

CHAPTER TWO: PLAN AREA SETTING & VISION

2.1 PROJECT LOCATION

The Plan Area is located in the northeastern portion of Yolo County directly adjacent to Interstate 5 at the existing town of Dunnigan, just north of the interchange between Interstate 505 and I-5. The City of Woodland is located approximately 14 miles to the south and the town of Arbuckle in Colusa County is located approximately 8 miles to the north. The site is bounded generally by Bird Creek to the south, Tehama-Colusa Canal and County Road 88 to the west, Road 99W to the east, and the north boundary is the triangular intersection of Road 88 and Interstate 5.

2.2 PRE-SPECIFIC PLAN SETTING

2.2.1 Town of Dunnigan Context

Prior to the Specific Plan, the town of Dunnigan was primarily comprised of the Yolo Hardwoods, Old Town, the commercial uses and mobile home park near I-5 at County Road 8. The Yolo Hardwoods subdivision, located on the west side of Interstate 5, is where the majority of the pre-specific plan population resided, largely consisting of single family homes on 1-acre lots and a mobile home park. The “Old Town” portion of Dunnigan on the east side of



Dunnigan General Store and Post Office

Interstate 5 is comprised of a three block square area with County Road 99W bisecting it, parallel with the Southern Pacific Railroad tracks. A small mobile home subdivision is located on County Road 99W just north of County Road 8 and several rural residential homes are located within the western portion of the Plan Area. Dunnigan contains several highway commercial uses, such as a truck stop, service stations, mini-marts, and restaurants. A large auction yard, Ritchie Brothers, is located in the southeast corner of the Plan Area. The town has no public sewer or water infrastructure, relying on groundwater wells, septic systems and small wastewater treatment facilities with ponds. The students residing within the town attend schools in Arbuckle. The existing public/quasi public facilities include a volunteer fire station, the US Post Office, several churches, the Dunnigan Water District offices and the town park.

2.2.2 Site Conditions

Prior to the adoption of the Specific Plan, the 3,110 acre Plan Area was zoned for residential uses (approx. 408 acres), jobs and services (approx. 280 acres) and agriculture and open space uses (approx. 2,422 acres). The residential zoning comprises the Hardwoods, Old Town and the Country Estates mobile home park on Road 99W. The existing uses within jobs and services zoning are primarily located adjacent to I-5 and Road 99W. The agricultural uses within the Plan Area are located primarily on the west side of I-5 and a small area on Road 99W south of Road 6.

Plan Area Setting & Vision

Existing agricultural activities on the site include grazing, row crops, orchards and some vineyards. Numerous irrigation ditches cross the agricultural fields and there are several existing stock ponds. Natural vegetation within the undeveloped portion of the Plan Area consists of a few scattered oak and willow trees. Vegetation associated with Bird Creek, Dunnigan Creek and the irrigation ditches include oaks, willows, cottonwoods, buckeyes and other riparian vegetation. The majority of the Plan Area is generally flat to gently sloping. However, in the western third of the Plan Area, the topography dramatically changes, with rises ranging from approximately five percent and up to 20-30 percent, near the Tehama-Colusa Canal, which forms the majority of the western boundary of the Plan Area.



North edge of Dunnigan Creek



Near southwestern Plan Area boundary

2.2.3 Adjacent Uses

Agricultural lands abut the Plan Area on all sides. To the east, the agricultural uses are primarily row crops. To the south is Bird Creek, which is a perennial creek with moderately steep banks and scattered riparian vegetation. Agricultural uses to the south of the creek include both row crops and orchards. The southwestern edge of the Plan Area is bordered by the Tehama Colusa Canal. Beyond the canal to the west are moderate to steeply sloped grazing lands. The western edge of the Plan Area to the north of Dunnigan Creek is bounded by County Road 88 and to the west of Road 88 are 20 acre agricultural parcels, each with existing home sites. The north edge is the intersection of I-5 and Road 2, where the existing uses include row crops and orchards.

2.3 CONSTRAINTS & OPPORTUNITIES THAT INFLUENCE THE SPECIFIC PLAN

Primary conditions that have potential influence on the Plan Area include the distance from regional job centers, existing sensitive land uses, adjacent agricultural lands, the transportation corridors, the natural and man-made drainage ways, and sensitive environmental and habitat resources. Such conditions influence both opportunities and constraints to future development. As a result, the general layout and design of the Plan Area was guided by the following factors, which are demonstrated on the Land Use/Zoning Plan, Exhibit 3.1:

- The intent to ensure compatibility with existing uses within the Plan Area and adjacent agricultural uses through designation of similar types and intensities of land uses, buffers and setbacks.
- The opportunity to ensure preservation of significant resources including creeks, drainage ways, habitat areas and seasonal wetlands in open space areas.

- The opportunity to connect to and extend major circulation corridors, providing optimal connectivity of uses and facilitating functional travel modes.
- The opportunity to introduce clustered rural residential housing interspersed with new agricultural uses or open space in the western most portion of the Plan Area where the hilly terrain is not suitable for more dense housing or traditional agricultural crops.

2.4 VISION STATEMENT

Dunnigan is intended to be a simple, authentic and self-sustaining place that is connected to the past and is poised to thrive into the future. It is a community focused on environmental and social sustainability, health, wellness, connection, stewardship, and authenticity. Dunnigan embraces a broad cross-section of demographics and lifestyles. The community provides a platform for interconnectivity and future-based living while providing the slower pace of life embodied by traditional rural California. The pillars that define Dunnigan are self-sustaining, connected, and genuine.



Self-sustaining means that the community supports itself with services, businesses, a variety of inclusive housing options and green technologies. The community is self-reliant, providing for its residents and resting lightly on the land.

Inter-connected signifies that Dunnigan's road and trail network is a conscious and intuitive design to provide simple transport throughout the town. The community provides the ability for residents to nurture and relate to the land while also provides innovative technology to connect to the world

Genuine pertains to the quality and essence of the community. It is reflected in the design of the neighborhoods, services, and infrastructure which are community oriented, rather than functioning as a cog within the region. Architecture is human-scaled, with houses near the street, walkable commercial areas that emphasize local services, attractive pedestrian and bicycle transportation, and public spaces where local residents can interact.



Plan Area Setting & Vision

2.5 SMART GROWTH PRINCIPLES

The Dunnigan Specific Plan responds to the Yolo County 2030 General Plan, which directed the community expansion of Dunnigan and designated the boundaries for a Specific Plan. The community expansion of Dunnigan is intended to ensure the sustainability of the town, provide a base population that will support basic community services and with a mix of land uses that will provide a balanced number of homes which are priced to match the number of local jobs and wages.



The vision for the community is founded upon the principles of ‘smart growth’, which were adapted from the principles used by SACOG in the development of the regional Blueprint. These principles are fundamental to the community concept which achieves a balanced mix of land uses, their appropriate placement within the Plan Area and an infrastructure network that accommodates regional transportation facilities while providing integrated opportunities for pedestrian and alternative travel modes. The community will be enhanced with a strong sense of place intended to foster social cohesion, one that promotes non-vehicular modes of travel, encourages education, minimizes energy use and maximizes sustainability at all levels. Dunnigan will be a lifelong community in which people of all ages and abilities can live for as long as they choose. The DSP incorporates the following concepts in the overall vision:

2.5.1 Transportation Choices

The Specific Plan is designed to allow and encourage residents to live, work, shop, educate and recreate within Dunnigan. The integration of a comprehensive roadway and trail system will maximize the potential for people to walk, ride bicycles, use neighborhood electric vehicles (nev’s), ride the local bus or carpool.



2.5.2 Compact Development

The Land Use Plan is compact and designed to use the land efficiently. The land uses are organized to encourage more walking, biking and public transit use, and shorten auto trips. The Land Use Plan is organized into six planning districts.

2.5.3 Mixed Use Development

The DSP integrates residential, shops and office uses in locations throughout the Plan Area to create active, vital neighborhoods. The mixed use areas allow both vertical and horizontal integration of the land uses.

2.5.4 Housing Choice and Diversity

The DSP provides a variety of places where people can live, including apartments, condominiums, townhouses, attached detached single-family homes with a range of sizes and prices. This creates many housing opportunities for families, singles, seniors and people with special needs. This feature is of special benefit for professionals, as well as retail employees, service workers and other people for whom living close to work can be financially challenging.

2.5.5 Quality Design

The DSP emphasizes quality site planning and architectural design as important factors in creating a strong sense of community and sense of place. The design details of the development, such as the relationship of the buildings to the street, setbacks, placement of garages, sidewalks, landscaping, the aesthetics of building design and the design of the public rights-of-way, are factors that influence the attractiveness of living in a compact development and facilitates the ease of walking and biking to work or neighborhood services. The DSP Development Standards detail the permitted uses and specific development standards and the DSP Design Guidelines provide design guidance for the Plan Area.



2.5.6 Natural Resource Conservation

The Land Use Plan incorporates open space corridors throughout the Plan Area, along with preservation of wildlife corridors and plant habitat and the promotion of environment-friendly practices such as energy efficient design, water conservation and stormwater management. In addition to conserving resources and protecting species, the conservation of natural resources improves overall quality of life by providing places for outdoor enjoyment.



2.5.7 Use of Existing Assets

The DSP builds upon many of the features found in the existing community. The new rural residential areas to the west are an extension of the general pattern found in the Hardwoods Subdivision. The historic buildings of Old Town form the basis for a new commercial area that emphasizes the arts and tourism. The Caltrans rest stops are re-imagined as showcases of local agriculture for the traveling public. The rail line is envisioned as a future commuter train. Most importantly, the community's natural drainages have been enhanced to provide not only improved riparian habitat, but to also serve as pathways for pedestrians and bicyclists, and conveyances for local storm water.