

STAFF REPORT

DATE: February 8, 2017

TO: Planning Commission

FROM: Katherine Hess, Community Development Administrator
Ashley Feeney, Assistant Director of Community Development and Sustainability

SUBJECT: West Davis Active Adult Community – Preliminary Workshop

Recommendation

Staff recommends the Planning Commission hold a preliminary workshop on the proposed West Davis Active Adult Community and provide suggestions to staff and the applicant for consideration during the Commission and environmental review process. This is only the beginning of the technical review process - the Planning Commission will have additional opportunities to review the proposal prior to making its formal recommendation to City Council.

Background

David Taormino has submitted applications to the City proposing consideration of the West Davis Active Adult Community project. The site is 75 acres on the north side of Covell Boulevard, west of Sutter-Davis Hospital. Approval of the project would require General Plan Amendment, and voter approval under Measure R. An Environmental Impact Report will be prepared. Other entitlements would include Development Agreement, Affordable Housing Plan, Annexation (including a tax-share agreement) and implementing approvals, such as subdivision maps.



Figure 1: Location

Application documents are at <http://cityofdavis.org/city-hall/community-development-and-sustainability/development-projects/west-davis-active-adult-community>

De Novo Planning Group, which has experience preparing EIRs in Davis, has been selected to prepare the CEQA documents. Staff anticipates that the following policy topics will drive the key planning and environmental analysis for this project:

- Impacts to agricultural and biological resources.
- Traffic and circulation impacts, including accommodations for pedestrians and cyclists connecting to the existing built environment.
- Project consistency with City goals for sustainability, urban development, parks and open space, and community character.

The Environmental Impact Report will also cover the required CEQA analyses of impacts to public utilities and facilities, greenhouse gas emissions, alternatives, and cumulative impacts.

In January, the City Council gave the following directions to staff:

1. Solicit Commission input on the proposal, as outlined in the report at <http://documents.cityofdavis.org/Media/Default/Documents/PDF/CityCouncil/CouncilMeetings/Agendas/20170124/04H-WDAAC-Preliminary-Direction.pdf>;
2. Return to Council with a budget adjustment and contract for preparation of an Environmental Impact Report;
3. Initiate review of the fiscal impacts of the proposal; and
4. Process the applications and bring them to Planning Commission and City Council hearing upon completion of staff and commission reviews.

Commission Review Process

The purpose of this workshop is to allow the Planning Commission to provide preliminary review and comment, focusing on general topics such as mix of land uses, roadway and greenbelt networks, relationship of the site to surrounding uses, and issues to be addressed as the project is refined prior to environmental review and public hearing. Later in the review process, the Planning Commission will hold a public meeting during the DEIR public review period to allow commissioners and the public to make comments on the draft document.

Planning Commission, as the body formally charged with reviewing land-use applications, would also hold the required public hearing and make formal recommendation to the City Council on the merits of the proposal as a whole. Staff anticipates that comments from advisory commissions would be presented to the Planning Commission and City Council in a matrix format, with staff notes on how recommendations have been addressed.

Other advisory commissions will be asked to review the proposal, prior to public hearing before the Planning Commission and City Council. All applicable commissions will be asked to make advisory comments on policy consistency related to their charges. Specifically, commissions will be requested to comment on project components that should be incorporated into the Baseline Project Features as the City Council considers presenting the proposal to the voters.

Preliminary dates for commission review, and likely topics for discussion, are as follows. This will be refined as the evaluation proceeds.

Commission	Tentative Date	Discussion Topics
Senior Citizen	February 9 (workshop) March 9 (recommendations)	Senior-friendly components of subdivision, including age restrictions, greenbelt configuration, unit types and features, and recreational/HOA amenities; access to public transit and paratransit; consistency with Guidelines for Housing that Serves Seniors and Persons with Disabilities
Open Space and Habitat	March 6	Agricultural mitigation and buffer, environmental analysis (when released)
Bicycle, Transportation , and Street Safety	March 9	Street layout and connectivity, roadway and path widths, Covell Boulevard frontage improvements
Recreation and Park	March 16	Park and greenbelt location and amenities
Social Services	March 20	Affordable housing proposal
Natural Resources	March 27	Sustainability components, environmental analysis (when released)
Finance and Budget	TBD, likely spring-summer	Fiscal impacts on City, sensitivity analysis reflecting Development Agreement commitments, tax-share agreement, and project refinements

Completion of the Environmental Impact Report would require approximately twelve months from contract execution. Public hearings before Planning Commission could be expected in early 2018.

Preliminary Review Comments

Staff has a few initial comments on the proposal, based upon our preliminary review. Additional comments by Planning Commissioners are encouraged. Staff and the applicant have the goal of identifying any substantive changes to the proposal prior to confirming the Project Description for the purpose of scoping the Environmental Impact Report.

Location and Uses. This location may be appropriate for development of housing targeted to seniors. It is proximate to Sutter-Davis Hospital, the University Retirement Community, and medical offices. The site is within the Sphere of Influence adopted by the Yolo County Local Agency Formation Commission. Adequacy of proximate services for residents, including shopping, recreational amenities, social activities, and schools, would be evaluated as part of the application review.

Measure R Requirements. Staff anticipates that Baseline Project Features, as required by Measure R, will be refined through public and commission review. Development Agreement and Preliminary Planned Development provisions are also anticipated to be reviewed concurrently with the Baseline Project Features. Should the applications be approved by the City Council and the voters, implementing actions such as subdivision maps and conditional use permits would be processed through Planning Commission. At that time, Development Agreement could be

refined, as necessary, in accordance with the provisions of the General Plan Amendment and Baseline Project Features.

Greenbelts. The preliminary concept plan shows greenbelts of 25-35 feet throughout the project, no public park, and an HOA-maintained outdoor area as part of the Activity Center.



Figure 3: Conceptual Greenbelt Path

The General Plan calls for greenbelts averaging 100 feet wide. Recently-adopted street standards call for multi-use paths to be 12 feet wide, with 2 foot rideable/walkable shoulders, for a total of 16 feet of rideable surface (FHWA guidelines and Shared-Use Path LOS analysis can be used in determining appropriate path width to maximize LOS without overbuilding infrastructure). The General Plan also calls for a neighborhood park within 3/8 of a mile of all residences. Arroyo Park is approximately 3/8 mile from the edge of the site, across Covell Boulevard.

Staff feels that a central greenbelt could serve as the pedestrian/bicycle circulation corridor and public green space for subdivision residents, but it would need to be of appropriate width to accommodate a variety of uses, including activity nodes that might include uses such as play structures, outdoor exercise equipment, and/or a fenced play area for small dogs. The variety of potential users, including cyclists, persons with mobility impairments, parents with babies and strollers, and other users are likely to require wider-than-proposed paths to reduce potential for conflicts.

Roadway connectivity and emergency access. Primary vehicular access to the site would be from Risling Place, adjacent to Sutter-Davis Hospital. Secondary (right-in, right-out) vehicular access would come from Covell Boulevard west of the main entrance. The Covell Boulevard edge is anticipated to include two westbound travel lanes (to be considered in the EIR), a planted parkway strip, and a multi-use trail north of a relocated drainage channel.



Figure 4: Conceptual Site Plan

Staff feels that the preliminary site plan could be improved with the addition of greater connectivity and loop streets, similar to the concepts illustrated in Figure 2 of the General Plan Transportation Element (below). Interconnectedness will accommodate vehicles for emergency services and waste removal, and improve “permeability” and resident access throughout the neighborhood.

The preliminary site plan also shows multiple flag lots at the ends of the cul-de-sacs. These lots can require frequent curb cuts, which can create difficulty for placement of street trees, on-street parking, and waste collection. The driveways for the flag lots might also pose challenges for senior citizen residents.

The accommodations for bicycle, pedestrian, and vehicular travel along Risling Place will require particular care with respect to crosswalk placement, adequacy of vehicular circulation, and adequacy of bicycle facilities. Staff is proposing to reach out to Sutter-Davis Hospital to request the latest thoughts on future development in the hospital’s expansion area, so that improvements can be coordinated as well as possible.

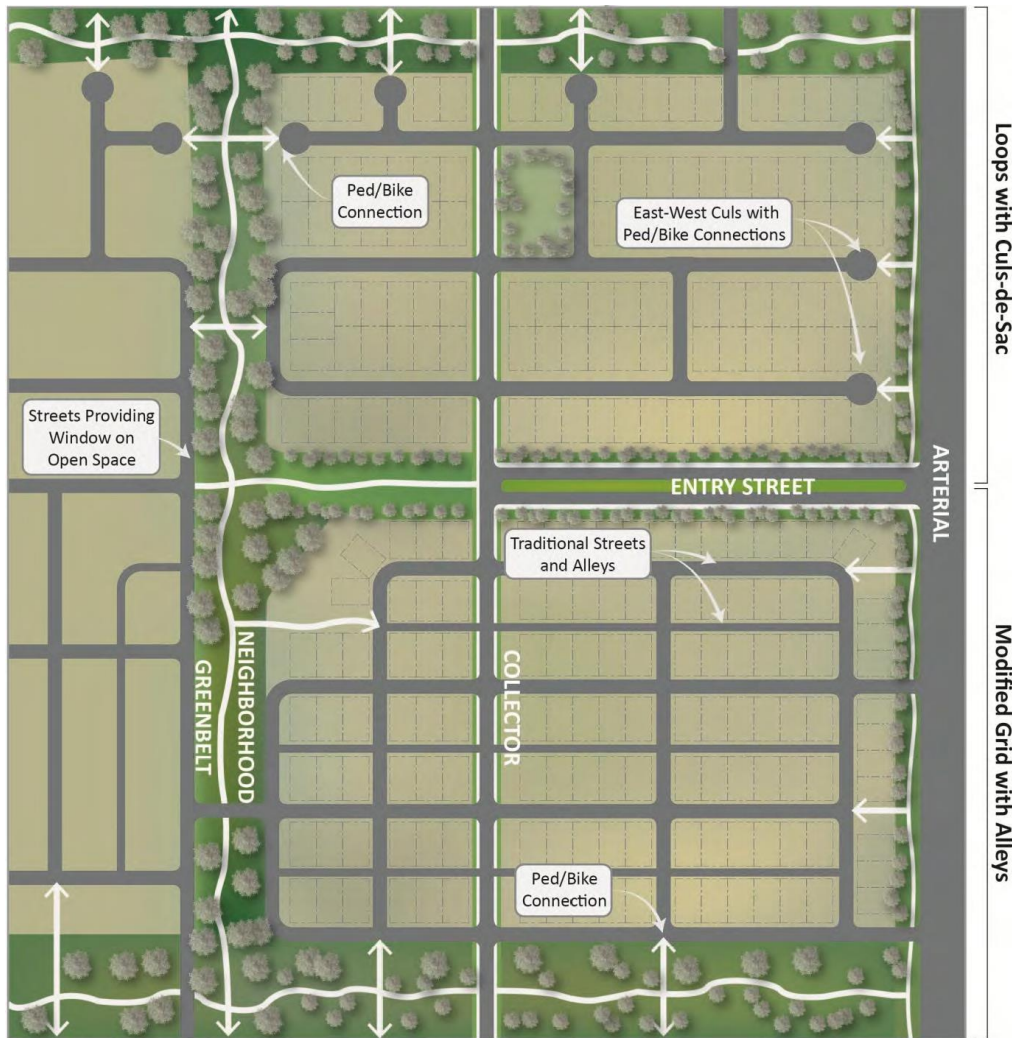


Figure 5: Transportation Element Figure 2 - Street Connectivity Concepts

The Environmental Impact Report will identify improvements necessary to mitigate impacts of the project on the transportation system. Any new or modified roadways will be required to meet current street standards. Staff anticipates that review of the proposal, including consideration by the Bicycle, Transportation, and Street Safety Commission, will consider on-site circulation and the Covell Boulevard “edge” as well as opportunities to improve the west Covell Boulevard corridor.

Agricultural Preservation and Agricultural Buffer. The City’s Right to Farm and Farmland Preservation Ordinances require both mitigation for the loss of agricultural land, and a 150-foot agricultural buffer between new development and agricultural lands. The buffer is to be comprised of a 50-foot public access area and a 100-foot transition area. Permitted uses within the transition area include native plants, hedgerows, drainage channels and agricultural uses.

The applicant is proposing a 150-foot agricultural buffer that would include 50 feet of public access and 100 feet of dual-purpose agricultural buffer and drainage swale. Like the proposed drainage facilities, a portion of the buffer is located on the 75-acre WDAAC parcel and a portion is located on the properties to the west and north of the site. Soil removed from the drainage swale would be used to elevate the subdivision above required flood elevations.

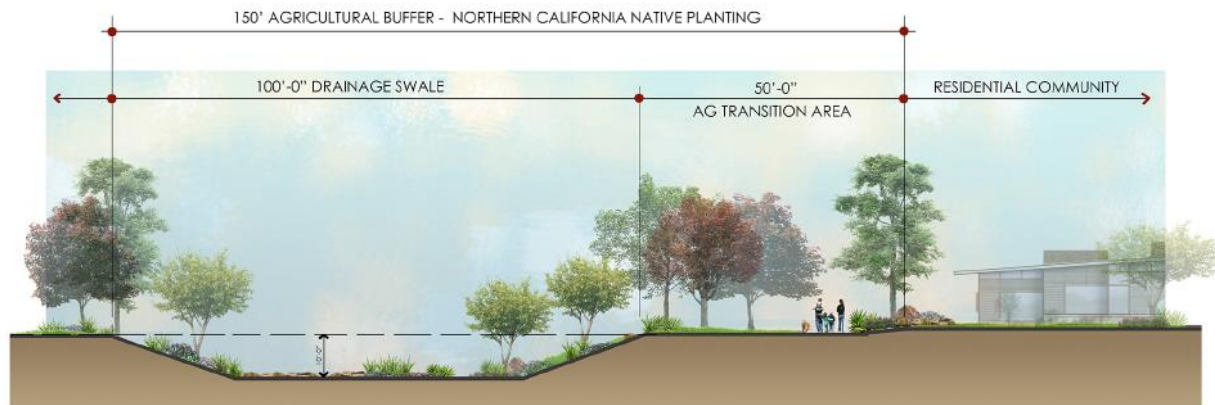


Figure 6: Conceptual 150' Agricultural Buffer

Sustainability. The applicant has initiated discussions on possible sustainability components, including photovoltaics on every single-family unit and compliance with the City's mandatory CalGreen Tier 1 standard. Residential projects receiving building permits after January 1, 2020 will be required to be Zero Net Energy, as defined by the California Energy Commission. Other opportunities to explore through the development review process include feasibility of a zero-net carbon subdivision, potential to provide resources for "greening" existing neighborhoods, and incorporation of the three "E"s for sustainability: environment, economy, and equity.

Attachment

1. Preliminary Master Plan
2. Conceptual Site Plan

Additional materials provided to the Planning Commissioners by the applicant in paper form are at <http://cityofdavis.org/city-hall/community-development-and-sustainability/development-projects/west-davis-active-adult-community>