

# CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

## 1.1 OVERVIEW

The Dunnigan Specific Plan (DSP) directs the expansion and formation of the 3,110 acre community of Dunnigan. The overarching vision is of a vibrant and self-sustaining community that incorporates environmentally sustainable practices, distinct and walkable neighborhoods featuring complementary land uses and the integration of open space as the foundation of the community. The natural environment is the backbone of the community design and is integral to the sustainability strategies that are a foundation for the DSP.



**Vicinity Map of Plan Area and Yolo County**

The Dunnigan Specific Plan proposes a self-sustaining, mixed-use community including a broad spectrum of residential uses, employment, retail and supporting uses, recreational, open space and public uses, which are in symmetry and balance with the existing community. The projected yields, at full build out, would provide up to approximately 9,230 dwelling units and 11,300 jobs. Dunnigan will be an integrated community where residents can live, work, shop, educate, recreate and gather as a community. A detailed project description and vision statement is provided in Section 2.4.

Given the unique nature of the DSP, emphasis has been placed on creating a vibrant, comprehensively planned, sustainable community: one that generates a sense of place for residents and visitors through the use of natural and designed boundaries and landmarks. The amenities and natural resources will provide residents with an identifiable location that they can call “home” for generations to come.



## 1.2 PROJECT BACKGROUND AND HISTORY

The town of Dunnigan was founded as Antelope in 1853 by two early settlers, J. S. Copp and Jolin Wilson. An inn, known as "Dunnigan's" was opened in 1854 and another early settler, A.W. Dunnigan, built a large barn that became the Antelope Stage Depot. The community's first store was opened in 1866. In 1876, the Northern Railway, later known as the Southern Pacific Railroad, completed its roadbed through the community and the Antelope Stage Depot became the railway station. In the same year, the town plat of Dunnigan was filed for record at the county seat, formally changing the name of the community from Antelope to Dunnigan.

Dunnigan grew as a service center for the surrounding agricultural area. In 1909, eucalyptus trees were planted on large tracts of land located northwest of Dunnigan, with the intention of making furniture with the wood. When the trees were found to have no commercial value, the lots, known as the Yolo Hardwoods Subdivision, were sold as home sites. During the 1930's, many "Dust Bowl" refugees settled in the Hardwoods. After World War II, an influx of families from the San Francisco Bay Area purchased lots in the Hardwoods to build their retirement homes. The Interstate 5 freeway was completed in 1968, separating the Hardwoods from the historic Old Town.

The first formal planning for Dunnigan was completed in 1958, with the adoption of the Yolo County Master Plan. The Dunnigan Area General Plan was adopted by the County in 1981, followed by a subsequent update of the plan in 1992. The Dunnigan Community Plan was adopted by the Board of Supervisors in 2001.

The initiation of the Dunnigan Specific Plan occurred as a result of the Yolo County General Plan update, which began in May 2003. It was at this time that the Board of Supervisors gave direction to begin the process of comprehensively updating the General Plan, which had last been updated in 1983. Throughout 2004 to 2005, over 20 workshops were held to gain input and ideas from the various rural communities and a Land Use Summit was convened to develop issue and land use alternatives. During this time and into 2006, the County participated in regional modeling efforts and growth projections undertaken by the Sacramento Area Council of Governments (SACOG) to create the Blueprint scenario. From September 2006 to September 2007, the County held multiple hearings to explore and ultimately define the policy premise and Preferred Land Use Alternatives for the General Plan update process. The Preferred Land Use Alternative directed the preparation of the Dunnigan Specific Plan, providing specific targets for development capacities and community design that were an outgrowth of the community outreach process. The 2030 General Plan was adopted by the Board of Supervisors in November 2009.

During the early period of the General Plan Update, three of the largest landowners within the Dunnigan Specific Plan boundaries formed an effort to participate with the local Dunnigan Citizens Advisory Council (DCAC) in visioning for the Dunnigan community. The landowner's consultant team participated in numerous DCAC meetings and other meetings with local residents during the period of 2005 throughout the entire General Plan update process. The Plan Area boundary encompasses approximately 3,110 acres, comprised of numerous "participating" and "non-participating" landowners. The Dunnigan Landowner Group, representing "participating landowners" of approximately 58 percent of the Plan Area acreage, submitted an initial application to Yolo County in June 2009 and worked with County staff and others to refine the Specific Plan, which was officially submitted to the County in 2012. The term

“non-participating landowner” shall refer to any landowner who was not a member of the Dunnigan Landowner Group at the time that the Specific Plan was approved.

### 1.3 KEY FEATURES AND PROJECT OBJECTIVES

The Dunnigan Specific Plan represents the opportunity to implement the long-term vision of Yolo County to create a sustainable, balanced, healthy and successful community. Sustainability is measured in terms of providing infrastructure and a built environment that are coordinated to conserve resources and use renewable resources. Balance is measured by the extent to which jobs and wages are matched to housing within the community. Healthy is measured in the quality of life and the array of community services that are provided. Success will be measured by the test of time, as the community grows and emerges over the next 20 to 30 years, and then matures as a place that is vibrant, stable and a desirable place to live and work.

#### 1.3.1 The Keys to Success

Key features of the DSP are:

1. **Integrated Sustainable Practices:** Metrics are established that require the project implementation to achieve defined standards for energy efficiency, water conservation, stormwater management and renewable building materials.
2. **True multi-modal living:** Innovative programs to ensure that all residents have a multitude of opportunities not to use a gas powered vehicle, which includes a comprehensive trail system, streets designed to allow neighborhood electric vehicle use throughout the community, bicycle and neighborhood electric vehicle (nev) sharing programs, organized school pools and bike pools, education and activities to promote transit and non-vehicular use as the primary choice, becoming a way of life.
3. **High quality educational facilities:** Schools will be provided as “turn-key” facilities and will follow the green schools model, providing innovative, sustainable designs and programs.
4. **Health, wellness and support of community values:** The extensive, interconnected open space, active recreation facilities and the Dunnigan community gardening program will provide ample places for physical activity and will form a unifying element of the community, providing places for residents to meet, play, grow their own food and experience natural surroundings.
5. **Integrating agriculture with community:** The project provides the opportunity for integrated agriculture and open space within the boundaries of the rural residential districts, provides buffers and educational programs to help protect/respect neighboring agriculture and promotes the use of locally grown products.

#### 1.3.2 Project Objectives

The following summarizes the project objectives that guided the DSP:

1. Establish a comprehensive land use plan for the 3,110 acre Dunnigan Specific Plan Area that is compatible with the goals, policies and framework of the Yolo County General Plan and, more specifically, provide for the realization of a community scale sufficient to ensure economic sustainability with a base population large enough to support basic community services not presently available in Dunnigan.

## Introduction

2. Establish a mixed-use community that integrates a variety of land uses, including residential, commercial, office/professional, light industrial, recreational, public and educational land uses, and which incorporates feasible smart growth principles, provides protection of valuable environmental resources, is compatible with the existing land uses within Dunnigan.
3. Establish a land use and circulation system that promotes convenient mobility, with an emphasis on a variety of non-vehicular modes as alternatives to fossil-fuel consuming car usage within a human-scale community environment that is safe, accessible and convenient for all modes of travel.
4. Promote a diversity of housing opportunities responsive to community needs and market conditions, including housing for executives, single-family dwellings, apartments, townhouses and live-work units to serve a broad range of family incomes.
5. Provide opportunities to attract a high quality and diversified base of employers to locate within the Plan Area, resulting in a stable employment base with a wide range of job opportunities for Dunnigan and Yolo County residents, promoting in a balance of jobs to housing.
6. Provide community-wide public facilities including fire stations, sheriff substation, library, elementary schools, a middle and high school, passive open space, and neighborhood and community parks.
7. Provide a comprehensively planned and innovative infrastructure system that supports the needs of the Dunnigan Plan Area as a whole.
8. Provide for planned growth in a location that is or can be served by existing and planned infrastructure with ready access to regional transportation corridors such as Interstate 5 and 505.
9. Where feasible, preserve and enhance existing sensitive biological habitats, natural open spaces and riparian areas.
10. Create a financially viable, fiscally responsible and balanced community that is responsive to market demand and infrastructure cost requirements while generating a positive General Fund revenue flow to the County.
11. Provide for the on-going maintenance needs of the community open space areas, park facilities, public services and infrastructure through effective local governance.

### 1.4 PURPOSE AND LEGAL AUTHORITY OF THE SPECIFIC PLAN

Specific plans provide an opportunity to creatively implement the intent of the General Plan and serve as a refinement of General Plan policies. The 2030 Yolo County General Plan provided specific action (CC-A17) requiring the preparation of a Specific Plan for Dunnigan.

The Dunnigan Specific Plan is the primary land use, policy and regulatory document used to guide development of the Plan Area. The Specific Plan establishes a development framework for land use, community design and character, infrastructure improvements and a subsequent project approval structure for orderly development within the 3,110 acre Plan Area.

Preparation of a specific plan is authorized by Section 65450 et seq. of the Government Code. Government Code Section 65451 mandates that a specific plan include a text and a diagram or diagrams which specify all of the following in detail:

- 1) The distribution, location, and extent of the uses of land, including open space, within the area covered by the plan.
- (2) The proposed distribution, location, and extent and intensity of major components of public and private transportation, sewage, water, drainage, solid waste disposal, energy, and other essential facilities proposed to be located within the area covered by the plan and needed to support the land uses described in the plan.
- (3) Standards and criteria by which development will proceed, and standards for the conservation, development, and utilization of natural resources, where applicable.
- (4) A program of implementation measures including regulations, programs, public works projects and financing measures necessary to carry out paragraphs (1), (2), and (3).

The specific plan must also contain a statement of relationship of the specific plan to the General Plan. Consistency with the General Plan is required by state law. Furthermore, no zoning, tentative maps, parcel maps, or public works projects can be approved, adopted, or undertaken unless they are consistent with the adopted specific plan. The DSP was prepared pursuant to State Law and is compatible with the applicable policies and programs of the General Plan.

## **1.5 RELATIONSHIP TO COUNTY PLANS & REGULATIONS**

### **1.5.1 Yolo County General Plan**

The California Government Code requires that Specific Plans be consistent with the local jurisdiction's adopted General Plan. The General Plan is a statement of the community's land use values and is the underlying basis for its vision and direction. The General Plan serves as the long-term policy guide for the physical, economic and environmental growth of Yolo County.

The Dunnigan Specific Plan implements the goals and policies of the Yolo County 2030 General Plan, which established a growth boundary for the community of Dunnigan and directed the preparation of a Specific Plan. An analysis of the consistency of the DSP with applicable General Plan policies and actions is provided in Appendix A.

### **1.5.2 Yolo County Zoning Code**

The Yolo County Zoning Code (Title 8 Chapters 1 and 2, Land Development and Zoning) establishes districts throughout the County with permitted land uses and development standards. These development standards create the framework for the physical form of the community (building setbacks, heights, etc). Upon adoption of the Dunnigan Specific Plan and the DSP Development Standards (Appendix S), the zoning for the Plan Area will be Specific Plan, with unique zoning categories applied to each land use district pursuant to the DSP.

To the extent that a component or regulation of the Specific Plan differs from a requirement of the Zoning Code, the Specific Plan will take precedence. Where the Specific Plan is silent, the Zoning Code will be used for the purpose of interpretation or applied as appropriate.

### **1.5.3 Yolo County Subdivision Ordinance**

The Yolo County Subdivision Ordinance (Title 8, Chapter 1 Land Development) will regulate individual requests for land divisions within the Plan Area, unless otherwise noted herein. To the extent that a component or regulation of the Specific Plan differs from a requirement of the Ordinance, the Specific Plan will take precedence. Where the Specific Plan is silent, the Subdivision Ordinance will be used for purposes of interpretation, and/or directly applied as appropriate.

### **1.5.4 Yolo County Improvement Standards**

The Yolo County Improvement Standards (adopted August 5, 2008) establish basic standards and detail sheets for construction of public infrastructure. These standards and specifications apply to all construction within the Plan Area, unless otherwise addressed herein. To the extent that a component or regulation of the Specific Plan differs from a requirement of the Standards, the Specific Plan will take precedence. Where the Specific Plan is silent, the Standards will be used for purposes of interpretation, and/or directly applied as appropriate.

### **1.5.5 Other Related Yolo County Plans**

The following plans are County-wide plans that provide specific guidance for any project within Yolo County. The DSP is required to be consistent with these plans, as applicable, or these plans could be updated and/or amended to achieve consistency with the DSP:

- Yolo County Climate Action Plan
- Yolo County Bicycle Transportation Plan
- Yolo County Parks and Open Space Master Plan
- Integrated Regional Water Management Plan
- Yolo County Waste Management and Hazardous Waste Plan

To the extent that a component or regulation of the Specific Plan differs from a requirement of these plans, the more specific or stringent requirement will apply. Where the Specific Plan is silent, these plans will be used for purposes of interpretation, and/or directly applied as appropriate.

## **1.6 SPECIFIC PLAN RELATED DOCUMENTS**

### **1.6.1 Environmental Impact Report**

The Dunnigan Specific Plan Environmental Impact Report (EIR) was prepared and certified by the Board of Supervisors on (date) Resolution No. (XXX). The EIR identifies the potential environmental impacts of the Specific Plan and identifies mitigation measures pursuant to the requirements of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA).

As individual subdivision maps or other development is proposed during implementation of the DSP, the County intends to rely, to the extent legally possible, upon the statutory exemptions provided under state law including, but not limited to: 1) Public Resources Code Section 21083.3 and CEQA Guidelines Section 15183 for land use actions and development consistent (including

ordinances and community plans) with the General Plan and Zoning; and, 2) California Government Code Section 65457a and CEQA Guidelines Section 15182(a) for residential projects consistent with the Specific Plans.

CEQA Guidelines Section 15183 provides that projects consistent with development density, zoning, community planning, and the general plan for which an EIR was certified do not trigger a new environmental review unless there are new impacts that have not already been properly addressed. Section 65457(a) of the California Government Code and CEQA Guidelines Section 15182(a) provide that no EIR or negative declaration is required for any residential project undertaken in conformity with an adopted Specific Plan for which an EIR has been certified.

The EIR for the Dunnigan Specific Plan was intended to qualify subsequent projects within the Plan Area for these exemptions, assuming those projects are consistent with the adopted Specific Plan, and fulfill all applicable Zoning conditions and CEQA mitigation measures (including the completion of detailed site-specific studies, if required).

### **1.6.2 Development Agreement**

The Dunnigan Specific Plan participating property owners have entered into a Development Agreement with Yolo County in accordance with Sections 65864 through 65869.5 of the Government Code. The Project Development Agreement, as it relates to the development of the Plan Area, will provide the property owner with a vested right to develop the project, implement the construction of certain infrastructure improvements, further establish the timing and method for financing improvements and other specific performance obligations of the property owners and Yolo County. The Development Agreements constitute legal and binding contracts between Yolo County, the property owners and their assigned successors in interest.

### **1.6.3 Dunnigan Specific Plan Development Standards**

Concurrent with the approval of this Specific Plan, Development Standards for the DSP were adopted by Yolo County. The DSP Development Standards (Appendix S) act as the zoning regulations for the Plan Area. The Development Standards set forth the permitted uses, development standards and other regulations for the Plan Area. When conflicts occur between the provisions in the Yolo County Zoning Ordinance or the County Improvement Standards and the DSP Development Standards, the provisions of the DSP Development Standards shall apply. Where the DSP Development Standards do not address a specific provision, the County Zoning Ordinance and/or Improvement Standards requirements shall govern development in the Plan Area.

### **1.6.4 DSP Design Guidelines**

Concurrent with the approval of this Specific Plan, Design Guidelines for the DSP were approved by Yolo County. The DSP Design Guidelines (Appendix B) provide specific direction for the development of all land uses to ensure quality and consistent design treatment.

### **1.6.5 Infrastructure Plans and Capital Improvement Plan**

The Yolo County Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) is a list of transportation and other infrastructure projects that are intended to be funded and constructed over a five-year period. The CIP was amended to include the improvements, as described in the DSP infrastructure master plans for water, wastewater and drainage facilities, to be constructed to serve the initial phase of the DSP.

### **1.6.6 Public Facilities and Public Services Financing Plans**

Concurrent with the approval of the Specific Plan, Yolo County adopted the DSP Public Facilities Financing Plan (PFFP) and the Public Services Financing Plan (PSFP). The PFFP defines the specific mechanisms which will be required to fund the capital costs of all infrastructure necessary for the full build-out of the Plan Area. The PSFP defines the mechanisms for the funding, delivery and management of the public services within the Plan Area, the analysis of the fiscal impact of the DSP to the County and the maintenance of the new infrastructure.

## **1.7 PROPOSED ENTITLEMENTS**

Implementation of the Specific Plan requires approval of the following entitlements by the Yolo County Board of Supervisors:

- Certification of EIR
- Recession of 2001 Dunnigan Community Plan
- Adoption of the Dunnigan Specific Plan, including adoption of Zoning Ordinance and Map
- Approval of DSP Infrastructure Plans and CIP
- Approval of the Public Facilities and Public Services Financing Plan(s)
- Adoption of Development Agreement(s)
- Approval of a Large Lot Tentative Subdivision Map

Development of the Specific Plan requires the approval of the following actions by State, Federal and other agencies:

- Approval of the Water Supply Assessment
- US Army Corps of Engineers permits (Section 401)
- Yolo-Solano Air Quality Management District permits (Authority to Operate, etc.)
- Central Valley Flood Control Board (Encroachment Permit)
- Department of Fish and Game and US Fish and Wildlife Service (take permits)
- Public Utility Commission (utility district approval)
- Caltrans (encroachment permit)
- Regional Water Quality Control Board Permits (Section 401)
- Clean Water Act Permits (Section 404)
- Streambed Alteration agreements (Section 1602)
- Agreement pursuant to Section 7 of the Federal Endangered Species Act
- Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCO) Change of Organization

Future approvals may include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Tentative Subdivision Maps
- Lot Line Adjustments
- Site Plan Review
- Use Permits
- Variances
- Project Development Agreements
- Environmental Health approvals
- Encroachment Permits
- Subdivision Improvement Agreements
- Rezones