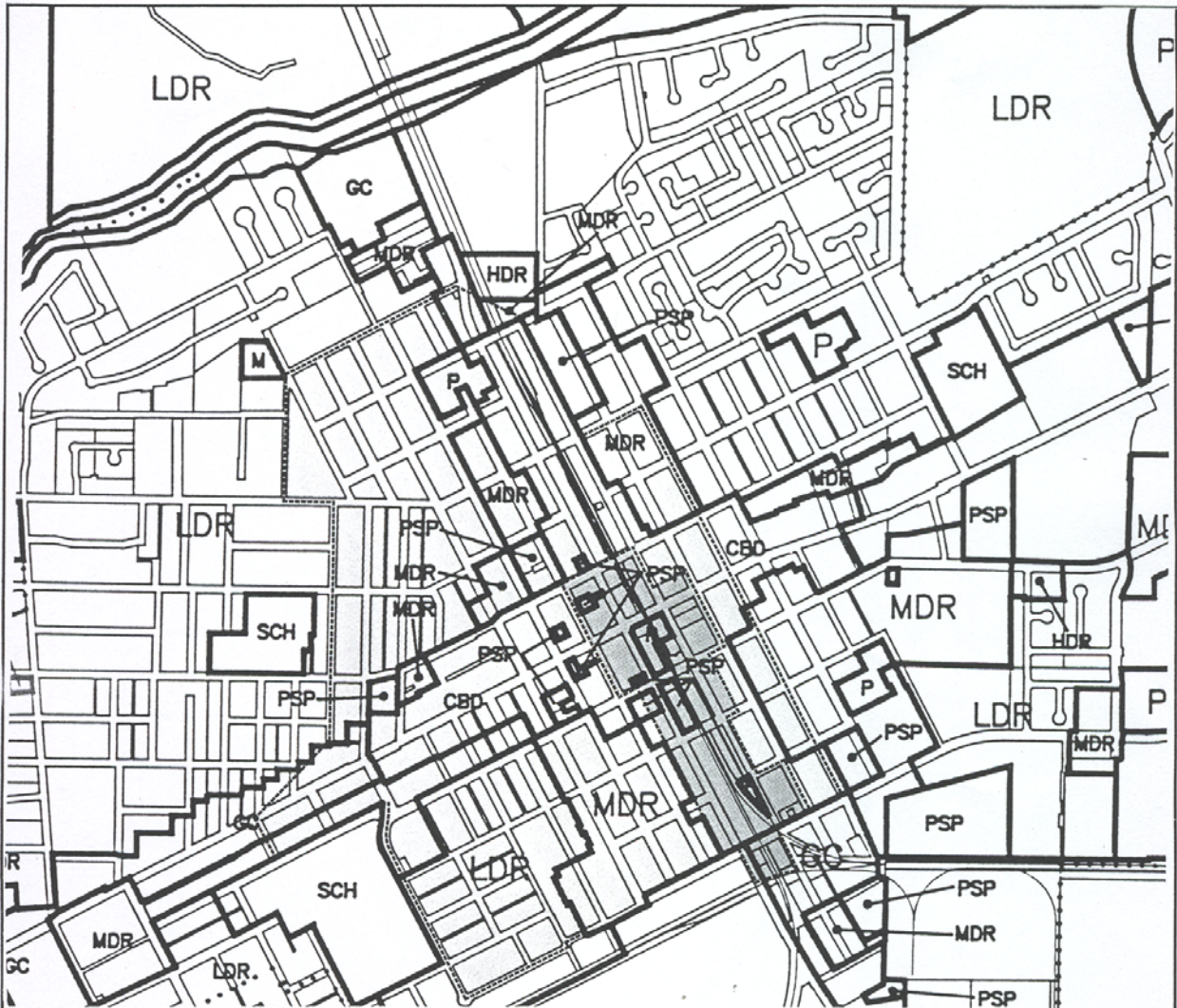
The general concept for the Oakdale Downtown Commercial Center is to create a historic main-street theme using the existing historical railroad depot at F Street and Sierra Avenue, and developing businesses attractive to tourist and Oakdale residents along Sierra Avenue (see Figure 4-2). Through-traffic on Sierra Avenue will be discouraged to create a primarily pedestrian atmosphere. The "Downtown Oakdale Revitalization Plan" identified the desired theme for downtown Oakdale to be "western". This means creation of a setting that is rustic, slow-paced, personal and inviting, for both the "westerner" and the "backpacker". This theme was not to be carried out in frontier architecture but, rather, in uses (specialty stores such as leather goods) and materials that are predominately natural in color and texture.

A consideration in selecting architectural themes is existing historic architecture within Oakdale. The 1986 Historic Sites Inventory is an excellent resource for that purpose. Several classic and beautiful wood and brick buildings still remain from the 1800s. The town of Oakdale began in the 1860s and had a lively growth until incorporating in 1906. It is this 1860-to-1905 period of Oakdale's early development that visitors are to experience again.

The Hershey Chocolate Company Visitor Center was the first new building to be completed within the project area. Its architecture and site development also should be referred to when designing new sites.

The planned downtown commercial center should contribute to the economic and aesthetic quality in downtown Oakdale. A setting is desired that will be commercially successful and an attractive addition to the existing downtown core. It is intended that, along with the uses planned, the appearance of the architecture and streetscape will encourage visitors to stay and shop, and return again.

Section 4.7 will discuss other Community Appearance visual resource issues not related to historical resources within the community. The resulting policies and guidelines provided in Section 4.8 and 4.9 are not intended to replace the policies in 4.5 and 4.6, as they relate to historic structures or Figure 4-1.



HISTORIC AND DESIGN DISTRICTS

CITY OF
OAKDALE
STANISLAUS COUNTY
CALIFORNIA

NORTH

HARLAND BARTHOLDMEW
& ASSOCIATES, INC.
SACRAMENTO, CA

LEGEND

- DOWNTOWN DESIGN DISTRICT
- HISTORIC PROPERTY SURVEY AREA

FIGURE 4-2