

CHAPTER II: VISION



2.1 OVERVIEW

The *Placer Vineyards Specific Plan* will direct the construction of a comprehensively planned new community in southwestern Placer County. This community will connect to emerging developments in the City of Roseville and Sacramento County and will help define an urban character for this area. The individual elements and requirements of this plan all serve to fulfill this vision. The regional vision for Placer Vineyards is identified in this chapter, while the details for how this vision shall be carried forward are contained in the chapters of the Specific Plan that follow.

2.2 PLACER VINEYARDS PLACE WITHIN THE REGIONAL PLANNING CONTEXT

Placer Vineyards is identified in the *Dry Creek/West Placer Community Plan*, the *Placer County General Plan*, and the Sacramento Area Council of Governments' (SACOG's) adopted *Preferred Blueprint Scenario* (the SACOG Plan) as a new compact, self-sufficient community. The SACOG Plan is a regional vision to accommodate the longer term growth needs of the Sacramento region, as the region's current population of 2 million is forecasted to grow to more than 3.8 million people over the next 50 years. The SACOG Plan has been prepared as an example of how land use and transportation choices might be integrated into the region. In the SACOG Plan, Placer Vineyards is one of the largest areas targeted for new urban growth in southwest Placer County. The SACOG Plan suggests that over 21,000+ new homes might be constructed in the Plan Area.

Placer Vineyards is planned to permanently preserve on-site and off-site natural resources and open space by creating a higher intensity urban core, connected to transit, and providing a broad range of housing choices, affordable to diverse income populations. This Specific Plan includes the construction of 14,132 homes to accommodate all income levels and household sizes. Placer Vineyards is near existing employment centers in Roseville and Rocklin and emerging employment centers at the Sacramento International Airport and McClellan Park. The Placer Vineyards plan will provide direct access to regional transportation systems and link this area to major employment centers in the region. The Placer Vineyards Plan shares the SACOG and local planning visions to link land use and transportation systems to connect and serve the region.

2.3 THE PLACER VINEYARDS PLAN

Envisioned as a compact, self-sufficient community, Placer Vineyards is comprehensively planned to include a mix of higher density residential neighborhoods, a central mixed-use town center, 2 mixed-use village centers, a commercial and employment corridor, parks, recreation facilities, schools, religious facilities, and a network of open space and protected riparian corridors.

Placer Vineyards is a place where the natural and urban landscapes are woven together to create a distinct community.

A network of shaded paths and trails weaves throughout the community along drainage corridors to connect residential neighborhoods to natural resources, community recreation facilities, schools, and community centers.

As a transit-oriented community, Placer Vineyards will include a transportation network of roadways and bicycle and pedestrian trails that provide access throughout the community, to the larger regional trail system, and to the regional bus rapid transit system on Watt Avenue. Smaller buses traverse throughout the community to connect residents to the town center, village centers, and community facilities.

The town center at Placer Vineyards, located at the heart of the community, is intended to provide a mix of retail shops, services, community facilities, and entertainment activities. The town center will serve as the cultural and civic focal point for public life. Buildings with wide, shaded retail streets are proposed to be clustered around a central town green. Residents and visitors casually stroll, shop, and eat at outdoor cafes, restaurants, and coffee shops. The town center will include a community library, post office, a small government center and sheriff substation, and a community recreation facility.

2 small village centers serve the surrounding neighborhoods: one on the east side and a second on the west side of Placer Vineyards. The village centers will be the focal point of the surrounding residential life. Designed as small, mixed-use nodes of activity, each village center provides wide, shaded pedestrian-friendly streets, and locally serving shops, services, offices, and residential uses. A small public plaza with street furniture and shade trees is proposed to create an inviting place for residents to enjoy outdoor public activities and social gatherings.

A regional commercial corridor on Base Line Road that includes a strategically located power center at the southwest corner of Watt Avenue and Base Line Road will provide regional services, employment, and a gathering place for the surrounding area communities.



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Neighborhoods in Placer Vineyards are intentionally designed to be open, accessible, and inviting, offering a range of housing choices, types, styles, and densities for all income levels. Centrally located schools and parks will serve as the focal point for each neighborhood with safe, shaded, tree-lined walkways and paths radiating to surrounding residences.

2 large community parks provide a range of organized recreational activities for Placer Vineyards. Located adjacent to the open space and community trail network, residents will have easy and safe access (to walk, bike, and jog) between parks and community facilities throughout the community. 2 oak grove natural areas, the Dry Creek Corridor, and adjoining Gibson Ranch Park, provide a natural refuge from the urban fabric.

2.4 PROJECT SMART GROWTH PRINCIPLES

Placer Vineyards is planned to create an urban development pattern with diverse transportation and housing options affordable to a broad range of income groups while permanently preserving on-site and off-site natural resources and open space. Rooted in an existing regional community context, the planning and design vision for Placer Vineyards is grounded in the following principles of Smart Growth:

- ◆ Protect and enhance the highest quality natural features and resources on the site by incorporating native oaks, wetlands, creeks, and drainage systems into a community-wide open space system; also provide transitional buffers sensitive to the character of adjacent land uses.
- ◆ Promote a mixed-use, compact development pattern linked to regional transportation systems.
- ◆ Create a livable, pedestrian-friendly, and safe environment with a distinct community identity and sense of place
- ◆ Provide a diversity of housing choices—types, styles, densities, and costs
- ◆ Provide a range of transportation choices—streets, paths, and trails—with links to local and regional transportation systems
- ◆ Promote a balance of uses—housing, employment, schools, parks, recreation, and places to shop—that supports a balance of jobs to housing in the region
- ◆ Create safe and accessible links between neighborhoods, centers, and districts within the Plan Area and to the surrounding community

2.5 PLANNING AND DESIGN PRINCIPLES

The planning and design principles that follow provide the overarching themes that establish the vision and physical framework for the Placer Vineyards plan. These concepts are organized as community-wide elements and places of activity intended to implement the above-stated Smart Growth and regional planning principles while recognizing the unique site and market conditions specific to Placer Vineyards. These concepts, as they apply to the community, are depicted graphically on the following pages.

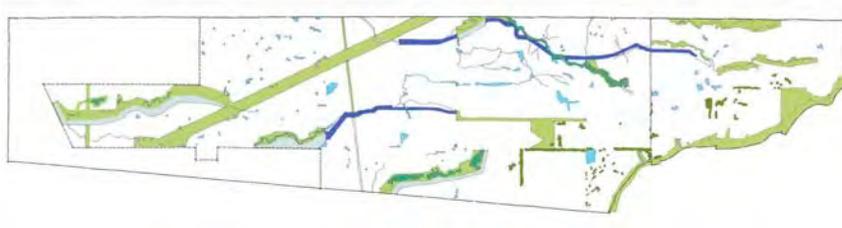
COMMUNITY-WIDE ELEMENTS

A. Natural Resources and Public Open Space

The natural resources and open space vision encourages wildlife and plant habitat preservation; promotes energy efficient design, water conservation and stormwater management; and incorporates public open space (parks, town and village greens, trails, and greenbelts) for public recreation within the development.

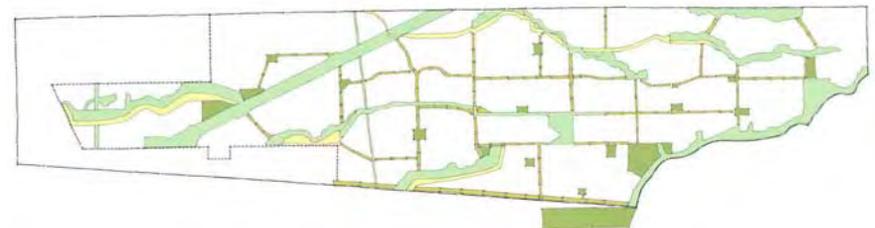
1. Natural Resources

The natural landscape consists of existing trees, wetlands, wildlife corridors, creeks, ponds, and other geological features on the site. Open space in Placer Vineyards is designed to permanently protect the significant on-site riparian corridors, wetlands, and oak tree groves characteristic to the site, such as Dry Creek. Dry Creek is a rich, natural open space resource that provides a green edge to the southeast corner of the community. As an element of Specific Plan implementation, Placer Vineyards will also provide off-site wetland mitigation, preserving large off-site open space preserves, located away from urban edge conditions.



2. Public Open Space Network

The open space network describes the system of parks, recreational areas, on-site drainage ways, and storm retention areas that are connected by a network of trails and paths. The open space system integrates existing wetlands, drainageways, spaces under power line easements, significant on-site oak groves, and the Dry Creek riparian corridor into an enhanced system of on-site drainage, storm retention, and recreational areas. This community-wide open space greenway system generally runs east-west, linking neighborhoods and special districts together throughout the community.



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Figure 2.1 View of Open Space Corridor

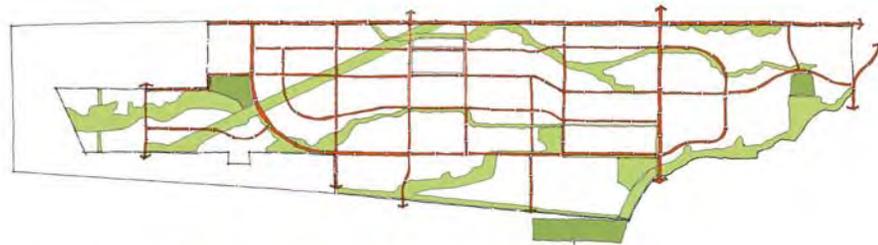


B. Transportation Choices

Developments designed around Smart Growth principles provide opportunities that encourage people to choose other modes of transportation—to sometimes walk, ride bicycles, ride the bus or light rail (if available), and to carpool.

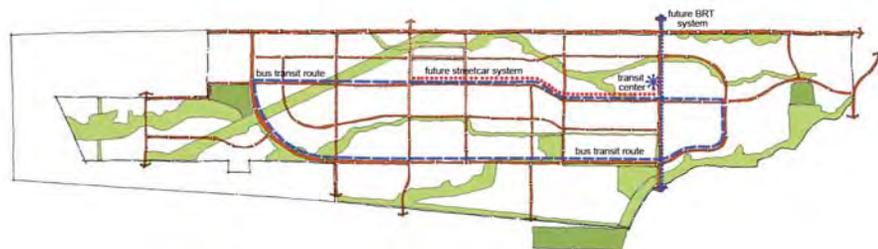
3. Grid of Streets

In Placer Vineyards, a network of major roadways, arranged as a grid of streets, provides efficient access and circulation for residents, shoppers, and workers. The north-south street system and circulation connections discontinue and terminate at major arterial roads, at parks, or at open space corridors. Roadways are designed to provide safe connections shared by cars, buses, bicyclists, and pedestrians.



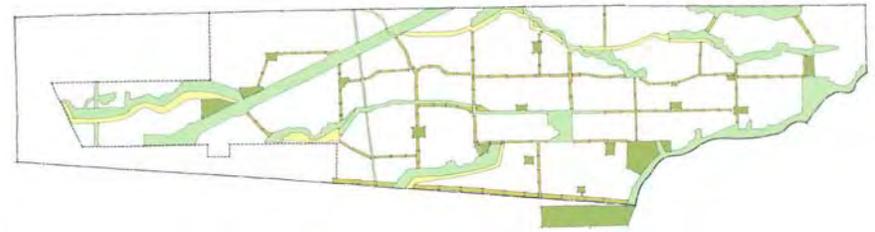
4. Transit Linkages

Alternative modes of transportation are integrated into the circulation system. The Specific Plan includes the provision of right-of-way for a future regional bus rapid transit system along Watt Avenue. East Town Center Drive will reserve right-of-way for a future streetcar system internal to Placer Vineyards. Routes for smaller buses will traverse the community to connect residents to the town center, village centers, and community facilities.



5. Connecting Trails and Paths

Pedestrian and bicycle paths and routes are integrated into the community-wide open space and street system. The roadways, greenways, and trails run parallel to each other and connect the major centers of the community.



6. Designed Landscapes

The designed landscape defines the form and character of the public realm: streetscapes along street corridors, gateways, entries, and landscape buffers and public spaces. The landscape design of the public realm provides a continuous visual thread that ties the community together under a common “green” framework, establishing the Placer Vineyards identity and community character.

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Figure 2.2 View of Dyer Lane Greenway through Oak Grove Corridor



CENTERS OF ACTIVITY

C. Quality Community Planning and Design

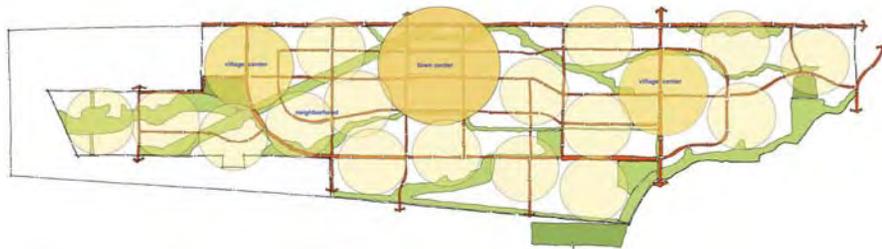
The Smart Growth principles of mixed-use/compact development, jobs/housing balance, and livability are addressed through the nature and design of the land use plan. Homes, shops, offices and entertainment places built near each other can create active, vital neighborhoods.

Project examples in Placer Vineyards include housing located near regional employment centers, small shopping centers in residential neighborhoods, and buildings with ground-floor retail and apartments or condominiums on the upper floors. These projects function as local activity centers, contributing to a sense of community, where people interact more with each other and tend to walk, bike, or ride the bus.

7. Town and Village Centers

A series of strategically-located urban centers—the town center, east village center, and west village center—are conveniently located to all neighborhoods in the Plan Area. Adjacent to higher density residential neighborhoods, the centrally located town center provides a mix of uses serving both regional and local market demands.

The 2 village centers are smaller local commercial nodes of activity containing a diverse mix of uses, housing types and densities, commercial and employment uses, public and quasi-public uses, and open space uses within a short walking distance of surrounding neighborhoods.



8. Regional Commercial Corridor

Strategically located along Base Line Road and the Watt Avenue bus rapid transit corridor, a regional commercial corridor links the Placer Vineyards community to the larger regional community. These commercial centers, including a power center, a range of retail, office, and business park uses along Base Line Road, are intended to be major centers of employment, services, and retail shopping for the region.

9. Distinct Neighborhoods Anchored by Public Spaces

The Smart Growth principles of livable, pedestrian-friendly neighborhoods, housing choice, and diversity are guiding visions in the design of the Placer Vineyards plan. Providing a variety of places where people can choose to live—apartments, townhomes, and single-family detached homes on a variety of lot sizes—creates opportunities to meet the needs of diverse household sizes (i.e. single families, single or 2-person households, seniors, and people with special needs).

Placer Vineyards is organized as an assembly of distinct neighborhoods, each designed with its own character and unique sense of place. A range of housing types and densities within each residential neighborhood provide housing choices and flexibility to meet market demands. Neighborhoods are anchored with community-serving facilities, such as schools, parks, religious facilities, and community centers within a 1/4 mile walking distance of surrounding residences.



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Figure 2.3 View of Townhomes along a Residential Neighborhood Street

