

STAFF REPORT

DATE: March 6, 2017

TO: Open Space and Habitat Commission

FROM: Katherine Hess, Community Development Administrator
Tracie Reynolds, Open Space Program Manager
Ashley Feeney, Assistant Director of Community Development and Sustainability

SUBJECT: West Davis Active Adult Community – Preliminary Workshop

Recommendation

Staff recommends the Open Space and Habitat 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. The Commission will have future opportunities to review the Environmental Impact Report and to make formal recommendation to the Planning Commission and City Council on aspects of the proposal within the purview of the Commission.

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

The proposal includes the following components:

- 325 for-sale units, primarily single-family detached and predominantly single-story
- 150 affordable senior apartments
- 3-acre (approximate) Activity and Wellness Center, including pool, public restaurant, outdoor patio, and parking lot
- 3-acre (approximate) parcel for University Retirement Community expansion
- Greenbelts, drainage, and agricultural buffer (including off-site agricultural buffer and stormwater detention)

Eighty percent of the units, including the affordable apartments, are proposed to be entitled as a senior citizen housing development. At least one occupant of these units would be required to be 55 and over, with all other occupants either spouses/partners aged 45 and older or health care providers. The remaining twenty percent of the units would not have age restrictions.

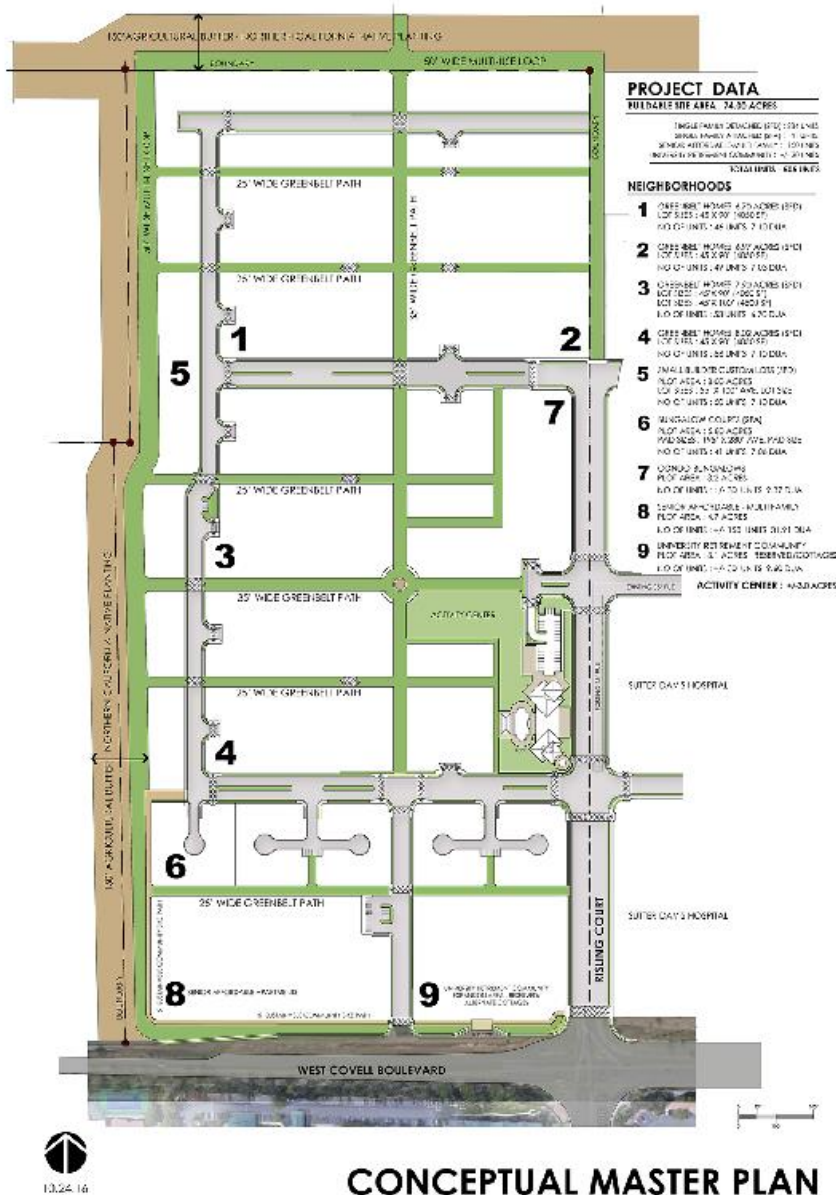


Figure 2: Conceptual Master Plan

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 environmental studies 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 Open Space and Habitat Commission to provide preliminary review and comment, focusing on general topics such as mix of land uses, agricultural buffer, agricultural mitigation, and issues to be addressed as the project is refined prior to environmental review and public hearing.

Later in the review process, the OSHC will have an opportunity to review the Draft EIR and make comments to be addressed in the Final EIR, prior to formal public hearings on the applications. 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. 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.

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
Natural Resources	February 27	Sustainability components, environmental analysis (when released)
Open Space and Habitat	March 6	Agricultural mitigation and buffer, environmental analysis (when released)
Bicycling, 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
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 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.

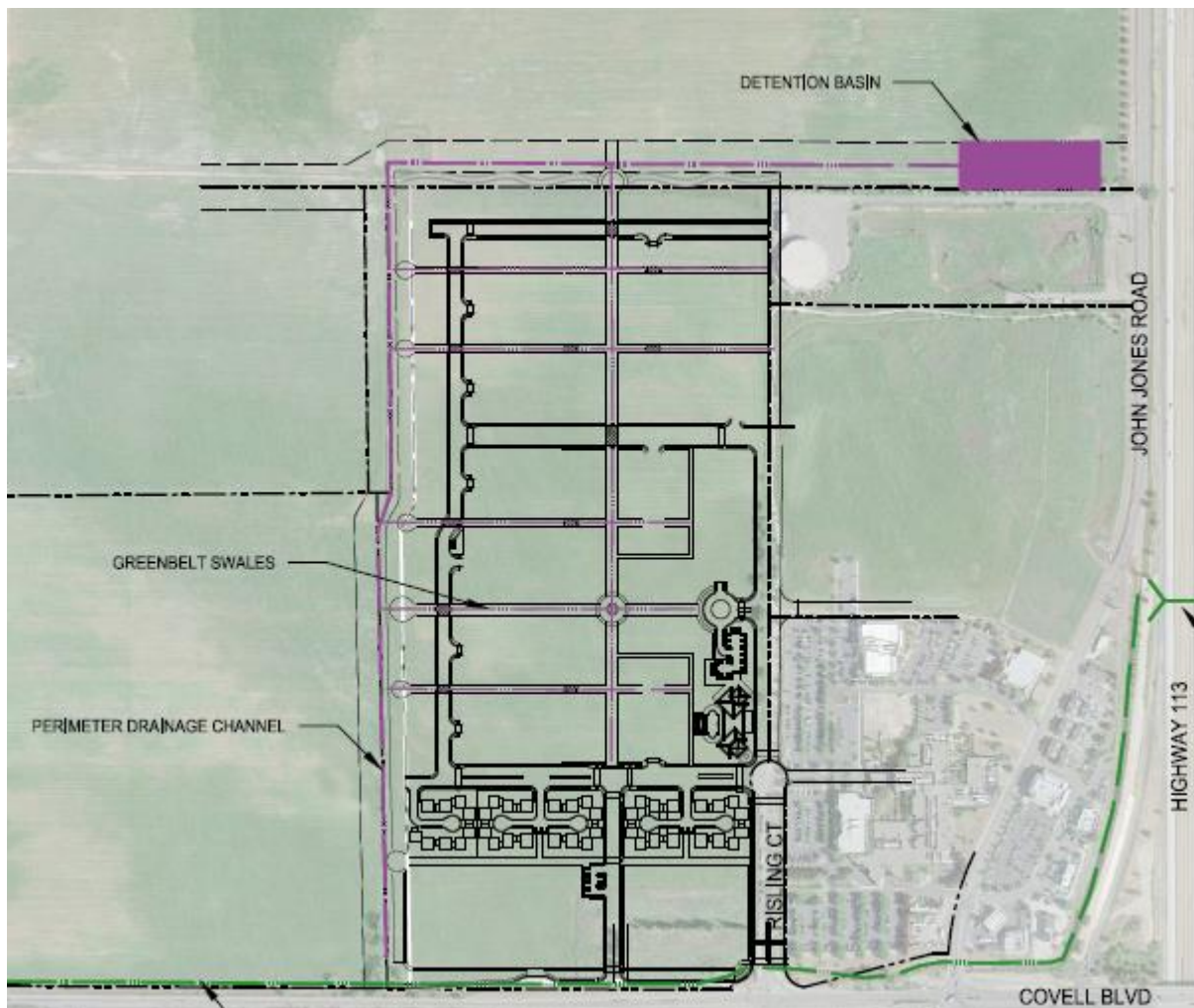
Location and Uses. This location may be appropriate for development of housing targeted to seniors. It is proximate to Sutter-Davis Hospital, the University Retirement Community, and medical offices. The site is within the Sphere of Influence adopted by the Yolo County Local Agency Formation Commission. 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, including special conditions of approval, are also anticipated to be reviewed concurrently with the Baseline Project Features. The Environmental Impact Report will identify mitigation measures to address adverse environmental effects.

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.

Stormwater Collection and Detention

The application proposes to collect stormwater throughout the subdivision, treat it (such as through use of bioswales) as feasible, and drain to a new channel west of the subdivision. The channel will lead to a new detention basin, or expansion of the City's existing basin, northwest of Sutter Davis Hospital. (See technical report at <http://cityofdavis.org/home/showdocument?id=7360>.) The applicant's engineer has concluded that a combination of proposed detention storage near the existing water tank site and around the perimeter of the project site, will mitigate impacts of peak discharges in the Covell Drain and maximum surface water elevations in the floodplain and near the site.



The existing channel along Covell Boulevard is proposed to be relocated approximately sixty feet to the north to accommodate roadway improvements. The perimeter drainage channel is proposed to be developed as habitat (see "Agricultural Buffer" section). The detention basin, like the nearby City facility, is not proposed for habitat or recreational purposes.

Agricultural Preservation and Agricultural Buffer. The City’s Right to Farm and Farmland Preservation Ordinance requires 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 privately-owned transition area include native plants, hedgerows, drainage channels and agricultural uses. The preliminary proposal assumes that the 50-foot public access area will be maintained by the homeowners association, so that it could potentially be used as community gardens or an orchard, although City ownership is a possibility.

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.

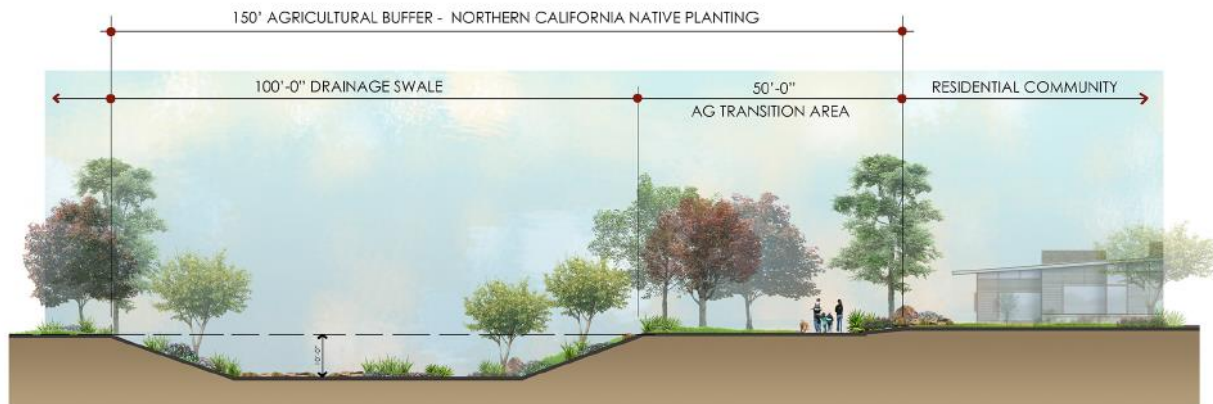


Figure 3: Conceptual 150' Agricultural Buffer

Staff is still researching and evaluating whether the drainage channel / agricultural buffer would be most consistent with the *Urban Agricultural Transition Area (UATA)* General Plan designation, or another category. The General Plan states that UATA segments should be a minimum of 150 feet wide to the greatest extent possible, and included within the city limits whenever feasible.

Agricultural Mitigation

Under the City’s agricultural land mitigation requirement, developers must permanently protect at least two acres of agricultural land somewhere within the Davis Planning Area to “mitigate” for every acre of agricultural land they convert to urban uses. Permanently protecting the land means either buying it outright or buying a conservation easement on the land. The developer must first protect the land along the entire non-urbanized perimeter of the project. For example, if a proposed housing development abuts farmland, the housing developer must protect that farmland. If the developer cannot protect this land for some reason, then the developer must provide the Adjacent Mitigation Land on the development site itself. The Adjacent Mitigation Land must be of a size that is economically viable as farmland (i.e., it must be a minimum 1/4 mile in width). Developers do not have to mitigate for the land being used as the required on-site agricultural buffer.

A developer may satisfy up to 50% of the agricultural land mitigation requirement by paying an in-lieu fee based on the appraised value of agricultural land near the city limits. The city council may approve mitigation that does not meet the adjacency requirement if an alternative mitigation proposal meets the intent of this chapter and would have extraordinary community benefits.

The perimeter drainage channel / buffer would not require mitigation, per the terms of the ordinance. Staff is researching whether the detention basin would be subject to mitigation requirements. The applicant is pursuing agricultural mitigation lands, but has not yet identified specific parcels or locations.

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 Open Space and Habitat 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>